Manipulation in Spanish and American pre-election political debates: The Rajoy–Rubalcaba vs. Obama–McCain debates

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Abstract: In this paper, we make a comparative analysis of two pre-electoral debates belonging to two different traditions – the 2011 Rajoy–Rubalcaba debate and the first 2008 Obama–McCain debate – in terms of the manipulative processes used. For that purpose, we compare the similarities and differences in the use of the genre contributing to manipulation in the two debate traditions. Also, we identify the manipulative devices employed following Rigotti's (2005) coding scheme, which is complemented with those fallacies often encountered in the field of politics (van Eemeren et al. 2009; Pirie 2006; Tindale 2007). Various similarities in the use of the genre between the two debate traditions have been identified, such as in the use of strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation that are inherently manipulative and that entail (de-)emphasizing Our/Their positive and Their/Our negative aspects (van Dijk 2006). The differences are related to the discursive strategies preferred, the role of the moderator in the debates, and the candidates' physical position in the confrontation, all of which may contribute to manipulation. Similarly, there are also similarities and differences in the candidates' use of manipulative processes as their strategy for winning the elections and a different preference for personal attacks and the dialectical battle.

1 Introduction

Ever since the fall of totalitarian regimes in the 20th century, manipulation in discourse has been widely analyzed because it was soon felt that manipulation had to do with using the language *in a certain way* to obtain some desired effects. Indeed, great numbers of individuals were influenced by totalitarian discourse, shaking the grounds of rationality this way. And yet manipulation cannot be

considered a souvenir of the "bad old times"; on the contrary, manipulative argumentation is alive in today's political discourse of extremist ideologies and in Western political discourse to defend the Western model of government and to obtain and perpetuate political power.

In recent years, political language and political discourse has been an object of study to find out what it is that politicians do to gain consent on the part of the audience. While it is essential that political candidates present their viewpoints and those of the party they represent to convince other people to change their attitudes and behavior as regards certain political issues, it is also true that they systematically use language to achieve political effects. Indeed, through different manipulative processes, the audience may be induced to think, judge, and decide in predictable ways and may therefore be led to biases and manipulation. Cognitive heuristics and the pragmatics of manipulation attempt to explain manipulative communication by explaining the ways that the human mind processes information and how this is exploited to guide irrational beliefs and decisions.

One type of political discourse where political language is realized and where speakers have good reasons to use manipulation is pre-election debates. These are face-to-face confrontations in front of an audience (usually television viewers but on occasions also a stage audience) in which two political candidates fight a dialogical duel. They are a subclass of political discourse included within the domain of agonal, or conflict, discourse (Vion 1992: 92). Generalizing from van Dijk's definition of parliamentary debates, pre-election debates may be regarded as "a specific genre of political discourse" (2005: 67). If van Dijk considers parliamentary debates as "local manifestations of the global political acts of legislation, governing, and control of government" (2005: 67), pre-election debates may be defined "as local manifestations of *wanting to do* – or continue doing in case the same party gets re-elected – those political acts of legislating, governing and controlling the government" (Cabrejas-Peñuelas and Díez-Prados 2014: 161). Political interviews, electoral meetings and speeches, and pre-election debates have been widely studied (Bull and Fetzer 2006; Cabrejas-Peñuelas and Díez-Prados 2014; Nuolijärvi and Tiittula 2011; Proctor and I-Wen Su 2011; and Simon-Vandenbergen 2008); however, to our knowledge, no one has attempted to make a comparative analysis of Spanish and American debates in terms of the manipulative processes used. In this study, we attempt to fill this gap by analyzing how manipulation is expressed in the Rajoy–Rubalcaba pre-election debate and in

the first Obama–McCain debate, which took place on November 7, 2011, and September 26, 2008, respectively, in the buildup to the general elections on November 20, 2011, and November 4, 2008. The decision to analyze manipulation in pre-election debates came about in the aftermath of the debate after newspapers accused the Spanish candidate Mariano Rajoy of being "a master of ambiguity," of using "political trickery," and of "doing one thing while persuading people he is actually doing the opposite" (Tremlett 2011). Such words no doubt indicated that politicians' language is not without a purpose but, on the contrary, can be used to convey certain meanings and not others, often through the speakers' skillful use of certain linguistic means, and can thus be used to manipulate. The American and Spanish debate traditions have been chosen because they may shed light onto different ways of achieving an audience's manipulation. The following research questions will be analyzed:

1. Are there any similarities and differences in the use of pre-election debates by American and Spanish politicians when fighting for the opportunity to run their countries? If so, how do they manifest as manipulation?

As the American and Spanish pre-election debates belong to different rhetorical traditions, we might expect similarities and differences in the candidates' interventions, the discursive strategies preferred, and the format of the debates, as well as the moderators' role in the dialectical battle. These may explain differing uses of manipulation on the part of the politicians.

2. Are there any similarities or differences between American and Spanish pre-election debates in the use of manipulation?

With this question, we attempt to identify the manipulative processes employed by politicians in two different debate traditions to find out how much they approximate each other and how much they differ in the use of manipulation. For that purpose, we have chosen to use Rigotti's (2005) framework complemented with an inventory of the most frequent fallacies used in the political domain (van Eemeren et al. 2009; Pirie 2006; Tindale 2007). Rigotti's framework was selected because it offers a comprehensive typology of manipulative devices that enables analysis in a text. Such devices include not only fallacies but also processes "which operate at a less local and more strategic level" (Rigotti and Greco Morasso 2009: 55). And yet, since we are interested only in the fallacies frequently encountered in the political arena, we follow those pointed out by Pirie (2006), Tindale (2007), and

van Eemeren et al. (2009). These authors offer an understanding of fallacious reasoning, which we find useful for analyzing pre-election debates since it offers "a clear sense of a dispute that needs to be resolved" (Tindale 2007: 11).

2 Conceptual analysis

Before we embark on a more theoretical and practical analysis of data, we shall define the term *manipulation* as "control to one's own advantage through deceitful means," such as politicians and advertisers manipulating voters or readers, which involves an "*illegitimate* influence" (van Dijk 2006: 360, italics in original) of the manipulator on the manipulated by using discourse. Van Dijk (2006: 360) defined manipulation as "a communicative and interactional practice, in which a manipulator exercises control over other people, usually against their will or against their best interests." Manipulation, therefore, involves not only "power, but *abuse* of power, that is, *domination*" (van Dijk 2006: 360, italics in original). Also, the manipulator often gains "*sincere consent*" on the part of the manipulated and uses "*emotions*, in particular affectivity, which in turn triggers confidence" (de Saussure and Schulz 2005: 9, italics in original). The key to manipulation is confidence, since "the more confident the hearer is, the less critically he thinks and the more effectively the manipulator is likely to achieve his persuasive goal" (de Saussure 2005: 131).

Manipulation should be differentiated from any of the forms of legitimate persuasion (e.g., education, information), in which persuaders attempt to convince their interlocutors by using (legitimate) means – for example, by giving proving and thoughtful arguments. The interlocutors are, however, free to act and believe as they please if they are not convinced by the arguments given. The manipulated, by contrast, are victims of manipulators, since they often ignore the real intentions behind the manipulator's words, which more often than not solely benefit the manipulator and are against the best interests of the manipulated. De Saussure and Schulz (2005: 6–7, italics in original) summarized the characteristics of the manipulator and the manipulated as follows:

> Manipulative discourse implies an asymmetrical relation between the speaker and the hearer, where the manipulator has in particular the properties of (i) having at least some *power* over the addressee, (ii) is

to some extent *insincere*, and (iii) leads the manipulated to believe *false* propositions […]. Conversely, the manipulated is (i) *confident*, (ii) has a presumption of the *sincerity* (or cooperation), of the *relevance* […] and of the *truthfulness* of the speaker.

Although manipulation has been studied from different points of view – such as critical discourse analysis (CDA) (see Danler 2005; van Dijk 2006) and argumentation theory (see Rocci 2005) – this study continues with van Dijk's (2001, 2006) trend in the last decade in CDA and follows a multidisciplinary approach, which includes a triangulation of social, cognitive, and discursive approaches. Indeed, we believe that manipulation is a social phenomenon (it involves control of some social actors over others), a cognitive phenomenon (it involves mental control of the manipulated), and a discursive phenomenon (it involves text, talk, and visual images) (van Dijk 2006: 361). We have adopted the discourse analysis approach to manipulation because it attempts to explain not only the propositional meaning of a text, but also how public discourse is used to serve the interests of those in power over the interests of the general public, who are therefore subjected to power abuse.

In this article, we are interested in one type of manipulation: social domination of politicians over the general public. Such domination requires special access to and control over the mass media and public discourse, including parliamentary debates, pre-election political debates, and other forms of public political speech. This means that politicians "exercise their political power through public discourse, and through such public discourse they at the same time confirm and reproduce their political power" (van Dijk 2006: 362).

3 The Rajoy–Rubalcaba debate vs. the first Obama–McCain debate

The context of the Rajoy-Rubalcaba confrontation was one of profound economic crisis, which was the result of the subprime mortgage crisis in the United States in 2007, the housing bubble nourished for years in Spain, and a large national and regional debt. Before the general elections, the two major political parties, Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and Partido Popular (PP), agreed to organize a single debate on November 7, 2011, at the Television Academy, to be broadcast on public television and radio channels. The prime ministerial contenders were Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba for the

Socialist Party, also the interior minister under the current government, and Mariano Rajoy for the PP camp. Before the debate, some opinion polls predicted a resounding defeat of the Socialist Party by the Popular Party.

In the United States, the context of the Obama–McCain debates in 2008 was marked by the financial crisis, the war in Iraq, the Georgia–Russia conflict, and the possibility of terrorist attacks like that of September 11. Obama made ambitious promises to the electorate, including tax cuts for most Americans, a withdrawal of American troops from Iraq, and an expansion of health care coverage. McCain, however, promised not to leave Iraq without a victory, to allocate more money for community college education, and to continue former president George W. Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy. The candidates held three debates over the course of a few days, while opinion polls predicted Obama's victory by a larger margin as the debates came to an end.[1]

The Rajoy–Rubalcaba debate lasted for 90 minutes; it started with an opening and finished with a closure made by moderator Manuel Campo Vidal and had an introduction and a conclusion by the interlocutors. It was divided into three sections, each section divided into interventions by the two candidates (see Figure 1).

INSERT FIGURE 1

The first Obama–McCain debate also lasted for 90 minutes and was moderated by Jim Lehrer. It was divided into thematic sections and finished with a conclusion for the candidates to summarize their positions and ask for citizens' votes. Although the debate was originally planned to focus on foreign policy and national security, a large portion of it also dealt with economic issues. The debate was further divided into eight 9-minute issue segments,[2] which were introduced by the moderator's eight lead questions. Two minutes were allotted for each candidate to comment on the topics selected by the moderator, followed by a 5-minute open discussion, where the politicians answered the moderator's follow-ups and directly addressed each other. The issue segments were preceded by an opening to the debate made by the moderator, and the debate finished with a conclusion closing the

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[1] The Gallup poll gave Obama 50% and McCain 43% in October 2008 right before Election Day on November 4, 2008 (http://www.gallup.com/poll/111064/gallup-daily-obamamccain-gap-narrows.aspx).
[2] Jim Lehrer mentioned at the beginning of the Obama–McCain debate that the debate was divided into nine 9-minute segments, not eight. The reason for this reduction was an extension of question 3, dealing with the financial rescue plan, and thus the moderator reduced the number of final lead questions from nine to eight.

interventions that was made by both interlocutors and a closure made by the moderator. There was not a preestablished set of interventions for each candidate as in the Spanish debates, which made the debate less rigid, although the speaking time was measured for each interlocutor; see the structure in Figure 2.

INSERT FIGURE 2

Although both the Rajoy–Rubalcaba and Obama–McCain debates were divided into sections dealing with different topics, they differed in the introduction, the opening and closing sections, and the moderator's role in the debates. Indeed, in the introduction to the Spanish debate, the candidates offered their particular approach to the current situation in Spain, while in the conclusion they summarized their positions and ask voters for their vote. By contrast, the American debate format included only a conclusion by the politicians, where they also summed up their thinking and tried to gain the audience's vote. And yet both were similar in their appeal to the audience's emotions. The opening and closing sections were similar in both debate traditions as regards the basic functions fulfilled – namely, for the moderator to introduce the contenders and explain the rules of the debate in the opening section and to close the politicians' interventions and express his gratitude to the candidates and the audience during the closure.

The American and Spanish debate traditions also differed in the moderator's tasks: In the Spanish debate, the moderator opened and closed the debate and the different thematic sections, distributed turns, monitored the number and timing of the candidates' interventions, and avoided open conflicts between the interlocutors, fulfilling in this way a mediating function (Blas-Arroyo 2011: 177). However, in the American debate, in addition to having the same tasks as the Spanish moderator, the moderator also asked the politicians questions in an attempt to create direct engagement of the candidates on the topic at hand and intervened in the debate whenever a clarification was needed. Therefore, he also fulfilled a provoking function (Blas-Arroyo 2011: 180).

The structure of the debates is important for the purpose of this study, as one might think that the use of manipulation processes should vary from the introduction and concluding parts of the debates to the central interventions. It would therefore be reasonable to think that there is a wider choice of manipulative processes in the parts where there is more dialogic battle than in the

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introduction and conclusion to the debates. In spite of that, the introduction to the American debate has not been considered in this study, since it was not part of the debate format.

4 Spanish and American debates: A comparison

In this subsection we attempt to answer our first research question by highlighting the similarities and differences in the use of pre-election debates by American and Spanish political candidates that manifest as manipulation. To answer the question, we take into account recent debates: those of Obama–McCain in the campaign for the presidency of the United States and of Rajoy–Rubalcaba in Spain.

US presidential debates and Spanish debates share the same purpose: both are an attempt to convince the audience that the chief politicians are good candidates to run the country. For that purpose, the debates spread a presidential image of the candidates, which is accomplished through strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation that are often employed to manipulate in political discourse (van Dijk 2005 and van Dijk 2006). This implies emphasizing Our positive and Their negative aspects and deemphasizing Our negative and Their positive aspects (van Dijk 2006). See Example 1, in which Rajoy begins with a strategic move of negative other-presentation by calling Rubalcaba "Rodríguez Zapatero" as if by mistake and distances himself from his opponent by saying that, unlike Rubalcaba, he does only as indicated in his electoral program. The manipulative move here consists of suggesting that Rajoy could maintain standards in health, education, and pensions while turning the economy around by lowering taxes. However, it later became evident that severe cuts to basic services and unemployment subsidies had already been planned if the PP won the elections. Also, one wonders whether Rajoy's slip of the tongue was not intentional and was thus an attempt to manipulate the audience into making them believe that Rubalcaba was not but a continuation of his predecessor.[3] It seems evident that through a biased

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[3] Tremlett (2011) also commented on Rajoy's trick in the aftermath of the debate: "Rajoy made a show of confusing his [Rubalcaba's] name with that of Zapatero. It was an unsubtle attempt to tell viewers that Rubalcaba and Zapatero – who is deeply unpopular and decided not to stand again – were one and the same thing."

presentation of facts in favor of the speaker's own interests and against those of his interlocutor (and the opposing party he represents), the audience may be induced to think and act in a certain way.

Among the various strategic moves of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation are these:

1. Referring to one's past actions and future plans (acclamations), since the candidates need to emphasize what they have done for their country and what they intend to do.

2. Referring to the opponent's weaknesses, which may be "personal[es] or programática[s]" [personal or related to the electoral program] (Téllez et al. 2010: 256) (the so-called attacks).

3. Emphasizing one's positive policy issues (e.g., health services, employment, education) rather than personal qualities, as suggested by Benoit and Sheafer (2006), and the opposing party's lack thereof. For instance, in Example 2, Rubalcaba portrays his party positively for the progress made in Spain in gender equality (past action); at the same time, he paints the PP in a bad light by casting doubts on their interest in gender equality.

4. Talking about values or principles of society (i.e., support, solidarity, effort, tolerance, freedom). Example 3 is used to remind the audience that the United States is a great nation and thus any problem can be overcome.

Despite the similarities, there are also differences between American and Spanish pre-election debates in the discursive strategies preferred by politicians that aim to manipulate the audience. Such strategies help politicians to present themselves "como la opción más aceptable para el votante, a la par que consiguen, o pretenden hacerlo, reducir el grado de aceptabilidad del oponente o contrincante" [as the most acceptable option for the voter, while they are also able, or try, to reduce the opponent's or rival's degree of acceptability] (Téllez et al. 2010: 255). Indeed, an analysis of the Obama–McCain debate reveals that the candidates made acclamations (i.e., proposals that praise the candidates' positive qualities or those of their party) and reached agreements, all with the aim of presenting themselves positively. This was favored by the question-and-answer format of the debate. But they also attacked their opponent to emphasize his negative actions (Benoit and Sheafer 2006; Téllez et al. 2010). See Example 4, in which McCain offers a biased account of his positive qualities and his rival's weaknesses. By contrast, direct attacks, even to the point of mercilessly discrediting the interlocutor,

predominate in Spanish debates as part of the politicians' strategy of negative other-presentation. This is due mainly to the fact that "the debate is presented as a true battleground, and even at times, as a boxing ring, where the ability to 'knock out' an adversary is far more important than logical argumentation" (Blas-Arroyo 2003: 397). For instance, in Example 5, Rajoy deprecates his opponent's behavior by distancing himself from it (ad hominem attack). However, unlike in American debates, the Spanish political candidates expressed few agreements, except for on gender equality in work and family and on the fight against terrorism. Instead, the politicians focused on explaining their political agendas, attacking their opponent, and defending their positions.

Another difference between the American and Spanish pre-election debates is the moderator's role and the candidates' position in the debates, both of which may contribute to manipulation. The moderator's limited interference in Spanish debates means that the political candidates address each other directly, presenting their positions and discrediting those of their interlocutor. This, linked to their face-to-face position at the table, may lead Spanish politicians to confrontations and ad hominem attacks in an attempt to emphasize the negative characteristics of the opposing candidate. By contrast, in American debates, moderators often prevent confrontations, and even when they pose questions that address disagreements, "the debaters are rarely able to provide more than oblique responses to an opponent's position," and, thus, the "locus of confrontation shifts from politician-politician to questioner-politician" (Jamieson and Birdsell 1988: 195). Also, American politicians in presidential debates seldom address each other directly, which, together with their position of standing at podiums or sitting at separate tables while facing the moderator and audience, serves to complicate the clash. This may explain why the contenders in the Obama–McCain debate were less inclined to ad hominem attacks.

5 Theoretical framework: Rigotti's (2005) identification of manipulative processes

Rigotti (2005) created a classification of manipulative processes, which includes the following:

1. *Using falsity and insincerity*: Falsity attempts to make the listener change his or her vision of reality, while insincerity is a false promise.

2. *Using fallacies*, which are techniques (or rhetorical devices) aimed at making assumptions highly salient in such a way that they are cognitively inescapable.

Taking into account the literature on fallacies (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1987 and van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992; van Eemeren et al. 2009; Tindale 2007), in this study, we concentrate on some of the most frequent fallacies used in politics classified according to the different stages of critical discussion: the confrontation, opening, argumentation, and concluding stages[4] (van Eemeren et al. 2009; Neagu 2013; Pirie 2006; Tindale 2007). Such stages serve to identify the ideal structure of an argument, and thus they are also ideally found in the American and Spanish debates:[5]

a. Fallacies in the confrontation stage

- *Ad hominem attacks*: attacking not the pros and cons of an argument but instead the real or imaginary negative qualities of someone making a claim

- *Argumentum ad baculum*: making direct or indirect threats

- *Argumentum ad misericordiam*: attempting to elicit the audience's emotions

b. Fallacies in the opening stage

- *Shifting the burden of proof*: asking the interlocutor to show that the argument is wrong

- *Evading the burden of proof*: avoiding providing evidence for one's standpoints; for that purpose, presenting the standpoint as self-evident and referring to one's expertise to affirm that one's views are indisputable

c. Fallacies in the argumentation stage

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[4] According to van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992:34-35), the parties involved in a discussion have to go through different stages: the *confrontation stage*, where the interlocutors establish that there is a difference of opinion; the *opening stage*, in which they decide to resolve such difference; the *argumentation stage*, in which they defend their standpoints; and the *concluding stage*, where the interlocutors evaluate whether the difference of opinion has been resolved and in whose favor.

[5] For example, in the Obama–McCain debate, these are the dialectical stages for the first question, "Where do you stand on the financial recovery plan?" *Confrontation stage* –Obama and McCain differ in their approach: Obama blames Bush's "failed economic policies," which McCain supports. By contrast, McCain mainly blames Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and "corporate greed and excess" for the financial crisis. *Opening stage* - "Senator McCain is absolutely right that […]," "I just fundamentally disagree". *Argumentation stage* – "We've got to start also …," "it's important […] that …." *Concluding stage* – Senator McCain concludes by stating his belief in the US and in its future. However, the difference of opinion is not resolved.

- *Straw man*: creating and then attacking an oversimplification or exaggeration of an opponent's viewpoint

- *Red herring*: raising an irrelevant issue, often to distract people from the real focus of attention

- *Misuse of argumentation schemes*: when introducing supporting arguments in accordance with one of the argument schemes, flouting the argument scheme's rules (van Eemeren et al. 2009: 164) by

  - symptomatic argumentation, which involves introducing an argument as contrary to or typical of a situation;

  - argumentation by analogy for comparable items; or

  - causal argumentation, which is based on a cause-effect relationship

- *Argumentum ad populum*: assuming a statement to be true just because the majority believes it to be so

- *Argumentum ad consequentiam*: rejecting a statement because of the negative consequences that it would bring about if it were true

- *Slippery slope:* rejecting a measure because it would have negative consequences, starting from a small step and culminating in disastrous events

- *False analogy*: comparing two apparently similar situations, leading to an invalid conclusion

- *Argumentum ad verecundiam*: appealing to the authority of a person who is mistakenly considered an authority

- *Post hoc ergo propter hoc*: claiming that because A preceded B, A must have caused B

d. Fallacies in the concluding stage

- *Argumentum ad ignorantiam*: assuming that if a fact cannot be proved to be false, it is true

3. *Violating presuppositions*, or introducing propositions that the hearer does not know ahead of time and thus attempting to impose one's viewpoint.

4. *Exploiting the human instinct of referring to totality*, which refers to the human tendency to generalize and thus simplify.

5. *Using the polarity temptation*, which refers to the common belief that in a paradigm that has a scalar structure with two extremes, those extremes are the only two possibilities, when in fact there is a graduation between the two extremes.

6. *Distorting relevance and interest*, or attempting to make the listener believe that what is said is necessarily of interest.

6 Methodology

The present study attempted to make a comparative analysis of the Spanish pre-election debate that took place on November 7, 2011, prior to the general election for prime minister of Spain, and the first American presidential debate of the 2008 campaign, which happened on September 26, 2008, in terms of the manipulative processes used. We aimed to identify the manipulative processes employed by the politicians in the two debates following Rigotti's (2005) modified coding scheme to find out how much they approximate and how much they differ from each other in the use of manipulation. The decision to analyze the manipulative processes came about after the media commented on Rajoy's ambiguity and trickery in the debate, which no doubt indicated that the politician used language for his own interests. We also wondered whether different debate traditions presented different ways of achieving manipulation.

For the study of manipulation, the Rajoy–Rubalcaba debate (19,849 words, including the moderator's interventions) was taken from the Spanish national radio and television broadcast (Radio y Televisión Española, or RTVE) website,[6] and the Obama–McCain debate (16,419 words, including the moderator's interventions) was obtained from the *New York Times*'s website.[7] The transcriptions were copied and pasted in text format and loaded into a freeware program called UAM Corpus Tool,

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[6] The debate and transcription can be found at http://www.rtve.es/noticias/elecciones/generales/debate/.
[7] The debate transcription can be found at http://elections.nytimes.com/2008/president/debates/transcripts/first-presidential-debate.html.

developed by Mick O'Donnell.[8] This software is, in fact, a set of tools to annotate text(s), search the corpus, and run descriptive and inferential statistics. For the analysis of manipulative processes, we inserted the modified version of Rigotti's (2005) coding scheme.

The identification of manipulative devices required careful consideration when we felt that something had gone wrong. Following Tindale (2007: 13), such identification was "aided by the fact that we [were] dealing with traditional (and modern) patterns of reasoning that [provided] specific characteristics in each case." For fallacies, we followed Pirie's (2006), Tindale's (2007), and van Eemeren et al.'s (2009) explanations and examples, which assisted us in recognizing the patterns or schemes, while for the remaining manipulative devices, we used explanations and examples of Rigotti (2005). The identification and evaluation of fallacies also required explaining what was fallacious about them. It is, however, true that it was not always a clear-cut procedure, since on occasions it involved evaluating the context of argumentation for key features that could be of any help, the politicians' arguments, and whether or not all considerations introduced in the premises were relevant, among other criteria. Tindale's critical questions helped us in the evaluation. The first question served to identify the type of fallacy involved, if any, while the second (and subsequent questions) helped us consider what was wrong about the argument, the relevance of the arguments given, and contextual matters. After the analysis of the text and context, only those cases that were clearly fallacious to us were counted. One researcher analyzed both debates for manipulative processes; however, to achieve interrater reliability, we had another researcher, who was also well acquainted with political discourse, analyze 30% of the debates. The researchers reached 73.13% agreement. Those processes on which there was no agreement were discussed until a consensus was reached. In the following paragraph, Example 6, from the Obama–McCain debate, is analyzed for all types of manipulative processes.[9]

In (1) Obama flouts the argument scheme rule following the symptomatic argumentation (see "misuse of argumentation schemes" above), since he assumes that his statement is true just because it is generally believed that it is not typical of a country to maintain its military superiority when its economy is declining. This is also an instance of the fallacy *argumentum ad populum*. McCain

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[8] The program can be downloaded for free from http://www.wagsoft.com/CorpusTool/.
[9] Some of the fallacies found coincide with those pointed out by Neagu (2013).

answers with an *argumentum ad verecundiam* in (2) and with an ad hominem fallacy in (3). In the former, McCain resorts to his own expertise as a warrant for the truthfulness of his statement, and in the latter, he stresses Obama's lack of experience and of personal honesty ("we've seen this stubbornness before") rather than provide arguments for his position. Then, McCain continues by appealing to the audience's emotions when referring to the veterans in (4). Such an appeal constitutes an *argumentum ad misericordiam* because it cannot be inferred from his emotional words that he will fund veterans' care adequately. McCain finishes in (5) with a new *argumentum ad verecundiam*, since he attempts to make the audience believe that, owing to his expertise, he is able "to keep this country safe and secure" and his claim is indisputable.

On occasions, the analysis entailed making some methodological decisions: The unit of analysis of the manipulative processes of the text was generally the orthographical sentence (from capital letter to full stop); however, statements were often longer or shorter than the sentence (Example 7). The extract in Example 7 was formed from two orthographical sentences; however, only one sentence and half of the next were analyzed as a straw man fallacy. Also, on occasions the same example showed the interplay of two or more fallacies or one fallacy and another manipulative process (see (1) in Example 6).

The third methodological decision attempted to distinguish between fallacious and nonfallacious uses of arguments. This required reconstructing the intended argument before issuing any charges of fallacy, making sure that the actual argument was present in the text and there were both premises and a conclusion. The pattern or scheme of the fallacy was then determined to find out which fallacy it was. Following Tindale (2007), critical questions were issued to distinguish legitimate from illegitimate strategies by paying attention to the reasonableness of the claim supported by the premise and whether such premise was relevant to the claim in the conclusion. See Example 8, which is a nonfallacious example of an ad hominem attack, since Rajoy does not attack the opponent as a person but instead accuses the government of incompetence. Therefore, the argument does not fit the basic pattern of concern.

The final methodological decision was related to the calculations of the manipulative processes in the American and Spanish debates for comparison purposes. Although both debates lasted

for 90 minutes, the number of words differed, which made it necessary to calculate the ratios of manipulative processes per 1,000 words of text by using percentages of difference. These were calculated by using a rule of three and a subtraction:

X = [ratio of manipulative processes per 1,000 words of text in the American text × 100] / ratio of manipulative processes per 1,000 words of text in the Spanish debate.

The resulting percentage represented the ratios per 1,000 words of text in the American debate. The percentage of difference was then calculated by subtracting the ratio *X* obtained from 100% (the ratio per 1,000 words of text in the Spanish debate). In short form,

% of difference = (100% − X).

7 Results and discussion of findings

The results in this subsection have been derived from the analysis of the debates following the modified version of Rigotti's (2005) manipulative processes. We mention only the results that proved statistically significant. First, we present the results obtained for manipulative processes for both debates as a whole (Tables 1 and 2)[10] and then focus on the economy section, since it is the only one that is comparable across debates (Tables 3 and 4). No comparisons can be made for the introduction and concluding parts of this part of the debate, because there are no fallacies in the introduction or conclusion to this part of the Spanish debate or in the conclusion to this part of the American debate.

Comparisons across debates reveal that Rajoy and Rubalcaba used a ratio of 12.04 instances of manipulative processes per 1,000 words of text, while Obama and McCain used 10.78. This is the

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[10] The tables presented were exported from the UAM Corpus Tool version 2.8.12, which shows total numbers of manipulative processes (N), percentages, and descriptive statistics (Student's *t* tests and chi-square). The * sign indicates how statistically significant the difference between results is: one * sign means the significance level is 90% (i.e., a 10% chance of error), two * signs means the significance level is 95% (i.e., a 5% chance of error), and three * signs means the significance level is 98% (i.e., a 2% chance of error). According to Dörnyei (2007: 210), a result is considered significant in the social sciences if *p* is less than 0.05 – that is, at a significance level of 95%. Thus, significance levels lower than that (i.e., *p* values higher than 0.05) need to be considered with caution.

result of the Spanish politicians using more manipulation than the Americans in the same time allocated for their formulations. Closer analysis reveals that fallacies are the manipulative process most frequently used in the debates, followed by falsity and insincerity in a lesser fashion, although these are more balanced in the Obama–McCain debate: 10.33 fallacies and 1.31 falsities and insincerities per 1,000 words of text in the Rajoy–Rubalcaba debate and 9.44 fallacies and 1.28 falsities and insincerities in the Obama–McCain debate. They were therefore more common in the Spanish debate (a difference of 8.62% and 2.29%, respectively). Fallacies offer the advantage of having the appearance of good reasoning when in fact they are attempts to silence the opponent and persuade the audience of the reliability of the candidate's words. Indeed, "the struggle to impose a social and political representation may be more decisive than what is said on a given topic, i.e. than the truth or falsehood of a proposition" (Zurloni and Anolli 2013: 255). Fallacies, no doubt, are used to achieve precisely this effect. However, falsity and insincerity cannot abound in debates, as political candidates would lose credibility in the long run. The remaining manipulative processes identified were seldom used in either debate (see Table 1). These results are, however, nonsignificant, and therefore any statistical coincidences are unrelated.

The results for fallacies classified per stage in the critical discussion indicate that Rajoy and Rubalcaba favor the confrontation stage to use fallacious argumentation, followed by the argumentation stage. Numerous examples in the Spanish debate exemplify the candidates' preference for confrontation and attacks (Example 9). By contrast, Obama and McCain show a slight tendency toward the argumentation stage, although without forgetting attacks, which indicates their preference for the dialectical battle and therefore their attempt to systematically exploit the opportunities afforded by the stage to their own advantage and against the best interests of the opponent. Comparisons between debates indicate that the largest difference is in the confrontation stage, where the Spanish candidates make 30.32% more fallacies than the American. The opening stage is, however, relevant for the American candidates when compared to the Spanish. Statistical calculations indicate strong significance for the results in the confrontation and opening stages ($\chi^2 = 7.15$, $p < .02$, and $\chi^2 = 10.82$, $p < .02$, respectively) and weak significance in the argumentation stage ($\chi^2 = 3.49$, $p < .10$). Such differences between the American and Spanish debates can be ascribed to differing rules in discourse

organization and discursive behavior. This, no doubt, includes preference for logical argumentation or attacks; the role of the moderator, who either promotes topic discussion and avoids confrontation or does not interfere in the debate and allows confrontation; and the positions of the interlocutors, who either favor argument discussion or attacks. As expected, very few fallacies are used in the opening and concluding stages, since the politicians concentrate their arguments in the other two stages.

INSERT TABLE 1

Analyses of the fallacies used in the discussion stages reveal that, despite the fact that both the American and Spanish interlocutors favor the confrontation and argumentation stages, they do so to different degrees (see Table 2). In the confrontation stage, the Spanish and American politicians use ad hominem attacks over the other fallacies; however, Rajoy and Rubalcaba quarrel aggressively to a greater degree than Obama and McCain in an attempt to damage the public image of their adversary and the party he represents (51.25% of difference). While quarreling, the politicians often draw attention to some characteristic of the interlocutor's character and point out that it is a good reason not to believe his claims: Rajoy presents his opponent as a continuator of Zapatero's failed economic policies and hence also to blame for the country's economic ills ('You remind me of that because you have both made exactly the same policies throughout the years; you are jointly responsible with Mr. Rodríguez Zapatero'[11]). Meanwhile, Rubalcaba attempts to convince the audience that the PP candidate is deliberately ambiguous in his words, which really hide his intention to make strong budget cuts in social services to save the current economic stagnation ('Mr. Rajoy, leave aside your deliberate ambiguity').

The other types of fallacies in the confrontation stage – *argumentum ad baculum* (i.e., appeals to force) and *argumentum ad misericordiam* (i.e., emotional appeals) – are less used in both debates; however, again the percentages in the American debate for the confrontation stage are more balanced than in the Spanish. Only *argumentum ad misericordiam* is found to occur with significant difference between debates, with Obama and McCain using it on more occasions than Rajoy and Rubalcaba (a difference of 2,220%), and thus the American candidates substitute good reasons for emotions in an

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[11] Only the English translations of the extracts from the Rajoy–Rubalcaba debate have been provided owing to space restrictions.

attempt to persuade their audience. This has to do with the fact that "political debates […] are largely decided on the basis of emotional factors" (Walton 1987: 33), and therefore it is often the case that there is "exclusive preoccupation with the emotional impact of the appeal" (Walton 1987: 34). In Example 10, Senator McCain tries to elicit the audience's sympathy so as to justify his decision to stay in Afghanistan. The results indicate that there is a relationship between debate tradition (Spanish or American) and type of fallacies that is highly significant for ad hominem attacks ($\chi^2 = 31.91$, $p < .02$) and *ad misericordiam* fallacies ($\chi^2 = 32.77$, $p < .02$), and that therefore both variables are related.

INSERT TABLE 2

Further examination reveals that, as pointed out, the fallacies in the argumentation stage are slightly more popular with the American politicians than those in the confrontation stage, whereas the reverse is true for the Spanish. Therefore, Obama and McCain show an interest in giving reasons to defend their viewpoints while arguing against their opponent's, but they also attack each other directly. In the argumentation stage, Obama and McCain focus on *argumentum ad verecundiam* (1,120% more than in the Spanish debate, $\chi^2 = 28.73$, $p < .02$), slippery slope (750% more, $\chi^2 = 10.24$, $p < .02$), misuse of argumentation schemes (115% more, $\chi^2 = 0.92$, $p < .02$), and straw man (41.78% less, $\chi^2 = 7.04$, $p < 0.10$) in their fallacious moves. Such results are also highly significant when compared to the Spanish debate for all fallacies except for straw man. In the debate, McCain criticized Obama's lack of experience as disqualifying Obama from being the commander in chief, while he portrayed himself as the most qualified candidate, depicting his wide experience in politics as an important weapon to beat Obama. In Example 11, McCain uses an ad hominem attack against Obama's "naïveté" and an *ad verecundiam* fallacy to highlight his own experience. Also, he tries to depict the Democrat as a tax-and-spend liberal; for example, in Example 12, there is an interplay of an *ad populum* fallacy and a violation of the argument scheme rule (the symptomatic argument) when McCain defends his standpoint just by pointing out that it is generally believed that in times of crisis, taxes should not be raised (see Neagu's [2013] scheme above). Obama, on his own side, states his broader vision to rule the United States and criticizes both the Bush administration and McCain as an endorser of Bush's policies, including those regarding the economy ("the policies of President Bush

that John McCain wants to follow") and the Iraqi invasion, which represents a great expenditure for the country. In this way, Obama implies that things will not change if McCain is elected.

Rajoy and Rubalcaba follow a different strategy to persuade the audience of the feasibility of their political plans. In order of occurrence, they concentrate on the straw man fallacy and use the others much less. In this way, by creating a caricature position of the opposing candidate and attacking it, the politicians manage to set him in a negative light, while at the same time they "outline [their] own individuality that [disassociates them] from the opponents" (Neagu 2013: 26). The other fallacies for which Rajoy and Rubalcaba show greater percentages of use when compared to the American debate – *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (100% more), *argumentum ad consequentiam* (73.33% more), and red herring (52% more) – allow them to construct a fallacious reasoning based on possible negative consequences and to draw attention to a completely different issue, hoping that in this way the audience will forget the issue first raised. The statistical differences between the American and Spanish debates show strong significance for *post hoc ergo propter hoc* ($\chi^2 = 8.33$, $p < .02$) and for *argumentum ad consequentiam* ($\chi^2 = 4.70$, $p < .02$), medium significance for red herring ($\chi^2 = 2.74$, $p < .05$), and weak significance for straw man ($\chi^2 = 7.04$, $p < .10$). When attacking their opponent, Rajoy and Rubalcaba use the fallacies *argumentum ad consequentiam* and *post hoc ergo propter hoc* to stress the negative consequences of the opposing party's policies on Spanish society should it win the upcoming general election (see Example 13). The example proves to be an unreasonable move resulting from *argumentum ad consequentiam*. Rubalcaba shows his socialist ideology by defending public institutions – the educational and health systems – and by accusing Rajoy of advocating privatization. That is, no doubt, one of his main weapons to persuade the audience, since the right to health care and to education are considered assets in Spanish society. Rajoy, for his part, implies with his fallacious argumentation that the Spanish economy will not be improved if his rival wins and that, indeed, he is the change that the country needs (Example 14).

When defending themselves from attacks, the politicians often avoid answering the questions addressed by referring to other issues, which is especially the case of Rajoy (see Example 15). The extract is an example of a red herring fallacy inasmuch as Rajoy avoids giving an answer to Rubalcaba's direct question, which would make his plans obvious. These are not Rajoy's and

Rubalcaba's only strategies for winning the debate: Rubalcaba, who belongs to the current governing party and is far behind the poll predictions for the opposing party in the general election, has the difficult task of unmasking Rajoy's strategy of covering a hidden agenda, which is why he mostly asks questions; by contrast, Rajoy is in an easier position, as he only has to avoid Rubalcaba's accusations, and he does so by employing the red herring fallacy.[12]

The economy sections (also including employment) in both the Rajoy–Rubalcaba and Obama–McCain debates lasted for 40 minutes and dealt with prevailing concerns for the American and Spanish populations at the time. Examination of all four politicians' interventions reveals that the candidates also pursue their rhetorical goals of persuading the audience by using manipulative processes: 43.51% and 44.07% of all manipulative processes in the Spanish and American debates, respectively; thus, they have very similar rates of manipulation. Further investigation shows that the candidates use the majority of processes, although there are large differences between them (see Table 3). Indeed, all candidates follow the same tendency of using more fallacies than any other manipulative process, which is especially the case of the Spanish politicians (6.82% more than in the American), followed by falsity and insincerity (1.38% more). The results are therefore are more balanced for Obama and McCain.

INSERT TABLE 3

Analyses of the ratios of the fallacies used per stage indicate that, as was the case with the overall percentages of manipulative processes, the Spanish and American debates have a concentration of fallacies in the argumentation and confrontation stages. They differ, however, in the different relevance given to the stages: Rajoy and Rubalcaba favor the confrontation stage to make the majority of fallacies (49.57% more than in the American debate), whereas Obama and McCain follow the opposite tendency (103.41% more than in the Spanish debate). This confirms the conclusion that

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[12] In the aftermath of the debate, numerous newspapers and radio channels commented on Rubalcaba's attack and Rajoy's avoidance strategies in the debate. For example, Daniel Ureña, an expert on political communication, explained that "Rubalcaba has tried to take the initiative in the confrontation and a common technique for that is finishing the intervention blocks with a question, in such a way that the opponent is obliged to answer. Rajoy has been able to avoid those questions and, in those cases in which he did respond, he did so with prepared data that he had brought and that he introduced with statements such as 'I knew you were going to say that'" (own translation). (http://www.cadenaser.com/espana/articulo/rajoy-tranquilo-rubalcaba-contundente-analisis-comunicativo-debate-2011/csrcsrpor/20111108csrcsrnac_5/Tes).

Spanish candidates have openly hostile and, at times, aggressive behavior in debates, while the American candidates leave more room for logic and argumentation in their interventions. Also, the American politicians favor the opening stage for manipulation, unlike the Spaniards. The results are highly significant in all three cases ($\chi^2 = 19.40$, $p < .02$ in the confrontation stage; $\chi^2 = 12.30$, $p < .02$ in the argumentation stage; and $\chi^2 = 6.84$, $p < .02$ in the opening stage; see Table 3).

With respect to types of fallacies, the results reveal that Rajoy and Rubalcaba make all their fallacies of the ad hominem type with the aim of mercilessly discrediting the interlocutor's image to their own advantage (see Table 4). They do so regardless of their position in the government: Since Rajoy belongs to the main opposition party, he judges the current government's incapacity to mend the current critical situation in Spain. Rubalcaba, who belongs to the governing party and therefore cannot accuse it, tries to discredit Rajoy by uncovering his hidden agenda that really holds a financial bailout of banks, a reduction of unemployment benefits, and labor reform. By contrast, Obama and McCain also make some ad hominem attacks (73.85% less than in the Spanish debate, $\chi^2 = 36.94$, $p < .02$), but these are far fewer, such as Obama questioning McCain's integrity and future poor policies. The American candidates further use some *ad baculum* fallacies ($\chi^2 = 7.57$, $p < .02$) by threatening those whose policies put in danger the US economy and some *ad misericordiam* fallacies ($\chi^2 = 27.39$, $p < .02$) by appealing to the audience's emotions. The results have strong significance for all three fallacies. See Example 16, in which McCain intends to bring earmarked spending under control by using threats.

INSERT TABLE 4

In the argumentation stage of the discussion, the Spanish candidates favor red herrings (38.36% more than in the American debate, $\chi^2 = 3.86$, $p < .05$), which is followed by *post hoc ergo propter hoc* ($\chi^2 = 3.86$, $p < .05$) and *ad consequentiam* fallacies ($\chi^2 = 3.42$, $p < .10$). All instances of red herrings belong to Rajoy, who avoids Rubalcaba's attacks by accusing him of lying and deceiving or by not answering his constant questions altogether (Example 17). However, Rubalcaba's questions to make his opponent fall into contradictions are counterproductive, as he paints a picture of Rajoy as president by asking him what he would do regarding pensions, unemployment benefits, labor reform, VAT raise, SMEs, and others: for example, 'Are you going to apply your program to the labor reform?

Yes or no?' By contrast, their American counterparts use *argumentum ad verecundiam* ($\chi^2 = 7.47$, $p <$ .02), all occurrences of which belong to McCain. Indeed, McCain resorts to his expertise as opposed to Obama's lack thereof as a strategy to beat him: "the issue in which I've been involved for many, many years." For his part, Obama resorts to his strategy of portraying McCain as a follower of George W. Bush's erroneous economic policies, which McCain will continue if he becomes the new president of the United States (straw man fallacy) (Example 18).

Thus, while the results in this study suggest that the American and Spanish debates share similarities in the use of manipulation in the pre-election debates, there are also differences that make them overall dissimilar from each other. It is therefore possible to talk about two different debate traditions with argumentative strategies typical of their own that are aimed at steering the discourse rhetorically in the direction of the candidates' interests. Which strategies were more effective in achieving the candidates' own purposes and which effects they had on voters are something that is unknown to us and are a matter for further research.

8 Conclusions

The objective of the present study was twofold: to investigate the similarities and differences in the use of language in Spanish and American pre-election debates that manifest as manipulation and to analyze the similarities and differences in the use of manipulation in the Rajoy–Rubalcaba and the first Obama–McCain pre-election debates. The results indicate that Spanish and American political candidates use strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation that are typical of manipulative discourse. Their various strategic moves are essentially manipulative, since they are biased presentations of facts that favor the politicians' own advantages and refute their opponent's. However, they differ in the discursive strategies preferred: While American contenders seem to think of pre-election debates as the place to make proposals (acclamations, in Téllez et al.'s [2010] terms) and reach agreements to paint themselves in a positive light, for Spanish politicians, the debating arena seems to better resemble a battleground, and thus they use attacks predominantly. Other differences are found in the moderator's role and the candidates' position while debating, which contribute to either favoring or disfavoring manipulation of the ad hominem type.

The results of the analysis of manipulation in the Rajoy–Rubalcaba and Obama–McCain debates reveal similarities and differences in the use of manipulation. In general terms, the Spanish candidates used more manipulation than the Americans in the same debate time and favored fallacies over any other manipulative process, followed by falsities and insincerities, while the results are more balanced for the American candidates. No doubt, fallacies are preferred because they serve well the purpose of appearing to present a rational argument while, in fact, being deceptive moves designed to influence the result of the discussion to the candidates' own advantage. Also, the Spanish politicians, interested in attacking each other, concentrated on the confrontation stage and on ad hominem fallacies in the whole debate and in the economy section, following the egocentric function of political verbal behavior (Watts 1992), which seeks to maximize the speaker's own benefit while minimizing the rival's, and facilitated by their face-to-face position at the table. However, the American politicians showed more interest in the argumentation stage and so in the dialectical battle, without giving up confrontation, as well as in ad hominem attacks, appeals to force (*ad baculum* fallacy), and appeals to the audience's emotions (*ad misericordiam* fallacy) as persuasion strategies. Finally, the debaters used the remaining argumentation strategies in differing approaches to beat their opponent: Rajoy, to make the present government's incompetence obvious; Rubalcaba, to show the opposing party's true agenda; McCain, to stress his experience and Obama's inexperience; and Obama, to paint his rival as an extension of President Bush and thus a proponent of Bush's erroneous economic and military policies. Future studies could study whether or not the American and Spanish politicians were successful at using manipulation and to what degree they achieved their aim of persuading the audience.

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Bionote

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Appendix

(1)   RAJOY: 'Mr. Rodríguez … Pérez Rubalcaba insists in telling us and in telling all Spaniards what I'm going to do. […] I'm not like you, what I don't have in my program I don't do; therefore, don't confuse me. I beg you not to confuse me.'

(2)   RUBALCABA: 'I would like to talk about equality, about equality between women and men, which is one of the policies to which I give most importance, to say that we have made a lot of headway in this matter. Also, alone.'

(3)   OBAMA: […] *And in the '60s, he [my father] wrote letter after letter to come to college here in the United States because the notion was that there was no other country on Earth where you could make it if you tried. The ideals and the values of the United States inspired the entire world.*

(4)   MCCAIN: *Look, no matter what, we've got to cut spending. We have --- as I said, we've let government get completely out of control.*

(5)   RAJOY: '[…] Also, you froze the pensions of the Spanish pensioners and you didn't have it in your program. <u>I am not like you</u>, what I don't have in my program, I don't do; therefore, <u>don't confuse me</u>. I beg you <u>not to confuse me</u>.'

(6)   OBAMA: […] (1) *<u>There has never been a country on Earth that saw its economy decline and yet maintained its military superiority.</u>* […]

MCCAIN: (2) *<u>I've been involved, as I mentioned to you before, in virtually every major national security challenge we've faced in the last 20-some years. There are some advantages to experience, and knowledge, and judgment</u>*. (3) *<u>And I – and I honestly don't believe that Senator Obama has the knowledge or experience and has made the wrong judgments in a number of areas, including his initial reaction to Russian invasion – aggression in Georgia, to his – you know, we've seen this stubbornness before</u>* … (4) *<u>As far as our other issues that he brought up are concerned, I know the veterans. I know them well. And I know that they know that I'll take care of them. And I've been proud of their support and their recognition of my service to the veterans. And I love them. And I'll take care of them. And they know that I'll take care of them. And that's going to be my job</u>*. (5) *<u>But, also, I have the ability, and the</u>*

knowledge, and the background to make the right judgments, to keep this country safe and secure. […] I don't think I need any on-the-job training. I'm ready to go at it right now.

(7) RAJOY: '<u>Then you made a mistake with the diagnosis and the measures. And you thought that spending everything you could reactivate the economy</u> and you got us into a public deficit and an absolutely enormous public debt.'

(8) RAJOY: 'The situation has reached an unsustainable extreme which has to be solutioned. […] it is unsustainable because the government is not capable of correcting the situation. This lack of confidence that the present government generates both inside and outside Spain and its inability to straighten things out is what has forced the early call for an election.'

(9) RAJOY: '[…] I'd like to disregard Mr. Pérez Rubalcaba's excuses. Mr. Pérez Rubalcaba has talked about the crisis that started in the US and the crisis in Greece, but it's the same old story isn't it? Everyone else is to blame for causing the crisis but it seems the government is not responsible.'

(10) MCCAIN: […] *she said, "But, Senator McCain, I want you to do everything -- promise me one thing, that you'll do everything in your power to make sure that my son's death was not in vain." That means that that mission succeeds, just like those young people who re-enlisted in Baghdad, just like the mother I met at the airport the other day whose son was killed. And they all say to me that we don't want defeat.*

(11) MCCAIN: *I honestly don't believe that Senator Obama has the knowledge or experience and has made the wrong judgments in a number of areas, including his initial reaction to Russian invasion – aggression in Georgia, to his – you know, we've seen his stubbornness before* […]. *As far as our other issues that he brought up are concerned, I know the veterans.* […] *But, also, I have the ability, and the knowledge, and the background to make the right judgments, to keep this country safe and secure.* […]

(12) MCCAIN: *Now, that's a fundamental difference between myself and Senator Obama. I want to cut spending. I want to keep taxes low. The worst thing we could do in this economic climate is to raise people's taxes.*

(13) RUBALCABA: 'Within the educational system in some autonomous communities there are schools that reject the most difficult students and send them to the public school. Do you know that is happening, Mr. Rajoy? The same thing in the health system would be the ruin of the public health system.'

(14) RAJOY: 'Think about what this constitutes and the disorder in the economic policies that it implies; and what has been the result Mr. Pérez Rubalcaba? Over 5 million unemployed on top of everything else we have had to endure all these years. <u>As a result of which what now needs to happen here in Spain is the creation of an economic policy which is totally different to the one you have been enforcing on us all these years</u> [*ad consequentiam* fallacy].'

(15) RUBALCABA: '[…] Are you going to raise the VAT? I believe you're going to cut down the unemployment benefits, I believe you're going to take the SMEs out and I'll tell you more: I believe you're going to raise the VAT. I only hope you clarify it to the whole of the Spanish citizens.'

RAJOY: 'Mr. Pérez Rubalcaba insists on telling us and on telling all Spaniards what I'm going to do. Let me tell you that I'll say what I'm going to do […].'

(16) MCCAIN: *As president of the United States, I want to assure you, I've got a pen. This one's kind of old. I've got a pen, and I'm going to veto every single spending bill that comes across my desk. I will make them famous. You will know their names.*

(17) RAJOY: '[…] Of course, it [a labor reform] should be made, but not like yours, which nobody supports.'

RUBALCABA: 'Explain out, explain out; just a moment, Mr. Rajoy.'

RAJOY: 'As regards international innovation …'

RUBALCABA: 'Why don't you explain? It is in your electoral program.'

(18) OBAMA: […] *this is a final verdict on eight years of failed economic policies promoted by George Bush, supported by Senator McCain, a theory that basically says that we can shred regulations and consumer protections and give more and more to the most, and somehow prosperity will trickle down.*