Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Bachelor in Global Communication /
Grado en Comunicación
Internacional

Trabajo Fin de Grado

Discourse in the

COVID-19 pandemic

Corpus analysis of speeches to the nation

of France, Germany, and Spain

Student: **Cristina Imaz Chacón**

Supervisor: Dr. Bettina Schnell

Madrid, 14th June 2021

TÍTULO: El discurso en la pandemia de COVID-19: Análisis de corpus de los discursos a la nación de Francia, Alemania y España

AUTOR: Cristina Imaz Chacón

DIRECTOR: Profa. Dra. Bettina Schnell

RESUMEN:

Durante la fase inicial del COVID-19 en Europa, los discursos a la nación pronunciados por los líderes políticos fueron cruciales para evitar el aumento de contagios, mantener la legitimidad del gobierno y preservar la salud de la población. Este estudio tiene como objetivo comprender los tonos, las narrativas y los valores utilizados en los discursos oficiales pronunciados por los jefes de gobierno y los jefes de estado de Francia, Alemania y España y cómo estos se relacionan con sus estrategias nacionales de contención. Para analizar las diferencias y similitudes entre los discursos, se llevó a cabo un análisis cualitativo mediante la selección de 24 temas, junto con una codificación de todos los discursos, seleccionando sólo un tema por frase. Este estudio muestra que todos los discursos estudiados tienen por objetivo frenar la curva y proteger a los vulnerables, y que la crisis del COVID-19 fue formulada por todos los líderes seleccionados como una cuestión tanto individual como colectiva. Por una parte, todos los discursos se basan en principios como la disciplina individual, la democracia y la confianza en la ciencia y reflejan, en mayor o menor medida, una retórica belicista. Por otra parte, los líderes seleccionados utilizan los discursos para mostrar empatía con la población, así como para enmarcar un futuro mejor. Además, nuestra investigación muestra diferencias en los discursos de los jefes de gobierno con respecto a los de los jefes de estado derivadas de sus diferentes funciones. En definitiva, nuestros hallazgos sugieren que la selección de ciertos temas por encima de otros tiene implicaciones para la legitimidad de los líderes y la conformidad de la sociedad con las restricciones.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Análisis Crítico del Discurso, COVID-19, líderes políticos, Europa, discurso, jefe de gobierno, jefe de estado, comunicación de crisis.

TITLE: Discourse in the COVID-19 pandemic: Corpus analysis of speeches to the nation of France, Germany, and Spain

AUTHOR: Cristina Imaz Chacón

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Bettina Schnell

ABSTRACT:

During the initial phase of COVID-19 in Europe, the speeches to the nation delivered by political leaders were crucial to foster contagion containment, uphold the legitimacy of the government and preserve the populations' health. This study aims to understanding the tones, narratives and values used in the official speeches pronounced by the heads of government and heads of state of France, Germany and Spain and how they relate to their national containment strategies. To analyze the differences and similarities between the speeches, a qualitative analysis was carried out through the selection of 24 topics, together with a codification of all the speeches, selecting only one topic per sentence. Our analysis shows that all speeches stated the objective to slow down the curve and protect the vulnerable, and that COVID-19 crisis was framed by all selected speakers as both an individual and collective issue. Furthermore, all speeches rely on principles such as individual discipline, democracy, and trust in science. All speeches reflect, to a greater or lesser extent, wartime rhetoric and use speeches to show empathy for the population as well as to frame a better future. Moreover, our research shows differences in the speeches carried out by heads of government with regards to those of heads of state derived from their different roles. All in all, our findings suggests that the selection of certain topics above others has implications for the legitimacy of the leaders and society's compliance with restrictions.

KEY WORDS: Critical Discourse Analysis, COVID-19, political leaders, Europe, speech, head of government, head of state, crisis communication.

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1. Introduction

As with other fields of social studies, such as geopolitics, journalism or sociology, the spread of the coronavirus pandemic has transformed the world of political communication. On the one hand, the nature of the crisis communication has questioned the politicians' capacity to sensitize society, disseminate good health practices, advocate for the acceptance of measures, call for solidarity and sanction those that go against the common good, especially upon the emergence of several misinformation sources. The paradox here is that, in the era of post-truth politics, politicians have been entrusted with the daunting responsibility of raising public awareness of health measures based on scientific data.

On the other hand, the containment of the COVID-19 has become the aspirational goal of any political campaign, having great impact on the legitimacy of not only the political leader or party, but foremost government, which can be exemplified with the rise in the approval rating of European leaders during the month of March 2020, such as Emmanuel Macron or Angela Merkel.

The spread of COVID-19 has had far-reaching implications for citizens' rights and welfare as well as for the functioning of liberal democracies themselves. Along the line of the Foucauldian term "governmentality", discourse can be considered a technique through which subjects are governed (Mayhew, 2009) (Sjölander-Lindqvist, et al., 2020), together with other government tools such as the restrictions, the implementation of national lockdowns, social distancing, among others. It is in this context where, according to Yuval Noah Harari (2020), author of the book Sapiens, humanity has to choose between two main axes: between totalitarian surveillance and citizen empowerment, and between nationalist isolationism and global solidarity (p. 1). In such a cumbersome scenario, the drift political communication takes will definitely have an impact on the type of society we are constructing.

2. Purpose and objectives

The objective of this research is to analyze how heads of state and heads of government of France, Germany and Spain framed the COVID-19 crisis in the initial phase in an attempt to implement strategies for contagion containment, uphold the legitimacy of

the government and preserving the populations' health. To do so, we will analyze the different political narratives of the speeches pronounced by the heads of state and heads of government of the beforementioned countries during the last two weeks of March 2020.

The study aims at understanding the differences and similarities between the speeches of the selected heads of state and heads of government from an understanding of the cruciality of crisis communication from the heads of state during the pandemics to raise awareness on the disease and provide information to the population (Argenti, 2002).

Moreover, the study aims to deepen insight into the values highlighted and the tone used in each speech, to determine the types of narrative frameworks used to communicate to the public the beginning of a moment of crisis: the COVID-19.

All in all, the main motivation behind this research is to learn how political leaders use discourse for health and legitimacy purposes in times of pandemic and advance on the narratives that can help implementing containment measures upon a pandemic. From an analysis of the political communication during the first wave of Sars-CoV-2, we can draw conclusions regarding the political discourses that we will probably see in the future waves of such virus.

In relation with the beforementioned motivations, the objectives of the present paper are the following:

- ✓ Understanding political leaders' official communication strategies in the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis and how they relate to their national containment strategies.
- ✓ Studying the differences in the tones, narratives and values used in the official speeches of the heads of state and heads of governments of Spain, France, and Germany.

To achieve the latter goals, I have selected several questions that will guide my research:

- ✓ Which are the topics the heads of state and heads of government pose upon the COVID-19 crisis? Which assumptions underlie such selection of topics?
- ✓ Which metaphorical framing do they use to describe coronavirus and the containment policies? Which values did they emphasize?

✓ How do these messages relate to their national context and domestic policies? What differences and/or similarities can we find in the messages of the three political leaders?

3. State of the art and theoretical framework

The present research draws on two research areas, namely, risk communication or crisis communication, as well as Critical Discourse Analysis. Throughout this section we will explain the key concepts of both areas relevant for our discussion.

3.1. Risk communication in times of COVID-19

In the event of a pandemic crisis, heads of state and heads of government address the population with mixed strategies from the fields of science communication and risk communication. Combining strategies of both risk and science communication, speeches held by heads of state and heads of governments face the challenge of understanding "people's perceptions, concerns and beliefs as well as their knowledge and practices" and challenging misinformation through fact-based discourses (World Health Organization, 2021).

While science communication aims at "enhancing public scientific awareness and scientific literacy" (Burns, O'Connor, & Stocklmayer, 2003, p. 198), risk communication refers to "the exchange of real-time information, advice and opinions between experts and people facing threats to their health, economic or social well-being" (World Health Organization, 2021). The purpose of risk communication is not only to "encourage informed decision making, positive behavior change and the maintenance of trust" (Gamhewage, 2014, p. 1), but also to enable dialogue with the population and involve them in the containment of health threats.

The three big challenges of risk communication in the 21st century are: the lack of trust in authorities and experts, the reliance on public on-line sources and social networks for health advice; and a new 24-hour journalism reliant on reduced sources following health issues (Gamhewage G. M., 2013). All of the latter challenges to risk communication have been found in the COVID-19 crisis, since the upsurge of alternative sources, fake news and the levels of high consumption of social media during March and April, 2020 possibly

hampered the national leaders' communications (Castillo-Esparcia, Fernández-Souto, & Puentes-Rivera, 2020).

Furthermore, there are two issues determining the success or failure of risk communication: different perceptions of the same risk by experts and the public and problems originated from the trustworthiness of the recommendations given and the source of the information itself (Gamhewage, 2014).

On the one hand, official communication needs to understand the difference between the experts' and the public's risk perception in order to bridge the gap between them. Experts analyze threats in terms of its dimension, the public exposure to it and the level of vulnerability of the population from a quantitative assessment of issues such as morbidity and mortality, financial or other loss. On the contrary, public risk assessment depends on a much more complex cognitive process that resorts to heuristics upon uncertainty (Slovic, 1987). Moreover, the public may consider a risk great when their sense of emotional engagement is also great and arouses their outrage (Sandman, 1987). According to Gamhewage (2014) The level of public outrage, and therefore, the level of their risk perception depends on certain factors, such as the familiarity with the threat, the impact on the future generation, the inability to see or feel it, the possibility of catastrophic consequences, the unfair distribution of harm and benefits, among other factors. In other words, what experts mean by risk is hazard, whereas the public relate it to outrage (Sandman, 1987). Therefore, discourses based on data alone and not connecting with public outrage may not meet success (Sandman, 1987).

On the other hand, studies show that success in disease containment depends on public confidence in the government representatives or bodies, since compliance rates are highly related to the public trust on the instructions given (Kasperson, Kasperson & Golding 1999, as cited in Löfsted, 2005). In fact, perception and trust are intertwined. The US Centre for Disease Control and prevention (CDC) advises communicators to enhance trust during their speeches bearing in mind factors such as expertise, good character, idenfication with the public and good will (CDC Prevention Research Centers, n.d.).

3.2.   Concepts and definitions

After the latter introduction to risk communication, it is paramount to define what discourse is, the main tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis and the concepts we will touch on throughout this research.

3.2.1.   Critical Discourse Analysis

There are many different definitions of the term 'discourse'. In Widdowson's (1995, p. 158) words, "discourse is something everybody is talking about but without knowing with any certainty what it is: vogue and vague". Most scholars agree that discourse is both part of the social life and an instrument to create social life. As Souto-Manning (2014, p. 159) puts it, discourse is an "inherent and inseparable part of the social world, of the broader social context that shapes and is shaped by society".

The political discourse is a discourse produced by professionals in the field of politics. To this respect, van Dijk (2005) argues that the analysis of political discourse could be extended to a broader group of people, organizations, and all citizens as participating in the politics. In order to narrow down the concept of political discourse, in the present paper we understand it as any communication delivered by politicians addressing the rest of the citizens.

In the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) discourse is understood as "a form as social practice" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). CDA regards discourse as a significant tool sustaining power relations, and assumes that, as part of a wider political strategies, discourses entail political intentions and support policy beliefs. In fact, discourse is regarded as "a particular way of representing some part of the (physical, social, psychological) world (…), associated with different groups of people in different social positions" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 17). CDA is concerned with "the close analysis of texts and relations" (Fairclough, 2001) and therefore pays attention to the relation of discourse and power structures. In this line, discourses are conceived as "knowledge systems of the human sciences (medicine, economics, linguistics, etc.) that inform the social and governmental 'technologies' which constitute power in modern society" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 261). Moreover, some studies use the Foucauldian term "governmentality" to argue that discourse is a technique through which subjects are governed (Mayhew, 2009) (Sjölander-Lindqvist et al., 2020). In the context of COVID-19,

we could argue that official communication by the heads of state and heads of government and its capacity to influence – and govern over- individual behavior is key for the purpose of flattening the curve, decelerating the pace of the virus' contagion and, thus, avoiding an overstrain of the healthcare system (Sjölander-Lindqvist, et al., 2020, p. 3).

Fairclough and Wodak (1997) expose the following eight principles defining the Critical Discourse Analysis. First, CDA approaches social problems and cultural processes by making explicit power relations which frequently go unnoticed (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 271-279). Second, power relations are negotiated through discourse. Third, discourse constitutes society and culture, and the fourth principle asserts that discourse produces ideologies. The fifth principle claims that discourses make reference to their historical context. Sixth, CDA highlights that the link between text and society is mediated through Foucault's notion of "orders of discourse", the conceptual realm where knowledge is originated and produced (Fairclough, 2003). In this sense, according to Foucault, discursive practices reinforce the "order of discourse" making it virtually impossible to think outside them. The seventh principle points out that the purpose of CDA is interpreting and explaining. Finally, the last principle states that discourse is a form of social action.

3.2.2. Concepts and definitions

Context

It is paramount to understand the context in which a discourse is delivered, that is to say, the place, the moment, the addressee(s), the objective, and the overall background of the discourse itself. Some scholars suggest that discourse is not a mere representation, but rather a reflection of an aspect of reality that is intended to be shown and seeks to achieve a certain action (van Dijk & Mendizábal, 1999). In fact, discourses are modified in accordance with the circumstances in order to satisfy the speaker(s)' goals.

Style and rhetoric: Metaphors politicians live by

In this research we have found it necessary to pay close attention to the use heads of state and heads of government make of metaphors in their speeches. We have departed from the assumption that there is a connection between the metaphors used to frame problems and the policies taken to tackle them (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In their book

Metaphors we live by, Lakoff and Johnson define metaphors as the means used to "understand and experience one kind of thing in term of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). The way metaphors are constructed around a concept reflects assumptions about the concept itself and, in turn, shapes further action according to those conceptions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). "The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 23)*.*

As Michael J. Reddy (1979) put it in his theory "the conduit metaphor", ideas (objects) are put into words (containers) and sent (along a conduit) to a hearer who unfolds the object from the container. The metaphorical structuring involved is always partial, not total, thus, "part of a metaphorical concept does not and cannot fit" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 13). This can be exemplified by the structural metaphor *Time is money,* whereby time is conceived as a valuable commodity, a limited resource, but as opposed to money, once it is "wasted" it cannot be returned.

There are two main categories of metaphors: structural and orientational (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). On the one hand, structural metaphors refer to when one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 14). This is the case of *Argument is war:* whereby an argument (a verbal discourse) is equated to a war (an armed conflict). In fact, many of the things we do in arguing are partially structured by the concept of war and in terms of battle, which we will later observe in how some of the selected heads of state and heads of government equate the containment policies against the spread of COVID-19 to a war against an enemy (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4).

Orientational metaphors, on the contrary, organize a whole system of concepts with respect to one another based on cultural background and physical basis (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 14). In sentences such as "The number of infections is rising/ going up", we can observe an orientational metaphor framed as: "More is up" and "more is bad", therefore "bad is up". This connection of concepts that in fact contradicts the usual orientational metaphors, that usually go along the assumption "good is up" and "bad is down", as could be seen in the sentence "I'm feeling down today".

4. Methodological framework

In this section we will explain the selection of the speeches, as well as where they can be consulted, and we will proceed to explain the methodology used in the analysis of the speeches. Finally, we will discuss the limitations of the study.

4.1. Constitution of the corpus and selection of the documents

The documents to be analyzed are of a purely political nature. The selection of these speeches has been made according to a criterion of relevance and interest for the purpose of the study. Since all of the speeches were delivered by heads of state and heads of government of the selected European countries (France, Germany, and Spain) and were broadcast on TV, they played an important role during the management COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the speeches addressed a similar target audience, the citizens of their respective countries in a time of uncertainty around the public measures to contain the first wave of COVID-19. The time frame of the research is the month of March 2020, a key moment for their political communication since it was the month when the governments of the selected countries implemented measures to combat the virus. For the purpose of the study, we have also included the speech delivered by Frank-Walter Steinmeier on 11th April, so as to have a better sense of the German leaders' communication during the first weeks of the pandemic.

The selected countries present different governmental structures that shape, in turn, the nature of the official communication addressing the population. This could be observed in the French semi-presidential system with the prevalence of the head of state, the President Emmanuel Macron, over the head of government, Jean Castex. While the former delivered addressed the nation through three formal speeches, Castex did not pronounce himself publicly on the matter. On the contrary, in the Federal Parliamentary Republic of Germany the head of state, the Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel, plays a more important role than the head of state (Bundespräsident), the Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, which can be reflected in timing of the official speeches delivered to the nation by Angela Merkel (18th, March) in comparison to a later one by Steinmeier (11th April). As a parliamentary monarchy, the Spanish head of the state is the King, currently King Felipe IV, while the head of government is the democratically elected President, currently Pedro Sánchez. The traditional role of the

Spanish monarchy during times of crisis may explain why both the President Pedro Sánchez and the King Felipe IV addressed the nation during the initial phase of the coronavirus outbreak.

Moreover, there are differences in the quantity and extension of the selected speeches. While Emmanuel Macron addressed the French nation three times, namely on March 12th, 16th and 21st, the German chancellor Angela Merkel only pronounced one speech, on March 18th, coupled with another one delivered by Federal President on April 11th. In the case of Spain, three speeches to the nation were delivered during the time frame: two by Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, one on March 13th and the other one, on March 21st, and another one by King Felipe VI, pronounced on March 8th.

All the speeches have been extracted from official websites of the selected countries, being elysee.fr in the case of France, bundeskanzlerin.de in the case of Germany and lamoncloa.gob.es and casareal.es in the case of Spain. Due to the length of the speeches, the author has decided not to include the transcripts of the speeches in the annexes, which exceeds the limits of the research. They can, nonetheless, be accessed for consultation through the links provided in **Table 1**, together with a wordcount.

Country	Speeches by the Heads of State (HS) and Heads of Government (HG)	Wordcount
France	President Emmanuel Macron (**HS**) 2020-03-12. Addresse aux Français https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2020/03/12/adresse-aux-francais	3,507
	President Emmanuel Macron (**HS**) 2020-03-16. Addresse aux Français du Président de la République Emmanuel Macron https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2020/03/16/adresse-aux-francais-covid19	2,655
	President Emmanuel Macron (**HS**) 2020-03-25. Déclaration de M. Emmanuel Macron, président de la République, sur la mobilisation face à l'épidémie de Covid-19, en particulier le rôle des soignants, et sur le lancement de l'opération militaire Résilience en soutien à lutte contre la diffusion du coronavirus, Mulhouse https://www.vie-publique.fr/discours/273982-emmanuel-macron-25-mars-2020-discours-de-mulhouse	2,177
Germany	Chancellor and chief executive of Germany Angela Merkel (**HG**) 2020-03-18. "Fernsehansprache von Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel"	1654

	https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/aktuelles/fernsehansprache-von-bundeskanzlerin-angela-merkel-1732134	
	Televised address by Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier (**HS**) on the coronavirus pandemic at Schloss Bellevue, on 11 April 2020 https://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Reden/2020/04/200411-TV-Ansprache-Corona.pdf?__blob=publicationFile	1091
Spain	Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez (**HG**) 2020-03-13. "Declaración del presidente del Gobierno para anunciar el estado de alarma" https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/multimedia/videos/presidente/Paginas/2020/130320-sanchez-declaracio.aspx	979
	King Felipe IV (**HS**) 2020-03-18. "Mensaje de Su Majestad el Rey" https://www.casareal.es/EN/Actividades/Paginas/actividades_discursos_detalle.aspx?data=6232	864
	Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez (**HG**) 2020-03-21. "Press briefing by President of the Government on coronavirus crisis" https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/presidente/intervenciones/Paginas/2020/20200321press-covid19.aspx	7257

Table 1. *List of speeches made in March 2020 by the heads of government and heads of state of France, Germany, and Spain. Table inspired on the work of Sjölander-Lindqvist et al., (2020).*

4.2. Qualitative analysis of the speeches

The analysis of the selected speeches was carried out with Nvivo, a qualitative data analysis software, following a mixture of an inductive and deductive method to select 24 topics. On the one hand, the inductive method can be regarded in the consultation of pre- established categories, mostly based on the codebook Spanish Agendas Projects, which presented several health-related categories, from which we originally selected the following: (1) Sanitary facilities, hospitals, construction; (2) Agreements between the NHS and private companies.; (3) Human resources, education, and training. Health Manpower; (4) Disease prevention and health promotion; (5) Long-term treatment, rehabilitation services, hospice and problems relating to aging; and (6) Research and development in health (Chaqués-Bonafont, Palau, & Muñoz, 2014). Throughout the first review of the speeches, the pre-established categories were refined, considering the context of the first wave of COVID-19. Thus, category 1 was renamed as "Capacity of hospitals"; categories 2 and 3 evolved into the topic "Healthcare system and personnel"; category 4 was covered by both "Prevention measures" and "Slowing down the curve"; category 5 was renamed as "Protection of the vulnerable"; whereas category 6 was framed as "Trust in science".

On the other hand, the deductive method was applied after reading the speeches and revising the list of coding categories to add the findings. All the latter was carried out by deleting categories that were not mentioned in the speeches, narrowing down other broader categories as well as examining new discourse strands that were not drawn in prior to reading the texts. Examples of topics that had not been compiled before the first review of the texts but were later included are: Democracy (and the subtopic elections); Economic measures; Empathy showing; Essential workers; Europe; Explanation of COVID-19; Historical moment; Impact of COVID in daily life, Individual discipline; International cooperation (beyond Europe); Political unity and coordination; Predictions for the future; References to nation; Security forces; Societal cooperation; State of alarm and extraordinary measures; Transparency and honesty; and War rhetoric. The applied deductive methodology is in line with Mayring's "evolutionary coding", as the topics evolve during the codification process through considerations on the speeches (Mayring, 2002, p. 120).

In the course of the analysis, only one topic was selected per sentence. When in doubt between several topics, the author chose the most salient one, that is to say, the topic that had been coded the least throughout the text before.

5. Analysis of the selected speeches

In this section we will first, describe the domestic contexts and strategies upon COVID-19 in France, Germany, ad Spain. Second, we will explain 24 topics selected to analyze the speeches. Third, we will provide a contextualization of the selected speeches, together with a qualitative analysis of the topics used in the latter categories with the use of Nvivo.

5.1. Domestic strategies upon COVID-19: France, Germany, and Spain

In December 2019, the WHO's Country Office in the People's Republic of China noted the emergence of a cluster of cases of "viral pneumonia of unknown cause", in the region of Wuhan. The initial outbreak of coronavirus that had been allegedly originated in a seafood wholesale market in Wuhan, was soon followed by cases throughout the world, such as Japan or the USA. France was the first European country to inform WHO of cases of novel coronavirus, which was in February named COVID-19 by WHO. On

March 2020 WHO labelled COVID-19 as a global pandemic and the Director-General claimed that Europe had become "the epicenter of the pandemic, with more reported cases and deaths than the rest of the world combined, apart from the People's Republic of China" (World Health Organization, 2020). While most of the hospitals were overwhelmed by the influx of COVID-19 patients, Italy adopted severe restrictions on movement and strict public health measures first at the local level and then at the national level, policies that were later implemented in Spain, France, and other European countries. The impact of Sars-COVID-19 was such that, as of March 18th, 2020, more than 250 million were under lockdown in the EU and Germany and Belgium decided to adopt measures as well (Henley & Oltermann, 2020).

The domestic containment strategies to reduce the transmission of SARS-Cov-2 were different in the selected cases. After hitting hard on Italy, Spain became the second country with highest death rates and cases of COVID-19. Spain introduced a national lockdown on 14th March and harsh restrictions on mobility, except for the provision of basic needs.

After announcing the closure of schools, universities and all nonessential public areas, France implemented a national lockdown on March 17th. Individuals leaving their homes had to carry a written declaration that stated the reasons they were out, which, in turn, had to be related to either working, purchasing necessary groceries, health reasons, helping a vulnerable person, an individual physical activity or walking a pet.

Germany had a lower fatality rate than that of France or Spain, arguably because of its extensive testing thanks to its robust sector of laboratories. Although its policies differed from state to state, on March 22nd Angela Merkel announced the implementation of a "contact ban" on both the national and the federal level, limiting public gatherings to two people (except for families), adopting a 1.5m physical distance measure and shutting down most businesses (Wieler, Rexroth, & Gottschalk, 2020).

5.2. Recurrent topics

In this section we will analyze the speeches of the heads of state and heads of government of France, Germany, and Spain. To do so, we will first lay out the 24 topics selected and provide a definition for their codification of the speeches.

Definition of topics		
Topic		**Definition**
Capacity of hospitals		References to the number of beds available in hospitals and the over exhaustion of the healthcare system.
Democracy	General	References to the state of democracy, liberties, and freedoms of the citizen.
	Elections	Specific references to electoral procedures during times of COVID-19.
Economic measures		References to the economic extraordinary measures that the government would implement to cope with the consequences of the restrictions.
Empathy showing		Statements showing concern about the society and the victims of COVID-19.
Essential workers		References to workers in the so-called "essential areas", apart from healthcare and security forces (transport, agriculture, supermarkets, etc.)
Europe		References to Europe and the EU, mostly focused on finding a common solution for the COVID-19.
Explanation of COVID-19		Scientific explanations of the spread of COVID-19, potential symptoms, etc.
Healthcare system and personnel		References to the healthcare system, infrastructure, personnel, drugs, etc.
Historical moment		Comparison of COVID-19 to other historical events.
Impact of COVID in daily life		References to how COVID-19 and the consequent measures have impacted society.
Individual discipline		References allocating the responsibility of the fight against COVID-19 on the individual.
International cooperation (beyond Europe)		References to the need for international cooperation to fight the pandemic, beyond Europe.
Political unity and coordination		References to the need for political unity and coordination of all administrations.
Predictions for the future		References to the future after the pandemic and the lessons learned.
Prevention measures		Guidelines of prevention measures: hand sanitation, security distance, wearing masks, etc.
Protection of the vulnerable		Statements addressing the objective of protecting the ill and the elder from COVID-19.
References to nation		References to countrymen and the nation as a whole.
Security forces		References to the actions of policemen and the army.
Slowing down the curve		Statements addressing the objective of abating the pandemic.
Societal cooperation		References to the need for a coordinated answer from the society as a whole.
State of alarm and extraordinary measures		Explanation of extraordinary measures and the establishment of a State of alarm.

Transparency and honesty	Statements enhancing trust on official sources of communication, reinforcing the need to listen to them and informing about the danger of fake news.
Trust in science	Statements reinforcing the need to follow scientific recommendations.
War rhetoric	References to COVID-19 in terms of war.

5.3.   Contextualization of the speeches

5.3.1. France

On March 12th, 2020, Emmanuel Macron delivered a speech calling the COVID-19 crisis *"the most serious health crisis that France has experienced in a century"[1]* and indicating that the Nation was *"only at the beginning of this epidemic"[2]*. As he started praising "the Nation" for their endurance by calling out for French values such as solidarity and fraternity, he also praised the work of the health workers by calling them the "heroes in white shirts":

> They have all agreed to take time out of their personal and family lives for our health. (...) These thousands of admirable women and men who have no other compass than care, no other concern than the human being, our well-being, our life, quite simply. [3]

While the President conceded that the effects of the Covid-19 on the "majority of cases" were minimum, he stressed the imperative to protect the "most vulnerable compatriots" who were elderly or affected by chronic diseases. Indeed, that was the priority of the Nation listed by President Macron throughout his speech, whereas the second one was stopping the epidemic so as to avoid the exhaustion of the hospitals[4].

As the municipal elections had been convoked for 15th March, President Macron framed the general political will to continue with the municipal elections through the importance of securing the democratic life of France, all in all, underlining the importance of following the security measures. As for the policies the government

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[1] « La plus grave crise sanitaire qu'ait connu la France depuis un siècle «

[2] « Nous ne sommes qu'au début de cette épidémie »

[3] « Tous ont accepté de prendre du temps sur leur vie personnelle, familiale, pour notre santé. (…) Ces milliers de femmes et d'hommes admirables qui n'ont d'autre boussole que le soin, d'autre préoccupation que l'humain, notre bien-être, notre vie, tout simplement. »

[4] « Il faut continuer de gagner du temps, et pour cela, je vais vous demander de continuer à faire des sacrifices et plutôt d'en faire davantage, mais pour notre intérêt collectif. »

would take, Macron announced the closure of schools and universities to avoid contagion, the need to work from home, when possible, the maintenance of public transport as well as economic measures aimed at delaying the payment of taxes and "defending businesses of all sizes". On the health realm, he called for the mobilization of all health workers and researchers, as he demanded trust in science, stating that France had the best virologists, epidemiologists, clinicians, and specialists of great renown.

> I hope that in the coming weeks and months we will have the first treatments that we can generalize. Europe has all the assets to offer the world the antidote to Covid-19.[5]

Furthermore, he stressed the need for two types of "withdrawals"[6]. On the one hand, he underscored the need for a nationalist withdrawal, since "This virus does not have a passport". In fact, during his intervention, Macron dedicated a special mention to the EU's response and proposing measures at the level of the G7, calling for a coordinated response while showing a strong identification with Europe:

> We Europeans will not let a financial and economic crisis spread. We will react strongly, and we will react quickly.[7]

On the other hand, he called for an individualist withdrawal, stressing the role of every individual to rally around the measures taken applying hand sanitation and security distance through self-discipline and unity.

> I am counting on all of you to make a nation out of us. To awaken the best in us, to reveal that generous soul which, in the past, has allowed France to face the hardest trials. [8]

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[5] « J'espère que dans les prochaines semaines et les prochains mois, nous aurons des premiers traitements que nous pourrons généraliser. L'Europe a tous les atouts pour offrir au monde l'antidote au Covid-19. »

[6] « Repli »

[7] « Nous, Européens, ne laisserons pas une crise financière et économique se propager. Nous réagirons fort et nous réagirons vite. »

[8] « Je compte sur vous toutes et tous pour faire Nation au fond. Pour réveiller ce qu'il y a de meilleur en nous, pour révéler cette âme généreuse qui, par le passé, a permis à la France d'affronter les plus dures épreuves. »

President Macron finished his speech by saying that there would be time in the future to question the flaws of the system, "the weaknesses of our democracies" that had led to that crisis and that, on the contrary, current moment required "the protection of our fellow citizens and the cohesion of the Nation". He then claimed that the Nation needed to retrieve the soul that has allowed the French society to overcome all the crises throughout history.

All in all, the top three topics used in Macron's speech on March 12th were, in accordance to the previous summary, economic measures, healthcare system and personnel, and societal cooperation (**Graphic 1**).
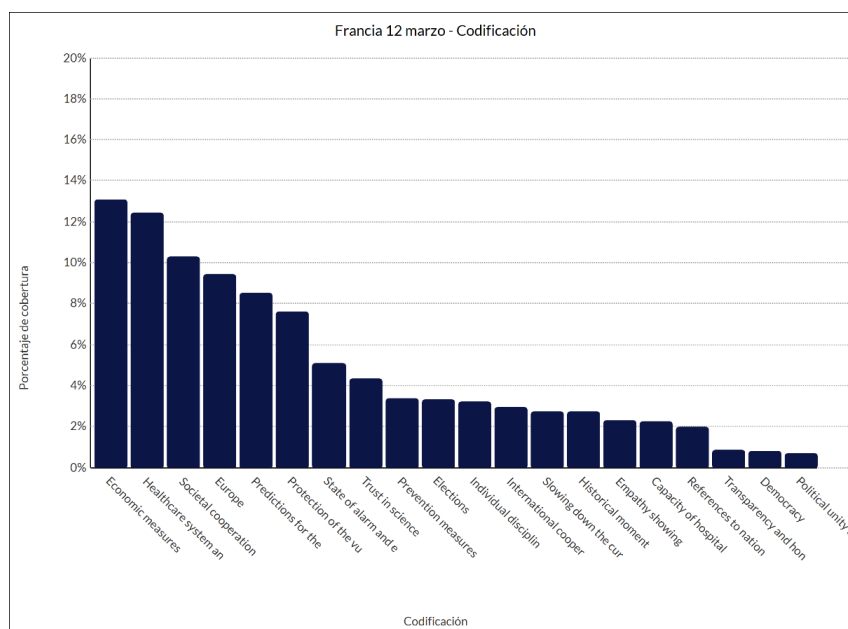
Graphic 1*. Percentage of coverage of the topics in Emmanuel Macron's speech on 12 March 2020.*

On March 16th, 2020, Emmanuel Macron addressed the French nation once again, upon the once "distant idea", now "immediate reality" of the epidemic. He provided justification of all the measures (closing non-essential businesses, schools, etc.) for the protection of the society against the virus' propagation by claiming that "Never before has France had to take such decisions - obviously exceptional, obviously temporary - in times of peace*."[9]* Macron also announced that the second round of the municipal

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[9] « Jamais la France n'avait dû prendre de telles décisions - évidemment exceptionnelles, évidemment temporaires - en temps de Paix »

elections would be postponed and claimed the decision had been taken by a unanimous agreement. Furthermore, he drew on the "good and the bad citizen" dichotomy, opposing the people that were not following the rules, in his words, "As if, deep down, life had not changed", and risking themselves and the whole society. He then announced that from then on meetings and reunions with non-cohabitating people were not allowed, that all business needed to adapt themselves to home office, and the European decision to suspend all travels from outside the EU.

> Obviously, tonight I am laying down new rules, we are laying down prohibitions, there will be controls. But the best rule is the one that you, as citizens, apply to yourselves. Once again, I appeal to your sense of responsibility and solidarity.[10]

After showing empathy with the public, "My dear compatriots, I understand the impact of all these decisions on your lives"[11], Macron stated his famous quote "We are at war, in a sanitary war", which went viral on all newspapers:

> We are not fighting against an army, nor against another Nation. But the enemy is there, invisible, elusive, advancing. And this requires our general mobilization.[12]

Emmanuel Macron went on with the idea of the sanitary war throughout his speech to talk about the new draft law, to call for unity to all the sectors and using a warfare rhetoric talking about how "no French person will be left without resources". He continued underscoring the Nation's need to support "its children who, as health care workers in cities and hospitals, are on the front line of a battle that will require their energy, determination and solidarity."

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[10] « Evidemment, ce soir, je pose des règles nouvelles, nous posons des interdits, il y aura des contrôles. Mais la meilleure règle, c'est celle qu'en tant que citoyen, vous vous appliquez à vous-mêmes. Une fois encore, j'en appelle à votre sens des responsabilités et de la solidarité. »
[11] « Mes chers compatriotes, je mesure l'impact de toutes ces décisions sur vos vies. »
[12] « Nous sommes en guerre, en guerre sanitaire, certes : nous ne luttons ni contre une armée, ni contre une autre Nation. Mais l'ennemi est là, invisible, insaisissable, qui progresse. Et cela requiert notre mobilisation générale. »

> They have rights over us. We obviously owe them the means, the protection. We will be there. We owe them masks, gel, all the necessary equipment, and we will see to it.[13]

Macron called the nation to remain calm and come up with innovative ways of keeping in touch with the loved ones, as well as avoiding fake news and *"the spirit of panic, (…) the false rumors, half-experts or false experts".* In that regard, he insisted that people should trust the government by claiming that "The word is clear, the information is transparent, and we will continue to give it.*"*

> I will address you regularly. I will tell you each time, as I have done, as the Government is doing, the truth about the evolution of the situation.[14]

He made a final call for hope using future tenses, putting the focus on "the day after" all the struggle, a day in which all the concerns of the pandemics will be nothing but lessons for the French nation.

> We will win, but this period will have taught us a lot. Many certainties and convictions have been swept away and will be called into question. Many things that we thought were impossible are happening. Let us not be impressed. Let's act with strength, but let's remember this: the day after, when we have won, it won't be a return to the day before. We will be morally stronger, we will have learned, and I will be able to draw all the consequences with you. [15]

As we can see in the following graphic, the most coded topic was state of alarm and extraordinary measures, which shifted from receiving a 5% of the total speech on March 12th (**Graphic 1**) to an outstanding 17% on March 16th (**Graphic 2**). The topic of economic measures

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[13] « La Nation soutiendra ses enfants qui, personnels soignants en ville, à l'hôpital, se trouvent en première ligne dans un combat qui va leur demander énergie, détermination, solidarité. Ils ont des droits sur nous. Nous leur devons évidemment les moyens, la protection. Nous serons là. Nous leur devons des masques, du gel, tout le matériel nécessaire et nous y veillons et veillerons »

[14] « Régulièrement, je m'adresserai à vous. Je vous dirai à chaque fois, comme je l'ai fait, comme le Gouvernement le fait, la vérité sur l'évolution de la situation ».

[15] « Nous gagnerons, mais cette période nous aura beaucoup appris. Beaucoup de certitudes, de convictions sont balayées, seront remises en cause. Beaucoup de choses que nous pensions impossibles adviennent. Ne nous laissons pas impressionner. Agissons avec force mais retenons cela : le jour d'après, quand nous aurons gagné, ce ne sera pas un retour au jour d'avant. Nous serons plus forts moralement, nous aurons appris et je saurai aussi avec vous en tirer toutes les conséquences, toutes les conséquences.»

continued to rank among the most coded topics, followed this time by individual discipline, instead of societal cooperation as in Graphic 1. Moreover, the topic predictions for the future continues to have an important share of the speech.
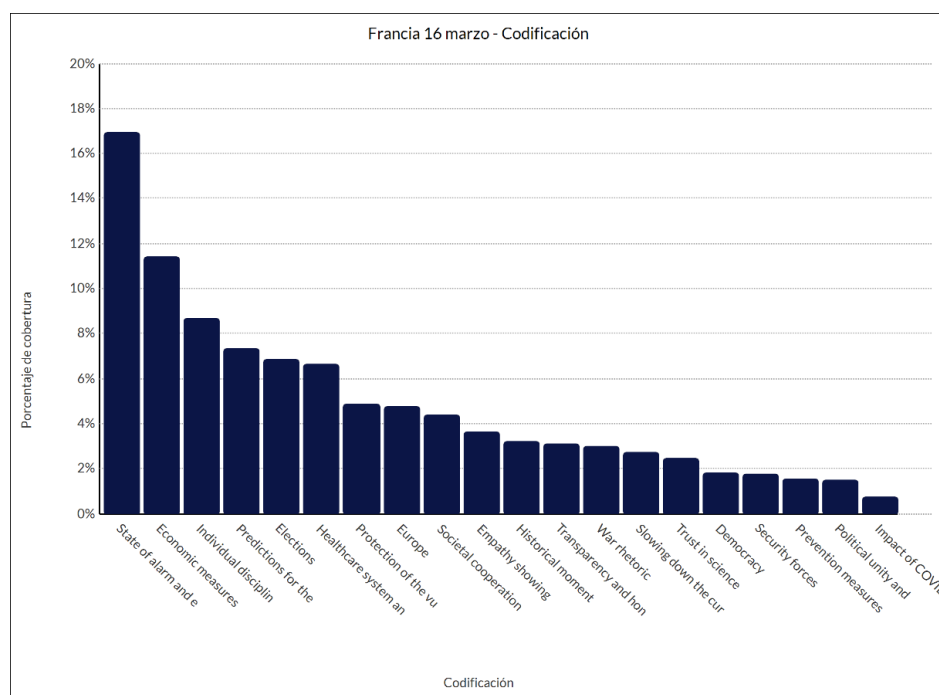
Graphic 2. *Percentage of coverage of the topics in Emmanuel Macron's speech on 16 March 2020.*

On March 25th, 2020, Macron addressed the nation once again, from Mulhouse, an Alsacian town which was at the time, the most impacted by the epidemic. Once again, the French President showed empathy towards the suffering of the victims' families' suffering. He then underscored the value of transparency by laying out all the measures the government was taking related to the transport of medical equipment, the mobilization of all state services, the government's engagement with "a massive investment plan for investment and upgrading of all careers" or the deployment of military resources to combat the virus with the Operation Résilience. Macron alluded to the fraternity the nation was witnessing in three different parts of the population, having different roles, yet all of them of paramount importance: the "first line healthcare workers", to whom he added that the nation paid tribute; all the workers that "keep the nation alive" (those working for agriculture, transport, cleaning, etc.) on the second line; and those staying at home on the third line. Furthermore, he talked again about the role of the EU, by thanking neighbor European countries for having

taken charge of heavy patients, claiming "This is also Europe, the real Europe, this solidarity." The French President finished his intervention taking up the warfare rhetoric:

> This evening I wanted to be here, alongside our carers, alongside our armies, alongside our patients, to say that the whole nation is committed, committed to this fight. Everyone has a role to play, every citizen, because the French nation is a block and because in this war, we must be united, proud, and grateful for the role of each one of us and hold on to the unity and courage that will enable us to win. We are only at the beginning, but we will hold on.[16]

In Graphic 3, we can observe a shift in the topics coded from the previous speeches with regards to the economic measures, which had ranked on the first three most coded topics in the previous speeches (**Graphics 1 & 2**) and now is located on the seventh position. This phenomenon can be explained by the emergence of other topics, such as security forces and essential workers.
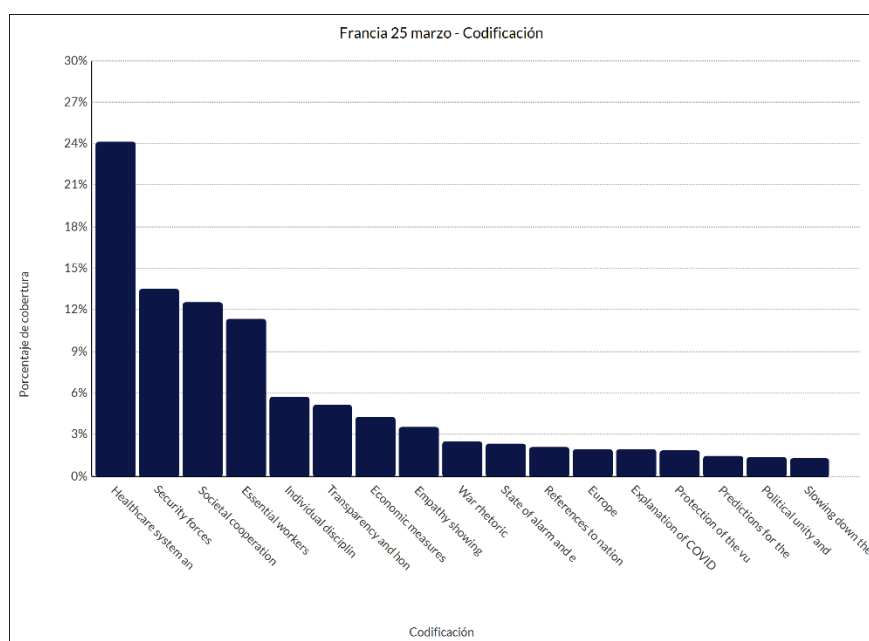
Graphic 3. *Percentage of coverage of the issues in Emmanuel Macron's speech on 25 March 2020.*

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[16] « Ce soir je voulais être là, aux côtés de nos soignants, aux côtés de nos armées, aux côtés de nos malades, pour dire que toute la Nation est engagée, engagée dans ce combat. Chacun a un rôle à y jouer, chaque citoyen, parce que la Nation française est un bloc et parce que dans cette guerre nous devons faire bloc, être unis, fiers et reconnaissants pour le rôle de chacun et tenir l'unité et le courage nous permettront de vaincre. Nous ne sommes qu'au début mais nous tiendrons. »

Graphic 4. *Percentage of topics in all France's speech*

Percentage of topics in all France's speeches

Legend:
- Capacity of hospitals
- Democracy
- Elections
- Economic measures
- Empathy showing
- Essential workers
- Europe
- Explanation of COVID-19
- Healthcare system and personnel
- Historical moment
- Impact of COVID in daily life
- Individual discipline
- International cooperation (beyond Europe)
- Political unity and coordination
- Predictions for the future
- Prevention measures
- Protection of the vulnerable
- References to nation
- Security forces
- Slowing down the curve
- Societal cooperation
- State of alarm and extraordinary measures
- Transparency and honesty
- Trust in science
- War rhetoric

All in all, we can observe that the topics that were coded the most in all France's speeches were healthcare system and personnel (15%), economic measures (10%), societal cooperation (9%), state of alarm and extraordinary measures (8%), Europe (6%) and individual discipline (6%) (**Graphic 4**).

5.3.2. Germany

The German Chancellor speech from March 18th, 2020, was the sole official communication was released in March directed to the public by either the head of state or the head of government in Germany. The overall narrative frame of the speech delved in the idea that Germany is a democracy and that the temporary restrictions of the freedoms were for the benefit of everyone, which can be observed in the following quote:

> We are a democracy. We do not live by coercion, but by shared knowledge and participation. This is a historic challenge, and it can only be achieved together.[17]

This narrative can be first seen in the constant stressing of the politicians' and government's duty (and that of herself as the Chancellor) to preserve democracy through transparent communication on the decision-making in what she deemed was an unprecedented moment in the history of Germany since the Second World War.

Throughout her speech, Angela Merkel addressed the direct consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, referred to those concerning the spread of the disease and the suffering of the ill people. In addition, she insisted on the need to avoid an overstrain of the hospitals, albeit the excellency and readiness of the German healthcare system:

> However, our hospitals would also be completely overwhelmed if too many patients were admitted in a short period of time and suffered a severe course of corona infection.[18]

The German Chancellor chose a war metaphor when she thanked publicly health and primary workers for their effort during the crisis by claiming that "in this fight" they were

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[17] „Wir sind eine Demokratie. Wir leben nicht von Zwang, sondern von geteiltem Wissen und Mitwirkung. Dies ist eine historische Aufgabe und sie ist nur gemeinsam zu bewältigen."

[18] „Aber auch unsere Krankenhäuser wären völlig überfordert, wenn in kürzester Zeit zu viele Patienten eingeliefert würden, die einen schweren Verlauf der Coronainfektion erleiden".

"fighting in the frontline". In addition, she highlighted the role of experts and scientists in driving national policies, the need for the population to follow the healthcare guidelines (hand sanitation, security distance, etc.) and to be patient for the arrival of a vaccine, which, at that time, was not yet developed.

Moreover, Angela Merkel laid out the indirect effects of coronavirus: the consequences of social distancing and lockdown for the individual and the society as a whole. The Chancellor touched on the effects of the containment policies on the economy and ensured that the government was working on alleviating the hardship for both big and small businesses. She also exposed the psychological effect of the lockdown and praised all the solidary movements that had emerged to fight loneliness and to take care of the most vulnerable people. Likewise, the German Chancellor stressed how the national strategy to contain the spread of the SARS-Cov-2 could pose a threat to fundamental democratic values, such as the restriction of the freedom of movement. However, she reinstated that such policies were temporary and for the benefit of everyone and ended up her speech by thanking everyone for following the rules.

Angela Merkel called out for individual responsibility upon the contagion containment by claiming that the outcome of the crisis and, therefore, the solution to it, were to a great extent dependent on the discipline of individuals. To do so, Merkel used a juxtaposition to underscore the importance of cooperation when she claimed that the pandemic proved "how vulnerable we all are", but "how we can protect and strengthen each other by acting together" by abiding the rules. Moreover, she aimed at bringing closer the "abstract figures in statistics" to the population by stating that those collective numbers represent single lives, those of "a father or a grandfather, a mother or a grandmother, a partner" and that "No one is expendable. Everyone counts, it requires all of our efforts". In this sense, her speech was marked by a constant effort to empathize with the suffering of the people derived from the changes that they were experiencing due to coronavirus.

To sum up, throughout her speech Angela Merkel used a narrative stressing the need to uphold democracy during the times of crisis. She underscored the problems deriving directly from the SARS-Cov-2, such as the spread of the disease, the suffering of the ill people and the over exhaustion of hospitals; and economic, psychological, and

democratic issues generated from the government restrictions to prevent a further contagion. She emphasized the role of the individual as the key agent in putting a solution to the crisis by complying with the rules. This can be reflected in the selection of topics by Merkel's speech (**Graphic 5**), being individual discipline the most coded topic, followed by state of alarm and extraordinary measures and societal cooperation.
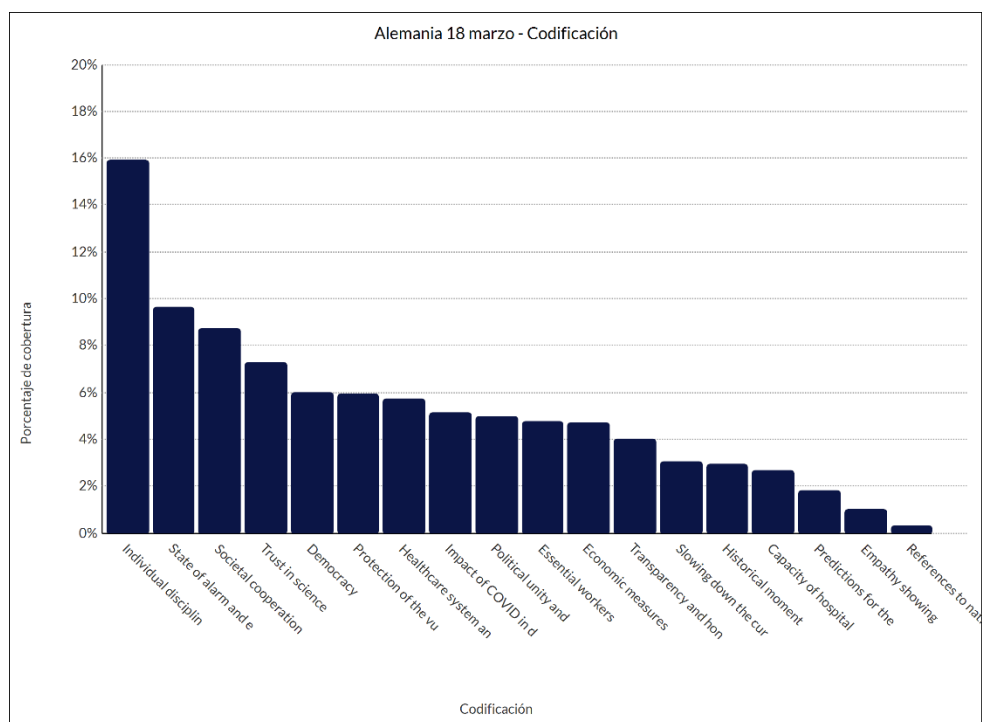
Graphic 5. *Percentage of coverage of the topics in Angela Merkel's speech on 18 March 2020.*

On April 11th, the German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier addressed the country through a televised speech on the coronavirus pandemic at Schloss Bellevu. As it was the beginning of Easter, the speech was full of references of how different 2020 Easter would be from the past ones and how COVID-19 would have an enormous impact in the future. The Federal President showed empathy for the victims of the pandemic but mostly praised the population for the efforts made during the previous weeks and called for the continuation with the solidarity at all levels of society and across all nations in Europe. Most remarkably was his challenge to Macron's war frame, indicating that the pandemic was not a war, but rather a test for humanity:

> No, this pandemic is not a war. It does not pit nations against nations, or soldiers against soldiers. Rather, it is a test of our humanity. It brings out the worst and the best in people. Let us show each other our best side![19]

As we will further elaborate on, we can argue that Steinmeier's narrative focusing on the future, on the changes in daily life derived from COVID-19 and on showing empathy for the population (**Graphic 6**) corresponds to his ceremonial role as Germany's Head of State, being the leader of the Nation that needs to appease the citizens in such a Critical time.
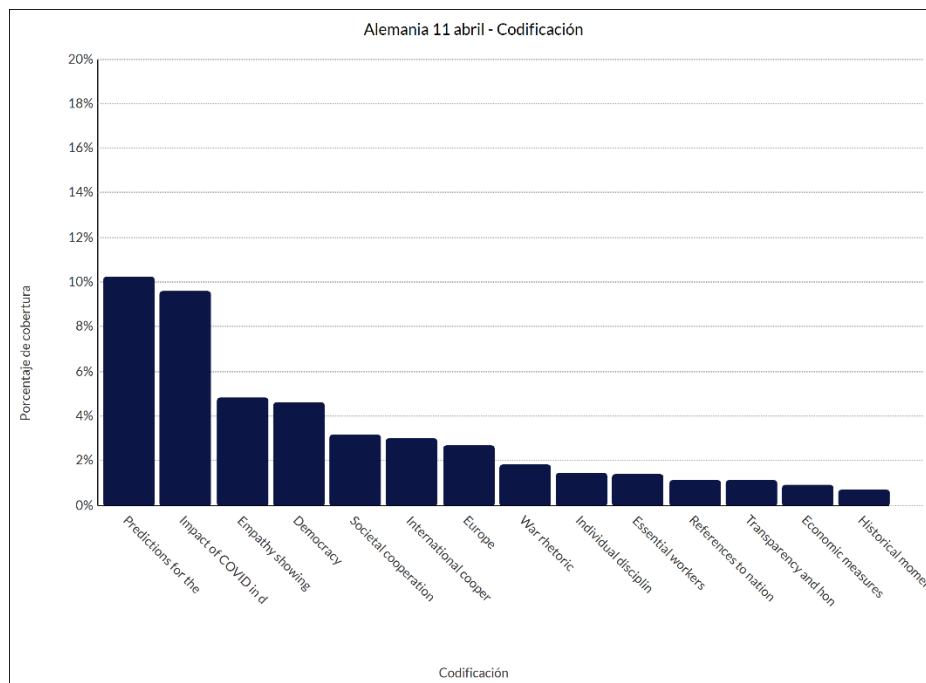
Graphic 6. *Percentage of coverage of the topics in Frank-Walter Steinmeier's speech on 11 April 2020.*

All in all, the most coded topics in all Germany's speeches are individual discipline (12%), impact of COVID in daily life (10%), predictions for the future (9%), democracy (8%), and societal cooperation (8%) (**Graphic 7**).

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[19] „Nein, diese Pandemie ist kein Krieg. Nationen stehen nicht gegen Nationen, Soldaten nicht gegen Soldaten. Sondern sie ist eine Prüfung unserer Menschlichkeit. Sie ruft das Schlechteste und das Beste in den Menschen hervor. Zeigen wir einander doch das Beste in uns!"

Graphic 7. *Percentage of topics in all Germany's speeches*

Percentage of topics in all Germany's speeches
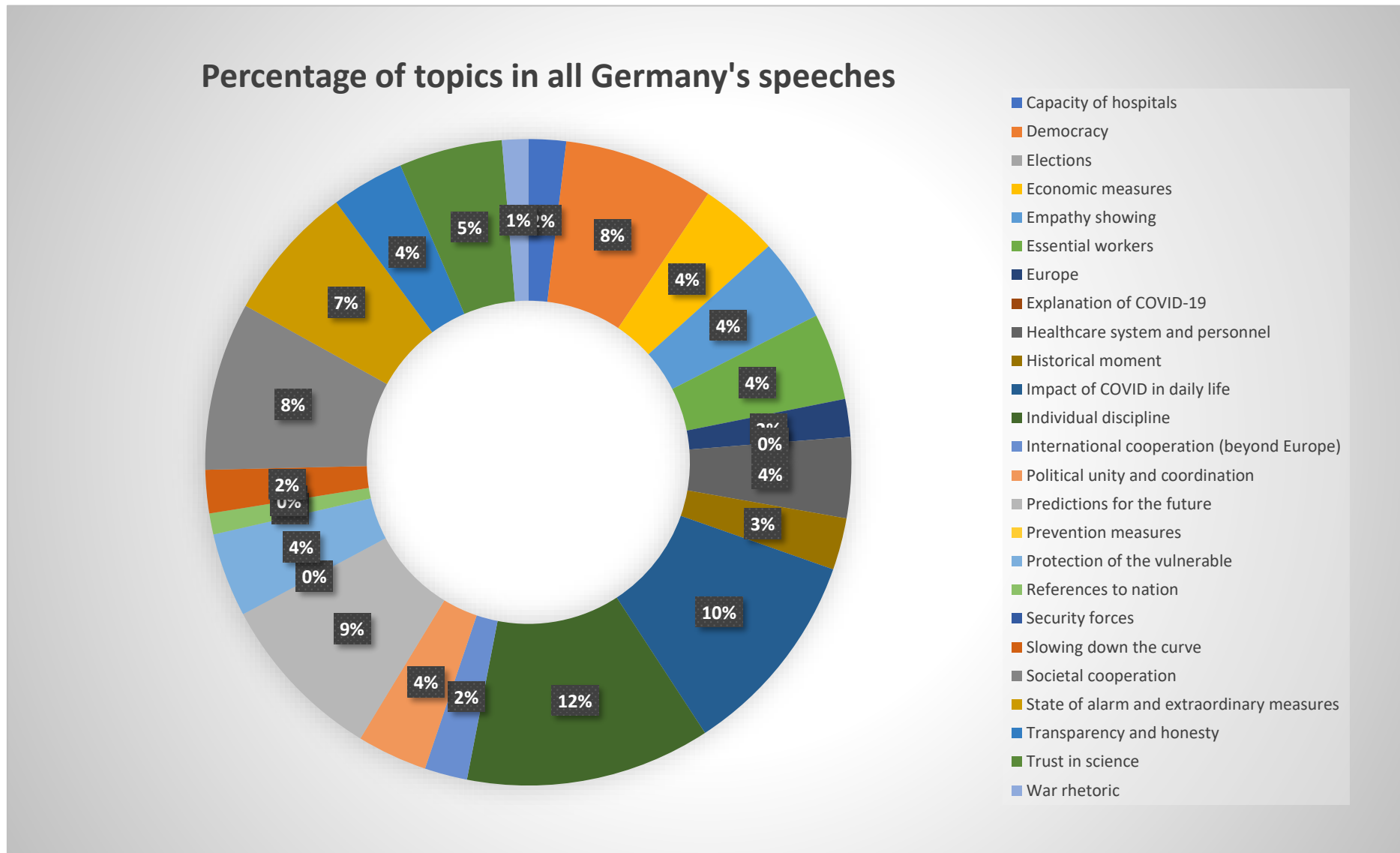
5.3.3. Spain

The President of the Spanish government Pedro Sánchez on March 13, 2020, announced in an institutional statement the decree of a state of emergency for the following fifteen days. In that speech he justified the use of the State of Emergency by stating it was an extraordinary "instrument of our Rule of Law, enshrined in our Constitution", to confront extraordinary crises "as the one the world and our country are unfortunately suffering". Moreover, he explained the communication procedures that he was carrying out to inform the Congress of Deputies and the regional leaders.

Throughout the speech Pedro Sánchez often compared the COVID-19 crisis to a "a combat against a virus" and affirmed that "hard weeks await us". He then stressed "unity, responsibility and social discipline" as the guiding principles to face the challenge and allocated "missions" to different shares of society. First, he expressed the will of the Spanish Government and the regional authorities' commitment to mobilize all their resources to curb the pandemic so as "to protect all citizens, specially the most vulnerable". Second, he referred to the "healthcare professionals in the frontline" as "our shield against the virus" and thanked them for "their dedication and sacrifice". Third, he asked for the collaboration of the citizens in following the experts' guidelines, with a special note for the youth, deemed as "decisive" in the contagion containment, and the elderly people and people with chronic diseases to protect themselves at all costs.

The Spanish President finished his intervention by addressing to what he called his "fellow countrymen"[20] and, in a war-like tone declared:

> Victory depends on each one of us, at home, in our families, at work, in our neighborhoods. Heroism is also about washing one's hands, staying at home, and protecting oneself, in order to protect all citizens.[21]

All in all, the topics that were coded the most in Pedro Sánchez's first speech were state of the alarm and extraordinary measures; individual discipline; and political unity and coordination (**Graphic 8**).

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[20] "Compatriotas"

[21] "La victoria depende de cada uno de nosotros, en nuestro hogar, en nuestra familia, en el trabajo, en nuestro vecindario. El heroísmo consiste, también, en lavarse las manos, en quedarse en casa y en protegerse uno mismo, para proteger al conjunto de la ciudadanía."

España 13 marzo - Codificación
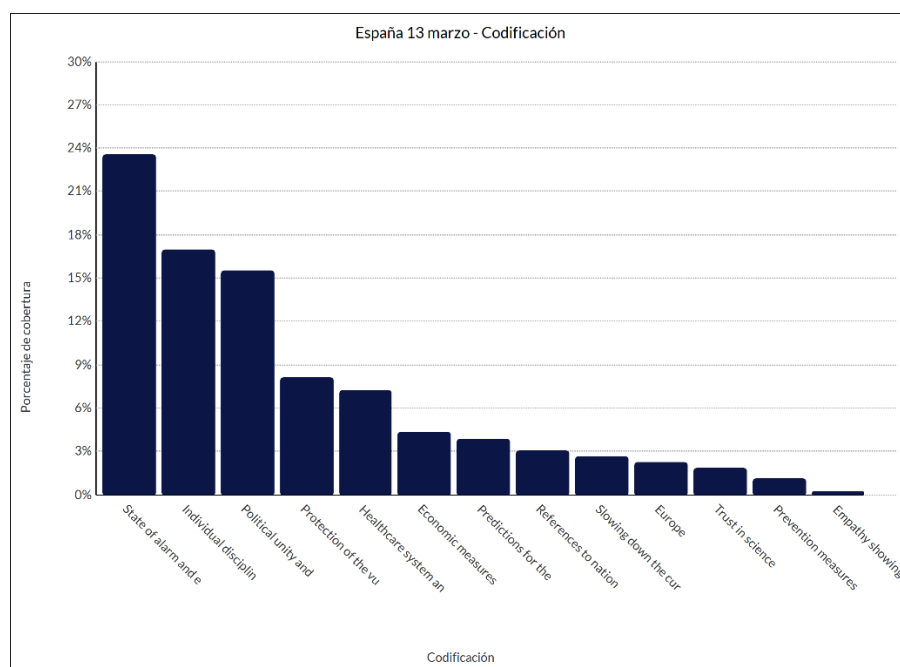
Graphic 8. Percentage of coverage of the topics in Pedro Sánchez's speech on 13 March 2020.

On March 18th, 2020, the King Felipe VI addressed the nation to show sympathy for the people suffering due to the impact of the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis and gratitude for the primary and healthcare workers, deemed as the "vanguard" of society through their "sacrifice" and "courage". He then described the COVID-19 crisis as a reality that was testing the values and capacities of the State and stated that through national unity, individual responsibility and solidarity Spain would overcome this temporary crisis and retrieve normality. "Spain will regain its pulse, its vitality, its strength". By alluding to war terminology, the King's speech finished by stating:

> This virus will not defeat us. On the contrary. It will make us stronger as a society; a society that is more committed, more supportive, more united. A society that stands up to any adversity.[22]

In the same way as Steinmeier, the topics that were coded the most by King Philip VI were predictions for the future and empathy showing (**Graphic 7**), in relation to their role as the Head of State in both countries. In the speech of King Philip VI, the topic healthcare system and personnel ranked the second position in terms of codification, related to his praise to the Spanish healthcare workers (**Graphic 9**).

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[22] "Este virus no nos vencerá. Al contrario. Nos va a hacer más fuertes como sociedad; una sociedad más comprometida, más solidaria, más unida. Una sociedad en pie frente a cualquier adversidad"
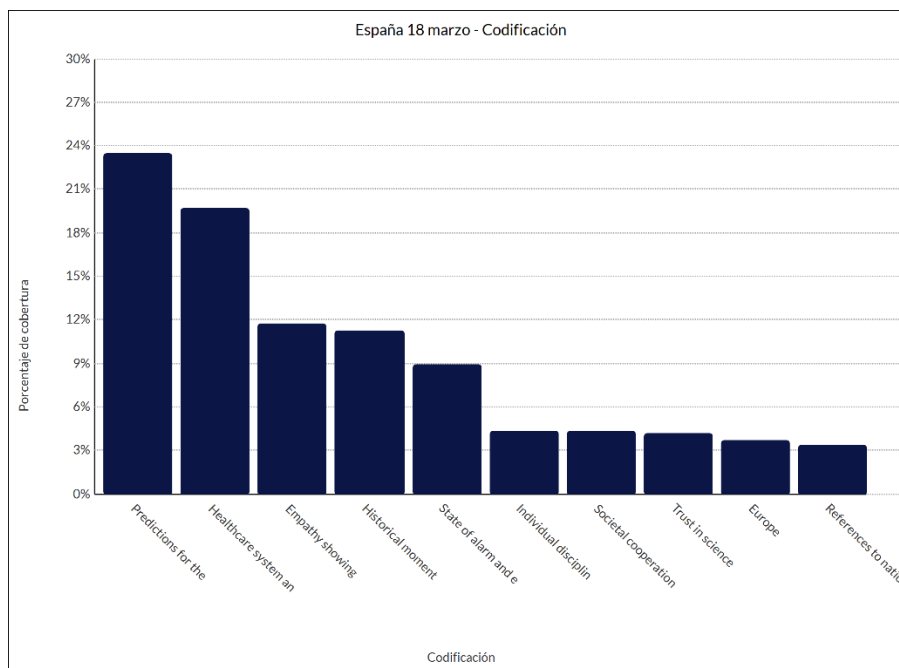
Graphic 9. *Percentage of coverage of the topics in King Philip VI's speech on 18 March 2020.*

On March 21st, 2020, Pedro Sánchez addressed the population to inform "on the progress of the fight against the coronavirus pandemic". Just like other European leaders compared the coronavirus challenge with the Second World War, Sánchez drew a comparison with the challenge that the Spanish Civil War posed to the nation and used terminology specific to natural disasters, such as "catastrophe" or "avalanche". In this speech, the President of the Spanish Government faced the challenge of informing the nation that Spain was "one of the worst affected countries in Europe and in the world", providing data of the contagion and death cases of the Spanish "compatriots" and explaining that the impact of the virus was not uniform throughout the territory.

A week had passed after the announcement of the state of emergency and the Spanish President constructed a parallelism around the lessons of the latter seven days for the nation: those seven days had taught the society the value of life, health, family, and even relations with the neighbor. Furthermore, by using an "us vs. them" frame, Pedro Sánchez argued that the latter seven days had served to gain a better picture of which he deemed to be "the enemy", the SARS-Cov-2 and, by showcasing a mix of risk communication and science communication, he explained that this virus was more widespread and lethal than the common flu.

In order to promote responsible attitudes, Pedro Sánchez introduced what I will term as the "Good and bad citizen dichotomy", whereby the good citizen is described as having rational fear but at the same time as someone who contrasts the information, he/she consumes and follows government indications by staying at home, whereas the bad citizen is prone to consulting and spreading fake news, hoards food and does not abide the rules. Throughout the speech, the President of the Spanish Government praised the good citizen traits and claimed that:

> The vast majority of Spanish society (…) is reacting with tremendous responsibility, discipline and a desire for victory.[23]

He also gave some examples of how the good citizen attitudes had prevailed during the first week of the state of emergency, such as the reduction in transport, and, in turn, hydrocarbon emissions, or the decline of criminal offences by 50%. In this line, Sánchez argued that the COVID-19 as a test on the society, just like King Felipe VI put it, and added that "this calamity is bringing out the best in us".

Following his allusion to war terms, Pedro Sánchez talks about the three main battlefields, all equally important, where there is an ongoing fight against what is pictured as "the common enemy". The first one, already mentioned in his previous speech is that of the healthcare system, whose main problem, he insists, is not on fighting the virus itself, but on the exhaustion of the healthcare system. In this sense, he also reflects on the need to "gain time" to curb the pandemics, an idea that is also present in Angela Merkel's speech. Throughout the speech, he praised the service of the healthcare workers, together with that of the primary workers and the law enforcement bodies.

The second battlefield was that of the government and authorities, which, he announced, were working on the provision of health resources, and had already hired a big number of healthcare professionals to fight the virus. Sánchez argued that the government was already fighting the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis beyond health by working on the mitigation of the economic impact and ensuring access to information for all citizens. He repeated a quote from his last speech "we will do

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[23] "Nuestra sociedad española, en su inmensa mayoría, (…), está reaccionando con una impresionante responsabilidad, disciplina y moral de victoria."

whatever we need to, whenever and wherever we need to" and called on political unity to serve the people arguing that "we now must stand up to defeat this virus, which is our common enemy, and we must now urgently save lives, jobs and companies". In addition, Sánchez provided a justification of the national lockdown with the fact that they follow the World Health Organisation guidelines, following the consensus of the scientific community, and that most of the countries were adopting similar measures. He attempted to make the national lockdown seem a sound policy by comparing it to other countries, that with the pretext of achieving "national immunity" had not implemented the national lockdown and were at that moment facing high numbers of deaths.

The last battlefield exposed by Sánchez revolves around the confinement at home, which, he stressed, aimed at ensuring "that many people we love carry on breathing". He also underscored the civic attitudes of the population by claiming that "it is not fear that keeps us locked in our houses but courage". Although there is a mention of the restriction of liberties and freedoms, unlike Angela Merkel, Pedro Sánchez did not delve into the potential impact of the national lockdown on the quality of the Spanish democracy. He finished his intervention by taking back on the lessons of those seven days and calling on the nation to "defeat" the virus as a "united front".

The topics that were coded the most in the last speech of Pedro Sánchez were individual discipline (drawing on the good and bad citizen dichotomy), impact of COVID-19 on daily life, healthcare system and personnel, as well as state of alarm and extraordinary measures (**Graphic 10**). One of the most notable changes from the speech delivered on 13th, July is the reference to the actions of the security forces to tackle the pandemic (**Graphic 10**).

España 21 marzo - Codificación
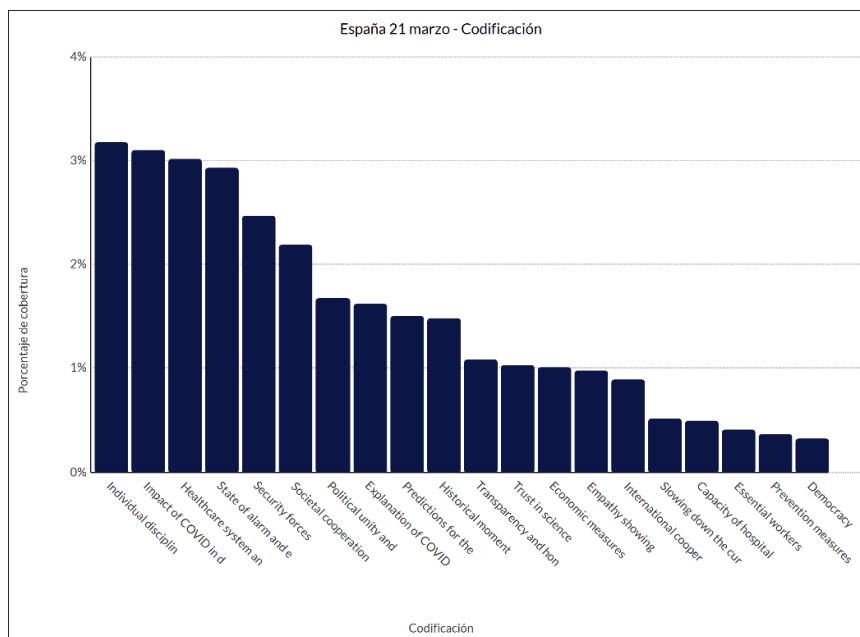
Graphic 10. *Percentage of coverage of the issues in Pedro Sánchez's speech on 21 March 2020.*

All in all, the topics that were coded the most in all Spain's speeches are state of alarm and extraordinary measures (17%), predictions for the future (14%), healthcare system and personnel (14%), political union and coordination (13%), and empathy showing (6%) (**Graphic 11**).

Graphic 11. Percentage of topics in all Spain's speeches
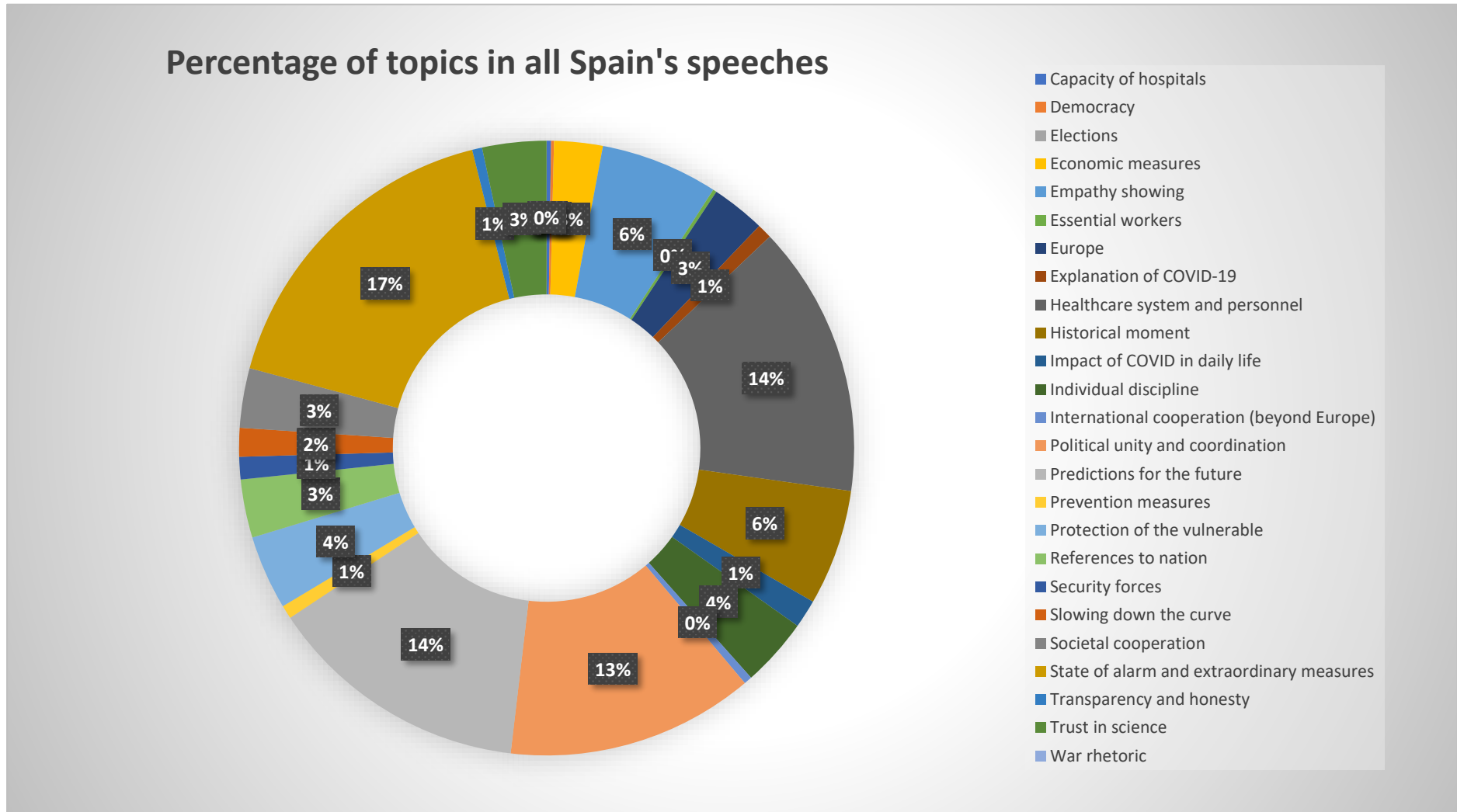
6. Discussion of the findings

The differences found in the selection of topics in all the speeches can be due to the sociocultural background of the countries, differences in the type of government (being France a Semi-presidential Republic, Germany a Federal Parliamentary Republic and Spain a Parliamentary Monarchy), personal differences between the selected speakers, differences drawn from the timing of the pandemic with regards to the domestic electoral calendars, differences in the healthcare system (being France a unitary system, compared to the more decentralized systems of Germany and Spain). In this section we will discuss the results from the analysis and draw a comparison between all the speeches through a compilation of graphs and tables, some of which can be found in the annexes.

Graphic 12. *Hierarchical map of topics covered in all speeches. The size of the cells is representative of the percentage of coding in every topic.*

In all of the selected speeches, the topics that were coded the most overall were (1) individual discipline, (2) state of alarm and extraordinary measures, (3) societal cooperation, (4) healthcare system and personnel and (5) predictions for the future (**Graphics 12 & 13**). Furthermore, we can observe how the sum of the two German speeches does not reach values as high as those of France and Spain (**Graphic 13**), that is to say, that the speeches of Merkel and Steinmeier cover most topics equally, whereas their French and Spanish counterparts underscore specific topics.
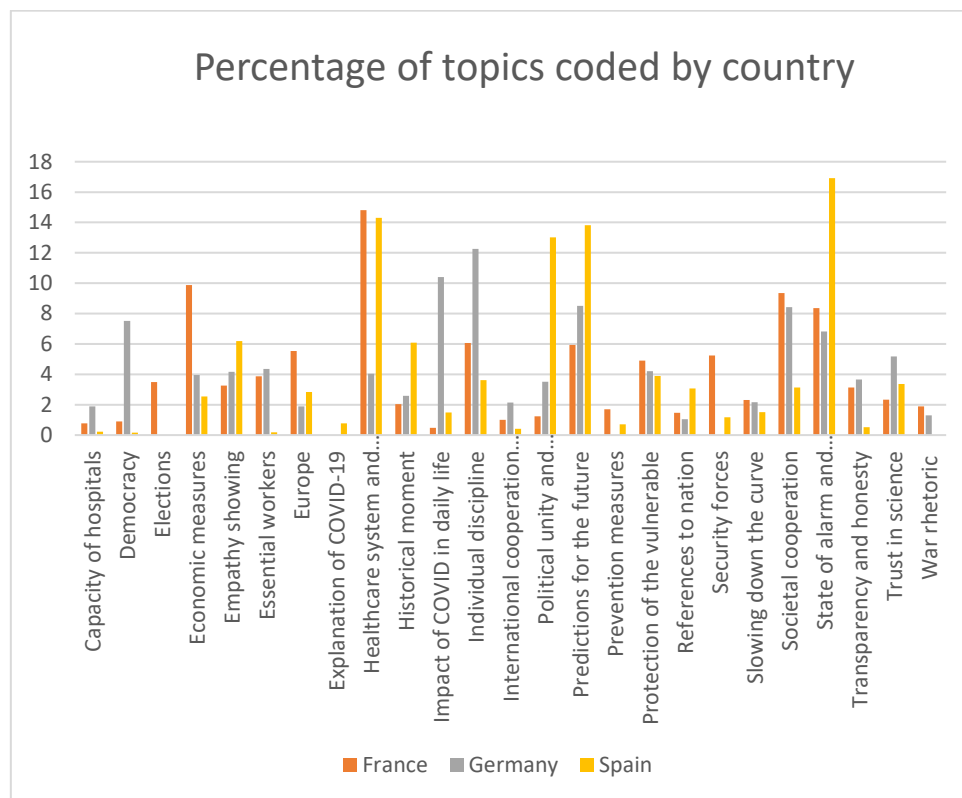
Graphic 13. Percentage of topics coded by country: France, Germany and Spain.

Individual discipline, societal cooperation

We can observe how, in all three selected countries, COVID-19 is framed as an individual and collective problem (**Table 4**). On the one hand, the individual is understood as a core agent of the containment measures and he/she is held responsible for both his/her health and the public health, based on the principle of civic engagement and the neoliberal notion of individual responsibility (Maunula, 2017). As Sjölander-Lindqvist et al. (2020, p. 1) puts it,

> The individual is positioned as a key cause of, and solution to the problem;
> however, construing the individual as an indispensable actor to overcoming
> the crisis also means that the individual is laid open for reprehension.

The containment discursive strategy used by all of the actors mostly allocates the responsibility of the pandemic containment to the individual, as "the core agent in circumscribing the virus" (Sjölander-Lindqvist et al., 2020, p. 1). All in all, collective gain is framed as only achievable through individual will. Furthermore, all the selected leaders praise the good citizenship while condemning those skirting rules through resistance acts. This rhetorical device is very clear in the case of Emmanuel Macron and Pedro Sánchez, who develop an "us vs. them" rhetoric in what we have named as the "good and bad citizen" dichotomy. On the other hand, there is an emphasis on the need to work harder for the society as a whole. Moreover, the idea of the active citizenship can be found in the cases of France, Germany, and Spain, when stressing the "need to change life in order to slow down the spread of the virus" (Sjölander-Lindqvist et al., 2020, p. 10).

		France	Germany	Spain
Capacity of hospitals		0,77 %	1,88 %	0,24 %
Democracy	General	0,91 %	7,52 %	0,15 %
	Elections	3,49 %	0 %	0 %
Economic measures		9,87 %	3,95 %	2,55 %
Empathy showing		3,26 %	4,16 %	6,18 %
Essential workers		3,88 %	4,35 %	0,19 %
Europe		5,53 %	1,89 %	2,84 %
Explanation of COVID-19		0 %	0 %	0,78 %
Healthcare system and personnel		14,82 %	4,04 %	14,31 %
Historical moment		2,04 %	2,59 %	6,09 %
Impact of COVID in daily life		0,47 %	10,42 %	1,48 %
Individual discipline		6,07 %	12,25 %	3,61 %
International cooperation (beyond Europe)		1,01 %	2,14 %	0,43 %
Political unity and coordination		1,23 %	3,52 %	13,02 %
Predictions for the future		5,94 %	8,51 %	13,82 %
Prevention measures		1,7 %	0 %	0,71 %
Protection of the vulnerable		4,91 %	4,2 %	3,9 %
References to nation		1,47 %	1,05 %	3,07 %
Security forces		5,24 %	0 %	1,18 %
Slowing down the curve		2,32 %	2,16 %	1,51 %
Societal cooperation		9,35 %	8,41 %	3,13 %
State of alarm and extraordinary measures		8,35 %	6,82 %	16,92 %
Transparency and honesty		3,14 %	3,66 %	0,52 %

Trust in science	2,33 %	5,17 %	3,37 %
War rhetoric	1,9 %	1,31 %	0 %

Table 2. *Percentage of coverage of the topics by country.*

State of alarm and extraordinary measures

We can observe how the heads of government of Germany and Spain devoted a bigger share of their speeches to explain the state of the alarm and the newly implemented extraordinary measures than their respective heads of state (**Table 3**), in line with their role as the chief of the executive branch. In the Spanish case, we can see how Pedro Sánchez allocated a 23,36% of his first speech to clarifying the legal framework of state of alarm and the policies that were to be taken under such circumstances, whereas the following Spanish speeches focused less on such topic (9,37% and 9,69%, respectively) (**Table 3**). Moreover, the German case is notable, allocating Angela Merkel a 10,44% of her speech to explaining the state of alarm, in comparison to a 0% of Steinmeier's speech (**Table 3**). This can be due, first, to the novelty of that state of alarm and the need to provide justification for the policies to implement to slow down the curve. The speeches of Pedro Sánchez and Angela Merkel were issued on 13th March and 18th March respectively, thus, before those of King Philip VI (18th March) and Frank-Walker Steinmeier (11th March). Therefore, we could argue that the heads of government were entrusted the task of explaining the state of alarm and the extraordinary measures that were to be implemented, in order to "governmentalize the pandemic":

> The containment measures serve to governmentalize the pandemic through the creation, activation, and execution of procedures for containing the virus, and by creating rules and incentives to influence particular behaviors of peoples (Sjölander-Lindqvist et al., 2020, p. 2).

Prevention measures and explanation of COVID-19

Furthermore, the selected French speeches make more references to prevention measures (hand sanitation, security distance, wearing mask, etc.) (1,70% of all the selected French speeches) than Germany (0%) and Spain (0,71%) (**Table 2**).

Economic measures

With regards to the explanation of economic measures to cope with COVID-19, France's speeches are the ones that include more references to it, accounting for 9,87% of the total of the country's speeches, as compared with the German 3,95% and the Spanish

2,55% (**Table 2**). This can be related to France's recent movement, the gilets jeunes, which has arguably had a critical impact on Macron's leadership in the country, especially with regards to economic measures.

Slowing down the curve, healthcare system and personnel and protection of the vulnerable

All of the speeches stress the importance of slowing down the curve to be able to provide a proper healthcare treatment and, ultimately, protect the most vulnerable population. In fact, slowing down the pandemic curve comprises a 2,32% of all the French speeches, a 2,16% of the German case and a 1,51% of the Spanish speeches (**Table 2**). Furthermore, all the leaders praise the domestic healthcare system in their speeches, entrusted with the protection of the nation as a whole and, in the case of Macron and Sánchez, often referred to as "the first frontline", predominantly France (14,82% of all their speeches) and Spain (14,31%), over Germany (4,04%) (**Table 2**)**.**

Moreover, we can observe in all three cases a reduction in the stressing of the need to protect the vulnerable from the first speeches to the last ones (**Table 3**). This can be illustrated with the evolution of the selected French speeches, coming from a 7,71% of coverage of protection of the vulnerable in the speech of 12th March, to a 5% on 16th March and, finally finishing in a 1,89% on the 25th March (**Table 3**). The reason behind this may be the explained by the way the pandemic unfolded, being more necessary at first to express the need to protect the vulnerable by establishing certain limitations on freedoms, and later, being more necessary to address the impact of the very limitations on the population themselves.

Predictions for the future

Moreover, we can observe in all of the selected speeches a focus on the future, claiming that, despite the complication of the COVID-19 crisis, if the nation follows the government measures, "the future will be better", in an attempt to relieve the population from the difficulties of the present. In fact, some scholars argue that much of the success of certain governments and political leaders relies on the discursive projections of the future that legitimates their policies and actions (Dunmire, 2011).

This topic is more present in Spanish speeches (13,82%), followed by Germany (8,51%) and France (5,94%) (**Table 2**). In the case of Spain, we can observe how the narrative of Spanish head of state, King Philip VI, makes more use of the future (24,74% of the total

speech), than Pedro Sánchez in his speeches delivered on 13th March (3,86%) and 25th March (**Table 3**). We can observe the same phenomenon in Germany, where 20,87% of Steinmeier's speech makes references to the future, in comparison with 1,96% of Angela Merkel's speech (**Table 3**). Overall, we can argue that, whereas heads of government were responsible for the clarification of the concrete measures to fight COVID-19, heads of state utilized the future in their narratives more than the heads of government.

Empathy showing

Likewise, the study shows how the speeches of Philip IV and Steinmeier present a bigger share of text under the category of "empathy showing" than their counterparts heads of government (**Table 3**). The speech of King Philip IV has a 12,35% coded under "empathy showing", in comparison with those of Pedro Sánchez, on 13th March (0,20%) and 25th March (3,24%) (**Table 3**). Similarly, we can note the difference of the presence of empathy showing between Steinmeier's speech (9,87%) and that of Merkel (1,13 %) (**Table 3**). Overall, we could argue that in the selected cases the heads of state display a more sensitive tone than the head of governments, devoting a big share of their speeches to show concern about the situation of the citizens and sometimes using a paternalistic vocabulary over the nation.

Europe and international cooperation

Macron is the one that pronounces the most on the matter of Europe, comprising around a 5,53% of the topics covered in his speech, compared to speeches of German leaders (1,89%) or Spanish ones (2,84%) (**Table 2**). However, we could argue that this phenomenon does not happen with regards to international cooperation, since France's references to it (1,01%) are lower than those towards Europe (5,53%) (**Table 2**). Parallelly, Germany presents a stronger orientation towards international cooperation (2,14%) than that of European cooperation (1,89%) (**Table 2**). Furthermore, Spain shows more references to European policies to combat COVID-19 (2,84%) than to international cooperation (0,43%) (**Table 2**).

Essential workers and security forces

We can observe an increase in the number of references to essential workers and security forces from the first speeches to the last ones. In France, essential workers are not being mentioned in the first and second speeches, but then obtain a coverage of

11,67% on the speech of the 25th of March (**Table 3**). The same happens with the topic of the security forces in both France and Spain, where, for instance, no references are made to security forces in the first and second speeches of Spain whereas they receive a coverage of 8,17% of Sánchez's speech on 25th March (**Table 3**). We could argue that the rise in references to these two collectives may be related to the paramount work they carried out to provide basic services to the population during quarantine.

Democracy

Germany is the country that shows a greater concern to the impact of the restrictions of freedoms and liberties to the state of democracy, devoting a 7,52% of the total of speeches to that, in comparison to France's 0,91% and Spain's 0,15% (**Table 2**). In fact, we could argue that, due to the country's historical background, German people are very critical of restrictive measures, which can be exemplified by the anti-lockdown Querdenker movement, which demonstrated against what they deemed the "Corona-Diktatur" (Lang, 2021). Furthermore, Macron is the only leader that makes references to the elections, an isolated matter giving the coincidence in time of the first wave of COVID-19 with the French municipal elections, calling to hold the first round of municipal elections on March 15th in his first speech and instructing to postpone the second round to 28th June (**Table 3**).

Trust in science and transparency and honesty

As all the selected speeches were delivered in a moment of emerging conspiracy theories around the origin of the pandemic and rising among of fake news, all the three leaders aimed at, first, enhancing trust in science, and second, stressing that they were the most reliable sources of information. In all of the speeches there is an emphasis on the role of science and trust in science, covering a 2,33% of the total of France's speeches, 5,17% of Germany's and 3,37% of Spain's (**Table 2**). Moreover, we can observe how all three leaders explicitly stress in some of their speeches the government's duty to be transparent and honest during times of crisis and to provide clear information on the evolution of the situation of COVID-19 (**Table 3**). In fact, we could argue that the need for governments to be considered a credible source of information is paramount in times of pandemic, since disobedience can come from competing discourses disclaiming the role of science.

War rhetoric, historical moment, and references to nation

All political leaders have made use of wartime rhetoric in their speeches, conceptualizing of the COVID-19 crisis through words such as "battle", "defeat" of the virus or "frontline", among others (Sjölander-Lindqvist, et al., 2020, p. 1). Throughout the speeches we can see structural metaphors constructed as *Argument is war*, equating the containment policies against the spread of COVID-19 to a war against an enemy (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4). The most notable case is that of the latest speech of Macron, which use wartime rhetoric through the repetition of the sentence "We are at war" (**Table 4**). An exception to this rhetoric can be found in Steinmeier's words attempting to step out of the war framing of the pandemic.

Furthermore, this narrative is sustained by the leaders when comparing the crisis to the historical challenges the nation confronted in the past thanks to the effort of its people. In France and Germany, the COVID-19 crisis is compared to the WWII, whereas the Spanish leaders compare it to the Spanish Civil War. Furthermore, all of the speeches include references to the nation and use words such as "countrymen" or "compatriots".

7. Implications of the speeches

The corpus analysis of the selected speeches shows how the COVID-19 crisis communication was carried out through values-based discourses, relying on on individual discipline, cooperation democracy, unity, transparency, or trust in science.

The rise in approval ratings of most European leaders might in fact be linked to the exploitation of metaphors reminding people of war-time periods. As the political scientist at the University of Kent Matthew Goodwin puts it, the first months of the pandemic witnessed the phenomenon of "rally effect", a phenomenon that states that in times of crisis voters usually rally around their political leaders (Holroyd & Chadwick, 2020). Consequently, the linguistic frame of an external existential threat can have contributed to the rise in the approval ratings of European leaders. According to Europe Elects, President Emmanuel Macron's approval rating improved by an average of 10% after implementing the national lockdown on March 17th. Although such approval rating fell progressively during the course of the lockdown, he still enjoyed a higher approval in the opinion polls than before the COVID-19 crisis (Holroyd & Chadwick, 2020). Similarly, the approval rating of Chancellor Angela Merkel and the CDU/CSU rose from

a 24% to a 38% vote share, according to survey institute Emnid Kantar (Holroyd & Chadwick, 2020). Although the approval rating of PSOE and President Pedro Sánchez fell in the week prior to the implementation of the lockdown, the case of Spain also reflects an improvement in the approval rating in comparison to that prior the COVID-19.

8. Conclusions

By way of conclusion, we can say that in the present bachelor thesis we have addressed the official speeches delivered to the nation by the heads of state and heads of government of France, Germany, and Spain in the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis and their relation to their national containment strategies with the main objective of studying the differences in the tones, narratives, and values among them. First, we have discussed the tenets of crisis communication and Critical Discourse Analysis relevant for present analysis and defined the concepts used throughout this research. Second, we have developed a methodological framework based on Mayring's evolutionary coding selecting 24 topics to code the selected speeches. Furthermore, we have carried out a detailed qualitative data analysis using the software Nvivo in order to answer the following research questions:

- ✓ Which are the topics the heads of state and heads of government pose upon the COVID-19 crisis? Which assumptions underlie such selection of topics?
- ✓ Which metaphorical framing do they use to describe coronavirus and the containment policies? Which values did they emphasize?
- ✓ How do these messages relate to their national context and domestic policies? What differences and/or similarities can we find in the messages of the three political leaders?

The findings of the thesis are the following.

(I)   We can observe differences in the timing of the speeches, given that Macron delivered his first speech on 12th March, Sánchez on 13th March and Merkel on 18th March. There is a difference in the timing of the speeches of the heads of state of Spain and Germany, given that King Philip VI delivered a speech on 18th March, whereas Steinmeier only pronounced himself on 11th April.

(II)   The difference in the timing of the speeches delivered by the heads of state and the heads of government suggests that the heads of government are the ones in charge of handling the pandemic timely.

(III)   The speeches delivered by Macron and Sánchez were notably longer than those pronounced by Merkel, Steinmeier and King Philip VI.

(IV)   In times of crisis communication upon the COVID-19 pandemic, we can observe how the heads of state and heads of government of France, Germany and Spain delivered values-based speeches, relying on principles such as individual discipline, democracy, and trust in science.

(V)   All the selected speeches display wartime rhetoric, being more prominent in Macron's speeches and least used by German leaders.

(VI)   COVID-19 crisis was framed by all selected speakers as both an individual and collective issue.

(VII)   In all selected speakers, we can observe an often use of narratives focusing on the future to evade the society from the difficulties of the present.

(VIII) All speeches stated the objective to slow down the curve and protect the vulnerable.

(IX)   All speeches refer to democracy and the duty of governments to be transparent and honest to justify the restrictive measures established to slow down the curve.

(X)   We can observe differences in the speeches carried out by heads of government (more informational, explaining the extraordinary policies) with regards to those of heads of state (showing empathy about the situation of the population and focusing more on the future). Research suggests that these differences derive from the different roles of the leaders.

The findings of this study have to be seen in light of some limitations, derived from the lack of comparison with codifications by other researchers. Another limitation is related to the lack of previous research studies on the topic of political communication in times of COVID-19. Furthermore, there can be a limitation with regards to the different languages used in the selected speeches, given that the use of different vocabulary, together with the connotation of certain words, may point out to specific topics, as well as discarding others.

All in all, further research should be done on crisis communication delivered by governments during the different waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. It would be particularly interesting to see whether the patterns studied in this research will also be found in speeches by heads of governments of other countries. Given that the impact of COVID-19 is expected to remain relevant in the coming years, it is important to detect which messages and topics will be used by political leaders to justify restrictive measures in the interest of public health.

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10.   Annexes

Table 3. Percentage of topics' coverage in speeches

Topics		F1	F2	F3	G1	G2	S1	S2	S3
Capacity of hospitals		2,27 %	0 %	0 %	2,88 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	1,62 %
Democracy	General	0,84 %	1,85 %	0 %	6,48 %	9,47 %	0 %	0 %	1,06 %
	Elections	3,37 %	7,01 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Economic measures		13,26 %	11,7 %	4,37 %	5,06 %	1,84 %	4,3 %	0 %	3,31 %
Empathy showing		2,32 %	3,75 %	3,65 %	1,13 %	9,87 %	0,2 %	12,35 %	3,24 %
Essential workers		0 %	0 %	11,67 %	5,14 %	2,86 %	0 %	0 %	1,32 %
Europe		9,54 %	4,87 %	2,01 %	0 %	5,45 %	2,23 %	3,88 %	0 %
Explanation of COVID-19		0 %	0 %	1,98 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	5,36 %
Healthcare system and personnel		12,63 %	6,77 %	24,86 %	6,18 %	0 %	7,18 %	20,7 %	9,95 %
Historical moment		2,75 %	3,31 %	0 %	0,76 %	6,06 %	0 %	11,85 %	4,89 %
Impact of COVID in daily life		0,65 %	0,76 %	0 %	5,56 %	19,57 %	0 %	0 %	10,25 %
Individual discipline		3,28 %	8,9 %	5,92 %	17,2 %	2,92 %	16,87 %	4,6 %	10,52 %
International cooperation (beyond Europe)		2,98 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	6,16 %	0 %	0 %	2,94 %
Political unity and coordination		0,7 %	1,53 %	1,45 %	5,39 %	0 %	25,33 %	0 %	5,52 %
Predictions for the future		8,65 %	7,52 %	1,48 %	1,96 %	20,87 %	3,86 %	24,74 %	4,96 %
Prevention measures		3,44 %	1,6 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	1,11 %	0 %	1,22 %
Protection of the vulnerable		7,71 %	5 %	1,89 %	6,43 %	0 %	8,08 %	0 %	0 %
References to nation		2,01 %	0,22 %	2,17 %	0,37 %	2,35 %	3,04 %	3,53 %	0 %
Security forces		0 %	1,8 %	13,95 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	8,17 %
Slowing down the curve		2,77 %	2,78 %	1,35 %	3,31 %	0 %	2,61 %	0 %	1,72 %
Societal cooperation		10,45 %	4,5 %	12,92 %	9,44 %	6,49 %	0 %	4,59 %	7,24 %
State of alarm and extraordinary measures		5,15 %	17,35 %	2,38 %	10,44 %	0 %	23,36 %	9,37 %	9,69 %
Transparency and honesty		0,85 %	3,18 %	5,35 %	4,36 %	2,32 %	0 %	0 %	3,61 %
Trust in science		4,38 %	2,52 %	0 %	7,91 %	0 %	1,83 %	4,39 %	3,41 %
War rhetoric		0 %	3,08 %	2,6 %	0 %	3,77 %	0 %	0 %	0 %

Table 4. Relation between topics and number of reference

Topic		Number of speeches mentioning the topic	Total number of references/ topic	Number of references in speeches							
				F1	F2	F3	G1	G2	S1	S2	S3
Capacity of hospitals		3	6	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Democracy	General	5	9	1	1	0	4	2	0	0	1
	Elections	2	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic measures		7	16	4	2	1	3	1	2	0	3
Empathy showing		8	24	4	4	3	2	2	1	4	4
Essential workers		4	8	0	0	3	2	1	0	2	0
Europe		6	15	9	2	1	0	1	1	1	0
Explanation of COVID-19		2	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
Healthcare system and personnel		7	36	10	3	8	4	0	2	3	6
Historical moment		6	19	3	3	0	3	1	0	3	6
Impact of COVID on daily life		5	19	1	1	0	2	7	0	0	8
Individual discipline		8	52	7	7	2	17	1	7	2	9
International cooperation (beyond Europe)		3	7	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	2
Political unity and coordination		6	14	1	2	1	3	0	4	0	3
Predictions for the future		8	33	6	3	2	3	6	3	5	5
Prevention measures		4	7	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Protection of the vulnerable		5	21	11	3	1	4	0	2	0	0
References to nation		7	18	7	1	4	1	2	2	1	0
Security forces		3	8	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	5
Slowing down the curve		6	17	5	3	2	3	0	1	0	3
Societal cooperation		7	37	8	4	4	9	3		1	8
State of alarm and extraordinary measures		7	39	7	8	3	8	0	3	2	8
Transparency and honesty		6	19	2	4	2	5	2	0	0	4
Trust in science		6	19	4	3	0	5	0	1	1	5
War rhetoric		3	8	0	5	2	0	1	0	0	0
Total number of references		462									

Table 5. *Total number of references per speech and per country.*

	France			Germany		Spain		
	F1	F2	F3	G1	G2	S1	S2	S3
Number of total references / speech	101	63	42	80	33	30	25	88
Total number of references/ country	206			113		143		