西班牙報紙針對政府對抗新冠病毒的破碎措施之論述實踐

Francisco de Borja Navarro[*]　**Aiden Yeh**[**]

摘要

新型冠狀病毒 (COVID-19) 因其具有迅速傳播的能力與人傳人的傳染性，已成為全球性問題，從而引發全世界失序。幾乎全球所有國家都未預料到 COVID-19 對本國經濟及公民的日常生活帶來的殘酷影響。西班牙是第一波受到 COVID-19 嚴重影響的歐洲國家之一，也是首先實施安全措施（如全國檢疫和單獨隔離）的國家之一。在全國封鎖時期之後，西班牙政府開始進行四個階段的全國疫情降級行動，但顯然與該國主要報紙發表觀點意見與社論，亦即支持和反對政府在疫情降級期間相關政策之有效性相衝突。透過對西班牙兩家重要的報紙（El País 和 El Mundo）使用的標籤及其語義、語用含義進行基於語料庫的言談分析，本研究旨在調查報紙之論述實踐，以及不同的政治意識形態如何影響其使用的標籤，反之亦然。語料庫數據是由 400 篇文章內含362,383 個憑證所組成，收集於 2020 年 5 月，對應西班牙政府宣布疫情降級的前 15天。研究者針對新聞報導進行了基於語料庫的調查，包括對詞彙的選擇和分類，以及在新型冠狀病毒流行期間的報導重點。本文以社會認知方法 (Van Dijk, 2008) 作為理論框架，研究結果顯示，兩家報紙都特別關注西班牙首都馬德里所面臨的政治分歧問題：關於中央政府可靠程度令人質疑，以及中央政府在應對疫情二次爆發的準備程度。此外，研究還發現 El País 傾向於制肘西班牙政府的行動，而 El Mundo 則更直接地報導了其反對降級措施的立場。這種使用的標籤、評論和傳遞資訊的方式，在西班牙讓民眾間產生了恐懼感，也失去了對政府的信賴感，因此民眾進一步拒絕了政府為預防、控制和應對疫情而採取的政策及努力。這些事件導致社會和政治分裂，威脅到西班牙公民的團結，強烈的負面情緒隨著一天天過去越發明顯。

關鍵詞：新型冠狀病毒、疫情降級、西班牙政府、報紙、語料庫言談分析

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[*]　文藻外語大學英國語文系碩士研究生
[**]　文藻外語大學英國語文系副教授

Discursive Practices of Spanish Newspapers Regarding the Fragmented Government Measures in Battling Coronavirus

Francisco de Borja Navarro[*]   Aiden Yeh[**]

Abstract

The Coronavirus, known as COVID-19, has become a global problem due to its capacity to spread rapidly and human-to-human contagion, provoking a world disorder. Almost every country in the world was not expecting the brutal impact that COVID-19 brought into their economy and the daily life of its citizens. Spain, one of the first European countries severely affected by COVID-19, was also one of the frontrunners that led the implementation of safety measures such as the national quarantine and at-home confinement. After its first national lockdown, the Spanish Government started to carry out a national re-opening divided in 4 phases, which apparently was confronted with a mixture of conflicting (re)views published in leading newspapers, i.e., those who supported and those who were against the measures adopted during reopening. By conducting a corpus-based discourse analysis of various labels used and their semantic and pragmatic implications by two leading newspapers (El País and El Mundo), this study aims to investigate their discursive practices and how different political ideologies influence the labels they use, and vice versa. The resulting corpus, which consists of 400 articles with 362,383 tokens in total, was created and collected in May 2020, corresponding to the first fifteen days of Spain's reopening. A corpus-based investigation of media presentations of news which included the selection and categorization of lexis and the focus of reporting during the coronavirus epidemic was conducted. Taking a sociocognitive approach (Van Dijk, 2008) as the theoretical framework, the results in this study show that both newspapers focused especially on the problems that Madrid, the Spanish capital faced, i.e., political disagreements regarding the central government's questionable reliability and their readiness to confront the second wave of the outbreak. Moreover, this study finds that El País showed a predisposition to victimize the actions of the Spanish Government, while El Mundo is more direct with their news reporting on disagreements over the reopening measures. The labels, comments and ways of delivering information created a sense of fear among the Spanish citizens and loss of their trust, thus further rejecting the government policies and efforts to prevent, control, and respond to the pandemic. These events resulted in social and political fractures that threaten the unity of the Spanish citizens while a strong negative sentiment is becoming more visible every day.

Keywords: Coronavirus, reopening, Spanish government, newspaper, corpus discourse analysis

[*]M.A. Candidate, Department of English, Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, Taiwan
[**]Associate Professor, Department of English, Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, Taiwan

Introduction

One of the most important values for a democracy resides in having freedom of speech, not only for the people to speak and assemble but also the freedom given to the media to broadcast news, report information, and provide an analysis of current events, which include political issues and squabbles, government administration, and governance. The way in which the ideas and opinions of the roles and actions taken by national leaders are expressed, have an impact on public opinion, and thus, it serves as an important tool to create a good or bad impression to the readers about the behavior of the political parties. Each media source is able to broadcast its own inclinations toward a political party, causing the production of biased information that benefits its own political ideals. By this means, linkages between certain media sources and political parties, which are aligned to enhance the image of the party or diminish the image of others, become evident. As Van Dalen and Van Aelst (2012) posit there are some political entities that are more exposed to media coverage than others, depending on the political orientations of the writers hired by the media source. This exposure is in turn related to the position that given parties hold in the society, whereby the more powerful ones have more access to media coverage (Bennett, 1990; Graber, 2003). The present research aims to analyze the different ways in which the media have covered the degree of effectiveness of the reopening measures adopted by the Spanish Government in May 2020. To this purpose, two different newspapers are considered to be representative of the conservative parties (*El Mundo*[1]) and the liberal parties (*El País*[2]) . They were chosen in order to analyze the labels used to describe the two factions in articles connected with the loosening of restrictions. As Hallin and Mancini (2004) postulated, Spain can be included in the *polarized pluralist media system* since this country possesses strong political parallelism, low circulation of newspapers, low professionalism, and high state intervention. Consequently, the reasons for choosing these two specific newspapers are (1) the easy access to news archives and (2) the flagrantly biased slant to information in light of the participation of various political actors, especially political parties in these media sources (Strömback & Luengo, 2008). In contrast, the relationship that other countries have between media sources and political inclinations derives from the consumer of the media source, more than from the bonds that the media source could have with any political party (Gunther, Montero, & Wert, 1999; Seymour-Ure, 1974). This research aims to find the differences in the newspapers' discursive practices with a particular focus on the crisis provoked by the coronavirus disease, which is wreaking havoc in the Spanish health system and economy. By analyzing the different articles of the *El País* and *El Mundo* regarding the measures taken by the new Spanish government during the crisis reopening, we hope to find more indications of political inclinations and the treatment given to political rivals. The following section explains the relationship that *El País* and *El Mundo* have had with Spain's bipartisan government (*PSOE* and *PP*) throughout the years, and the discourses usee to refer other recently created political parties (*Unidas Podemos, Ciudadanos, Vox*), which have become key to gaining access to the presidency of the Spanish government.

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[1] El Mundo - Diario online líder de información en español. (2020). Retrieved from https://www.elmundo.es/
[2] El País: El periódico global (2020). Retrieved from https://www.elpais.com/

El Mundo and *El País* in the Spanish Political Scene

The Socialist Party (PSOE) and the Popular Party (PP), first known as Alianza Popular (AP), and reconstituted in 1989 under the name of the Popular Party (PP), have been the two major parties. From the 1970s until the 2000s they have remained the two dominant alternatives to hold the seat of power in the government. Hallin and Macini (2004) noted that since the 1970s, there has been a division between the political ideologies of the Spanish news readership, especially in the 1980s with the creation of *El Mundo*. In recent years, *El País* had a strong relationship with the Socialist Party (PSOE*)*, giving this party large coverage, and at the same time, covering the actions of the Popular Party (PP) and the parties which had more conservative practices in Spain in a negative light. On the other hand, since its creation, *El Mundo* acted as an ally of right-wing parties, especially the Popular Party (PP*)* (Castells, 2009; Gunther et al., 1999). As a consequence, the majority of left-wing voters read *El País* as the norm, and right-wing voters read *El Mundo*. This claim is validated in surveys conducted by El Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (Baumgartner & Chaqués Bonafont, 2015), which demonstrate that "…in 2009 more than 50% of the readers of El País identify themselves at an ideological position between 1 (far left) and 4 on a 10 point index from left to right." (p. 5), compared to just 6.8% of the readers of *El Mundo* (CIS, 2009: question 13c). By contrast, more than 37% of the readers of *El Mundo* are above 6 in the left-right ideological scale, versus 9% of the readers of El País (CIS, 2009, question 13c)[3].

However, due to the dissatisfaction of Spanish citizens regarding corruption (Fernández & Collado, 2017), doubtful management of national budgets, the economic crisis that occurred in 2008 (Cuadrado-Roura & Maroto, 2016), and the protests known as 15M (Micó & Casero-Ripollés, 2013) which took place in 2011 by citizens who were against a bipartisan government, a large number of political parties started to be considered as real alternatives to the PSOE and PP. Nevertheless, three of the newly created political parties gained special attention with Spanish voters. The first party is called *Podemos* (established in 2014), and renamed *Unidas Podemos*. It falls the left of the political spectrum. The second of the newly established parties is called *Ciudadanos* (formed in 2006) and is located to the center-right of the political spectrum. The last political party which gained a lot of attention recently is called *Vox* (2013), with its extreme-right political ideology (Ferreira, 2019). Due to the diversification of the voting options these recent years, *El País* and *El Mundo* have had to change their discourse in order to captivate readers with mixed political ideologies. According to the research of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) in 2016, 20.1% of the readers prefer *El País* in order to gather information about politics. On the other hand, *El Mundo* is the favored newspaper for 9.3% of the readers. Looking into these statistics, it can be concluded that *El País* is the main preference for the sympathizers of

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[3] The Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) introduces explicit questions in its surveys to know the readers' perceptions about ideology, political parties and newspapers. Here, we provide the statistics from the following survey: studio no 2798 Barómetro de abril 2009, (question 13c). The question asked about which newspaper the participants read to get information about politics, using a scale from 1 (far left) to 10 (far right).

PSOE, *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos*, while *El Mundo* attracts the voters of *PP* and *Vox*. Such evidence can be found in the studies of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) in 2016, declaring that the 38.2% of the PSOE voters, the 31.7% of the sympathizers of Unidas Podemos, and the 21.8% of the supporters of Ciudadanos preferred *El País* as a source of information for political matters. On the other hand, *El Mundo* received the 19.6% of the *PP* voters, and the 21.7% of Ciudadanos´ sympathizers. These results reveal that *El País* and *El Mundo* changed their practices to write articles in order to gain more readers. In the past, these newspapers had clearly identified readers depending on their political ideology, thus they did not have to change their politically oriented discourse. However, nowadays, they need to take into consideration an increasingly diverse readership and try not to send explicit negative messages about the parties that hold a fragile alliance. That is the case of the PSOE, which is leading an unprecedented government in a weak coalition with Unidas Podemos, the support of the nationalist parties (PNV, Más País-Compromís, Nueva Canarias, BNG and Teruel Existe), and the abstention of the independent parties in Basque Country (EH Bildu) and Catalonia (ERC). The same can be said with the opposition of the government, historically led by one of the two major parties PP or PSOE. Now that the PP is leading the opposition, it is in need of an alliance with parties such as Ciudadanos and Vox in order to make a stronger opposition to PSOE and its governmental coalition.

In spite of the emergence of the above-mentioned political parties, PSOE and PP still have deep bonds with *El País* and *El Mundo*, respectively, and have the power to influence, in certain ways, the messages that these newspapers send to their readers. Especially in moments of crisis such as the current coronavirus outbreak, newspapers tend to send a positive or negative message to the readers regarding the measures adopted by the government and the coalition parties, addressing similar topics, but with different perspectives. The purpose of this investigation is to analyze the discursive practices of *El País* and *El Mundo* when they inform the general public about the health crisis that Spain is trying to overcome during the period of reopening which occurred as a result of the COVID-19, and especially the perceptions that they send to their readers about the measures adopted by the Spanish government during this period. To undertake this analysis, a sociocognitive approach is adopted (Van Dijk, 2008), using a corpus created from the articles of the newspapers *El País* and *El Mundo* published in May 2020.

Coronavirus: Lockdown and Reopening in Spain

As Schwartz and Graham (2020) posited "Coronaviruses are spherical, enveloped, and the largest of positive-strand RNA viruses" (p.1). These viruses have a broad recipient range, in which animals and human beings can be included. Until 2019, there were six different types of coronavirus found and labeled as HCoV-229E and HCoV-NL63 belonging to the *Alphacoronavirus genus*; and HCoV-OC43, HCoV-HKU1, MERS-CoV, and SARS-CoV, which belong to the *Betacoronavirus genus* (Hui, 2017; Song et al., 2019). Some of the symptoms are respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases, some subjects have an immunodeficiency syndrome (Schmidt, Schneider, Heise, Weinke, Epple & Stöffler-Meilicke, 1996). In human beings, COVID-19 presentes with a greater variety of symptoms including colds, which at the beginning of the epidemic was thought to be a common catarrh

(Schwartz & Graham, 2020).

In the beginning of December 2019, a great number of the citizens in Wuhan, a city with a population of around 11 million located in the People's Republic of China (PRC), was identified with a novel case of pneumonia (Li et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2020). On   January 7, 2020, the government of the PRC in China labeled the virus previously known as unknown coronavirus, with a new name: 2019-nCoV for 2019 novel coronavirus (Zhu et al., 2020).

In Spain, the first case of the coronavirus infection appeared on January 31, and by July 14, 2020, the total number of cases increased to 255,993 and 28,406 deaths. The Spanish government issued a national alarm and lockdown on March 15, with 7,793 cases of COVID-19 and 292 deaths. On May 11, the period of lockdown officially ended, and the government issued a series of measures to ensure a smooth return to a so called "new normality", dividing the re-opening into 4 phases. The government's plans were to classify the cities over the national territory depending on each area's risk of contagion as well as the fulfillment of required conditions in terms of health measures and back-to-work regulations in order to let them advance to the next phase. However, the start of Phase 1 in some of the Spanish provinces was delayed due to medical criteria and potential level of contagion. As a result, some islands from Baleares and Canarias commenced Phase 1 on May 4, but provinces such as Catalonia, Castilla-León, Valencian Community, Madrid and most of Castilla-La Mancha did not meet the criteria to advance to Phase 1 until May 11.

The next section provides a description of Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach as a theoretical framework along with critical discourse analysis (CDA).

Theoretical Background

Critical discourse analysis is a branch of discourse analytical research that focuses on how "…social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 352). The origins of CDA can be found in classical rhetoric, text linguistics, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics and pragmatics (Darweesh & Abdullah, 2016). Knowledge about ideology, influence, gender and hierarchy are useful tools in order to interpret and analyze texts. Discursive practices often leave ideological marks as a result of the production of divergent power relations between groups, genders and social classes. In her studies, Eagleton (2004) claims that media sources can guide the perception of an event or situation as well as attitudes toward these events. Considering this perspective, Fairclough (1989) posited "the exercise of power, in modern society, is increasingly achieved through ideology" (p. 2). It can be affirmed that CDA focuses on disclosing the relationship of ideological and structural discourse. That is, the series of beliefs that are shared by a group, community or organization about a certain topic, situation or event can be interpreted and analyzed through CDA. The present study will be analyzed using CDA based on Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach.

Van Dijk's Sociocognitive Approach

Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach agrees with Fairclough's critical approach in which the view of discursive practices can be seen as a mode of social practice. Nonetheless, instead

of focusing on discursive practices themselves, Van Dijk chose to focus on social cognition as the bridge between text and society (Amoussou & Allagbe, 2018). Van Dijk (1998, 2000, 2001), posits that ideology is a way of social cognition or a belief system common in a group. Described as "the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group" (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 8), ideology is established by "basic propositions that represent what is good or bad for the group" (Van Dijk, 2000, p. 95). Social cognitions can be represented and interpreted through the analysis of ideas, thoughts and inclinations toward a particular phenomenon by certain groups (Van Dijk, 1993). As defined by Ghachem (2015) social cognition is "the shared social representations which include knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, values and norms" (p. 2). The interaction between ideology and language has attracted the linguists (Fairclough, 1995, 2004; Fang, 2001; Hawkins, 1997; Kuo and Nakamura, 2005; Van Dijk, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2001). Their diverse theories and methods are included in critical discourse analysis (CDA). Van Dijk also presented a type of study called macro and micro level of analysis. The micro level of analysis can include language use, discourse, verbal interaction and communication, while in the macro level of analysis matters such as social order, power, dominance and inequality between social groups are embedded (Van Dijk, 2003). In his studies, Van Dijk adopts a powerful discourse and ideologies about the "Us" against "Them" (Van Dijk, 1993, 1997).   It can be seen that, for example, in the political scene and discourse, a fight for dominance and power is continuous, leading to inequality (Van Dijk 1993). This study will have a focus on the phenomenon of the "Us" versus "Them", as we analyze how newspapers with different ideological and political perspectives try to diminish or negatively cast the actions of the political parties that are not in line with them, and are included in the following points previously cited by Al-Khazraji (2017, p. 118):

- **Research about the social and historical background of the principal actors of the political disagreements in order to have a better understanding of the context of the discourse:** It is necessary to understand the history of the participants or social groups involved in the analysis in order to understand where the roots of their beliefs come from and have a better interpretation of the context in which the analysis is taken.

- **The investigation of the major groups, the links they have with specific events and how the events involve them:** Research about why certain groups participate in a particular event and how these specific events influence the major actors differently is undertaken in order to know how to affect these groups positively or negatively, and what are the possible consequences of these particular events for the groups.

- **The distinction of a negative or positive perception of "Us" versus "Them":** Ideologies can be categorized in different groups, depending on different social issues, power control or refusal. These differences provoke a separation between in-groups and out-groups (Abrams and Hogg, 1990). For instance, Van Dijk (1995)

identified the phenomenon of "Us" versus "Them" in different ideologies such as nationalism or racism.

- **Identification of the assumptions and implications of the texts:** Discourse analysis investigates how the articles produced by media sources are interpreted by the reader, and what impact the media will have on the reader. CDA shows how different texts are interpreted in different ways depending on the audience that is consuming the articles (Al-Khazraji, 2017). Correspondingly, Van Dijk (1993) posited that readers have independent opinions and their interpretations may vary from one article to another.

- **Investigation of the lexicon and syntactic structure in a more formal manner to accentuate or deemphasize the opinions of the group that exhibit partiality.** (Van Dijk, 1998, pp. 61-63): Depending on the ideologies of different media sources, it is likely that they use different wording and lexicalization to describe the same event. The selection of different wordings and lexis may impact the reader's opinion of the articles. As Van Dijk (1995, p. 260) expressed "We see that the meaning of sentences, clauses, nouns, nominalizations and adjectives are all possible targets for the expression of ideological content, usually in the form of evaluative concepts."

Methodology

The corpus built for this study consists of texts featured in *El País and El Mundo* newspapers that include the words "coronavirus" and "reopening" (la desescalada), all published in May 2020, as a result of the national Spanish quarantine and lockdown due to the coronavirus, and consequently, the measures in the four phases of the reopening process adopted by Spanish government meant to lead to the so-called "new-normality". The corpus as a whole consists of 362,383 tokens and 22,186 types: *El País* (221 articles, 213,442 tokens), and *El Mundo* (179 articles, 148,941 tokens). The corpus is designed to include one newspaper, which is in line with the ideology of the Spanish Government (*El País)*, and one newspaper, which supports the parties from the opposition (*El Mundo*).

The criteria for choosing these newspapers can be found in their political inclinations toward different political parties in Spain. *El País* supports the Socialist Party (PSOE), which at present, is leading the current government through a coalition with Unidas Podemos, the support of the nationalist parties (PNV, Más País-Compromís, Nueva Canarias, BNG and Teruel Existe), and the abstention of the independentist parties in Basque Country (EH Bildu) and Catalonia (ERC). Both the Socialist Party (PSOE) and Unidas Podemos are placed on the left wing of the political ideology, although the Socialist Party (PSOE) has more centered political inclinations than Unidas Podemos. On the other hand, *El Mundo* newspaper was chosen to be included in the data for analysis, since this newspaper sides with the Popular Party, the representative of the right wing of the Spanish political ideology, which at present is leading the Government's opposition. Included in the opposition are parties such as Ciudadanos, with a center-right ideology, and VOX, placed in the far-right wing of politics.

In what follows, a description of the sources chosen for the analysis will be presented.

El País is the Spanish newspaper that has the largest spread and influence in Spain. Its first appearance was on May 4, 1976, when Spain was initiating its transition to democracy. After four decades *El País* still maintains its leadership and it is the Spanish media reference inside and outside Spain. This newspaper defines itself as a global, independent, high quality newspaper and defender of democracy. *El País* possesses offices in the majority of the European countries as well as in North America and Latin America, having presence across 45 countries in the World (El País, 2020).

El Mundo holds the second position in the ranking of diffusion and audience in Spain. Since its foundation in 1989, *El Mundo* has remained loyal to its ideologies, achieving a great influence in Spain, specifically among political right-wing readers. *El Mundo* defines its ideologies as liberal ones. It is usually critical of the PSOE and nationalist parties, and is closer to the PP (El Mundo, 2020).

The criteria for the selection of these newspaper articles and inclusion in this corpus comprises daily news of the current situation of the outbreak of the coronavirus in Spain, and the ways in which the measures adopted by the government during the reopening after the lockdown were perceived by newspapers of different political ideologies. The corpus is limited to political, business, and medical articles and the ways in which may affect the perceptions of the governments' measures adopted during the reopening. The time frame for data collection was the month of May, 2020, as this was the period in which the Spanish government launched its loosening of restrictions after 99 days of lockdown while the coronavirus was confirmed to be spiking in Spain.

Software Used in the Analysis

For this study, as an integrated suite of programs, Voyant Tools (Sinclair & Rockwell, 2015) was used. Voyant is a web-based text reading and analysis environment, which offers a variety of ways to manipulate texts (Welsh, 2014; Uboldi & Caviglia, 2015). It is a scholarly instrument designed to facilitate reading and interpretive practices for digital humanities students and scholars as well as for the general public (Miller, 2018). In their research, Hetenyi, Lengyel and Szilasi (2019) shed light on various functions that are commonly used with Voyant. Summary, Cirrus, Collocates and Correlations are the functions provided by Voyant. These are the ones this analysis is based on. The Cirrus tool is a cloud of words in which the bigger and more centered words are the most frequently used in the corpus under study. Cirrus includes the option of using *Stop words* in order to exclude specific words, and it can determine the number of words to appear in the corpus. The Correlation tool facilitates identifying which tokens usually appear together in the text. The Summary tool presents an overview of the corpus, containing the number of tokens, number of unique tokens, longest and shortest documents, highest and lowest vocabulary density, average number of words per sentence, most frequent words, notable peaks in frequency, and distinctive words (Sinclair & Rockwell, 2016). Voyant also provides an effective function called Corpus Collocates in order to help the researcher identify the most relevant collocates in the corpus and automatically remove the most common items such as articles, possessive forms and coordinating conjunctions. These sets of items are excluded from the

analysis since a high number of them lack meaning, and/or they do not show any meaningful patterns.

Results and Analysis

Voyant Summary

The searches in *El País* returned 317 instances of "coronavirus" in its full name and its abbreviation (COVID). The corpora size for *El País* was 213,442 words, indicating one instance of "coronavirus" in every 673 words. *El Mundo* returned 397 instances of "coronavirus", which included both the full name and its abbreviations. On average, in the *El Mundo* corpora of 148,941 words, one instance of "coronavirus" appeared for every 375 words. Another token investigated was "reopening", which the Spanish translation is "desescalada" or "desconfinamiento". The corpus of *El País* indicates that there were 458 instances of the token "reopening", indicating one instance every 466 words. In El Mundo, we found 493 instances of "reopening", registering one instance every 302 words. In order to compare the features of the two different corpora, the tokens, types, sentences, word length, etc., were analyzed (Table 1). The purpose of presenting the characteristics of the two corpora in Table 1 is to ensure that the two corpora were consistent in their physical features so that all differences discovered later would be attributed to factors other than these.

Table 1
Statistics on the Corpora Based on El País and El Mundo

	El País	*El Mundo*
Instances of "coronavirus"	*317*	*397*
Instances of "reopening"	*458*	*493*
Number of Articles	*221*	*179*
Tokens	*213,442*	*148,941*
Average Tokens Per Article	*965*	*832*
Sentences	*5,187*	*3,829*
Average Tokens Per Sentence	*41*	*39*
Types	*17,398*	*12,838*

Voyant Cirrus

Cirrus tool offers a set of "stop words" function in order to discard the most common non-content tokens such as "with", "and", or "a", for example. This list was improved by manually adding a set of specific Spanish tokens (e.g., determinants, articles, prepositions) in order to save time in excluding irrelevant words.

The first run using the Cirrus function was conducted in order to identify the most frequently used words that appeared in both corpora. In *El País* (Figure 1), the item "phase" appeared as the biggest one with an occurrence of 802 times, followed by "government" (667 times), "Madrid" (502 times), "reopening" (380 times), "persons" (371 times), "community" (352 times), "health" as an adjective (333 times), "health" as a noun (319 times), "alarm" (284 times) and "measures" (264 times). These ten items conform to the top 10 in occurrence in *El País*. It is interesting to observe that in the top 10 items, the term "coronavirus" (317 times) was not included, which is one of the tokens that this study intends to analyze in depth, nonetheless the top 10 tokens have an obvious correlation with the word "coronavirus". If a deeper examination is taken, it can be observed that words related to "coronavirus" (synonyms, metaphors) were displayed in the corpus. That is, items such as "COVID" (124 times), "pandemic" (169 times) and "virus" (120 times) were included in the top 100 terms mentioned in this corpus. It can be said that if all of these items were counted as one, since they all refer to the "coronavirus", this item would be placed in the top 3 in the corpus, mentioned 606 times.

As shown in Figure 2, in *El Mundo* the token "government" appeared as the biggest one with an occurrence of 729 times, followed by "phase" (646 times), "alarm" (358 times), "reopening" (352 times), "health" as an adjective (311 times), "Sánchez" (267 times), "Madrid" (254 times), "persons" (251 times), "coronavirus" (242 times) and "community" (240 times). These ten items conform to the top 10 in occurrence in *El Mundo*. Although the results from Cirrus needed to be analyzed with caution since it does not contain correlations or co-occurrences, some preliminary guesses can be made, and can be further expanded using the other tools from Voyant.

Figure 1. *El País Cirrus*

Figure 2. *El Mundo Cirrus*

As for *El País*, the appearance of the token "Madrid" in the top three was noticeable (Table 2). Madrid is the capital of Spain, and its regional government is led by the Popular Party (PP)– the opposition party of the central government. Madrid has been one of the most affected communities by the coronavirus during the reopening, and due to questionable measures adopted by the regional government, Madrid was one of the last communities which advanced to the latter phases of reopening. Hence, the appearance of the token "Madrid" in *El País* can be explained merely because Madrid is the Spanish capital and its problems are more serious than other Spanish regions, or because *El País* was also exposing the regional government practices that kept Madrid from advancing to the next phase in the reopening protocol.

As for *El Mundo,* the appearance of the token "Sánchez" in the top 10 (Table 2) suggests that the newspaper is carrying out an evaluation about the performance of the Spanish president during the coronavirus phenomenon and the reopening. The token "government" is in the top 1 of the ranking, which tells us that the newspaper is evaluating the Government's administration during the reopening, whether it was acceptable or not. The token "Madrid" is situated in the 7th position of the ranking, and an extensive analysis was made using other Voyant tools in order to determine if *El Mundo* was either for or against the measures taken by the regional government of Madrid as well as for the ones adopted by the central government.

To another extent, in both *El País* and *El Mundo*, the token "reopening" appeared in the 4th position of the top 10. The Spanish reopening is an important matter, and it encompasses all the tokens that appeared in each corpus. In the next section, the token "reopening" will be analyzed taking into account the rest of the tokens using Voyant Correlations and

Collocates. The aim of this analysis is to determine the perceptions that *El País* and *El Mundo* have about the (1) Spanish reopening in terms of national and regional government performance, (2) the discrepancies of the regional government in Madrid and the central government due to the slow changes in phases of the reopening, and (3) the level of acceptance of the measures adopted by the central government during the reopening process.

Table 2
Top 10 Terms of the Corpus

El País			El Mundo		
Position	*Name of the token*	*Appearances*	*Position*	*Name of the token*	*Appearances*
1	phase	802	1	government	729
2	government	667	2	phase	646
3	Madrid	502	3	alarm	358
4	reopening	380	4	reopening	352
5	persons	371	5	health (adj)	311
6	community	352	6	Sánchez	267
7	health (adj)	333	7	Madrid	254
8	health (n.)	319	8	persons	251
9	alarm	284	9	coronavirus	242
10	measures	264	10	community	240

In what follows, an analysis of the newspapers' articles, starting from the headlines containing any of the top ten tokens of each corpus, will be identified, and the most relevant findings in the articles will be analyzed.

As for the token "government" found in the headlines, *El Mundo* and *El País* present different ways to show the performance of the government. While *El Mundo* acts as critical agent of the government, usually adding negative labels to the headlines, the token "government" in *El País* was followed by labels that, on the one hand suggest the power and legitimacy of their actions, and on the other hand victimizes the measures taken by the government:

(1)

El Mundo

El Gobierno intenta controlar el malestar de las grandes ciudades.

The government tries to control the discomfort of the big cities.

In the first example, the word "tries" is used to signify the lack of control of the government over the major cities in Spain. Thus, the government is represented negatively since it is not successful in addressing the major cities' expectations. As we keep reading the article, it can be found that in example 1, *El Mundo* used the label "discomfort" to suggest what the big cities were experiencing comes purely from an economic perspective, since the cities involved (Madrid, Barcelona and Spain) do not have financial debts. As the article pointed out, these cities' "fear" was based on their assumptions that their economic surplus would be taken away by the government and used as a part of the contingency plan to handle the coronavirus. These negative labels may lead readers think that the government does not have the reopening under control, but also suggest that the major cities are against the government administration. One interesting finding is that Sevilla is a city governed by the Socialist Party (PSOE), which also is the leader of the central government coalition. This consequently infers that some Spanish regional governments, no matter which party is leading the administration, would rather have greater autonomy in administering their economy, since their economy is more successful than what the central government has decided for them with respect to achieving a positive balance of its economy which highly resonates to what Rodrĺguez–Pose and Gill (2004) pointed out as regional inequality among the Spanish territory.

Below, two similar articles (example 2) from *El Mundo* and *El País* are compared and analyzed.

(2)

El Mundo

La Comunidad Valenciana acusa al Gobierno de favorecer al PNV en la desescalada.

Valencian Community accuses the government of favoring the PNV in the reopening.

El País

El Gobierno permite a Euskadi regular los desplazamientos y opta por poner reglas más restrictivas.

The government permits Euskadi to regulate the displacements and chooses to put in more restrictive rules.

These two headlines represent the same news but with very different wording. The articles discuss permission from the central government given to the Basque Country. While *El País* uses the token "government" accompanied with the word "permits" and "Euskadi", *El Mundo* connects the token "government" with words such as "accuses", "to favor", and "PNV". As it is widely known, the central government is in coalition with the PNV to form the government nationally and regionally, since it is the party with the majority of voters in the Basque Country. Due to the partisan status of *El País* towards the central government, it has used the label "permit" which does not suggest negative implications for the government's action in the article. In contrast, *El Mundo*'s headline presents a more negative message that, at first glance, does not have a lot of relationship with the intended one. A deeper look at the headline shows that one of the principal actors of the article is the Valencian Community, led by the Popular Party *(PP)*, which also leads the opposition to the central government. The label "accuses" by definition is taken as negative, since it is a claim that someone has done something wrong and is supported by the label "to favor" that shows preference by one of the political sides, which in this case is "PNV". El Mundo used "PNV" to directly emphasize which political party is in charge in the Basque Country, instead of using the label "Euskadi", as they did with the Valencian Community, and not using PP. By manipulating the wording, it is quite likely that *El Mundo* wants the Valencian Community to represent all citizens, not just the PP, by adopting the diametrical strategy with the Basque Country and the PNV. This strategy can be observed as a confrontation between "US" (the Spanish citizens) against "THEM" (the nationalist parties) (cf. Van Dijk, 1993, 1997). Since "US", the Spanish citizens, are not allowed to do things that "THEY", the people who want to break the unity of Spain, the "US" are preferred by the central government, and hence, can do what they want.

The next two articles of the third example are about the decision of the central government to not allow Madrid to advance to Phase 1 for a second time. A number of polarizations were also found to favor the central government or the regional government of Madrid.

(3)

El Mundo

Sánchez deja a Madrid en una Fase 'flexible' y el Gobierno de Ayuso replica que 'no hay razones técnicas' para no pasar a la Fase 1.

Sánchez leaves Madrid in a 'Flexible' phase 0 and Ayuso's government replies that there are no technical reasons to not advance to the phase 1.

El País

"*No hay explicación técnica. Estamos preparados*", *dice Díaz Ayuso sobre la*

permanencia de Madrid en fase 0.

"*There is not a technical explanation. We are ready*", *says Díaz Ayuso about*

Madrid's permanency in phase 0.

The polarizations that we looked for in this article can be defined as the representations of the political agents or organizations with good perceptions of "Us", while sending bad perceptions to "Them" (Van Djik, 2006). Both *El Mundo* and *El País* emphasize the declarations given by the president of Madrid, Isabel Díaz Ayuso, in which she criticized the administration of the central government for not letting Madrid advance to Phase 1 because there were "no technical reasons" for not advancing. As it can be seen in both articles, Ayuso used the token "deliberately harm" as an implication that the central government did not want Madrid to advance to Phase 1, not because they were not ready to do so, but only because the regional government belongs to the opposition party of the central government. Consequently, Ayuso used the token "take legal actions" in order to demonstrate that she has the power to threaten the central government in case they do not let the city advance to the next phase. The token "defend" could be a way of victimization, since in her discourse, it seems that the citizens of Madrid were treated by the central government as outcasts. What is interesting is that *El Mundo* also included in the article affirmations from the central government about Madrid's situation, using labels such as "excellent work" and "important effort" and ending with the labels "but", which is a disclaimer of positive ideas and rejected at the end (Van Djik, 2006) as in the phrase "have discarded again". The token "discarded" can be seen as a negative item since it implies that something is not desirable and thus, repudiated. This type of discourse suggests a message of victimization by the regional government, although they did the things right to pass to the next phase, the central government did not even consider the change for Madrid.

Voyant Collocates

It is apparent that the tokens "phase" and "government" were the most common in both corpora. As shown in Table 3, while the most prominent collocates in *El País* for "government" were the tokens "central" (41 times) and "regional" (38 times), referring to the Spanish central government and the regional governments of each Spanish Autonomous Community, *El Mundo's* first collocate for the token "government" was "president" (47 times), followed by the token "central" (39 times), and in third place the token "Sánchez" (26 times). The relationship of the token "government" with its collocates leads us to infer that while *El País* centers its attention on giving information about the Spanish government as an organization, it seems that *El Mundo's* news points out the performance of the Spanish president. The focus of the Spanish president in *El Mundo's* articles, can be seen as a characterization of Van Dijk's ideologies (1993, 1997) about the "Us" against "Them". It seems possible that *El Mundo* wants its discourse to explain what the central government is doing right or wrong through the figure of the president. A more extensive analysis will be made through Voyant Contexts tool between the tokens "government", and "president" and

"Sánchez" to better determine if there is a negative or positive discourse from *El Mundo* to the central government and its president.

Table 3
Collocates of government

	El País	El Mundo
	central (41 times)	*president (47 times)*
	regional (38 times)	*central (39 times)*
government	*Sánchez (26 times)*	*reopening (32 times)*
	Madrid (24 times)	*Sánchez (30 times)*
	community (23 times)	*plan (25 times)*

The next token for analysis is "Madrid". Since it is the capital of Spain, and it suffered a larger impact from the coronavirus pandemic, its advance to the "new normality" was more heavily impeded than the rest of the Spanish regions, which suffered a slightly smaller impact than Madrid. In both corpora, the first collocate that can be seen is with the token "community", as this is the official name of this region, Community of Madrid. The most remarkable differences between the collocates of "Madrid" in *El País* and *El Mundo* are that in *El País* the token "presidenta" (female president) can be found with strong collocates (25 times). This token refers to the president of Madrid Isabel Díaz Ayuso, who is known for having strong opposition to the national government and the measures adopted during the reopening, especially in Madrid. Moreover, "Madrid" and the collocate "Catalonia" also appear in both *El País* and *El Mundo*, but *El Mundo* seems to have a stronger opinion on Catalonia inasmuch as it also can be seen with the token "Barcelona" (capital of Catalonia) as one of the most recurrent tokens in relationship to Madrid. This recurrence can be identified as a result of the political conflicts that involve the government of Catalonia with the central government and regional Spanish governments (Harguindéguy, Rodríguez-López & Sánchez, 2017). In the next section, the contexts in which the token "Madrid" will be further examined to verify the perceptions of both newspapers about them. Table 4 below shows the co-occurrences of the token "Madrid" in the two corpora.

Table 4
Collocates of Madrid

	El País	El Mundo
	community (100 times)	community (80 times)
	phase (47 times)	phase (24 times)
Madrid	president (f.) (25 times)	Barcelona (19 times)
	Catalonia (23 times)	Catalonia (18 times)
	government (23 times)	government (17 times)

The last token for analysis is "reopening", which is the main focus of this investigation. At first glance, it appears that both newspapers contain similar collocates as can be seen in Table 5. Both newspapers focused their discourses of reopening on the government and the plans for each phase and/or the conditions to advance to the next phase in order to reach the so-called "new normality". This analysis would be expanded with the Voyant Contexts tool in order to point out whether the newspapers sent a positive or negative message of the plans adopted by the central government in order to advance to the next phase in each autonomous community, especially in Madrid. As an interesting remark, *El Mundo* includes the collocate "coronavirus" with the token "reopening", while in *El País* it does not appear. This could be explained by affirming that *El Mundo* still wanted to remind the readers that the coronavirus has not disappeared from the life of Spaniards. This collocation contributes to the negative connotations in its discourse, while *El País* presumably focuses its discourse on finding solutions and informing readers about the ways in which the Spanish population can protect itself against the coronavirus, without naming it directly.

Table 5
Collocates of Reopening

	El País	El Mundo
	phase (117 times)	phase (92 times)
reopening	plan (29 times)	plan (45 times)
	government (19 times)	government (32 times)
	community (18 times)	coronavirus (16 times)

Voyant Contexts

The Contexts (or Keywords in Context) tool shows each occurrence of a keyword with a bit of surrounding text (the context). It can be useful for studying more closely how terms

are used in different contexts. As we move through the two different corpus (*El País and El Mundo)* we are going to identify how the labels changed the perceptions of the readers around the different tokens mentioned above: (1) central "government" and the (2) measures adopted during the "reopening" and (3) "Madrid", since it is the capital of Spain and suffered some setbacks during the reopening.

The first big measure that the central government applied during the first days of reopening was allowing citizens to take a walk and practice sports during short periods of time. In order to promote social distancing, the government set different periods of time to go out based on different age ranges (Table 6).

Table 6
Time Schedule to Take Walks, Do Exercise,

Age	Time
14-70 years old	*6 AM to 10 AM – 8 PM to 11 PM*
Above 70 years old	*10 AM to 12 AM – 7 PM to 8 PM*
Below 14 years old	*12 PM to 7 PM*

It is interesting to point out that *El País* gave voice to the opinion of one of the political parties that conforms to the opposition of the central government regarding this measure, as shown in example (4).

(4)

El País

- *Vox califica de "toque de queda" la prohibición de pasear después de las 11 de la noche.*

- *Vox considers as "curfew" the prohibition of taking a walk after 11 PM.*

As it was mentioned before, VOX is a far-right wing political party whose "…ideology is based on a combination of nationalism and xenophobia (nativism) and an authoritarian view of society, attached to the values of law and order" (Ferreira, 2019, p.73). In the actual political scene, VOX can be seen as antagonistic to the central government that the PSOE leads. Due to its coalition with the far-left wing party, the UP, the current government conforms to a stronger socialist government that Spain has ever had in its democratic history. The majority of supporters of this party are disenchanted ex-voters of PP who changed their political preferences due to a perceived lack of leadership by the last general secretary of the PP. Still, the voters keep preferring *El Mundo* as their source of information. For this reason, *El Mundo* usually gives more coverage to the VOX news, although the presss sympathize

more with the PP. Therefore, it can be seen as a negative reaction to the first big measure adopted by the central government, labeling it as "curfew". This word is usually adopted when there is a high probability of disorder or clashes against the government or a large demographic (Brass, 2006). In this scenario, the use of this label seems to be a hyperbole (Van Dijk, 2006), since the central government still guarantees the right to leave the house at any time when there is a reasonable excuse. Although VOX has little representation in the government opposition forces, they use any chance they can to diminish the actions of the central government. Such a tactic   matches Van Dijk's (1993) theories about the fight for dominance and power in the political scene. As it can be seen in the excerpt (5) *El País* and the political party VOX have had various confrontations since VOX thinks that *El País* is "brutally stigmatizing." VOX and its members have never taken legal action against *El País*. VOX did, however, try to threaten *El País* to use its voters as a weapon, implying that the almost 4 million VOX voters from past elections could exert financial leveraging on the newspaper.

(5)

El País

El País lleva un año estigmatizando brutalmente a los dirigentes y votantes de VOX. En el accionariado de El País hay empresas y bancos que tienen como clientes a los casi 4 millones de votantes de VOX. Es hora de señalar a quienes financian este acoso.

El País has been brutally stigmatizing the leaders and voters of VOX for a year. In the shareholding of El País there are companies and banks that have as clients almost 4 million VOX voters. It's time to point out who is financing this bullying.

In the statement above, it can be seen how the token "brutally" as an exacerbation was used; in VOX's opinion the media coverage of *El País* is bullying them. Also, in its discourse, VOX used the Spanish citizens "4 million VOX voters" as a threat to try to make *El País* stop passing on this information. It is worth stressing that *El País* has been banned from all the acts that VOX performs. According to the FAPE (Federation Associations of Journalists of Spain), not only *El País* has been banned from VOX activities, but also various media sources have been banned from their public interventions since these media sources are not considered trustful in expressing VOX ideas. From these statements it can be suggested that VOX is trying to intimidate the media sources that are not in line with their ideological position.

In her research, Eagleton posited that the media "mentally directs how we experience and react to an event" (2004, p.34). This statement is clearly manifested in how two different media sources present the titles of the same topic but use wording and implications in order

to make the reader have different thoughts depending on which media source is read. As an example, both corpora introduced an article about the decisions of the central government and the opposition (PP) to extend the state of emergency in Spain during the reopening process. Examples of news titles consisting of one the reactions and the wording of the state of emergency are presented (6) below.

(6)

El Mundo

Pedro Sánchez llama a Pablo Casado tras la negativa del PP a prorrogar el estado de alarma "a día de hoy".

Pedro Sánchez calls Pablo Casado after the negative of the PP to propagate the state of emergency "at the present moment".

El País

Casado comunica a Sánchez que no apoya una nueva prórroga del estado de alarma: "No tiene ningún sentido".

Casado communicates to Sánchez that he doesn't support the new prorogation of the state of emergency: "It does not make any sense".

In these two headlines, the *Popular Party* rejects the prolongation of the state of high alert in Spain due to the coronavirus. In both headlines, the same information can be identified but with a different wording (Van Dijk, 1998), in which the main problem is the disagreement of the prorogation of the state of emergency in Spain. *El Mundo* shows that Pedro Sánchez, the Spanish president, is the one who has to call Pablo Casado, the leader of the opposition, to try to ask him for support in order to extend the state of emergency. That information implies that Pablo Casado is the one who has the power to solve this problem. On the other hand, *El País* reveals that it is Casado who talks to Sánchez to inform him that the PP is not going to help prolong the state of emergency. In this context, a sense of victimization by the national government, which thinks that the best solution to control possible news outbreaks is to extend the state of emergency. By adding the sentence used by Casado "No tiene ningún sentido" ("It does not make any sense"), we consider that the message that *El País* wants to send to the readers is that their health does not have any importance to the PP. This type of discourse can be identified as a representation of what the advantages or disadvantages that the state of emergencywould impose on the citizens in Spain, according to the theory established (Van Dijk, 2000) about what is good or what is

bad for the people.

In what follows, an analysis centered in Madrid, capital of Spain, and its problems to advance to new phases of the reopening will be conducted in order to point what are the perceptions of the two newspapers toward the management of this autonomous community during the end of lockdown period.

In the case of Madrid, the focus of attention in the two newspapers differed greatly. As it can be appreciated in the articles of the example (7), both newspapers write about the petition of the regional government of Madrid to advance to the next phase of the easing restrictions.

(7)

El Mundo

Dimite la directora general de Salud Pública de Madrid tras oponerse a pasar a la fase 1 de la desescalada.

Resigns the General Director of Public Health of Madrid after her opposition to advance to the Phase 1 of the reopening.

El País

La petición de Madrid de pasar a fase 1 desata una tormenta política interna en el Gobierno regional.

The petition of Madrid to advance to Phase 1 unties an internal political storm in the regional government.

While *El Mundo* only informs about the resignation of the General Director of Public Health in Madrid due to her opposition to moving forward to the next phase, *El País* goes further and expresses that Madrid "desata una tormenta política" ("is unleashing a political maelstorm") because the regional government has requested to advance to the next phase. These labels can be seen as the beginning of a number of problems caused by this petition. Based on this context, we can affirm that *El Mundo's* intention was to mask the real reasons for the resignation of the General Director of Public Health, since in the article, only was pointed that the ex-General Director of Public Health said that "Madrid no estaba preparada sanitariamente para pasar de fase" ("Madrid was not prepared healthwise to advance to the next phase"), while in *El País*, more concrete reasons were exposed in the article, in which the ex-General Director of Public Health said that the decision of the regional government "…no ha estado basada en los criterios de salud" ("…was not based on public health

criteria") and that "…han imperado otras cuestiones políticas y económicas" ("…other political and economic matters were at issue") in order to demand the moving to the next phase. This is a clear example of Van Dijk's theories of different groups having different ideologies and preferences (Van Dijk, 1993). In this case, it seems that the regional government favors economic recovery over the health of the citizens of Madrid in the fight against the coronavirus.

In addition, *El Mundo* and *El País* also published more articles about Madrid remaining in Phase 0, but the discourses differ in labels as shown in excerpt (8).

(8)

El Mundo

El Gobierno comunica a Madrid que no pasará a la fase 1 el lunes.

The government tells Madrid that it will not advance to Phase 1 this Monday.

El País

El Gobierno rechaza la petición de cambio de fase para Madrid.

The government rejects the petition of Madrid to change its phase.

El Mundo used the label "tells", and *El País* used the label "rejects", as a sign of force of the government. What is interesting in these articles is that El Mundo brings out the resignation of the ex-General Director of Public Health, emphasizing that the decision of not letting Madrid to advance to the new phase was token "…después de que este jueves dimitiera la directora general de Salud Pública madrileña, Yolanda Fuentes, al negarse a firmar la petición de cambio de fase por considerar que la región no estaba preparada para el cambio" ("…after this Thursday, the General Director of Public Health, Yolanda Fuentes, resigned when she refused to accept the petition to change the phase in that she considered that the region was not ready to the change.") Although, El Mundo tried to minimize the impact of this article by exposing that "Según fuentes del equipo de Isabel Díaz Ayuso, el Ministerio de Sanidad avala la capacidad asistencial de Madrid, pero se inclina por esperar a que el sistema de detección de Atención Primaria esté más afianzado para el inicio de la desescalada. Es decir, que mejore el sistema de realización de test en los centros de salud." ("According to sources on Isabel Díaz Ayuso's team, the Ministry of Health approves the healthcare capacity of Madrid but prefers to wait for the virus testing system to be more consistent") in order to begin loosening restrictions. It can be inferred that *El Mundo* tried to support the regional government of Madrid by saying that its team is still doing everything right, although it did not get the approval to advance to the next phase. This kind of discourse is similar with Van Dijk's ideologies (1993) in which he posited the phenomenon of the "Us" versus "Them". Until that time, the regional government still thought that they were well prepared to control the city, while the central government explained that Madrid did not meet

the requirements. Besides, *El País* gave more information about the limitations of Madrid because during this period, emergency care system was restructured to divert health personnel to the ad-hoc hospital located in the "Ifema Center", and numerous healthcare centers were closed as well as urgent services. When Madrid tried to advance to the next phase, a lot of the healthcare centers were still closed, provoking the emergency care system to fail at a complete recovery. In this context, *El País* also reported that the Ministry of Health labeled it as "obvious" to deny Madrid advancing to the next phase. As was shown in the results, *El País* used negative labels to categorize the actions of the central government, trying to show its dominance against the regional government. This type of discourse of power dominance is another of Van Dijk's theories (2003) that are embedded in the social discourse.

The above comparisons show how different the two newspapers were in terms of the treatment of news, language used in both corpora and its different political inclinations.

Conclusion

The outcomes of this research clearly demonstrate how discourse is a powerful tool to express different ideologies to intended readers. The analysis supports Van Dijk's theories of "Us" vs "Them" (1993,1997) when *El País* showed their intentions to expose the bad performances of the central government rivals, and labeled the measures taken by the central government during the Spanish reopening in a positive manner. On the other hand, *El Mundo* shows a more direct and sometimes negative discourse toward measures by the central government, emphasizing the disputes that the central government has with regional governments over what is good or bad for various Spanish autonomous communities (Van Dijk, 2000). In addition, *El Mundo* shows a total support to the central government opposition, especially the PP, in which their discourse is again based on the things they would do right if they were leading the government, and the things the central government is doing wrong (Van Dijk, 1993,1997). *El Mundo* also published a larege number of articles which exposed the potential negative effects on the Spanish economy in light of the central government's plans for reopening. This study has demonstrated that the use of different labels and discursive techniques relate similar news but show certain ideologies in the tow newspapers as influential, and thus, attempting to manipulate readers' opinions about the current progress of the Spanish reopening. The publication of these May 2020 articles gives voice to political actors, purporting what is good or bad for the unity of Spain as a country and its economy during in the delicate balancing act between physical, mental, and economic health as a result of the coronavirus and the lockdown it has imposed.

The outcomes of this analysis also show how the different Spanish political parties keep having disagreements even in moments of crisis like this pandemic. The discourses given by the central government as well as the governments' opposition, as voiced through opposing newspapers, may well mean that their dissensions and confrontations may lead to delayed recovery from this pestilence. If both the central government and the government's opposition do not work together to contain this unprecedented and highly contagious virus, it may cause devastating consequences for the Spanish citizens and its economy.

There are some limitations of this study that should be noted. This research was focused in the month of May, during the first days of the the first attempt at loosening restrictions. This means that we were only able to analyze the discourses of the first steps of the measures adopted by the central government in their fight against the coronavirus. A longitudinal study is recommended for future studies in this area to analyze the effectiveness of the measures adopted by the central government, and to identify which are the final (dis)agreements among the different political parties involved in the management of the crisis.

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