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# Crisis Management of PT in President Dilma Rousseff's Impeachment Process

Author

**María Santos Alfageme**

Supervisor

**Dr Clare Nimmo**

Universidad Pontificia Comillas (Madrid)

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations in Portuguese

AGU	Advogado-Geral da União
CUT	Central Única dos Trabalhadores
DEM	Democratas (partido político)
FBP	Frente Brasil Popular
FHC	Fernando Henrique Cardoso
LOA	Lei Orçamentária Anual
MPF	Ministério Público Federal
MS	Mato Grosso do Sul
MST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra
MTST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto
OECD	Organização para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento Económico
PMDB	Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro
PR	Relações públicas
PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira
PSOL	Partido Socialismo e Liberdade
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores
PTN	Partido Trabalhista Nacional
PSC	Partido Social Cristão
RJ	Rio de Janeiro
SP	São Paulo
STF	Supremo Tribunal Federal
UM	Organização das Nações Unidas
USP	Universidade de São Paulo
TCU	Tribunal de Contas da União

## List of acronyms and abbreviations in English

AGU	Attorney General of the Union
CUT	Unified Workers' Central
DEM	Democrats (Political Party)
FBP	Popular Front Brazil
FHC	Fernando Henrique Cardoso
LOA	Annual Budgetary Law
MPF	Public Federal Ministry
MS	Mato Grosso do Sul
MST	Landless Workers' Movement
MTST	Homeless Workers' Movement
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PMDB	Brazilian Democratic Movement Party
PR	Public relations
PSDB	Brazilian Social Democracy Party
PSOL	Socialism and Liberty Party
PT	Workers Party
PTN	National Labour Party
PSC	Social Christian Party
RJ	Rio de Janeiro
SP	São Paulo
STF	Supreme Federal Court
UN	United Nations
USP	University of São Paulo
TCU	Federal Court of Accounts

## 1. Introduction

At the beginning of the 1980s, the Brazilian military dictatorship was experiencing several changes. In the political field, a strike cycle materialised in two big projects — first, the creation of the trades union Unified Workers' Central (known in Portuguese as CUT), which contributed to a more developed and committed organisation of workers, and second, the foundation of the Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, henceforth PT) (Schwarcz & Starling, 2015).

PT emerged as a forceful agent for change for people living in urban and rural areas, left-wing activists, intellectuals and artists. Advocating democratic socialism, PT had a key role in the social mobilisation known as *Diretas Já*<sup>1</sup>, demanding direct presidential elections in Brazil. When the military dictatorship came to an end, PT, along with other left-wing parties, played an important part in the Federal Constitution, signed in 1988. PT's participation in the writing of the Constitution drove the country towards progress in terms of social rights and the democratisation of several public policies (Notícias, 2016).

PT gained power for the first time in 2003, when Lula was elected President of Republic. PT has run the Brazilian government since then — while Lula stayed for two terms, in October 2014 Dilma Rouseff began her second term of presidency. Apart from other achievements, the number of poverty-stricken people in Brazil has diminished by 33.6 % during PT's governments, thanks to conditional cash transfer programmes such as *Minha Casa Minha Vida* and *Bolsa Família*<sup>2</sup> (Ricupero, 2011).

After 13 years running office, several events have had a negative impact on PT's popularity. Together with other parties, several PT members are considered to be involved in Lava Jato Scandal, the biggest corruption case in Brazilian history. Coupled with an economic crisis and social dissatisfaction towards the party, PT has been going through a party crisis since then. However, the situation took a turn for the worse on 2 December 2015, when President of the Chamber of Deputies Eduardo Cunha accepted the beginning of President Dilma Rouseff's impeachment process. Given that proceedings are taking a long time, the political situation in Brazil has been growing tenser and, in parallel, the media has become increasingly difficult to understand. This

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<sup>1</sup> 'Direct (elections) now' in Portuguese.

<sup>2</sup> Literally 'My house, my life' and 'Family Scholarship'.

leads to the question: What is PT doing to manage this crisis and the way it is portrayed in the media?

The aim of this dissertation is to assess PT's crisis management in President Dilma Rouseff's impeachment process. After explaining the aims and objectives of the dissertation (Chapter 2), a background to the case study (Chapter 3) will lead to the theoretical framework (Chapter 4) sustaining the analysis. Apart from deciding on a suitable model of crisis management, this includes an examination of institutional communication and analysis of the political discourse. Part of the Brazilian legal framework regarding the topic will also be developed. Then, the hypothesis (Chapter 5) and Methodology (Chapter 6) will contribute to the understanding of the subject of this dissertation. Then, Findings and Discussion (Chapter 7) will be the core of the study. Due to the complexity of the impeachment process, every phase will be presented separately, following a chronological order. Apart from a brief introduction to the supposed origin of the PT crisis, analysis be divided into five different steps — first, an examination of the impeachment request will be carried out; second, authorisation of the impeachment process, which took place in December 2015; third, the creation of a Congressional Commission in March 2016; fourth, the majority of pro-impeachment votes at the Congressional Commission at the beginning of April 2016; and fifth, the voting at the Chamber of Deputies. This analysis will finish by providing four possible hypotheses of the near future events, leading to the final conclusions (Chapter 8) of this dissertation.



## 2. Aims and objectives

As previously stated, there is a lack of literature specifically regarding governmental or institutional crisis management. Many crisis management studies focus on how governments should react to natural disasters<sup>3</sup> and hence have very limited use in the field chosen in this dissertation. Instead, crisis management research drawn from business or public relations will be applied, as it is much more relevant to the subject under discussion.

Moreover, literature regarding political communication concentrates on communication during electoral campaigns, institutional communication being the least studied area within the field (Canel, 2008). Political discourses, which are part of the institutional communication techniques, are usually considered as part of the several institutional communication strategies.

In turn, given that the content of this dissertation is highly topical, there is no academic-based literature on the subject yet. However, there is small body of research on crises of political communication flow in previous years<sup>4</sup>, which could be considered the origin of Brazil's current political crisis. Moreover, the institutional communication available is in Portuguese, as well as most of the in-depth analysis and articles regarding the impeachment process, and there is little such research available in English.

For those reasons, this dissertation has been developed to supply an academic base to the crisis management of PT in the impeachment process of President Dilma Rouseff. Thus, this dissertation is original from an academic point of view for the four following reasons:

- 1) Application of a theory of crisis management in politics.
- 2) Extension of studies regarding institutional communication, with a special focus on analyses of political discourse.

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<sup>3</sup> Example: *OECD Risk Management: Strategic Crisis Management*, OECD (2013). In spite of having some ideas (i.e. international cooperation) that could be applicable within the context of crisis management of this dissertation, they will not be considered.

<sup>4</sup> *As rupturas nos fluxos de comunicação política entre a opinião pública e as instâncias políticas*, Trein, S.R. (2013) is an example of this.

3) First academic-based analysis of an existing crisis in the Workers' Party, in power at the Brazilian government since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

4) Internationalisation of a national crisis through translation.

First, a theory of crisis management, generally applied in the business and PR field, will be used to analysis a governmental response to a crisis. This will be carried out by fitting chronologically some of the most relevant strategies of PT within the impeachment proceedings.

Second, this dissertation develops the impeachment process focusing on institutional communication, consequently extending literature in the field. Analysis of political discourse lies at the centre of institutional communication discussion here. Specifically, this dissertation will examine in detail two speeches given by Rouseff, one in 2 December 2015 and another in 15 April 2016, as well as one of PT's national president Rui Falcão's speeches in March 2016.

Third, this dissertation is original in content for being the first academic-based analysis of an existing crisis affecting the PT. Ongoing consultation with Brazilian news, as well as public online interviews to Brazilian academics, has been crucial in the building of this study.

Fourth, the interest of this dissertation for a Degree in Translation and Interpreting lies in the international dimension it involves. Translation has been key in the development of this dissertation, due to the importance given to institutional communication and specific speeches of President Dilma Rouseff. Awareness of cultural differences between a Brazilian reader and an English-speaker has also been necessary in the writing process. This justifies the inclusion of a brief introduction to Brazilian legal framework and state organisation too.

### **3. Background to the study case**

This dissertation is based on literature regarding crisis management, institutional communication and analyses of political discourse. Therefore, a brief general overview of some concepts to be borne in mind throughout the study will be considered. To portray the issue, the concept of 'crisis management', as well as several models of crisis management communication, will now be presented. An introduction to institutional communication and analysis of political discourse, focusing on populist discourse, will also be provided. Then, the chosen theory will be further developed in chapter 4.

Having considered the complexity of the subject, the Brazilian political system will be briefly considered too, explaining the division of powers as illustrated in its Federal Constitution.

#### **3.1. Crisis management communication: general overview**

##### **3.1.1. Analysing the concept of crisis**

In 1988, Pauchant and Mitroff defined the term 'crisis' as "a disruption that physically affects the system as a whole and threatens its basic assumptions, its subjective sense of self, and its existential core" (Therrien, 2012). A few years later, Lesly developed such definition, adding "a state that will determine all future events affecting a certain person or an organisation. It is a key issue that produces a dramatic change"(Saura, 2005). Thus, Lesly innovates by talking about issues. Finally, Bland gives a more complete definition, linking the crisis to negative media coverage. According to Bland, media coverage can worsen a crisis, adding that sometimes media coverage is not proportionate to the relevance of the crisis (Saura, 2005). All three definitions have been considered within the framework of this dissertation.

##### **3.1.2. General models of crisis management in communication (Saura, 2005)**

Several models of crisis management in communication have been studied<sup>5</sup>. Examples of this are:

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<sup>5</sup> Apart from the ones that have been summarised, other models of crisis management that have been consulted are: Marra's Public Relations Crisis Management, González-Herrero Evitable and Non-Evitable Crisis, etc. (Saura, 2005).

For instance, *Grunig's 4 Models of Public Relations* correspond to the development of public relations throughout the last decades. These four models are: press agent, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical.

In turn, *Pauchant and Mitroff Onion Model* is interesting because it argues that individuals that are working in the firm or institution that is experiencing a crisis influence both the crisis perception and the efforts regarding crisis management. There are therefore some firms or institutions trend towards crisis and some others who do not. Attitude is said to take an important role regarding this model.

Another example of a model of crisis management is the *Hurd Layered Model*, which is more focused in communication during a crisis rather than in crisis management itself. Hurd develops a theory based on seven layers: connectivity, data correction, filtering information, media election, organisational memory, values and group processing.

*Heath's 5 Rs Model* will be the model applied in this dissertation. Given its suitability to the topic, Heath's 5 Rs model will be developed in chapter 4.1. *Crisis management: Heath's 4 Rs model of crisis management in communication.*

### **3.2. Political Communication**

According to Pippa Norris, “political communications is an interactive process concerning the transmission of information among politicians, the news media and the public.” (Norris, 2004). However, as the literature available on political communication tends to concentrate on election campaigns and other fields that are not relevant here, the focus will be on institutional communication, especially given the importance accorded to political discourses in the analysis section.

#### **3.2.1. Institutional Communication**

Institutional communication can be defined as the “set of persuasive-focused rules (principles) and procedures (specific applications) in communication performed by institutions to influence in their addressees in the attempt of attaining their permanent adherence to get to exercise and distribute power, as well as to exercise the public good” (Canel, 2008). As explained before, institutional communication is studied considerably less than political communication in reference to election campaigns. Institutional communication highlights the efficiency of the relationship between politics and

communications, differing from other political communication techniques in the following respects:

- 1) *Subject*: Not only institutions hold power, but also people. For instance, the President of the country, a minister, a major, and so on.
- 2) *Goal*: Its purpose consists on executing and distributing power, as well as on exercising the public good. The latter means the party in government is obliged to know about the public political atmosphere, whereas the former entails the necessity to communicate publicly negotiations taking place within the institution.
- 3) *Time*: Instead of being a timely implementation, institutional communication is active throughout a term in office.

Therefore, this dissertation will further analyse (*Chapter 4.2.1. Strategies and Techniques in Institutional Communication*) the possible strategies and techniques that an institution (in this case, the Brazilian government) can adopt in order to communicate.

### **3.2.2. Analysis of Political Discourse**

There is a very close link between discourse, ideology and politics, since politics are both discursive and ideological. As Teun Van Dijk points out, political ideologies are typically expressed through political discourses, emphasising *our* qualities and *their* defects, as well as reducing *our* defects and *their* qualities. Furthermore, in order to understand any political discourse analysis must go beyond a study of the structure of the discourse itself. The political context (the so-called 'mental model of a political situation') remains as crucial as the linguistic analysis of the political discourse (Dijk, 2005).

Given that the speeches analysed in this dissertation are from two members of PT who can arguably be considered as populist<sup>6</sup>, the theoretical framework concerning the analysis of political discourse will focus on Patrick Charadeau's (2009, 2011) studies regarding the characteristics of a populist political discourse.

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<sup>6</sup> Characteristics of a populist leader will be developed in Chapter 4.

### 3.3. The Brazilian political system

The Federal Constitution was promulgated in 5 October 1988. It is the supreme law of the Brazilian system and is considered to be the peak of the process of the country's redemocratisation after decades under a dictatorial system (Brasil, 2009).

Before considering the legal framework on the impeachment proceedings against President Dilma (*Chapter 4.3.*), having a look at the organisation of the Brazilian state will help in the understanding of the current political situation. As explained in the Constitution (Table 1), the Legislative, Executive and Judicial power are independent and harmonious between each other (Art.2). The Legislative power is exercised by the National Congress, which is divided into two different sections — Chamber of Deputies and Federal Senate (Art. 44). The former is composed of people's representatives (Art. 45), whereas the latter is composed of State and Federal District representatives (Art. 46). If not otherwise provided, decisions taken at the National Congress will pass on a majority of votes, being necessary all members to be present in every voting.

**Table 1: The Brazilian Constitution: Organisation of the Brazilian State**

*Art. 2º São Poderes da União, independentes e harmônicos entre si, o Legislativo, o Executivo e o Judiciário.*

*TÍTULO IV  
DA ORGANIZAÇÃO DOS PODERES  
CAPÍTULO I  
DO PODER LEGISLATIVO  
SEÇÃO I  
DO CONGRESSO NACIONAL*

*Art. 44. O Poder Legislativo é exercido pelo Congresso Nacional, que se compõe da Câmara dos Deputados e do Senado Federal.*

*Parágrafo único. Cada legislatura terá a duração de quatro anos.*

*Art. 45. A Câmara dos Deputados compõe-se de representantes do povo, eleitos, pelo sistema proporcional, em cada Estado, em cada Território e no Distrito Federal.*

*§ 1º O número total de Deputados, bem como a representação por Estado e pelo Distrito Federal, será estabelecido por lei complementar, proporcionalmente à população, procedendo-se aos ajustes necessários, no ano anterior às eleições, para que nenhuma daquelas unidades da Federação tenha menos de oito ou mais de setenta Deputados.*

*Art. 46. O Senado Federal compõe-se de representantes dos Estados e do Distrito Federal, eleitos segundo o princípio majoritário.*

*§ 1º Cada Estado e o Distrito Federal elegerão três Senadores, com mandato de oito anos.*

*Art. 47. Salvo disposição constitucional em contrário, as deliberações de cada Casa e de suas Comissões serão tomadas por maioria dos votos, presente a maioria absoluta de seus membros.*

**Source:** [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/Constituicao/Constituicao.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Constituicao/Constituicao.htm)

## 4. Theoretical framework

Having contextualised the different areas of study used, the theoretical base for this dissertation will now be presented.

First, Heath's 5 Rs Model of crisis management in communication will be developed. Second, strategies and techniques within the field of institutional communication will also be analysed. Third, Charadeau's characteristics of the populist political discourse will be presented. As for the introduction on the Brazilian legal system, there will be a brief explanation of the Brazilian legal framework on the impeachment, mainly the Federal Constitution and Law 1.079/1950.

### 4.1. Crisis management: Heath's 5 Rs model of crisis management in communication

Heath's model will be used as the theoretical framework in the analysis of PT's crisis management in communication in President Dilma's impeachment process, given that it focuses both on action after a crisis and being prepared before a crisis takes place. Therefore, Heath's model is more useful than the other models of crisis management developed in the former chapter (3.1.2. *General models of crisis management in communication*).

**Figure 1: Heath's 4 Rs model of crisis management in communication** (Saura, 2005)



**Source:** Diagram by author.

a) **Reduction:** After a crisis, the first step is evaluating the potential quantitative consequences and risks of the crisis. It is important to do so in order to coordinate the next steps efficiently.

b) **Readiness**: The second step includes crisis management training, both internal (in the case of the dissertation, in PT) and external (especially to citizens, but also to international media since it has an effect on the situation of the country mostly economically).

c) **Response**: Creating a plan for crisis management, analysing the impact of the crisis and auditing the crisis are the three most relevant efforts to do on an efficient response.

d) **Recovery**: In the fourth step, coordinated work would consequently activate recovery mechanisms, improving the situation of crisis.

Finally, if these four steps are performed correctly they will result in a fifth R- '**Resilience**', which is considered to be essential to solve a political crisis entirely.

## **4.2. Political communication**

As stated previously, within the broader field of political communication, this dissertation will focus on institutional communication and within this specific field of institutional communication, it will especially take into consideration the various different techniques and strategies that an institution such as the government of a country can implement. Communication on social media will be mentioned, yet, as explained in *Chapter 6. Methodology*, there will no specific theoretical framework will be applied in this respect.

### **4.2.1. Strategies and Techniques in Institutional Communication**

According to Canel's explanations on Graber's classification, strategies and techniques in institutional communication can be classified into four different types. Interestingly, both academics consider these strategies as part of institutional communication at any moment, not specifically in times of a crisis. The strategies and techniques identified are as follows (Canel, 2008):

#### **1) Transfer of information**

First, any news that an institution is aiming to make public should meet the 'newsworthiness' criteria. Second, the institution must have a stable or reliable



relationship with mass media, given that any transfer of information implies having to surrender some sovereignty over the news itself.

### ***2) Hiding information***

There is always some information that an institution would not be willing to give, fearing of potential harmful effects to the country or the institution. In this regard, some techniques can be applied: first, counteracting negative information that may unsettle the institution; giving some off-the-record sessions; softening the language in public statements to wilfully create confusion in the media or producing unnoticed lies. In a democratic system, the latter is often made by misinforming press officers, so that the information produced by the media does not correspond to reality.

### ***3) Staging: event organisation***

The organisation of events for an institution to communicate must at least meet these two requirements: first, events must be regular; second, there must be a reason for convening them. Calling the press for good news is a positive strategy too. Apart from press conferences, press briefings, special events and speeches are also considered under this subsection, given that the institution pursues the same goal through all of them — drawing the attention of mass media so that the news they want to announce actually becomes news.

### ***4) Persuasive communication***

Finally, institutions can send messages full of psychological appeal, aiming to convince addressees. Apart from classic methods such as communication campaigns or advertising placements, online institutional communication can be considered part of this subsection.

Given the importance of each strategy for institutional communication at any time, during a period of crisis communication through these techniques will arguably have to be reinforced. This dissertation will provide at least one example of the aforementioned techniques for each step outlined.

#### 4.2.2. Characteristics of the populist political discourse: Patrick Charadeau

It is not an easy task to define the term 'populist'. It has often been used by the either right-wing and left-wing parties in order to stigmatise the opposition party, as well as a mechanism of self-defence. In spite of the attempts regarding the theorisation of the concept since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the expression 'populist regime' has mostly frequently been used to describe Latin American political regimes that have emerged since the 1950s (Charadeau, 2009).

Cultural perception plays a key role in the configuration of characteristics of populism. That is why populism is perceived differently in every country. In Latin America, for instance, the populist discourse tends to be proletarian, claiming to be left-wing. And, more specifically, PT's populism<sup>7</sup> is arguably flexible, given that it aims to strike a balance between the investment on social policies and the development of a market economy (Charadeau, 2009).

In general terms, characteristics of a populist political discourse are:

1) Having a *strong dissatisfied population*, a populist will use the economic situation and the moral decline of society as an argument to convince the working classes. Victimisation is also a typical way to create anxiety amongst citizens.

2) A populist leader always speaks about the *source of evil*. It is often identified vaguely, given that the purpose is to suggest that someone is working on a plot or a conspiracy against them. However, sometimes the source of evil focuses on the opposition parties.

3) A populist discourse *emphasizes values in general*, drawing on historical, cultural characteristics either innate in the country or some important events that have steered the nation through progress and development —for instance, attaining democracy. More importantly, populists pretend giving decision power to their people. Generally, measures proposed to finish with the crisis tend to be vague.

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<sup>7</sup> It is important to note that Charadeau's study does not refer to PT, rather to former Brazilian President Luíz Inácio Lula da Silva. Given that the article was published in 2009, Dilma Rouseff's first term had not begun. However, this dissertation considers that such statement regarding Lula's populism can also be applied to Dilma's term in office.

4) Fourth, the *populist politician* differs from a normal politician in terms of the excesses reached when building their own image, when defending some values and when addressing their people. A populist politician tends to argue that they have three main qualities: they are the people's representative; they are authentic and reliable, often saying not have anything to hide from; they are powerful, and state that their power is not to facilitate personal ambition but rather further the people's interest.

Finally, populist language is characterised by the five following items:

**Table 2: Characteristics of the populist language (Charadeau, 2009)**

1	It tends to be simple and comprehensible.
2	Excessive nominalisations and use of impersonal verbal forms.
3	Use of a familiar, sometimes vulgar jargon, even insulting to some of their opponents.
4	Arguments often simplify the cause-and-effect relationship and merge all the causes of a certain issue without considering a hierarchy of importance of facts.
5	Use of the pronoun 'us' to refer to the individual leader, party, supporters and people, and 'I' to reaffirm their role as a powerful, authentic and important leader.

**Source:** Table by author.

### 4.3. The Brazilian Legal Framework concerning the President's Impeachment

The Brazilian National Congress is formed by the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. According to the Brazilian Federal Constitution, it is an exclusive right of the Chamber of Deputies to authorise the opening of any process against the President of the Republic (Art. 51). It is an exclusive right of the Senate to judge the President of the Republic for any committed crimes of responsibility (Art. 52), which are disaggregated in Art. 85: infringing upon the Constitution, and, especially, upon the administration probity, the budget law and law enforcement and judicial decisions, among others<sup>8</sup>.

Moreover, Law 1.079/1950 provides for a specific chapter on each kind of crime of responsibility. For instance, 'Crimes against Budget Law', 'Crimes against the Administration Probity' and 'Crimes against Custody and Legal Use of Public Money', which are part of the legal base of the impeachment request, are provided on this law (Deputados, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Out of the seven specific cases given at the Constitution, the given examples have been chosen on legal grounds, since the impeachment request that was accepted in December 2015 condemns Dilma Rouseff on these three bases.

## 5. Hypothesis

The general objective of this dissertation is assessing the crisis management of PT in President Dilma Rouseff's impeachment process. In order to do that, the analysis will be developed chronologically to help in the understanding of the process and the bearing in mind the specific context of any specific response. The study combines the application of Heath's 5 Rs Model of Crisis Management with an evaluation of the institutional communication techniques and strategies used throughout the impeachment process, as well as placing emphasis on the political discourse through the analysis of three different speeches.

In order to reach such general objective, four specific objectives are pursued:

1) Examining if there is a change in the use of terms in PT responses throughout the crisis, especially through the analysis of political discourse.

2) The extent to which PT's role in terms of both institutional and party communication was successful or made a change in the impeachment process results.

3) The importance of the so-called external factor (Brazilian citizens' mobilisation on the one hand and international awareness on the other hand) in the configuration of the impeachment process.

4) Analysing the legal basis of the impeachment request, as well as the other legal mechanisms concerning every step of the process.

This dissertation aims to answer the following question:

- How has PT attempted to manage President Dima Rouseff's impeachment process at all stages?

## **6. Methodology**

An explanation of the methodology employed in this dissertation is presented in this chapter, as for data gathering techniques and analysis techniques.

### **6.1. Data gathering techniques**

The data gathering techniques for this dissertation are mainly based on news concerning the beginning of PT crisis in the Austral winter of 2015 and throughout the impeachment proceedings, that is, from the beginning of December 2015 until April 2016. PT's Communication Agency, the official government webpage as well as other PT-friendly organisations have been a base to gather most of the crisis-management activities and speeches. Moreover, most data on PT's history and Brazil's facts and figures throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century is based on specialised literature. Finally, some online interviews to Political Science and Law academics have been consulted to create the hypotheses concerning the future both of the party and the Brazilian government.

Despite the dearth of literature on the topic, current news has been sustained by the legal framework regarding the crime of responsibility and the impeachment process in the Brazilian legal system. Interviews to the lawyers who sent the impeachment request to the Chamber of Deputies have also been consulted. As for literature regarding the academic-based analysis, each of the sample steps taken throughout the impeachment process will be fitted in Heath's 5 Rs Model of Crisis Management. In the case of institutional communication, María José Canel's research will be applied, keeping an eye on specific communication strategies and techniques of a government, either during times of crisis or not. Although the importance of public opinion and new ways of communication is commented throughout the analysis, this dissertation will consider both as part of today's government strategies of communication, falling the studies of both fields outside its objectives. Finally, Teun A. Van Dijk's considerations on the analysis of political discourse have completed and led to Patrick Charadeau's studies on analysis of populist discourse.

All data gathering techniques are consistent with the purpose of this dissertation — examining the crisis management of PT in President Dilma Rouseff's impeachment process.

## **6.2. Analysis techniques: content analysis**

This dissertation is innovative in its content, since there is currently no academic literature concerning crisis management of PT within the process of President Dilma's impeachment. However, this dissertation is not only original in content, but also in the applied methodology techniques.

The technique to chose the sample of activities, speeches and public declarations here considered has followed the advice given at W. Timothy Coombs's book *Applied Crisis Communication and Crisis Management: Cases and Exercises*, beeing the following: After a careful read and research, the selected data has been identified as central to the undertanding of the crisis and the governemtn's and party's crisis management. The given theoretical framework regarding institutional communication, analysis of the populist speech and crisis management has been continously put into practice throughout the analysis (Coombs, 2014).

In order to remain as neutral as possible, the author of this dissertation has strategically chosen not to analyse speeches given by any PT member under investigation in the Lava Jato scandal, in spite of the acknowledged importance of other PT members. However, former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's actions towards the last proceedings (March and April 2016), given his role in PT and in Brazilian politics.

Finally, it is worth noting the importance of having two different lists of abbreviations (in Portuguese and English respectively). This lies in the use of those abbreviations throughout the dissertation. When they were terminology in Portuguese about Brazilian political parties, charges or trading unions, for instance, abbreviations were kept in the original language, yet they were later explained in order to be incorporated naturally in the dissertation. In turn, when abbreviations were tecnicisms on the field of communication or referred to international organisations, they were kept in English and only translated into Portuguese while incorporating them into the list before the dissertation.

## 7. Findings and discussion

The analysis will be organised chronologically, as followed —first, a brief introduction on the beginning of the party's crisis will be performed. Second, the study of impeachment process would be divided into five subsections, according to the five most relevant steps in PT's crisis management process. Step 1 will be based on analysis of the impeachment request and a discussion concerning its legal grounds. Step 2 will focus on the acceptance of the impeachment request at the Chamber of Deputies and President Dilma's initial response, her speech serving as the core of the analysis. Step 3 will address the issue of PT's actions regarding crisis management from the opening of the process until the setting up of a Congressional Commission. Given that this process was the lengthiest, more time will be spent on it, subdividing the analysis into institutional communication and mobilisation of external actors. The change in the political discourse will be manifested through the example of PT's National President Rui Falcão's speech and President Dilma's interview for Spanish Journal *El País*. Step 4 will develop PT's reaction after Congressional Commission backs and gives continuity to the impeachment proceedings. President Dilma's speech, published two days before the voting at the Chamber of Deputies, will be focused on here. Step 5 will show PT's initial reactions after the impeachment process was passed by the Chamber of Deputies and was sent to the Senate. Finally, step 6 will explain what is expected to happen within the next months. Based on the legal framework and the views of well-known political scientists, *Figure 3: Impeachment Process* will outline four hypotheses as to the end of the impeachment proceedings. This chapter will then conclude with an overview of PT's crisis management throughout the process.

### 7.1. Beginning of PT crisis

In 2010, Dilma Rouseff succeeded Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, first PT President in history, in the presidency of Brazil. President Dilma won national elections in the second round by 56% of votes in favour, with PSDB member José Serra her opponent (Gallego-Díaz & Arias, 2010). During her first term, President Dilma enjoyed approval ratings among the population of around 80% (BBC News, 2016). After her first term, however, her unpopularity increased, yet Dilma Rouseff ran for the 2014 elections and won again, with over 51% of the vote in the second round (BBC News, 2014).

One of the reasons for President Dilma's increasing unpopularity was the beginning of a party crisis. Apart from other reasons, controversies regarding government investment in international events taking place in Brazil, such as the World Cup or the Olympic Games, have been a relevant cause (BBC News, 2016). Another factor that contributed to the beginning of PT crisis was corruption, especially the involvement of some PT members in the Lava Jato Scandal<sup>9</sup>. The party crisis has escalated since then, combining several issues leading to current political tensions.

It is important to note that Rouseff has not been investigated in any of Lava Jato Scandal phases since there has not been any evidence against her thus far. Legally speaking the Lava Jato scandal is not related to the impeachment process. However, given the importance of this within PT's current crisis, this dissertation includes a table at the end (see 10. Appendices: Table 5) with the names of incriminated PT members, their specific job function and their type of involvement within the case.

## **7.2. Dilma's impeachment process**

Rouseff's government saw its popularity decreasing continuously. Having to deal with several simultaneous crises, PT has tried to survive in the increasingly tense political situation. However, it is worth noting that, since 2011, President Dilma has been object of 48 impeachment requests, dating 34 of them from 2015 (Moraes, 2016). President of Chamber of Deputies Eduardo Cunha claims 39 of them have been rejected (Braziliense, 2016), 8 of them are being analysed at the moment and one of them meant the beginning of current Dilma's impeachment process.

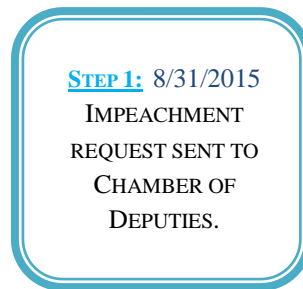
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<sup>9</sup> Lava Jato Scandal is the largest corruption and money laundering investigation that Brazil has ever had. Even though the investigation was opened in March 2014, the first cases only involved the business community. It was only in March 2015 when the Prosecutor General of Brazil sent to the Supreme Federal Court 28 requests for the opening of criminal investigations concerning 55 people, all of them related to political parties responsible for the appointment of high offices at Petrobras. PT was one of the parties involved. Further information is available at <http://lavajato.mpf.mp.br/entenda-o-caso>.



### 7.2.1. Step 1: Impeachment request

**Figure 2: Understanding the Impeachment Process I**



**Source:** Diagram by author.

According to Brazilian law, any citizen can take part in the political process by sending an impeachment request to the Chamber of Deputies when a President, a Vice-President, a Minister of State or a STF Minister (Callado & Paiva, 2016) fail to fulfill any promises before made (TV Cultura, 2013).

Helio Pereira Bicudo<sup>10</sup> and Joanaina Conceição Pascoal<sup>11</sup> are the authors of the only impeachment request that has been approved at Brazilian Chamber of Deputies so far (Capelo, 2015).

In the document that was presented at the Chamber, signed in 31 August 2015, Bicudo and Pascoal argue that Brazil is going through a moral crisis. Among other accusations, both lawyers try to associate Dilma Rouseff to the Lava Jato Scandal, as well as to the influence peddling investigation against Lula da Silva (Bicudo & Pascoal, 2015). However, the alleged reason why Cunha accepted the document was that their impeachment request accused President Dilma Rouseff of breaking fiscal laws by window dressing government accounts (Watts, 2015). The Federal Court of Accounts, hereinafter TCU, had stated flagrant violations of the Law of Fiscal Responsibility (Bicudo & Pascoal, 2015) during 2014. As Pascoal explains, social programmes were paid by public banks, as National Treasury borrowed money from them. According to Pascoal, the law was breached twice, since not only government policies cannot be paid for with borrowed money, but also the National Treasury is prohibited from borrowing money from any bank, either public or private. Rouseff had assumed then responsibility for this matter, having committing a crime of responsibility (Cultura, 2015).

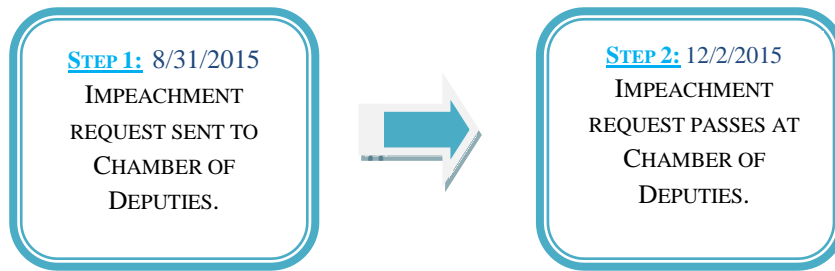
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<sup>10</sup> Hélio Pereira Bicudo is Brazilian lawyer and one of the founders of PT.

<sup>11</sup> Janaina Conceição Pascoal has a PhD in Brazilian Criminal Law and is a professor at USP.

### 7.2.2. Step 2: Approval of impeachment request

**Figure 3: Understanding the Impeachment Process II**



**Source:** Diagram by author.

In 3 November 2015, President of the Chamber of Deputies Eduardo Cunha (PMDB-RJ) had been accused at Chamber's Ethical Council for parliamentary honour inconformity (in Portuguese, "quebra de decoro parlamentar"), allegedly owning bank accounts in Switzerland, apart from being investigated at the Lava Jato Scandal (País, 2015). A month later, in 2 December 2015, Eduardo Cunha announced the approval of Bicudo and Paschoal's impeachment petition, opening a process against Dilma Rouseff.

The context of the beginning of the impeachment proceedings is highly controversial, given that it has been argued that Cunha deliberately activated legal mechanisms against Rouseff so that his process would slow down.

PT's reaction was swift. After having heard the news, Rouseff's first response was to defend herself from accusations at a press conference at Palácio do Planalto. Pro-government demonstrations organised by trade union Unified Workers' Central, hereinafter CUT, also contributed to PT's external crisis management.

**Table 3: PT's most significant responses to the opening of impeachment process**

EVENT	DATE	HOW WAS IT MANAGED?
Opening of impeachment process	2 December 2015	Rouseff gives conference at Palácio do Planalto.
	3-4 December 2015	Organised demonstrations.
	3 December	9 governors publish letter condemning the impeachment process.

**Source:** Table by author based on PT's institutional communication on 2-4 December 2015.

***a) Rouseff's first speech (10. Appendices 1 and 2)***

President Dilma begins her speech addressing “some words of clarification to all Brazilians”. Indeed, she exposes the matter clearly, beginning with the explanation of part of the above analysed context, which contributes to the understanding of the political process. She then goes to defend herself, considering the “grounds on which such request are based are both inconsistent and unfounded”. Finally, she asserts that she feels “completely calm” about the rejection of the impeachment request.

Regarding style, several aspects can be observed: first, the characteristic PT, populist, left-wing use of the language; second, the insistent use of the first person singular; and third, the abundance of terms regarding the topic, which arguably makes it difficult for citizens not familiar with politics to understand the meaning of the speech.

Although this discourse is the least populist out of the three that are analysed in this dissertation, some typically populist PT language can be appreciated in the inclusion of the public on statements such as “We cannot let indefensible interests or influences undermine the democracy or the stability of our country” or “We must be calm and trust in our institutions and the democratic State based on the rule of law”. Moreover, she uses the forms “I” “me” and “myself” several times, given that the final goal of the speech is to argue she has not committed any crime of responsibility or any illegal act. Interestingly, Rouseff uses political terminology, apparently forgetting her public. As argued by Patrick Charadeau (2009), the continuous use of political terms is not typical of a populist Latin American leader, whose supporters among the population come often from lower classes and lack knowledge of how the state functions.

Finally, Dilma's speech poses some difficulties when it comes to translating it into English. First, in the original speech Dilma addresses all “Brazilian women and men” instead of “all Brazilians”. Appealing to the population through marking a differentiation between women and men is a characteristic not only of the party's jargon, but of left-wing parties in Portuguese and Spanish-speaking countries. However, this gender distinction does not exist in English so it is not point that an English-speaking politician can make in the same way. Second, as developed in *Chapter 4: Theoretical framework, 4.3.1. Brazilian Legal Framework*, the use of the term ‘impeachment’ in the original speech merits comment. In the US, ‘impeachment’

is ‘a proceeding brought against a federal government official’<sup>12</sup>. While drafting the law, Brazilian lawmakers took the American concept and interestingly elected to borrow the term in English (‘Lei do impeachment’), instead creating a concept in Portuguese.

In conclusion, President Dilma’s speech is a good example of a crisis management strategy, inasmuch as it is a timely, public and clear response based on self defence and an explanation of the issue to the Brazilian population in general.

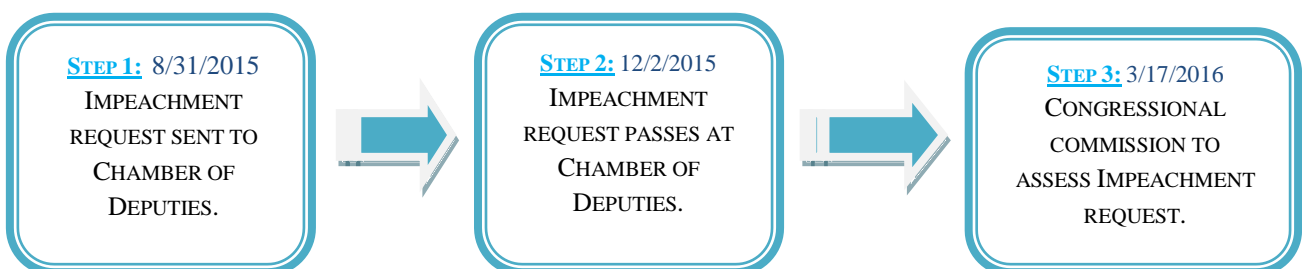
### *b) Organised Demonstrations and Public Statements*

Mobilisations have played a crucial role in the party’s crisis management since the very beginning of the impeachment process. The first social movement took place in Brasilia and was organised by CUT, whose president, Wagner Freitas, declared that there no legal motivations for an impeachment since it was “an aggression against democracy”. CUT announced a meeting with other social organizations in order to set an agenda of public pro-government demonstrations. Others, such as João Paulo Rodrigues, said that it was not an impeachment process but rather a “coup d’état” (Roxo, 2015).

In turn, PT governors, as well as other 6 governors from the Northeastern region, showed their disappointment and rejection regarding the impeachment process against Rouseff. They all published a letter in which they pointed out that accepting the opening of an impeachment process “listens to personal reasons” and “means throwing Brazil into riots derived from an undesired institutional retreat” (Munari, 2015).

### 7.2.3. Step 3: Congressional Commission formed

**Figure 4: Understanding the Impeachment Process III**



**Source:** Diagram by author.

<sup>12</sup> Source: <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/impeachment>

After the Chamber of Deputies approved the impeachment request, it was for them to form a congressional commission, whose aim was to vote on the continuity of the impeachment process. Among 65 members of the commission, PT and PMDB had the least number of representatives— only 8. PSDB, the opposition party, had 6 participators (UOL, 2016).

During this period of time (mid-March until mid-April), PT had to deal with several small crises in the framework of Rouseff's defence. Examples of this are: Dilma's interview for the Spanish newspaper *El País*, national president of PT Rui Falcão's speech and public physical and online mobilization, the latter through platforms such as FBP.

**Table 4: Sample of PT's actions regarding crisis management**

EVENT	DATE	HOW WAS IT MANAGED?
Biggest demonstration in the history of Brazilian democracy, pro-impeachment.	13 March 2016	PT organises mobilizations all over the country, contributing social groups such as FBP and CUT in the organisation.
	19 March 2016	Rui Falcão's publishes a video, inviting government supporters to go to demonstrations on 31 March.
Some deputies voting at the Congressional Commission say to be undecided.	17 March - 11 April 2016	FBP creates platform in which users can send contact undecided deputies in order to convince them to vote "for democracy".
		FBP publishes in created platform analyses of political situation, encouraging public participation and direct communication to deputies.
Impeachment process.		Artists and intellectuals show their support to PT's government.
Before Congressional Commission is formed, politicians ask Dilma to relinquish her office.	25 March 2016	President Dilma gives press conference for Spanish Journal <i>El País</i> .
PMDB officially puts an end to relationship with PT.	29 March 2016	Rouseff cancels trip to USA. PT members condemn the news.

**Source:** Table by author based on news and PT's institutional communication from 13 March to 11 April

2016.

**a) Institutional communication**

Once the Congressional Commission is formed, PT's political discourse turned progressively more aggressive.

a.1. Rui Falcão's speech (10. Appendices:s 3 and 4)

Out of the three speeches analysed throughout this dissertation, Falcão's is the best example of a populist discourse, as well as the most representative image of PT's activism and attempt of crisis management within the impeachment process.

To start with, Falcão exaggerates and argues PT is the victim of a system governed by hatred and conspiracies from the right-wing against the party ('The Right misinforms, spreads rumours...'). Falcão marks a not-so-clear difference between 'us' and 'them'. In most part of the speech 'us' refers to 'not only PT supporters but all those committed to democracy, who are against the *coup*' (my people, ), whereas they are '*coup d'état* supporters'.

When arguing that the impeachment has no legal grounds but rather is 'a *coup d'état*', Falcão creates tensions and makes supporters believe that the Brazilian judicial mechanisms are not working. Member of Brazilian Electoral and Political Vote Academy Carlos Callado argues that the reason for the opening of this impeachment process remains one of the least serious reasons to impeach a president. He believes the use of the term '*coup*' is very useful when you are the victim, in spite of the lack of legal basis (Callado & Paiva, 2016).

Furthermore, Falcão addresses his audience and invites them to 'keep informed through our recordings, through PT's Communication Agency, through our Facebook page', as well as announcing the organised demonstrations on 31 March 2016. It is interesting how the use of new technologies may be a way for a political party to manage a crisis nowadays.

Finally, difficulties of translating Falcão's speech are the following — in the one hand, he tends to use slang, which is not common in a populist speech in English. For instance, he addresses the public calling them '*companheiras e compaheiros*' ('male and female colleagues'). This entails a problem that was commented in the analysis of President Dilma Rouseff's previous speech (7.2.2.a)), since referring to the whole population based on gender differences is not such a useful tool in English.

*a.2. Rouseff's interview* (Jiménez Barca, 2016)

When being asked to relinquish her office, President Dilma argued that, if she was asked to do so, it was because there were no legal mechanisms for her to be impeached ('If some people are asking me to relinquish my office is because the impeachment request against me does not have a legal basis').

As commented on in the speech given on 2 December 2015, she keeps on showing how calm she feels about the impeachment process that is 'inconsistent' to her. She also stated that 'the waves of information are contributing in the creation of a political instability that is damaging' Brazil's economy.

***b) Citizens' Reaction: Mobilisation***

According to the theory of 5 Rs crisis management, external response should part of the process of any crisis management. PT allegedly worked on giving an external response to government's supporters throughout this step. Therefore, and due to the importance of these events, it will now be considered both the promotion of external support through the organization of different activities and the activities themselves.

Through videos that were posted both on PT Communication Agency and PT social networks, pro-government citizens were address to take an active part in the process of crisis management through an internet platform created by Frente Brasil Popular. Such platform informs users about the voting decision of all member of congressional commission, letting users contact any deputy to vote "for democracy". Information on social mobilisations was also posted on the website (Popular, 2016).

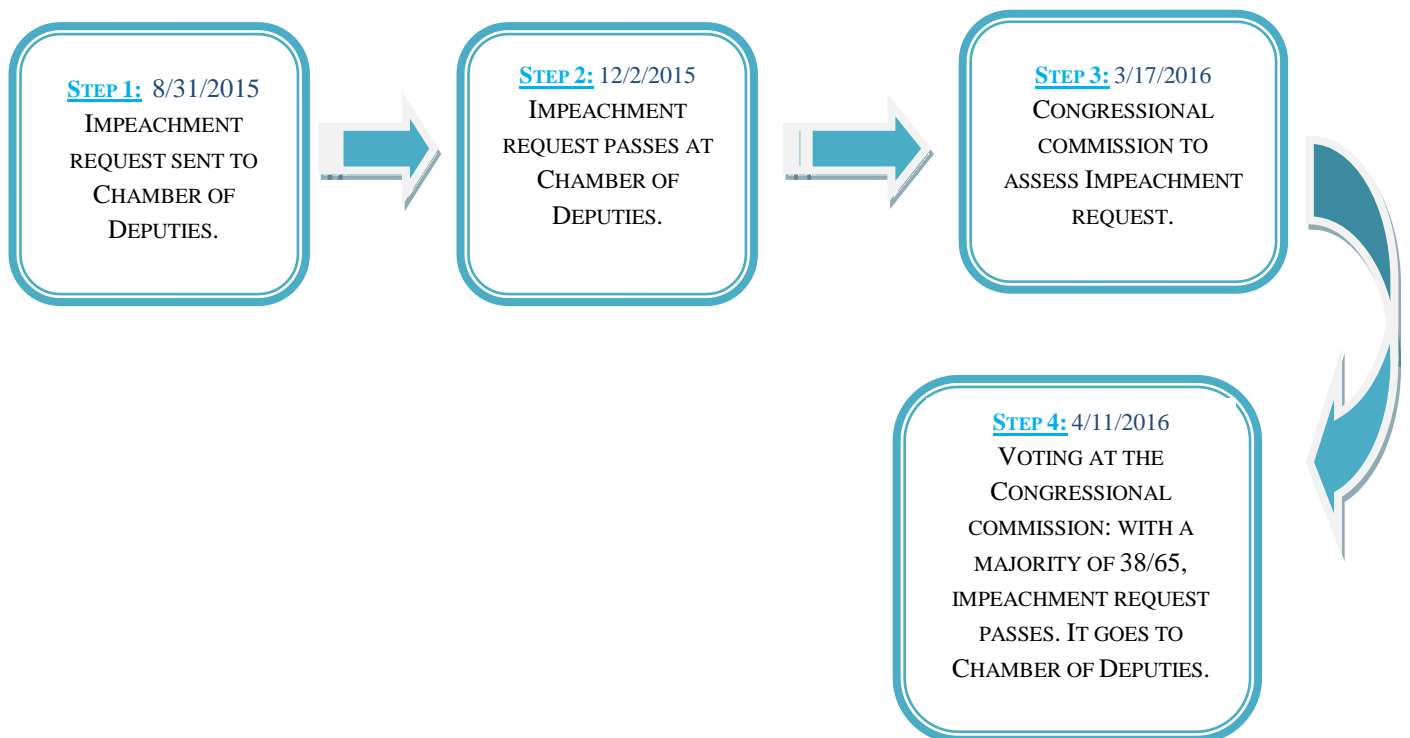
Several artists have also taken part in public mobilisations against the impeachment and have shown their support for PT (PT, 2016). So have other authorities, such as Lavenère, one of the authors of the only impeachment request that has ever impeached a Brazilian president (Agência, 2016).

Finally, PT had to deal with an institutional crisis when PMDB announced it was out of the government. As a response, Rouseff was worried about leaving Planalto and canceled a trip she was scheduled to make to the United States for a nuclear security summit. Some PT members condemned the news as well, such as Senator Lindbergh Farias,

who said such event was ‘an explicit conspiracy against democracy’, or Senate Leader Humberto Costa, who argued such action ‘was blessed by an opposition who wants to gain power by hook or by crook’ (Internacional, 2016).

#### 7.2.4. Step 4: Impeachment passes at Congressional Commission

Figure 4: Understanding the Impeachment Process IV



Source: Diagram by author.

On 11 April, the congressional commission backed the continuity of the impeachment proceedings against Rouseff by a majority of votes (38 to 27) (Jiménez Barca, 2016). It is worth noting that not only all PT advocates at the commission voted against going ahead with the impeachment process, but also representatives from other left-wing parties such as PSOL or PTN. In turn, all PSDB, PSC or DEM, (mostly right-wing) members voted in favour. Interestingly, there was no consensus in the remaining parties' representations, including PMDB, despite tensions between the latter and PT (Globo, 2016).

This was a race against the clock for PT. After the news broke, the party's actions multiplied and diversified throughout the week, before the voting at the Chamber of



Deputies on Sunday, 17 April. A sample of those crisis management actions are the following: criticising the media and “confirming” that the vote count made by PT ensures the non-continuity of the impeachment process, Lula da Silva’s active role in meetings and negotiations in the defence of Dilma’s office, as well as releasing a video, and Rouseff’s public speech on Friday 15 April. The latter will be carefully examined at the end of this subsection, as it was arguably was the most notable response to the impeachment process.

**Table 5: Sample of PT actions to prevent Chamber of Deputies to vote for the continuity of the impeachment process**

EVENT	DATE	HOW WAS IT MANAGED?
Build up, possibility of losing at the voting.	Several times throughout the week.	“Confirming” that the vote count ensures the non-continuity of the impeachment process.
Growing tensions on the future of the party and the president.	11-17 April	Lula’s negotiations and meeting defending Dilma, especially with undecided deputies.
	15 April	Lula posted online video.
PhD Miguel Reale Jr. defends the document concerning the impeachment request.	14 April	Lula’s negotiations and meeting defending Dilma, especially with undecided deputies.
Dilma cancels speech in national radio and TV.	15 April	Dilma published online video before the voting takes place.

**Source:** Table by author based on news and PT’s institutional communication from 11- 17 April 2016.

***a) General crisis management strategies of PT***

Several strategies of crisis management took place throughout the week. Some addressed directly to members of the Chamber of Deputies, consisting of negotiations with the so-called 'undecided deputies' the most relevant for the voting at the Chamber of Deputies (Benites, 2016). Lula played a decisive role in the articulation of a pro-government block of deputies (Agência, 2016), acting as a counterforce to pro-impeachment forces, such as Miguel Reale Jr<sup>13</sup> (Ribeiro, 2016).

On the other hand, PT institutional communication addressed the population as well. Most of the strategies implemented were released by PT's communication agency, contributing to mobilisations and responses from the population, whose opinion played an important role during this week too. Examples of PT's attempts to get the population to support the government are: ensuring that all vote counts demonstrate that pro-impeachment votes at the Chamber of Deputies will not be enough for the process to pass (Rodrigues, 2016) and, once again, Lula da Silva's active involvement, participating in public meetings organised by trading unions such as MST to defend Rouseff's office (Época, 2016).

Given his historical role both for PT and Brazil, Lula's opinion is heard by many. That is why he decides to post a video in 15 April, arguing that if the voting on impeachment passes at the Chamber of Deputies, the crisis will worsen. He also attacked PMDB indirectly when defending that someone who has not been democratically elected will not be able to run office, nor count on the respect from the population (Alencastro, 2016). Even though he recognises the government has sometimes been mistaken, Lula argues that responsibility and maturity will help restore international credibility in the country (Roxo, Alencastro, & Barretto, 2016).

***b) Rouseff's speech on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April (10. Appendix 5)***

It had been announced that President Dilma would give a speech on national TV and radio at the beginning of the week (Monteiro & Porto, 2016), yet she was advised to have it canceled by its advisers at the Government's Secretary of Social Communication,

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<sup>13</sup> PhD Miguel Reale Jr was Minister of Justice during former PSDB President FHC's office. He now is professor at USP.

arguing that it was a 'matter of political effectiveness' (Alencastro, 2016). Rouseff released a video online through PT's Youtube channel (PT, 2016) as well as in some of her official social media accounts, such as Twitter (Twitter, 2016). The speech given will be now analysed.

Rouseff opens this speech by addressing 'Brazilians' to try and convince them not to be deceived or misled by their information. In a comparison to the first speech, given on 2 December 2015 (*10. Appendices: Texts 1 and 2*), a move towards more populist political discourse can be identified. For instance, the following characteristics can be appreciated:

First, Rouseff argues that the current situation of 'antidemocratic movements' and 'pro-coup' that the country is facing is disastrous. She emphasizes democratic values ("On Sunday, we will have the opportunity to reaffirm, once again, our commitment towards democracy, freedom and the rule of law", "No government will be legitimate if it does not stem from popular, free, direct, secret and universal vote", etc.) and seems to be conferring the power of decision onto all Brazilians in the voting that was taking place two days later at the Chamber.

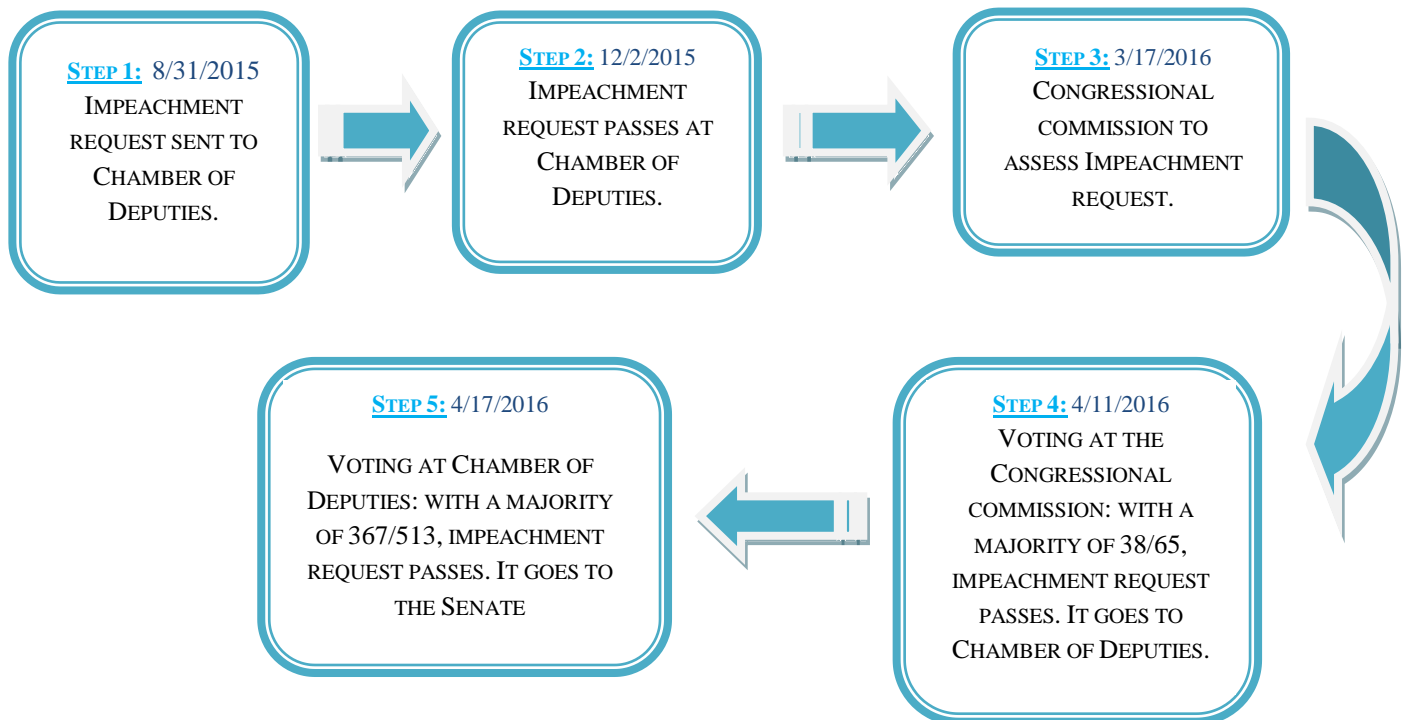
Second, she condemns politicians against PT, arguing that they are the source of evil; Moreover, she combines the stigmatisation of PMDB (although she does not refer to Temer or Cunha directly) with an indirect threat to the poorest population when she suggests that any potential new government will make cuts to social policies such as Bolsa Familia or Minha Casa Minha Vida, claiming that both are PT's achievements.

Finally, with regard to the specific strategy of crisis management on this issue, President Dilma repeats expressions of self-defence used in the speech given the night the impeachment process began, such as "There are no suspicions against me regarding embezzlement of public funds". She tries to portray herself as a transparent, powerful leader, capable of overcoming the political and economic crisis if the impeachment process stops.

All these characteristics are consistent with Charadeau's theory of populist discourse developed in Chapter 4. Moreover, difficulties in translation regarding gender distinction and other cultural differences that had been commented in previous analysis have also been found in this case.

### 7.2.5. Step 5: voting at the Chamber of Deputies

Figure 5: Understanding the Impeachment Process V



Source: Diagram by author.

In 17 April 2016, the Chamber of Deputies voted 'yes' to the continuity of the process. Despite PT's efforts to stop the impeachment proceedings against Dilma Rouseff at the Chamber of Deputies, votes in favour accounted for 25 more than necessary to be passed (Watts, 2016). With a total of 367 votes in favour of impeaching the President, 7 abstentions and 2 absences, only 137 backed PT's government (Aranda, 2016).

Given the importance of the voting to the Brazilian political situation, results were popular with internationally. Some international analysts and journalists have focused ironically in the reasoning of every deputy's vote, since the vast majority of them did not consider in their 15-second speech any legal grounds for the decision made (Economist, 2016).

This fifth step is characterised by the external factor, which had not been that important in the previous phases. Apart from Rouseff's trip to New York, where she have a speech at the UN and a press conference to international journalists, PT has kept up with some of the previous communication strategies at a national level. PT has also taken new relevant actions. All of this will be briefly now considered.

**Table 6: Sample of PT responses to Chamber's pro-impeachment voting**

EVENT	DATE
Online letter Rui Falcão	17 April
Organised demonstrations	17, 18 April
Dilma ask to organise before the Senate	18 April
Dilma gives press conference	18 April
AGU José Eduardo Cardozo gives press conference	18 April
Frente Brasil Popular	17-onwards
"Coup d'état will be defeated in the streets"	19 April
Public comments	18 April
Dilma goes to New York and gives a speech at the UN	22 April
Dilma gives a press conference to international journals	22 April

**Source:** Table by author based on news and PT's institutional communication from 18 to 24 April 2016.

#### *a) Dilma Rouseff's personal response*

President Dilma responds to the continuity of the impeachment in various ways throughout the week, arguably changing of strategy continuously. A sample of these responses will be considered through the analysis of the following talks to the audience: first, public press conference the day after the voting at the Chamber of Deputies; second, an implicit reference made to the impeachment on the speech given at the United Nations in 22 April 2016; third, press conference given to international journals right after the speech at the UN.

On Monday 19 April, Dilma gave a press conference at her official workplace as President of the Republic, Palácio do Planalto. Rouseff opens the speech by expressing how 'wronged and betrayed' she feels (Davies, 2016). She also defends her record by commenting how, looking at the reasons given by most deputies on their voting choice, there is indeed no legal ground for the impeachment process, and recalls that 'the only

way of judging a President of the Republic in Brazil is because of a committed crime of responsibility'. Interestingly, she confirms having practiced the acts that she is accused for, arguing that "all Presidents have done it before" and that "she did not do it to enrich herself at the expenses of it". According to her, that is consequently not a legal reason to impeach a President (Planalto, 2016).

At the end of the week, Dilma went to New York in order to sign the agreement on climate change at the UN. As procedural in the organisation, all political representatives of the signatory countries gave a speech. When it was Rouseff's turn, she included some comments on the political situation that Brazil was facing. However, she was moderate in tone, simply saying the following: "Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot finish my words without mentioning the serious political situation that Brazil is facing. In this regard, I would like to say that Brazil is a great country, whose society defeated authoritarianism and built a thriving democracy. Our people are hard-working and appreciate freedom. There is no doubt that they will know how to prevent any step backwards. I am grateful to all leaders who have expressed their solidarity" (Youtube, 2016). This is a good external crisis management strategy since, in spite of the impeachment process, Rouseff is still Brazil's President, and international credibility could be relevant to the decision made at the Senate.

After the conference in the UN, Rouseff spoke to international journalists and her message and attitude towards Brazil changed drastically. Apart from being explicit while talking about the impeachment, she stated that "a military coup could take place in Brazil" and that 'she can stage a military coup, literally breaking the Constitution', among other comments. She also asked members of regional organizations Unasur and Mercosur to examine the coup that is taking place in Brazil (TVNBR, 2016). The latter was quickly responded by a Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman, who argued that Brazil's democratic system has not been violated (Diario do Poder, 2016). There is a strong lack of coherence between Rouseff's words at the press conference and at the speech given only a few hours before. There has not been many comments about it, as the international press tended to comment on Rouseff's repeated victimisation and self-defence and on the possible examination of the democratic clause in the aforementioned organisations (Watts & Gambinno, 2016).

***b) PT's crisis management strategies***

As for the party's strategies of crisis management, there are several examples of public statements. For instance, Rui Falcão was prompt in media release condemning the results at the Chamber of Deputies and stating that 'this adventure —referring to the impeachment process— may still be stopped at the Senate' (Falcão, 2016). AGU José Eduardo Cardoso also declared at a public press conference that 'the government feels outraged and sad about the results at the Chamber' and that 'the break with the Constitution is, on PT's views, a coup d'état' (Planalto, 2016).

In turn, MTST leader called for mobilisations against the coup, arguing that it will be 'defeated in the streets' (Agência do PT, 2016). There were still a significant amount of public mobilisations throughout the country, organised by FBP and promoted at both their website and the party's (FBP, 2016).

**7.3. What happens next?**

Given that the Chamber of Deputies has given the go ahead for the impeachment process to continue, it is now time for the Senate to vote whether to accept the Chamber's decision or not. The voting at the Senate Commission, which will be formed in 26 April 2016, as announced by Senate President Renan Calheiros (Calgaro & Garcia, 2016), can be determined by a simple majority and will be the decisive step in President Dilma's judgment (Cortez, 2016).

In the meantime, the Brazilian press has created a Senate Scoreboard for citizens to be informed about the possible final result at the Senate Commission. On 25 April 2016, the Senate Scoreboard showed that 50 out of 81 would be in favour of Rouseff's impeachment, whereas 20 have indicated they are against. The remaining 11 people have not declared what their voting intentions are (7) or have said they are 'undecided' (2), 'not voting' (1) and 'did not reply' (1) (Folha, 2016).

Nevertheless, the political tension in Brazil might change before the members of the Senate Commission have to vote, turning favorable to PT. All legal possibilities will be

considered in the analysis below. According to political scientist Rafael Cortez<sup>14</sup>, possible scenarios are the following:

***a) Simple majority of pro-impeachment votes at the Senate Commission:***

If 41 out of 81 members of the Commission vote in favour, President Dilma will be removed from office for 180 days. The Senate will have that time to decide Rouseff's political future.

In the meantime, current Vice-President Michel Temer holds office. Set out both in the Law on Impeachment and the Constitution, this is potentially the most likely scenario.

***b) Overall majority of pro-impeachment votes at the Senate Commission:***

If at least 54 members of the Senate Commission vote in favour of the impeachment, President Dilma can be instantly removed from office (Callado & Paiva, 2016).

***c) New elections:***

Arguably the least likely scenario, yet a legal option. Recognising the impeachment's irrevocability, PT could request new elections at the Senate. Then, PT would have to group together with other political forces, preferably closer to its ideology given that it would need relevant support, since the constitution of new elections (Callado & Paiva, 2016). Vice-President Michel Temer, willing to run a temporary government, has been working lately to stifle the idea of new elections before it becomes a strong, probable option (Nery, 2016).

***d) Simple majority of pro-government votes at the Senate Commission:***

Impeachment process will be filed and President Dilma will be acquitted and able to retake her term, presumably until national elections take place again in 2018 (Brasil, 2016).

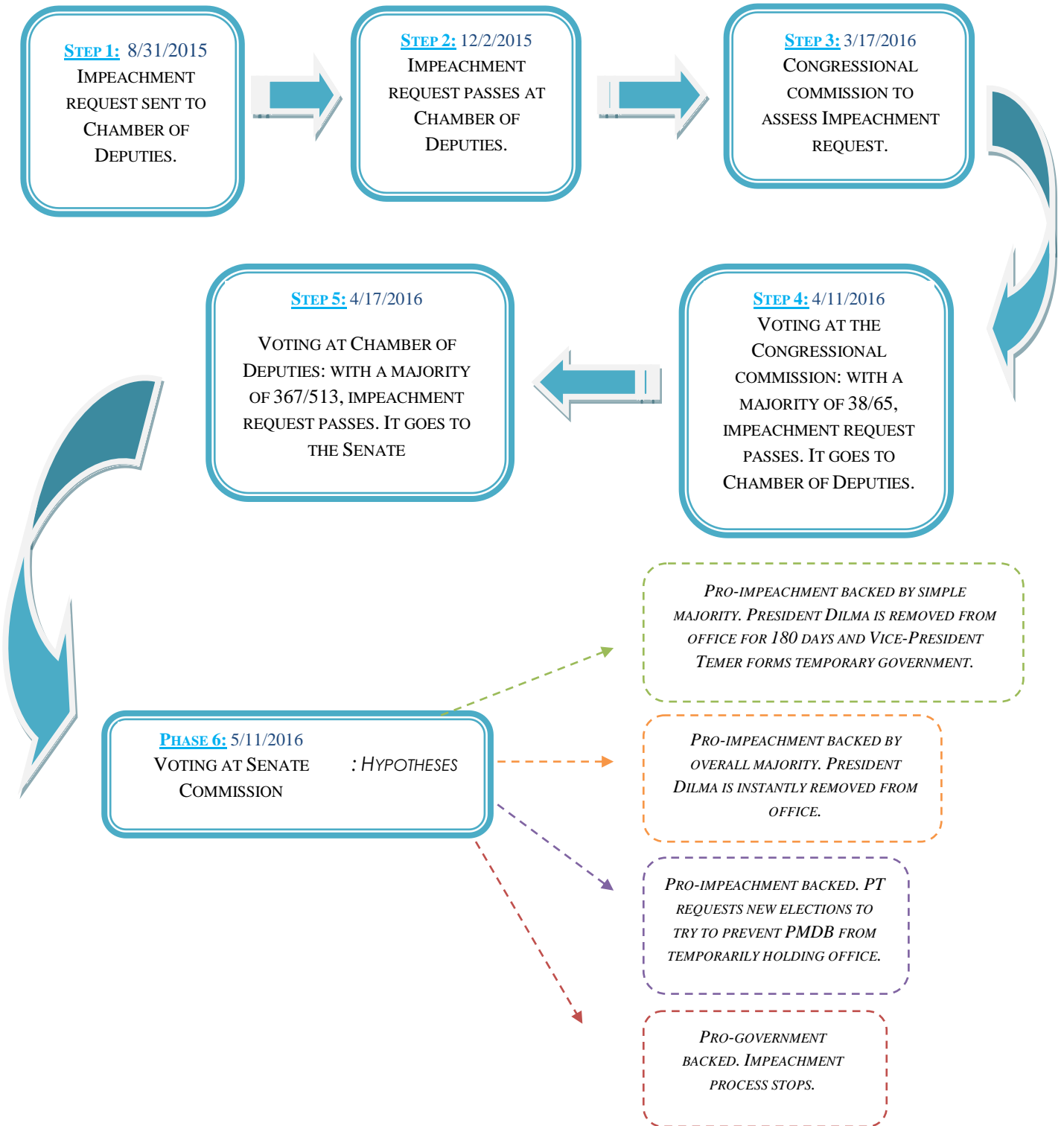
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<sup>14</sup> Rafael Cortez works as politics analyst at Brazilian consultancy Tendências. For further information: <http://www.tendencias.com.br/page.cgi?id=17>



### 7.4. Recap

**Figure 6: Understanding the Impeachment Process VI**



Source: Diagram by author.

A final analysis of the four possible ends to the impeachment process will contribute to redirecting the topic towards PT's crisis management.

If the first possible scenario takes place, PT unmanaged crisis would get to the final step. However, one of the first challenges Michel Temer would have to face is the unpopularity he now has (according to a survey from Datafolha after the voting at the Chamber of Deputies shows that around 54% of the people interviewed would be in favour of an impeachment process against Temer too) (Cortez, 2016). Moreover, Temer would have a very short period of time (180 days) to show what his party can do in the Brazilian government (Costas, 2016).

In turn, if over 53 members of the Senate Commission vote favourably to the political judgment, Rouseff will be instantly removed from her office. This will be the worst option regarding PT's crisis management, as it will show that the communication crisis goes beyond external institutions, such as the Agency, and that their ability to dialogue and convince other parties in order to partner to stay in power has undeniably worsened.

Even though the third option is allegedly the least probable, it could be the second best option for the party. Since the crisis has reached the penultimate possible step and relations with PMDB have been broken, if PMDB was to temporarily run office PT would have to leave a relevant part of its political presence. However, PT would find it difficult to find enough support to promote new elections.

Finally, according to PT's current views on the matter, the fourth hypothesis will be the best option for the party. Given that from the acceptance of Bicudo and Paschoal's impeachment request in December 2015 until now PT has not changed its political discourse, either has Rouseff recognised any possible reason to be impeached, PT's aim seems to be defending the President at all costs.

## 8. Conclusions and approaches

This dissertation has assessed PT's crisis management in President Dilma Rouseff's impeachment process. Due to the complexity of the case, every phase was presented separately, in chronological order. Departing from the beginning of PT crisis, the analysis has gone through five different steps: one, a brief study on the impeachment request; two, authorisation of the impeachment process; three, creation of a Congressional Commission; four, approval of the continuity of the impeachment process at the Congressional Commission; and five, voting at the Chamber of Deputies. At every stage, the examination of crisis management is been justified by a focus on institutional communication and an analysis of the populist political discourse of Rouseff and the national president of PT, Rui Falcão. Attention has been paid to the role of public mobilisations and hypotheses on near future events have also been considered at the end of the analysis.

Regarding crisis management on the impeachment process, is has not been able to fit PT's responses exactly into Heath's 5 Rs model of crisis management in communication. PT has met the usual trend of most parties strategic communication — instead of creating a communication plan and try to solve the crisis derived from the impeachment process at the very beginning, public communication was more interested in addressing supporters, given that the number of votes is the only way for political parties to gauge their success. As communication expert Rafael Alberto Pérez points out, communication managers tend to realize the importance of strategic communication at the end of a process (Pérez, 2014). Indeed, PT's reactions throughout the process mainly fall within the categories 'Readiness' or 'Response', not reaching the fourth step 'Recovery', and much less to 'Resilience'. Although sometimes incoherent, external responses have proved a crucial point in the management of the impeachment process.

However, in spite of the party's power crisis, it has not been any big internal crisis. PT has been successful in standing together throughout the process. It is noticeable in the fact that no representative of PT at either the Congressional Commission or the Chamber of Deputies backed the impeachment process and none of them approved going ahead with it.

Regarding the future of PT and in spite of undeniably going through a crisis that has at least left the party in a situation of instability and that could be about to remove President Dilma from her office, the current situation of PT is not irrevocable. Several academics have pointed out how PT is still an important party for the country and that it could make the situation profitable if it renews its political discourse and cleans the party of corruption. However, there are some difficulties that PT is facing and could solve quickly: — First, PT must put an end to corruption within the party, since it has damaged PT's reputation. Second, the image of the political leader, in this case Dilma, must be on national TV and radio more frequently. According to some news Rouseff has not been on TV or radio since February (Alencastro, 2016). Despite having direct communication via social media, is an important part of the population that has not become digital yet. Bearing this in mind, PT should arguably consider addressing older supporters through traditional methods.

With regards to findings, this dissertation has been original and innovative in content and methodology. With respect to its content, this dissertation has presented an in-depth analysis on a highly topical issue, bringing together some of the most relevant areas of research in the communication field. In turn, findings could have possibly been more avant-garde if it had focused on other factors regarding strategies of PT's communication, such as the use of new technologies or social media.

Throughout the analysis of the impeachment process, the issue of a general political crisis in Brazil has been explicitly raised. Lava Jato Scandal has eroded PT's government and could end up eroding Temer's transitional government, given that politicians involved in Lava Jato are part several of the most important parties of the country. Moreover, the case concerning Eduardo Cunha is still open. This can either be seen as the beginning of the impeachment of several corrupt politicians (Gross, 2016), or as a farce, where Cunha used his legal power to prevent the stop of his political career. Nonetheless, the two most relevant parties within the impeachment process, that is, PT and PMDB, are being investigated and blamed for corruption (Fellet, 2016).

To conclude, it is crucial to understand that the impeachment process is interconnected with other simultaneous crises that are causing political instability in Brazil. The issue has been followed internationally, yet there have been disagreements as to whether the opening of the process against Rouseff is having a positive impact on the country or

not. Despite the forecasts of international experts and politicians, the active role of Brazilian citizens could turn the tables. Brazil's population are fighting to rebalance and regenerate a corrupt political system, which hopefully could lead to a change in the political situation.

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## 10. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Transcription of Dilma's speech in original version (Portuguese)

«Bom, boa noite a todos. Eu dirijo agora uma palavra de esclarecimento a todas as brasileiras e a todos os brasileiros.

No dia de hoje, vocês viram, foi aprovado pelo Congresso Nacional o projeto de lei que atualiza a meta fiscal, permitindo a continuidade dos serviços públicos fundamentais para todos os brasileiros. Ainda hoje, eu recebi com indignação a decisão do senhor presidente da Câmara dos Deputados de processar pedido de *impeachment* contra mandato democraticamente conferido a mim pelo povo brasileiro.

São inconsistentes e improcedentes as razões que fundamentam este pedido. Não existe nenhum ato ilícito praticado por mim. Não paira<sup>15</sup> contra mim nenhuma suspeita de desvio de dinheiro público. Não possuo conta no exterior nem ocultei do conhecimento público a existência de bens pessoais. Nunca coagi ou tentei coagir instituições ou pessoas na busca de satisfazer meus interesses. Meu passado e meu presente atestam a minha idoneidade e meu inquestionável compromisso com as leis e a coisa pública.

Nos últimos tempos, em especial nos últimos dias, a imprensa noticiou que haveria interesse na barganha<sup>16</sup> dos votos de membros da base governista no Conselho de Ética da Câmara dos Deputados. Em troca, haveria o arquivamento dos pedidos de *impeachment*. Eu jamais aceitaria ou concordaria com quaisquer tipos de barganha, muito menos aquelas que atentam contra o livre funcionamento das instituições democráticas do meu país, bloqueiam a justiça ou ofendem os princípios morais e éticos que devem governar a vida pública.

Tenho convicção e absoluta tranquilidade quanto a improcedência deste pedido, bem como quanto ao seu justo arquivamento. Não podemos deixar as conveniências e os interesses indefensáveis abalarem a democracia e a estabilidade de nosso país. Devemos ter tranquilidade e confiar nas nossas instituições e no Estado democrático de direito.

Obrigada a todos vocês e muito boa noite.»

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWgyY5oeV3Q>

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<sup>15</sup> Haver uma ameaça. For further information: <http://www.dicio.com.br/pairar/>

<sup>16</sup> Troca de influência ou de benefícios que, geralmente feita de maneira desonesta, ocorre em segmentos políticos. For further information: <http://www.dicio.com.br/barganha/>

## **Appendix 2: Transcription of Dilma's speech in English**

"Well, good evening everyone. I would like to address some words of clarification to all Brazilians.

Today, as you saw, the National Congress passed the draft law that updates the established tax goals, thus allowing for the continuity of fundamental public services for all Brazilians. Also today, I received with indignation Mr President of the Chamber of Deputies's decision to process the impeachment request against the mandate democratically given to me by the Brazilian people.

The reasons on which such request are based are both inconsistent and unfounded. I have not committed any unlawful acts. There are no suspicions against me regarding embezzlement of public funds. I do not hold any personal assets overseas nor have I concealed the existence of any such assets from public knowledge. I have never coerced nor attempted to coerce any institutions or individuals in pursuit of my own interests. My past and my present attest to my fitness to govern and unquestionable commitment to the law and good governance.

In recent times, particularly in the last few days, the press has spread the news that there would be bargaining for the votes of pro-government members in the Chamber of Deputies' Ethical Council. In exchange, all impeachment requests would be filed. I would never accept or agree to any kind of bargain, much less to one that would go against the free functioning of my country's democratic institutions, block justice or acting against the moral, ethical principles that should govern public affairs.

I am convinced and feel completely calm that the impeachment request will be rejected and filed justly. We cannot let indefensible interests or influences undermine the democracy or the stability of our country. We must be calm and trust in our institutions and the democratic State based on the rule of law.

Thank you all and a very good evening."

**Source:** Translation by author.

### **Appendix 3: Transcription of Rui Falcão's speech in original version (Portuguese)**

« Companheiras e companheiros,

Mais de um milhão de pessoas saíram às ruas em todo o Brasil ontem. Minhas primeiras palavras são para cumprimentar todos vocês, para agradecer o esforço de mobilização que vocês fizeram e o seu compromisso com a democracia, com nosso governo, com nosso projeto e com a defesa do presidente Lula.

Não foram só os petistas que acorreram as ruas. Todos aqueles que têm compromisso com a democracia, contra o golpe, também deram uma demonstração de solidariedade, de resistência e de luta. Mostramos a eles que não há estabilidade com a tentativa de deposição do nosso governo. A estabilidade se dá com o fim do golpe, o fim do impeachment e com as mudanças na política econômica que nós temos apontado. É importante que nós continuemos vigilantes, mobilizados, reunindo os nossos diretórios, dialogando com a população, com a juventude, com os intelectuais, com as organizações sociais, com os movimentos organizados.

No próximo dia 31, há uma mobilização programada e a Frente Brasil Popular discute a manutenção dessa data e a realização de novos eventos.

Vamos acompanhar as informações através das nossas gravações, através da Agência, do nosso Facebook, e vamos evitar propagação de boatos. A direita faz contra informação, espelha boatos e nós não devemos ser propagadores deles.

Um grande abraço. Vamos à luta e à resistência. »

**Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0r64GYMVZQ>

#### **Appendix 4: Transcription of Rui Falcão's speech in English**

"My fellow colleagues,

Yesterday, more than a million people went out onto the streets across Brazil. My first words are to greet all of you to thank you for mobilisation efforts and your commitment to democracy, to our Government, to our project and to President Lula's defense.

Not only PT supporters filled the streets. All those committed to democracy, who are against the coup, demonstrated their solidarity, resistance and fight. We show them that there is no stability while there is an attempt to remove our Government. Stability comes with the end of the coup, the end of impeachment and with the changes to political economy that we have indicated. It is important for us to remain vigilant, mobilised, assembling our directories, communicating with the population; with the young people, intellectuals, social organisations and organised movements.

On 31 March, there will be a programmed mobilisation and Frente Brasil Popular (Popular Front Brazil) has called into question whether this will really take place or if new events will be held.

Let's all keep informed through our recordings, through PT's Communication Agency, through our Facebook page, and let's prevent the spread of rumors. The Right misinforms, spreads rumors and we should not propagate them.

I embrace you all. Let's fight and stand firm."

**Source:** translation by author.



**Appendix 5: Transcription of President Dilma Rouseff's speech on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016 in original version (Portuguese)**

«Brasileiras e brasileiros, o Brasil vive momentos que serão decisivos para o nosso futuro. No próximo domingo, teremos uma oportunidade de reafirmar, mais uma vez, nosso compromisso histórico com a democracia, a liberdade e o estado de direito.

O que está em jogo na votação do impeachment não é apenas o meu mandato, que pretendo defender e honrar até o último dia, conforme ao estabelecido na Constituição. O que está em jogo é o respeito à vontade soberana do povo brasileiro, o respeito às urnas. O que está em jogo são as conquistas sociais e os direitos dos brasileiros. Por isso, é minha obrigação esclarecer os fatos e denunciar os riscos dessa aventura golpista para o país.

Desde que fui eleita, parte da oposição, inconformada, pediu a recontagem dos votos, tentou anular as eleições e passou a conspirar pelo impeachment. Os derrotados mergulharam o país num estado permanente de instabilidade política impedindo a recuperação da economia, com o único objetivo de tomar à força o que não conquistaram nas urnas.

Não há razão para o pedido de impeachment contra mim. Acusam-me sem nenhuma base legal. Não cometi crime de responsabilidade. Não há contra mim qualquer denúncia de corrupção ou desvio de dinheiro público. Jamais impedi investigação contra quem quer que fosse. Meu nome não está em nenhuma lista de propina. Tampouco sou suspeita de qualquer delito contra o bem comum.

A denúncia contra mim em análise no Congresso Nacional não passa de uma fraude. A maior fraude jurídica e política da história de nosso país. Sem ela, o impeachment sequer seria votado. O Brasil e a democracia não merecem tamanha farsa.

Peço a todos os brasileiros que não se deixem enganar. Vejam quem está liderando este processo e o que propõem para o futuro do Brasil. Os golpistas já disseram que, se conseguirem usurpar o poder, será necessário impor sacrifícios à população brasileira. Com que legitimidade? Querem revogar direitos e cortar programas sociais como o Bolsa Família e o Minha Casa, Minha Vida. Ameaçam até a educação pública. Querem abrir mão da soberania nacional, mudar o regime de partilha e entregar os recursos do pré-sal às multinacionais estrangeiras.

Antes de tudo, o que move os golpistas são os nossos acertos. Eles querem derrotar, a qualquer custo, o que represento: o projeto de desenvolvimento e inclusão social pelo qual estamos trabalhando todos os dias nos últimos treze anos. Para alcançar seus objetivos, estão dispostos a violentar a democracia e a rasgar a Constituição, espalhando a intolerância, o ódio e a violência

entre nós. Estão dispostos a humilhar o Brasil perante a comunidade internacional como se fôssemos uma republiqueta qualquer e não uma das maiores democracias do mundo.

Brasileiras e brasileiros, dirijo-me a vocês para pedir que continuem defendendo a legalidade democrática. Continuem se mobilizando no trabalho, nas escolas, nas ruas e nas redes sociais. Não se trata de concordar ou não com o governo, mas de combater um golpe de estado, uma violação constitucional que poderá mergulhar o Brasil em um doloroso processo de instabilidade e insegurança.

Nenhum governo será legítimo se não nascer do voto popular, livre, direto, universal e secreto. Fora do voto popular qualquer governo será sempre a tirania. A tirania dos mais fortes, dos mais espertos, dos mais ricos, dos mais corruptos. Faço uma advertência aos que veem no processo de impeachment um atalho para o poder. Podem justificar a si mesmos mas nunca poderão, jamais, olhar nos olhos da nação porque a palavra "golpe" estará para sempre gravada na testa dos traidores da democracia.

Quero ainda saudar e agradecer os milhões de brasileiros e brasileiras que, nas últimas semanas, vêm promovendo manifestações em defesa da democracia, do estado de direito e da liberdade. É uma mobilização ampla e generosa, porque vem dos mais diversos setores da sociedade, mesmo dos que não votaram em mim, dos que são críticos ao meu governo, mas que jamais perderam a fé no Brasil. A história registrará a voz dos que não se omitiram nesse grave momento.

Brasileiros e brasileiras, nosso país tem todas as condições de sair da crise. De retomar o crescimento econômico, com emprego, estabilidade, distribuição de renda e oportunidades para todos. Juntos, haveremos de retomar a paz necessária para retomar o rumo das mudanças. Mas somente o respeito à ordem democrática pode assegurar a reunificação nacional.

Nós, cidadãos e cidadãs do Brasil, pessoas anônimas e famosas, trabalhadores da cidade e do campo, empresários, intelectuais, parlamentares, líderes políticos e sociais, cidadãos de todas as profissões e idades, homens e mulheres de todas as raças e credos, todos nós cidadãos e cidadãs deste país, somos os guardiões dos valores que fazem do Brasil esta grande nação. Por isso, eu tenho certeza que a democracia brasileira sairá vitoriosa.

Viva o Brasil! Viva a democracia!».

**Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHZskHUXEKM>

**Appendix 7: PT members involved in Lava Jato scandal**

Name	Job function	Type of involvement	Result
<b>André Vargas</b>	Federal deputy.	Money laundering.	In prison.
<b>Antonio Palocci</b>	Former Finance Minister.	Money laundering.	Investigated.
<b>Cândido Vaccarezza</b>	Former federal deputy (SP).	Bribe accepting.	Investigated.
<b>Delcídio do Amaral</b>	Senator (MS).	Corruption.	Case filed.
<b>Fernando Pimentel</b>	Minas Gerais Governor.	Corruption.	Investigated.
<b>Gleisi Hoffmann</b>	Senator and former minister.	Corruption and money laundering.	Investigated.
<b>Humberto Costa</b>	Senator and former Health Minister .	Bribe accepting.	Investigated.
<b>João Vaccari Neto</b>	Former Treasurer of PT.	Money laundering.	In prison.
<b>José Dirceu</b>	Former chief-of-staff to President Lula.	Corruption, conspiracy and money laundering.	Arrested.
<b>José Mentor</b>	Federal deputy.	Corruption.	Investigated.
<b>Lindberg Farias</b>	Senator.	Corruption.	Investigated.
<b>Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva</b>	Former Brazilian president.	Corruption.	Investigated.
<b>Luiz Moura</b>	State representative.	Money laundering.	<i>Not found.</i>
<b>Senival Moura</b>	Councillor.	Money laundering.	<i>Not found.</i>
<b>Vander Loubet</b>	Federal deputy (MS).	Criminal organisation and money laundering.	Investigated.

**Source:** Compiled by author.