

Analysis of strategic planning and its influence on political-electoral results from the study of the first round of the Chilean presidential campaign of 2017

Análisis de la planificación estratégica y sus influencias en los resultados político-electorales a partir del estudio de la primera vuelta de la campaña presidencial chilena de 2017

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ABSTRACT

The study and implementation of the electoral campaigns in Chile and latin america is giving its first steps, so that the development of professionals in the área and the analysis of the planification processlacks of the relevance that should have. In this paper it will report the results of a qualitative research, that analyzed the relevance that have the different stages of the strategic process of planning an electoral campaign and its impact in the final results of the first round of the 2017 chilean presidential campaign, specifically the cases of the candidates Marco Enríquez-Ominami, Alejandro Guillier, Alejandro Navarro y Beatriz Sánchez. It was consulted through semi-structured interviews to the presidentials candidates, advisors and campaign managers, it were defined some key themes related to the planification proces of each campaign asociated to a candidacy. Thus, the analysis and tabulation process give us a interest comparative between the answers of the candidates and advisors, that confronted with theoretical contextualization, allow us to develop a battery of suggestions to revalue the profesional communicator figure and its role as advisor to obtain better political-electoral outcomes.

Keywords: Political communication, Electoral campaigns, Strategic communication, Presidential election, Chile

RESUMEN

La ejecución y estudio de las campañas electorales están dando sus primeros pasos en Chile y en buena parte de Latinoamérica, por lo que el análisis del proceso y la formación de profesionales en esta área específica es aún incipiente. En el siguiente artículo, se reportarán los resultados de una investigación de carácter cualitativo que analizó la importancia de las diferentes etapas del proceso estratégico de planificación de una campaña electoral y su impacto en los resultados finales de la primera vuelta pre-balotaje de la campaña presidencial de 2017 en Chile, específicamente los casos de las candidaturas de Marco Enríquez-Ominami, Alejandro Guillier, Alejandro Navarro y Beatriz Sánchez. Para ello, se definieron diversos ejes temáticos claves relacionados al proceso de planificación estratégica de cada campaña asociada a una candidatura y se contrastó la información con entrevistas semiestructuradas a candidatos presidenciales, asesores y jefes de campaña. Así, el proceso de análisis y tabulación ofrece una comparativa interesante entre respuestas de diferentes candidatos y asesores que -confrontadas con la contextualización teórica- permiten elaborar una batería de sugerencias que revaloriza la figura del comunicador profesional y su rol asesor para la obtención de mejores resultados políticos-electorales.

Palabras claves: Comunicación política, Campañas electorales, Comunicación estratégica, Elecciones Presidenciales, Chile.

INTRODUCTION

The Chilean presidential elections of 2017 were held in an environment where the political class was delegitimized and there was deep mistrust and substantial deterioration of the public image

of the main political actors (Gamboa and Segovia, 2016). In order to solve the issue, it was necessary for these actors to reconnect with the people and communicate with their electorate. The election was starred by eight candidates. Table 1 summarizes information from each candidate.

Table 1.
First round of presidential election. Chile, 2017

CANDIDATES	COALITION	IDEOLOGICAL POSITION	VOTES	PERCENTANGE From total number of votes
Carolina Goic	Democracia Cristiana (DC)	Center	387.784	5,88 %
José Antonio Kast	Independiente	Right wing	523.375	7,93 %
Sebastián Piñera	Chile Vamos (UDI, RN y EVOPOLI)	Right wing	2.418.540	36,64 %
Alejandro Guillier	La Fuerza de la Mayoría (PS, PRSD, PPD, PCCh, ICy MAS)	Left wing	1.498.040	22,7 %
Beatriz Sánchez	Frente Amplio	Left wing	1.338.037	20,27 %
Marco Enríquez-Ominami	Partido Progresista (Progressive Party)	Left wing	376.871	5,71 %
Eduardo Artés	Unión Patriótica (UPA)	Left wing	33.665	0,51 %
Alejandro Navarro	Partido País ("País" Party)	Left wing	23.968	0,36 %

Source: Servel, 2017

Political communication was and still is a key and relevant aspect, as it fosters “the space in which contradictory discourses are exchanged between the three actors who have the legitimacy to express themselves publicly about politics; adding value to these three elements, validating and giving support to the political system. These said three elements are: the politicians, journalists and public opinion (through surveys)” (Ferry and Wolton, 1992, p. 31). In addition, as Gerstlé (2005) emphasizes, communication is essential for politics to exist.

Electoral campaigns are the period in which different political conglomerates carry out communicational actions that promote obtaining suffrage (Báez, 2011), where the different political actors are legitimized as valid representatives, in addition to motivating the interaction between the politicians, the media and citizenship.

The success of electoral campaigns lies in this connection with public opinion through communication, since without the latter, political action lacks visibility, therefore it lacks effectiveness (Riorda and Rincón, 2016). Furthermore, communicating is the first thing that anyone who claims to have a political role in society thinks about (Fara, Rossi, Fernández, Guberman,

Reina, Reina, Monasterio and Rizzuti, 2013). Subsequently, the strategic planning process is promoted, which allows knowing the competition and tactics to be implemented during the electoral process (Fara, 2014). This strategic design allows “evaluating, anticipating or weighing present alternatives” (Rodríguez, 2015, p.19) to elaborate a program that allows the objective to be obtained.

The present research will seek to analyze the relevance that the different stages of the strategic planning process of an electoral campaign have according to their outcome. This study focuses on the presidential elections of the year 2017 and on the performance of the candidacies of Marco Enríquez-Ominami, Alejandro Guillier, Alejandro Navarro and Beatriz Sánchez.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The process of creating and executing an electoral campaign comprises different elements: public opinion, strategy, narrative, relation with the media, discourse, campaign actions, campaign organization and budget (Fara, et al, 2013). Considering what has been mentioned, in order to start outlining an electoral campaign it is essential to acknowledge public opinion through qualitative

and / or quantitative studies. Mora (2005) assures that public opinion is “the map of social life, which is constituted by people’s opinions who circulate among them” (Rubio, 2009, p. 3).

The development of the strategy is a process that must be carried out calmly, since it is at this point that the bases of the entire electoral campaign are forged, otherwise there will be no elements that provide references and indicators to set a clear aim, leading to travel paths without a specific direction. As Durán Barba (2001) mentions, the strategy must be based on the information obtained scientifically (Fara, 2014) since “the more we investigate, the more we will be able to reach the coming stages, because each election is different and we cannot use the data from four or five years ago” (Peytibi, 2019, p. 141).

Prior to the planning process, it is necessary to carry out a study of the context of the election as it offers a counterpart and an additional element to what was previously investigated, placing the future development of the campaign in a specific framework. This will allow the campaign know the battlefield in which it will be performed. As the public opinion study, this prior research must be carried out by specialists; by the strategist.

Consequently, it is necessary to know the argument in which the electoral journey will be carried out, allowing to define a strategy that delimits the space of competition, including the actions to be developed. In addition, it is at this point where what will guide the campaign and under what ideas the strategy will unfold (Fara, et al, 2013) begin to be specified. It is ideal to be able to demarcate the main concepts. If said concepts are limited enough, the campaign actions will not be diluted compared to others that are not in line with the central strategy (International IDEA, 2006). The strategy, as Durán and Nieto (2018, p.125) mention, “is a general plan that guides everything that is done and is not done, everything that communicates or fails to communicate in a campaign.”

The narrative reached politics and electoral campaigns to provide them with meaning and an account that would link them together. This emerges as a necessity, as we live immersed in an ocean of stories (Eskibel, 2015) and the narrative “is a form of discourse that is imposed on all social sectors and transcends political, cultural and professional lines of partition” (Salmon, 2017,

p.30). Politics cannot be indifferent to this context. On the contrary, it becomes more meaningful due to the need to overcome the barriers of equality of proposals through the emotional enunciation of messages. The development of this story must have a narrative structure in which according to Del Rey “a conflict is represented by a script, a dramatized interpretation and a distribution of roles” (Del Rey, 2011, p.114) in which the roles of heroes, villains and victims are highlighted (Fara, et al, 2013), in addition to threats and solutions. To do so, “an electoral campaign must be similar to a theater play: the candidate is both the main character and the narrator of the story that is told to the electorate; its audience. The story appears as fiction; a rewriting of reality in which the candidate appears as the protagonist and necessary to the end of the story” (Richard, 2011, p.131).

During the electoral campaign period, the main function of the media is to inform the voter and help them make a decision based on the delivery of information (Curran, 2002). This, since the agenda defined by the media will determine, to a certain extent, the candidates’ exposure. As Cohen argued in 1963, “perhaps the media does not tell people what to think, but they do set the agenda for the issues to be thought about” (Canel, 1998, p.8). Thus, in order to somehow permeate this editorial line, it is essential to have a media plan that seeks to “publicize candidates’ positions, how outstanding citizens the candidates are, how voters want them to be, among others” (Martínez and Salcedo, 2006, p. 264).

The use of rhetorical resources constitutes a fundamental element for argumentation and persuasion in electoral contexts. In fact, it is the element that the candidate will utilize the most. Discursive action as a persuasive tool must succeed in generating three effects on the listeners; convince, persuade and emotionally move them (Fara, et al, 2013). Discourse becomes so relevant in the political-electoral sphere that it is argued that the different power structures are built on the foundations of language (González, 2017).

“For any campaign a strategy that includes different actions must be determined” (Peytibi, 2019, p. 141), since these campaign actions are “profitable, in terms of votes, which aim to capture a group of people who are interested in the candidate and their proposals” (Fara, 2014, p. 97). These actions can be classified into three types: high impact,

intermediate impact and ordinary or operational impact actions (Fara, et al, 2013). Independent of which of these are carried out, they must always act as maneuvers that promote the main concept of the electoral campaign. From the moment campaign actions begin to be planned, they must remain closely linked to the campaign axes and strategies. As Izurieta, Perina and Arterton argue; “you can’t communicate everything. You cannot project an image of everything. You have to know how to choose projects or actions” (2003, p. 244).

The organization of the campaign is defined at its onset and must be periodically evaluated during its development, given the chaotic nature of electoral processes (Fara, et al, 2013), since it “must coordinate the activity of a relatively heterogeneous group of individuals trained in different disciplines” (Costa, nd, p. 53), “allowing to coordinate in the same direction what would otherwise be isolated efforts” (Christian Democratic Party, 2016, p. 34).

The budget is one of the most important elements in an election since it stands as the campaign program but summarized in figures. The budget is the equivalent to the detailed total expenditure for the electoral campaign. The components of the budgetary item are three: “expenses, income and flow of funds” (Fara, et al, 2013, p. 235).

METHODOLOGY

54 The interpretive paradigm used in this research was qualitative, with a grounded theory approach, as it focused on “understanding and delving into phenomena, exploring them from the participants’ perspective” (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2010, p. 364) in relation to the context in which said phenomena occurred. Through this orientation we aim to “understand the participants’ perspective about the phenomena that surround them, go in depth in their experiences and perspectives, opinions and meanings” (Hernández, et al, 2010, p. 364). Consequently, the current investigation aims to know what happened during the electoral process in depth, which is something that has not been explored significantly.

As the table presented in the introduction, the universe of the investigation was made up of all the presidential candidates who participated in the first round of the elections held in Chile in 2017, as well as the advisers who participated in each of these elections.

The sample of the study, which is defined by Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2010) as the “representative subgroup of the population from which the data is collected” (p. 176), was established as non-probabilistic, since its selection depends on “causes related to the characteristics of the research or who presents the sample” (Hernández, et al, 2010, p. 176). Since we did not have the opportunity to access the entire determined universe, a convenience sample was available, which is composed of both the candidates and their main advisers in the presidential campaigns.

The current investigation presented certain limitations. Out of the seven selected study subjects, only four of them were considered for analysis. Due to logistical aspects of each one of the three remaining candidates, it must be mentioned that it was impossible to arrange an interview with Alejandro Guillier and Camilo Lagos, while Beatriz Sánchez, once consulted, declined to participate in the investigation it was not in line with her principles.

Table 2.
Subjects of the study

INTERVIEWEE	ROLE
Marco Enriquez-Ominami	Presidential Candidate
Alejandro Navarro	Presidential Candidate
Marcel Lhermitte	Campaign Manager/Consultant
Oswaldo Correa	Campaign Manager/Consultant
Sebastián Kraljevich	Campaign Manager/Consultant

Source: Authors

In order to obtain the data that would allow establishing the strategic elements used, a questionnaire was applied through a semi-structured interview, since the instrument functions as “a guide to issues or questions and the interviewer is free to introduce additional questions to specify concepts and obtain more information” (Hernández, et al, 2010, p.418).

Based on the same thematic structure in which the data collection element was developed, information was grouped into topics in order to, as Charmaz (2000) points out, “relate the data of the analysis with the grounded theory” (Hernández, et al, 2010, p.440). The analysis allowed the coding of the data to have a more complete description. Data were summarized; irrelevant information was eliminated, allowing a “greater understanding of the analyzed material” (Hernández, et al, 2010, p.448).

The analysis instrument took into consideration the eight main themes that constitute the strategic planning process: public opinion, strategy, narrative, media, discourse or discursive action, campaign actions, organization and budget.

RESULTS

Taking into account the main axes of the items analyzed in each campaign, it is possible to carry out the following sector analysis which brings detailed information on each campaign based on the different elements that said campaigns must have in order to obtain good performance according to their objectives.

Public opinion

Regarding the relevance of public opinion studies in each candidacy, the statements are as follows. “We worked a bit between February and May” (E = 2) of 2017, the minimum necessary according to Fara et al (2013). “Different survey methods” (E = 4) were developed, which were fundamental “with planning, because it guided us” (E = 4), thus complying with the necessary standards to obtain elements that allow a deep study of public opinion (Fara et al, 2013). Various key thematic axes, related to the strategic planning process of each campaign associated with a candidacy, were defined. “We carried out two mandatory qualitative investigations, one for the primary elections and one for the general election” (E = 1). In addition to “public surveys” (especially CEP) (E = 1), following the recommendations by Fara et al (2013) when not having a large budget. “We didn’t have [public opinion studies] on purpose. We did not have a single penny “(E = 5), we also “were aware of the surveys that were around” (E = 5) and, “as I have been a candidate before we had some electoral traceability “(E = 5), not complying with the necessary elements for the establishment of updated instruments that would allow candidates know the electorate, in accordance with what was proposed by (Peytibi, 2019).

Strategy

The candidacies of Marco Enríquez-Ominami and Beatriz Sánchez exhibited clear signs of having researched about the context in which their campaign would occur, utilizing public opinion studies, such as the CEP, and data from previous elections. This, according to what Campusano

(2015) expressed, allowed them to have a broader perspective regarding the current situation and the elements that made it happened. The difference lies in the interpretation they made out of the diagnosis from both public opinion studies and social environmental research.

The other candidates are not so direct when talking about the research they did prior the elections, but they do suggest that they do have carried out research in this regard, perhaps not so elaborated, but effective enough for them to develop a campaign strategy, allowing them to have basic elements that make it possible to know the context, problems and possible solutions (Rodríguez, 2015).

The candidates’ objectives were clear, out of the four campaigns consulted, only two of them intended to go to a second round. Regarding this, the interviewees stated the following, “we never planned the campaign thinking that we were going to win in the first round” (E = 4), “but we also had the certainty that we would be able to make it, actually, scoring [total number of votes of the left-wing candidates] much more than the right-wing” (E = 4). “We wanted to win” (E = 5), “I had no interest in having an honorary third place” (E = 5). This last candidacy, as mentioned by Fara et al (2013), could have negatively determined the strategic approach of the electoral campaign by defining an objective that was not related to reality.

The objectives set by the rest of the candidates were realistically stated, thus the strategic and economic development was carefully outlined, based on the options that they believed to be feasible (Fara, et al, 2013). Regarding *Frente Amplio*, being a new coalition, its interest was in positioning itself as a new alternative to the traditional left-right political model. On the other hand, Alejandro Navarro’s candidacy neither intended to win nor going to the second round. He was one of the interviewees who mentioned that his objective was “to install a candidacy that did not aim to succeed, since we already knew that we were not going to obtain the first majority of votes” (E = 3).

In relation to the campaign concepts, the team as a whole must be aware of what those concepts are, since these will be the guidelines that will give the campaign specific goals and determine the methods the objective will be achieved by. Everything that is done while the electoral campaign lasts should be thinking about the visibility of these elements.

All the candidacies raised narrow concepts, as recommended by International IDEA (2006). The actual change lay in the central axis, where each proposal was supported by different hints, while some proposed changes in partisan logics, others proposed changes related to pensions, education and health system, among others. Consequently, it was the candidacy of *Frente Amplio* the one that had clearest concepts, “to offer a horizontal leadership, hand in hand, that shares knowledge, answers and questions and doubts with the Chilean people, this plural force” (E = 1).

Regarding the electorate, only in the *Frente Amplio* campaign segmented its electorate; classifying them into different types of audience, identifying them as guaranteed voters, potential voter and those who would not vote for them, as Costa (s.f.) recommends. “We defined four types of audience. The first one, which adhered to Beatriz and had decided to vote for her, the staff in charge of taking her around Chile during the campaign period; people who were able to talk or persuade their close friends about the reasons why they had decided to vote for Beatriz. A second type of audience, which is very similar to the characteristics of the actor and, which was very relevant to us, were people who followed Beatriz but had not decided to vote or did not have the habit of voting (...). A third type of audience is made up of those who vote, who have the habit of voting, but traditionally voted for the *Concertación*. It was there where we needed to “scratch” a bit to dispute the second place in decent conditions. And a fourth audience had to do with people who did not adhere to us, did not vote, did not have the habit of voting, nor did they previously know us” (E = 1). Regarding the other candidacies, and according to what is subtracted by their words, only a general detail of who their target audiences were in terms of: age, and economy and ideology. “We imagined a scenario where we could capture the young but mature electorate” (E = 3), “we knew that they were the most popular classes because we saw it empirically” (E = 5) and “we basically did it based on the people who identify themselves with the center-left” (E = 4). This represents a gross mistake for these last three candidacies, as Izurieta et al (2003) mentions, the same message will not mobilize young people, adults and senior citizens.

The conceptualization of the public in such a general way does not benefit, by no method, the strategic planning process of the campaign, since it prevents

establishing an adequate target for the delivery of the message (Izurieta et al, 2003); in addition to making it impossible to analyze hard votes, potential votes, undecided ones and people who will never vote for the candidate (Costa, nd), not to mention the differences in relation to the sociocultural aspects of the target population, in turn allowing better use of resources in case they are scarce, as it was the case of all the candidates studied.

Furthermore, the identification of the different segments that make up the electorate and the classification of the audiences, to which the electoral campaign wishes to convey its message, is essential to determine, under these same concepts, the electorate’s behavior on the voting day.

Something that can be evidenced is that all the candidates seem to have had their main campaign themes well defined, focusing their speech, according to their comments, on the basis of few specific subjects, as Costa (s.f.) recommends. Although they all had similar strong themes (pensions and the economic model), the difference among them was noticeable in the way that each candidate conveyed their ideas through their own narrative.

While one of the candidates proposed “a change of logic, which means to move from a State that cares for the one who falls down, to a State that works so that no one falls” (E = 1), others wanted to position “social issues of rupture character: end AFPs (pension institutions), nationalize water, establish massive greeting campaigns or the campaign “more doctors for Chile” ”(E = 3), “move towards a state AFP ”(E = 4) and “choose your AFP, choose your Isapre (health insurance), choose your hospital ”(E = 5).

Taking into consideration the relevance and similarity of the issues that the candidacies address; disregarding that for their electorate said issues were of crucial nature and that they could be solved through their management as part of the government (Fara et al, 2013), and probably differentiate their position in relation to the left-right binomial. This dimensioning of themes from each campaign illustrates better the association between the content and their candidacy. Aid from research and opinion instruments are crucial to delimit the number of issues that the candidate and electorate deal with, in order to avoid generating confusion in the latter. (Fara et al, 2013).

The Narrative

Based on the fact that the story or narrative must be presented with a script, in which each element has a defined role in the development of the story to be told (Del Rey, 2011), the only campaign that had a narrative that could be considered as consistent was the one developed by the *Frente Amplio*, defining that “the only real possibility of change in Chile was Beatriz and that both Piñera and Guillier meant steps backwards (...) and that is why if a real change in Chile is meant, the only possible vote was Beatriz and the *Frente Amplio*”(E = 1).

The rest of the candidates evidence that they have not understood the narrative structure of the story which they need to tell: composed of heroes, villains, and victims (Fara et al, 2013). According to what was discussed with the representatives of the different investigated campaigns, they seem to contemplate the key elements on which their campaign was based. They had clear opponents and their proposals. However, said campaigns failed in terms of execution and/or planning. Consequently, losing the chance that the voter would empathize with each of the candidates (Richard, 2011). Although change is a transversal element, candidacies' fight flags were very similar from each other; where the AFPs stood out above the rest. The differentiating factor lies in how this whole set of pieces is able to fit together in such a way that it reflects what the campaign aims to, so that the electorate receives it through a coherent narrative, allowing people to evidence the contrast between one candidacy and another (Fara et al, 2013).

Media

The analysis of the role of the media, according to what was proposed by the different actors who participated in the campaigns, is transversal and lapidary in relation to their lack of neutrality. All of them state that the media respond to economic interests and, therefore, behave differently with one or another political actor. Namely, some interviewees mention that the media “respond to economic interests as most of them are related to the strongest candidates” (E = 2), in addition to highlighting that the coverage was “very partial, both in volume and orientation (...) Piñera's ratio was seven to one with respect to rivals”(E = 1). While, in relation to journalists, they receive “a

salary for an economic group that has an economic agenda” (E = 5). What the interviewees argued contravenes one of the guiding principles of the media: their impartiality when reporting. This, prevents the voter from knowing all the candidates and their proposals in the same way. (Curran, 2002).

In relation to what Martínez and Salcedo (2006) stated, and beyond the vision regarding the participation of the media in the electoral process, few of the candidates seem to have been prepared to face the challenge of a good positioning and work in front of the cameras. The candidate who came out successful from her different appearances was Beatriz Sánchez, who gradually improved her figure, even pointing out that “it was a very surprising process, how quickly she managed to acquire skills and develop the ability to perform in the media”(E = 1). For some candidates, this media significance was largely due to the novelty factor; being the new one, which positively influenced people, taking into account the relevance that something new implies for the media (Fara et al, 2013).

Although, Marco Enríquez-Ominami's and Alejandro Guillier's campaigns succeeded to deliver their message through the media, for the former it was a constant struggle to try to avoid questions related to his previous campaign; whereas, the latter lacked greater capacity to convey the main ideas and the most positive aspects of his campaign. This issue denoted a lack of preparation and lack of elements that would have allowed a better understanding of what was articulated (Fara, et al, 2013).

“When you design a campaign, there has to be a whole planning, what is called the media plan” (E = 2), it will define, at higher level, the message that is more convenient to present and where to do it (Martínez and Salcedo, 2006).

Discourse or Discursive Action

Regarding the discursive action, all the interviewees stated that they had methods for their discourse development. Despite this, it should be noted that some were more methodical than others since they presented strategies that ruled their public appearances. Considering that the discourse action was one of the activities that candidates did the most during the electoral journey, it would

have been recommended that all the candidates had had a short script or schema for their different speeches, as suggested (Fara et al, (2013).

Beatriz Sánchez's candidacy "prepared some memorandums for her" (E = 1). Alejandro Guillier's team had "a programmatic team and also had a content team" (E = 4) which communicated with each other. In Marco Enríquez-Ominami's candidacy the aim was "first, to fix the proposals well; then, there was an issue with the measures (...) and at the end, it was very hard work trying to adjust the proposals and measures to the vision that one [the candidacy] has of the society" (E = 5). In relation to Alejandro Navarro, he did not have a proper protocol or structure for his public appearances, "we had meetings with the candidate where we discussed the messages and the strong ideas for the interviews and for the appearances that could be considered as mediatic" (E = 2)

The evaluation of the candidates is quite positive according to the construction and discursive preparation, it is evidenced that they took into account how relevant and important the communication process is with their different audiences; preparing their speeches through a logical process, taking as base their own proposals, in addition to the audience to which they would address (Fara, et al, 2013). It is different to analyze if what was stated orally managed to move, convince and persuade the listeners, this, in this particular study, is quantifiable according to the votes obtained by each candidate.

think it was quite disruptive, but also, soon after, I think, if I'm not mistaken, the following week, the fact that Navarro's nephew throw some more coins to Piñera (...) I think that ended up breaking the entire campaign" (E = 2). This demonstrates that the actions carried out during the campaign must maintain a logic and should not be random events (Fara et al, 2013).

Organization

In relation to the political campaign staff, "it is vital, it is absolutely fundamental. I believe that it is impossible to carry out a campaign without strategic planning and without a political campaign staff" (E = 2). This becomes a similar statement compared to what Martínez and Salcedo stated (2006), when suggesting the need to have a structure that establishes an order, since organizations that do not have this structure tend to go towards entropy. With this analysis, it is highlighted that three of the candidates studied had defined electoral working teams, two of them, from the *Frente Amplio* and *Los Progresistas*. Said teams were quite organized, delimited and defined, as recommended by Fara et al (2013). While *La Fuerza de la Mayoría* coalition was too large to be controlled and organized; "our political campaign team was gigantic" (E = 4). Finally, the *Partido País* candidate, which had no political campaign staff, but only a team that met to discuss the campaign when necessary.

Having an excessively large political campaign staff, such as Alejandro Guillier's, does not allow to keep control of the actions that are being carried out, preventing the correct development of what has been agreed; limiting the ability to attribute responsibilities and faster solutions if necessary; making the decision-making process more inefficient and misusing the available resources (Costa, nd).

Fara et al (2013) strongly states that a campaign without a proper political working staff loses strength, lacks organizational capacity, resolution making becomes impossible as there is no head that is capable of making decisions related to specific issues, or even less, assuming responsibility in complex situations. The organization of an electoral campaign is essential to strategize about everything that happens during the electoral journey, strengthening messages, concepts, strategy and tactics, among others.

Campaign actions

All the candidates carried out the types of actions defined by Fara et al (2013) during the campaign, the high-impact ones being amplified through mass media, which in turn, were followed by intermediate actions to keep them in the limelight. They all carried out traditional actions and meetings with small groups of their electorate.

In relation to their actions, the interviewees declare the following: "everything we did was disruptive, everything was impactful. That was the strategy. It did not turn out well, but that is something else" (E = 5). There was some influence, but in a negative way, without the expected electoral benefits. Therefore, said actions should not be considered as good ones in relation to the profitability of votes (Fara et al, 2013). "Navarro coins being thrown away (...) I

The main strength of the campaign was “the staff members and how some people got involved” (E = 2), as well as “the courage [of the team], I think they were very bold, very cohesive people” (E = 5). Both dimensions are alike with what Costa (s.f.) stated, emphasizing the harmony that the political campaign staff must achieve to better fulfill the determined functions.

Budget

Regarding the budget, there is a unlike situation. Although all the candidates highlight that electoral expenditure is one of the main elements that are necessary to develop a good role (Costa, nd), the following statement diminishes budget preponderance in relation to another element: “I think that a very good strategic planning is much more [valuable] when it comes to campaigning” (E = 2). This idea is in concordance with what was stated by Fara et al (2013). Without this fundamental element, the money is only being spent and not invested, since knowing the expense that will be made is vital to ensure the conduct of the electoral contest.

For a campaign to develop financially in an orderly manner, it is necessary that the monetary resources are defined at the beginning of the process; otherwise, it may cause a confusion in the strategic area. It is not necessary that all resources are available from the very beginning, but it is essential to start with financial cushion that allows grounding bases to get the budgeted resources.

In all the analyzed campaigns, it is seen that the main problem was the little planning around this item (budget), being *Frente Amplio*'s candidacy the one that developed in the best way due to the codes of the academic politics that they possess. As “they do not have the experience of campaigning with as much money as the other sectors have” (E = 1), allowing them to campaign with fewer resources, having less expenses and obtaining better results. Maintaining, at the same time, the appearance of a professional campaign, without appearing amateurish (Fara et al, 2013), demonstrating what was mentioned by Martínez and Salcedo (2006), because; although, the resources are necessary to carry out a proper campaign, these will not directly influence the voter. This is the role of the strategy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis of the Chilean presidential campaign of 2017, it is possible to extract, as a general idea, that the strategic planning process does have a relevant role in obtaining a better electoral result in relation to the objectives set by each candidacy.

This can be exemplified from the case of Beatriz Sánchez' candidacy, which did have a strategic planning process, incorporating an important part of the different elements that make up the theoretical framework developed in this research; thus obtaining superior electoral results compared to the rest of the candidacies that were studied. Regarding the rest of the campaigns that were analyzed, it can be established that the planning process was not the most complete and suitable, with evident results in the polls, as the case of Alejandro Navarro's candidacy: the one that was least organized and obtained the worst results.

The candidacy of *Frente Amplio* (Sánchez) is the conclusive proof that during the first round of the 2017 presidential elections, the methodological work pays off at the ballot box; as they developed each stage of the strategic planning process, preparing studies, analysis, strategies, narrative and speech, among others.

The opposite side of the coin is reflected in the campaign carried out by *Partido País* (Navarro), which neither had a real strategic planning process; a political campaign staff, their own slogan, a media plan nor did they have a financial plan, among others. Navarro's campaign ended up being the candidacy with the lowest electoral results in the history of Chile. This, therefore, contravenes what was proposed by Fara et al (2013) when they mention the relevance of the strategic planning process, since it allows knowing what are the elements that should be implemented and which tactics will be used as the electoral campaign develops.

Campaigns of Marco Enríquez-Ominami and Alejandro Guillier represent a different situation. Although, these candidacies developed some parts of the strategic planning process, they failed to carry out some of the stages defined by Peytibi (2019), Costa (sf) and Fara et al (2013) on the relevance of the use of current studies; clear definition of the segments of voters; specific target of each

candidacy; differentiation through the narrative; clear conceptual axes that allow an effective definition and conception of their ideas; strong ideas and management of the political campaign staff. In the former case (Enríquez-Ominami) it was the strategic process itself, while in the latter (Guillier) they lacked sufficient unity to develop a coherent strategy. It can be inferred that both candidates did not make a correct analysis of what they should have transmitted to the electorate and what the electorate expected from them.

Nowadays, every electoral campaign needs to be methodically constructed; developing the different stages of the strategic planning process determined by Fara et. al (2013), due to the diversification of the audience, the disinterest of people in the political sphere and, above all, the delegitimization of the political class, which means that applicants for public positions must deeper understand how to communicate with their electorate, comprehend and analyze them, but at the same time, analyze themselves and develop their campaign considering elements that are easy to assimilate by citizens.

The development of the strategic planning process is essential for the proper development of a campaign, since this will define a path to be followed; seeking to differentiate from adversaries in relation to the candidacy that is carried out, allowing the proper use of human and financial resources. In the event that there are not so many financial resources available, it is advisable to conduct, at least, a qualitative study prior to the start of the campaign, since this element will allow knowing the reality of the electorate, in addition to providing key concepts for the campaign narrative and discourse of the candidate.

The diagnosis of the context has to be a must in every campaign process as it has no cost; plus it is carried out by the same team, and provides a reference of the setting in which the electoral contest will take place. In this sense, it is essential that the candidates establish real objectives. Not everyone has the possibility of winning, but they can seek other goals, such as registering a party or seeking to project themselves in the political field, for example.

As a recommendation, the concept of the campaign should be able to be synthesized in a word or a phrase, in addition to being known by everyone

who is part of the campaign, from the candidate to the militants. All the actions that are carried out by all the team members must be thought considering the diffusion and visibility of the campaign concept or concepts.

Segmenting the electorate into hard votes, potential votes, undecided voters the ones who would never vote for a specific candidate is also another desirable and expected task. Identifying the electorate in relation to their location, sex, age and socioeconomic background is essential, since the message will not touch a young person in the same way as an older adult.

In order to establish campaign themes, these must be selected based on the interests of the electorate and the characteristics of the candidate, as Costa (s.f.) has already said. It is recommended to have no more than three campaign themes, which should be of exclusive relevance to the public.

The narrative must be built under the central axes that are defined in the early stages of the strategic planning process, the candidate's own differentiating attributes, attributes highlighted by public opinion, objectives, concepts and campaign themes. Furthermore, the narrative must be accompanied by a structure that identifies a hero, a villain or villains, the victims, current problems and future threats and solutions to them.

It is necessary to design a media plan to identify the way to position the candidate in the mass media. This will allow establishing the elements which the candidate's team will communicate with and the tone that their appearances will have, which should always be done considering the audience they will address; and, in relation to the themes and programmatic axes of the campaign, looking for common ground with attendees.

In addition, the political campaign staff must be defined at the beginning of the campaign. It is recommended that the leaders of each team are trained professionals in the area of leadership, since campaign actions are events that must make votes profitable, so the activities the candidate participates of should only be carried out if this brings positive returns in the poll. In addition, it is required to start the campaign with a financial base that allows candidates to perform well during the start of the electoral contest. It is, therefore, convenient to develop a financial plan that allows

candidates to budget the amount of money they will get during the course of the campaign and what actions they will invest the budget in.

As obvious as it may seem, having an consultant or consultant in electoral campaigns is positioned not as a desirable fact, but as an imperative necessity. Having a specialist, capable of making decisions in a pragmatic way, candidates already have half the foundation for obtaining the desired electoral result. Running electoral campaigns with the possibility of winning is increasingly complex, so the vision of an agent who is capable of escaping political animosity and the desire to congratulate himself with the candidate, brings us back to reality in order to develop a successful candidacy; having always in mind all the elements of the strategic planning process.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare not to have any interest conflicts.

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