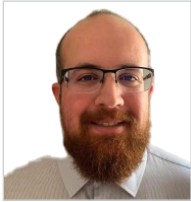# Popular Music in the 2019 Electoral Campaign in Spain

La música popular en las elecciones generales de 2019 en España

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Abstract:

This research studies the design of three political parties' playlists for the 2019 general elections in Spain. The party-candidate pairing is essential for understanding the role of popular music in electoral campaigns. The anthem is the party's sound brand that appeals to loyal voters and frames the campaign's candidate. The playlists with popular music allow for emotionally and thematically divided discourse that facilitates the party's personification. The songs are used functionally in the playlist by disassociating them from the performer's ideology. Based on the musical styles, the themes of the lyrics, and the dates of the songs, it is observed that electorally the PSOE targets youth with current social messages; the PP, which has a broader generational orientation, uses nostalgia and identity in an attempt to recover former voters. Ciudadanos includes numerous songs from the era of the so-called *Movida,* attracting mature and young electorates. In any case, the scarcity of political proposals is notable; the emotional message's predominance, which is attributable to the political parties and not to the candidates, strengthens ties with the party.

Keywords:

Political communication; popular music; electoral playlist; emotions.

Resumen:

Esta investigación indaga en el diseño de las playlists electorales de tres partidos en las elecciones generales de 2019 en España. El binomio partido-candidato es esencial para entender la función de la música popular en las campañas electorales. El himno es una imagen de marca sonora del partido que apela a votantes fieles y enmarca al candidato. Las playlists con música popular permiten un discurso emocional y temáticamente que facilita la personificación del partido. El empleo de canciones en las playlists se desarrolla desvinculando la canción utilizada de la ideología del intérprete. Teniendo en cuenta los estilos musicales, los temas de las letras y las fechas de las canciones, se observa que electoralmente el PSOE se dirige a los jóvenes con mensajes sociales de actualidad, y el PP, generacionalmente más amplio, usa la nostalgia y la identidad en la lógica de recuperar antiguos votantes. Ciudadanos, en la época de la denominada Movida, en la captación de electorados maduros, así como algunos jóvenes. En cualquier caso, lo que es destacable es la escasez de propuestas políticas, el predomino del mensaje emocional, que al ser atribuible a las organizaciones políticas y no a los candidatos, fortalece la vinculación con el partido.

Palabras clave:

Comunicación política; música popular; playlist electoral; emociones.

1. Introduction

The use of music in North American election campaigns has been documented since the end of the 18th century (Kasper and Schoening, 2012). Both its use and the song's compositions have changed over time. Almost two and a half centuries have passed since a coronation march composition in the 1789 election was used; Trump's 2016 and 2020 election campaigns featured The Village People. Despite the long tradition of using music in electoral campaigns in both the United States and other democracies, the study of this communicative phenomenon is relatively recent. Especially in Spain, where the research on the use of music in electoral campaigns is still emerging.

Despite certain songs' significance in the transition to democracy, such as "Libertad sin ira" (Freedom without anger), popular music took second place. It merely set the scene for the majority parties' events. The commercial songs with a political message took a back seat in the majority parties, as they were ousted by the sheer weight of the party's anthem. Julio Mengod composed the PSOE's current anthem in 1982, while the Partido Popular's anthem was composed by Manuel Pacho in the early 1990s to update its image. These anthems have been covered several times, generally coinciding with election campaigns, thus giving the impression of innovation and change. The party's anthem is a sound brand and a public calling card. This approach is appropriate when the voters are relatively unchangeable and loyal to a party, and the main task is to motivate mobilisation. In musical terms, the party frames the candidate with an anthem.

However, popular music has substantially broadened its functions in campaigns in recent years in Spain. Besides helping brand recognition and fostering emotional arousal, music also becomes part of the discourse. It attempts to connect voters with the political parties. This shift brings Spanish electoral campaigns in line with those of other democracies, resulting from the transformation in the electorates. The Spanish electorates have undergone significant changes since the 2011 social mobilisations; party anchors have weakened, increasing volatility and demobilisation. The current five parties, which have gained importance electorally in the last two 2019 elections, demonstrate the fragmentation and a new configuration. A significant proportion of voters have lost their allegiance to majority parties, provoking a shift towards other political cultures in which undecided voters are the critical element.

In democracies with presidential regimes, songs have attributed character traits to political leaders. President Obama is a particularly paradigmatic case. Popular music was a key element to his image as he used platforms to publish his playlists. These lists were calibrated to perfection, organised by eras, styles, the performer's gender, and languages to give a very particular image of a cool leader (Alaminos-Fernandez, 2018, 2020). Biden published his playlists as Vicepresident of Obama and used the same strategy for the 2020 presidential elections. His playlist was a bridge for the emotional and connected with the main electorates (African American or Hispanic). The popular songs went beyond the candidate's "musical branding," as qualities and character traits were attributed to him, allowing him to form emotional ties with society.

Popular music has had a broad function and has been used in the last electoral campaigns in Spain. A binomial is established between the party anthem (appeal to the loyal voters) and the commercial playlists. Commerical songs

express a more diverse emotional message combined with the themes communicated. In Spain, some political parties have published a campaign playlist for the two 2019 general elections.

This investigation considers the campaign music from three national political parties: Ciudadanos, Partido Popular (PP) and Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE). The three parties have created music playlists on the Platform Spotify for two general elections in 2019; they are ideologically located between the centre left, centre right, and right. In the case of Unidas Podemos or Vox, although it is easy to determine the ideological discourse of a party that uses the military anthem *Soy el novio de la Muerte* or protest songs from the transition era in a campaign, they have not been considered due to lack of comparable data since they did not publish lists with a formalised message. In this sense, we study electoral communication through parties' commercial music, which are located in the more temperate area of the ideological spectrum. These songs define a divided discourse, as they express the emotional and themes that identify them.

1.1. Music and elections

Music is present in the electoral campaigns, with one role or another depending on the political system and the social situation. In the international scene, the North American presidential elections show a long-standing tradition of using music in campaigns (Schoening and Kasper, 2012). So much so that one of the analytical concepts of the electoral dynamics- bandwagon- refers to the car that musicians travelled in when they accompanied the campaign.

At first glance, we refer to music's role according to parties' or leaders' relevance in the political system. Music plays an essential role in attributing features and characteristics to the candidates in presidential systems. This has been called "musical branding" as the presidential candidate is considered a brand, an image that must be wrapped and defined (Busby, 2009; Love, 2012). The cases of the United States or France show the centrality that music adopts in highly personalised elections. This also occurs in Spain, where, occasionally, a "presidential song" [1] is found.

Another differentiated situation are those elections in which the parties and leaders have equal importance and space. Although the figure of the leader is fundamental for attracting electorates, tradition grants a significant weight to the political parties in the electoral dynamic. The importance of the party's image in Spain is shown through anthems that set the scene for campaigns or party events. Party anthems act as a brand and musical reference for establishing emotional ties.

Popular commercial songs and party anthems have an essential place. Songs are a tool for building emotional bridges with constituents (Love, 2016) and a key to activating memory and recalling past feelings (Alaminos-Fernández, 2021). In this sense, the use of songs goes beyond creating a brand for the candidates and calls for boosting and mobilising identifications with the party. In Spain, where the voters are moving away from politics, volatility is high and rational

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1   Song "RAJOY CONTIGO ESTOY" in the 2008 general elections https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOIV_Ba9Iig&ab_channel=aldelcorral (Consultado el 21/02/2021).

arguments lose precedence to emotional ones. Thus the music discourse acquires greater utility (Fouce and del Val, 2017; Quecedo, 2017; Espí Hernández, 2017; Panke, 2019; García, 2019; Jaráiz *et al.* 2020; Alaminos, 2021).

The use of preexisting songs implies a set of restrictions for designing the party's playlist (Love, 2012). The music industry is a market whereby songs are conditioned by what is considered commercial (Adorno, 1941; Taylor, 2016). Consequently, songs are used in their original version, or their meaning is transformed by adapting it to the political objectives. These changes can modify the lyrics of the songs or reproduce them in a context that creates a meaning that does not correspond to their original one. Rolston (2001) referred to it as a lyrical drift or word drift, which consists in modifying the original meaning of a song to give it a new reinterpretation in another context. This drift is most significant when lyrics are altered for political use. In Spain, Vox used Juanes' song A Dios le Pido, adapting it to A Vox le pido. Similarly, Reagan employed the Springsteen song Born in the USA; Juanes demanded that the song's original meaning be respected. In this case, the songs are used regardless of an artist's political commitment to a party, as the message is translated emotionally according to the campaign objectives.

1.2. Music in campaign and campaign music

The difference between campaign music and music in the campaign is an important distinction (Alaminos-Fernández, 2016). Although the song and the performer tend to form a unit of meaning, the difference between campaign music and music in a campaign comes from the willingness to commit to a party politically. In campaign music, musicians act as celebrities who put their fame at the service of a party or cause (Orman and West, 2003; Wheeler, 2013). Based on identification theory, Burke (1969) proposed that if a segment of the population (according to age, gender, etc.) identifies with an artist, they will show a high probability of reproducing the artists' political preferences. However, the data supporting such a claim is far too old, and evidence about its validity in current societies lacks. According to Wheeler (2013), an essential part of recent research investigates how celebrities participate in politics and vice-versa; how politicians behave as if they were celebrities. This blurred contact zone between famous musicians and politicians establishes the field of electoral collaboration. To the extent that according to Orman and West (2003), there is no distinction when famous musicians support and raise funds for political candidates in an attempt to convey the positive traits of their celebrity to the politicians they support, by expressing their ideological positioning.

An example of this in Spain is the Platform supporting José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero in the 2008 general elections. Musicians such as Ana Belén, Víctor Manuel, or Serrat, together with other celebrities from other areas, requested electoral support for the PSOE candidate in Spain. This is usual in North American electoral campaigns, where the celebrities create support platforms, usually for progressive candidates.

In this sense, if we consider the situation in Spain, it is similar to The United States: it is easier to find famous musicians who support the Democratic Party or progressive parties in both countries than right-wing or conservative parties. In his two presidential elections, an explicit complaint from Donald Trump's campaign committees was the difficulty in

finding famous musicians to support his candidacy in his two presidential election campaigns. At the same time, artists offered to perform free for the Democratic Party.

It is worth noting that, in general, musicians prefer not to commit themselves politically, either because it makes it difficult for them to be hired by the public administration for concerts or because it results in part of the audience rejecting them. Precisely, both party support and censorship acts have been used in this research to operationalise the measurement of musicians' potential ideological affinities. An example of this was the censorship of the new Partido Popular's government of 21 artists, whereby they removed them from the 2019 poster of the San Mateo festivities in Oviedo.

In campaign music, musical resources are used for their semantic or emotional meanings and do not appeal to the performers' fame. Songs are a common element in daily life and are a tool for developing emotional empathy. The songs themselves produce cognitive and emotional effects from the lyrics, melodies, musical styles, era, or even language. In general, languages connote certain emotions and sensations about cultural stereotypes (Bechini, 1985; Alaminos-Fernández, 2014). Language is an element of the cultural connotation that gives a song several dimensions; among them are "idiosyncrasy" and a "designation of origin". It has its qualities in social imaginaries. The music genre of a song and the image of language forms a message in themselves, which is complementary to the content of the lyrics. Songs can act as emotional triggers by carrying experiences and activating evocations (Alaminos-Fernández, 2021).

When songs have an affect, it is the result of a combination between music and lyrics. This element is often forgotten in the studies on music's emotional effects, focusing almost exclusively on the songs' musical features (Juslin, 2005; Alaminos-Fernández, 2019). Lyrics, when understood by the audience, are an obvious source of the socialisation of values or behaviours according to cognitive learning theory (Giles and Maltby, 2004; Harakeh, Scholte, Vermulst, de Vries, and Engels, 2004; Maxwell, 2002; Petraitis *et al.*, 1995). Although most songs have lyrics, there are few studies on them (Juslin, 2005; Mori and Iwanaga, 2014; Stratton and Zalanowski, 1994). In any case, the conclusions they reach are far from consistent. For example, Straton and Zalanowski (1994) compared the emotional effects of exposure to music without lyrics and songs with lyrics. They concluded that the songs with lyrics have a more significant emotional impact. The attempts to replicate these results (Sousou, 1997) do not have a positive outcome, as differences are attributed to different songs. However, if this were the defining factor, it would indirectly invalidate the previous study's conclusion by being dependent on the songs chosen. The study on the effects of songs on emotions is more complex when textual elements representing lyrics are introduced along with the instrumental dimension (Mori and Iwanaga, 2013). Moreover, the personal and contextual factors introduce significant variability regarding the interaction between the lyrics and the melodies (Schlegel, 1999). In this sense, several studies (Baltes, Avram, Miclea, and Miu, 2011; Brattico *et al.*, 2011; Mory and Iwanaga, 2013) indicate that lyrics affect the audience's emotions. How music and lyrics combine are frequently reflections of the cultural norms, such as lifestyles (Rothbaum and Tsang, 1998). Thus, for genres like pop or rock, their emotional impact is linked to the relationship between music and lyrics (North *et al.*, 2004; Rentfrow and Gosling, 2003).

Regarding the role that song lyrics play in daily life, several studies have investigated how they can help individuals to understand their feelings better, adopt a position on specific issues, or help them make a decision when facing difficulties (Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald, 2002; Gibson, Aust, and Zillman, 2000). This element is very significant in political climates characterised by high volatility and uncertainty among voters.

In addition, according to Dewall, Pond, and Campbell (2011), there has been an increase in the study of song lyric content associated with antisocial or critical behaviours of the economic or political system; whereas, the studies on the representation of social relationships have decreased. However, romantic emotions are still a subject of reference in many commercial styles.

Song lyrics represent a significant source of information about social reality and those desirables or the existing lines of rupture and conflict. For some authors, there is a propensity for social consensus. The most popular songs contain lyrics on positions and themes that society accepts more widely (Health, Bell and Sternberg, 2001). In the case of music used by political parties to connect with their constituencies, the themes, and their social and cultural significance gain importance.

2. Objectives and methodologies

The music used in the political area, and in particular in the elections, indicates two fundamental aspects. On the one hand, it tells us about society and on the other hand about the party itself. Regarding society, it offers us a snapshot of the electorates (segments of the population) to which the party appeals, the values, and the emotions that they consider to be relevant for them. In this sense, social change is expressed in different musical styles associated with what is experienced at that time, both individually and generationally. In the case of Spain, the most significant periods refer to the Francoist and Post-Francoist period, the transition, and the so-called *Movida* (Labrador and Monasterio, 2006; Fouce and Pecourt, 2008; Fouce, 2009; Alonso, 2010; Mora and Viñuela, 2013; García, 2017). Regarding the party, playlists operate by showing a party image, which is similar to the presidential candidates' playlists (case of the United States of America) and establishing emotional connections. Sharing music humanises politics and brings candidates emotionally closer to voters under the guise of "we like the same music," we feel the same, we are similar. At the same time, the parties use simplified themes to characterise their image. In determining the above aspects about the playlists that the parties have selected themselves, a series of questions have been asked.

2.1. Objectives

The first is the extent to which the three parties' playlists are different. Sharing many songs and performers would indicate that the lists demonstrate random musical preferences, with no intention other than entertainment. Differentiated lists would provide evidence for a distinction between the audiences; even if the songs are chosen for entertainment, it will show that different audiences enjoy different songs or musical styles. In any case, the answer

would affirm the difference but not the intention. All the songs were considered, regardless of the language, to analyse the three parties' lists.

Thus, as far as intentionality is concerned, the alternative question is whether it is possible to detect ideological contiguities between parties according to their campaign music lists. Proximity or competition for a political space (especially in the centre right) could be expressed musically. In other words, if the songs are vehicles to connect with the electorates and the party's calling card, there should be more coincidences in the messages that they convey to shared electorates; that is, the songs or performers. If more songs from the list are shared between ideologically contiguous parties, there would be more evidence of intentionality in the design. The second objective is to determine the "campaign music" and "music in the campaign." To do so, we will evaluate whether the celebrities' ideology plays a role in choosing the songs. For instance, if the performers who supported the PSOE's Platform for Zapatero are on the Partido Popular's song lists or Ciudadanos. In general, few musical performers explicitly show ideological militancy. In this case, a music selection excluding performers according to ideological affinity would be found in campaign music, where the performer contributes significantly to the song. The third question is what songs characterise each of the parties and what they express regarding electorates and party image. According to Brownell (2014 and 2015), "Throughout the years, through the birth of new forms of communication and entertainment that have made election campaigns true spectacles, the playlists have become a crucial element for understanding the values that each candidate wants to represent and communicate." In this research, we will consider the musical style, the period, and the themes of the songs as key indicators.

2.2. Methodology and data

The questions posed by the research must consider that the lists of each party are made up of two subpopulations based on language, songs with lyrics in Spanish and songs with lyrics in foreign languages. Thus, the analysis of the lists to determine the potential differentiated music profile of each party uses the entire population, while other questions require examining the songs in Spanish exclusively since they convey emotional content that is understandable by the general population. The three play lists used in the party rallies and electoral acts, available on the Platform Spotify, are used to respond to the above questions. The sample comprises the songs that make up the lists *La España que quieres*[2] from PSOE, *#valorseguro*[3] from the Popular Party, and *Ciudadanos*[4]. A campaign music list composed of 263 performers or music groups and 287 songs.

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2   From: spotify:playlist:3BgANY10AAu35GNoMD3Zdq (Consulted 21/02/2021).

3   From: spotify:playlist:08jpakSuzMTW2Sqstxj0Lm (Consulted 21/02/2021).

4   From: spotify:playlist:60NewTmpC9Wp1Qzk1iUTTx (Consulted 21/02/2021).

Table 1. The number of songs on the playlist in the April-November 2020 general elections

Political Parties	Number of songs	Percentage
PSOE	100	33.6
PP	100	33.6
Ciudadanos	98	32.9
Total	298	100

Source: Spotify

Considering the presence of foreign languages in the three lists, 48% of the songs have lyrics in English and 0.3% in French. It is worth noting that almost half of the songs are in a different language to the constituents in an electoral campaign in Spain. Regarding foreign languages, the three parties predominantly use English, with 30% of PSOE's songs in this language, 52% of the PP's list, and 57.1% of Ciudadanos'. Only the Partido Popular incorporates a song in French, *Non, je ne regrette rien*, by Édith Piaf. Castilian is the predominant language in the PSOE's electoral playlist and the Partido Popular's and Ciudadanos' to a lesser extent. Songs with lyrics in Catalan, Basque, Galician and Asturian make a token appearance. The PSOE features songs in Catalan, Basque, and Asturian on its playlists, while the PP does so in Galician. Ciudadanos only incoporates songs in Castilian.

Table 2. Percentage of the songs on the playlist according to language and party in April-November 2020 general elections

	PSOE	*PP*	*Ciudadanos*	Total
Castilian	63.0%	45.0%	41.8%	50.0%
English	33.0%	53.0%	58.2%	48.0%
Basque	2.0%			0.7%
Galician		1.0%		0.3%
Catalan	1.0%			0.3%
Asturian	1.0%			0.3%
French		1.0%		0.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: created by the author

To analyse the first objective, which was to determine the party image, we have considered all the songs. The other two objectives use songs in Spanish for the analysis since the contents of the lyrics are generally understood. Therefore, the coding of the styles or the thematisation of the lyrics was carried out for the subpopulation of the songs in Spanish.

The ideological coding of the performers, categorisation of the musical styles, and thematisation of the contents have followed the following criteria. The performers have been classified into left and suitable ideological spaces, according to the available information. As mentioned above, many performers avoid expressing a commitment to political parties or even social causes to prevent potential harm to their professional careers. A thorough search of statements and other indicators expressing ideological features has been conducted. For instance, in the case that musicians have performed in rallies or on political support platforms, or on the contrary when other parties have censored the musicians because ideological traits have been attributed to them.

Table 3. The performers' ideological positioning on the electoral playlists

		Frequency	Percentage
Performers	Progressive	33	21.9
	Conservative	15	9.9
	Unattributed	103	68.2
	Total	151	100.0

Source: created by the author

Regarding the songs, both the themes and style have been considered as indicators of the political party's image. Concerning the different styles of the songs on the electoral playlists, they have been classified into three main types, according to their cultural meaning in the Spanish music scene. These styles have been defined as traditional, styles associated with modernity, and the most current youth styles.

The traditional style category includes Sevillanas, the *copla,* the *pasodoble, flamenco* or *rumba.* They are idiosyncratic musical styles characteristic of the traditional Spanish culture. The "modern" styles are genres that, despite being conventional nowadays, represent an essential change in the 1960s culture in Spain. They are fundamentally pop and rock. These styles are familiar to a broad socio-demographic spectrum of the population. Finally, the new styles are comprised of the most recent music, which are notably youthful, such as dance, electronic music, electropop, hip-hop/rap, house, alternative /indie music, or reggaeton.

Table 4. Musical styles of songs in the election playlists.

	Frequency	Percentage
New subcultural style	33	22.1
Modern mainstream style	104	69.8
Traditional styles	12	8.1
Total	149	100.0

Source: created by the author

The absence of specific musical styles is an important question. Punk, country, or jazz is not present. The most used styles are targeted at a wide audience, and of those, most of them have been in the Top 40 at some point.

The content analysis of the lyrics has allowed for thematisation according to the subject of the songs in the lists. Four main categories were observed. The first category refers to the "personal moods" and the second "romantic relationship emotions." In romantic relationship emotions, all the songs where the relationship is or is inferred to be heterosexual are coded. When the relationship is homosexual, it is included in the third category, "sectorial sociopolitics," where women's empowerment, gender violence, ecology, inequality, sexual freedom, etc., are considered. The fourth category, "identity sociopolitics," includes themes that extol national and local Spanish identities. For example "Y viva España" or "Sevilla tiene un color especial". These categories are, in practice, an expression of what has been and is the musical panorama in Spain.

Table 5. Themes of the songs in the election playlists

	Total
Personal moods	33.6%
Romantic relationship emotions	46.3%
Sectorial sociopolitics	14.8%
Identity sociopolitics	5.4%
Total	100%

Source: created by the author

The methodology used to construct the analytical categories and study them is the content analysis of the three parties' music lists. After coding, statistical analyses were performed through a correspondence analysis to identify the relational structure present in the data.

3. Analysis

The analysis of data will be presented based on the questions that define the objectives of the investigation, dealing first with a comparative approach to the design of the party playlists, then with the celebrities' roles and the music in the campaign, and ending with an analysis of the possible socio-demographic objectives behind choosing themes and styles.

3.1. Songs and performers on the playlist

The first question is to determine what songs and performers are shared by the three parties' lists. To do so, we will look at possible overlaps in the playlists. To what extent the three parties considered share performers or songs, or whether, on the contrary, the playlists are designed to offer their differentiated profile. The heterogeneity of the songs and the performers anticipates that there will be little musical convergence between the three parties, with a total of 263 performers and 287 different songs.

As seen in table 6, 91.9% of the songs are unique to each of the parties considered. 2% of songs are shared between PSOE and Ciudadanos and 6% between Ciudadanos and PP. Seven are performed in Spanish and two in English. Certain ideological contiguity is observed between the parties that share songs. Thus, between PSOE and Ciudadanos on the one hand, Ciudadanos and PP on the other hand, and there are no shared songs between PP and PSOE.

Table 6. Songs shared on PSOE's PP's and Ciudadano's playlist

	Percentage
Specific to each party	91.9
PSOE-Ciudadanos	2.0
Ciudadanos-PP	6.0
Total	100

Source: created by the author

Concerning performers, in principle, maintaining diversity is objectively more difficult, given that the population that could be of interest is more limited than the songs. Despite this, 77.6% of performers are exclusive to each party's lists. Within this limitation, the parties that share the highest number of performers are the PSOE and Ciudadanos (5.7%) and Ciudadanos with the PP (12.8%). PSOE and PP share 2.7% of the total performers.

In any case, the fact that the parties share performers does not imply that they choose the same songs, as we have seen above. PSOE and PP share the following performers: Los Manolos, Raffaela Carrá, Rosalía and The Beatles.

Table 7. Artists shared on the *PSOE'S, PP's, and Ciuadadanos'* playlists

	Percentage
Specific to each party	77.6
PSOE-PP	2.7
PSOE-CIUDADANOS	5.7
CIUDADANOS-PP	12.8
PSOE-PP-CIUDADANOS	1.3
Total	100

Source: created by the author

In the case of the performers, there are more similarities between Ciudadanos' and the PP's lists, followed by PSOE's and Ciudadanos'. If there is proximity coincidentally, the specificity reinforces their profile. In this sense, both the PP and Ciudadanos have the same performers, although in a different logic. The PP has two songs by Los Del Rio (Sevillanas), and Ciudadanos features five of the same performers: Avicii, Katy Perry, Miley Cyrus, Selena Gómez, and Seguridad Social. Of the five, four perform songs in English. The PSOE does not repeat any performer on its lists.

The analysis of the distribution of the songs shows that there is little overlap between the lists, and it occurs between ideologically continuous parties. Thus, the most significant overlap is between the PP's and Ciudadanos' lists and between the PSOE's and Ciudadanos'. There are several shared songs by performers, especially those in English. They do not share songs between ideologically distant parties, and in the case that they do share performers, they differ in the song chosen. It can be concluded that such ideologically differentiated lists seek to convey a message to present an image. Next, we are going to consider in what way and with what messages or emotional connections.

3.2. The campaign music

The second objective is to determine the function of the music and the extent to which "campaign music" is present. For this purpose, the artist's ideological commitment and song choice must be considered. If a party includes artists on their playlists who are not ideologically related, weight is given to the song and its emotional attributes; therefore, the artist and his/her potential ideological commitment take a back seat.

It is well known that music performers do not usually commit politically. Some musicians have maintained their political commitment to parties since the transition to democracy, such as Ana Belén, Víctor Manuel, Serrat, and other artists who have performed at political party rallies and events over time as well as Celtas Cortos, Danza Invisible, or Rozalén. An exhaustive search of statements in the media was made along with artists' participation in events and campaign rallies, where artists expressed their ideological position in order to classify performers ideologically. In this search, political vetoes on artists' performances have also been considered. Local or regional governments have frequently censured artists' performances because of their political stance. This has been observed more often in local and regional areas, especially when different politically oriented governments have changed. Censorship shows that these musicians are "ideologically catalogued" in one way or another by the party in power. The performers have been classified according to their progressive, conservative or unattributed ideological affinity. The analysis of the consistency between the performers' ideological positioning and the political party shows that there is no coherence. In the PSOE's list, 13.8% of performers are ideologically progressive, 1.5% are conservative, and 84.6% have not defined themselves publicly. In the Popular Party, 20% of its performers are progressive, 24.4% are conservative, and 55.6% unattributed. Finally, Ciudadanos is the party with the highest number of performers that have been politically defined as progressive, with 36.6%, 7.3% conservative, and 56.1% undefined.

Table 8. Performers' ideological positioning according to parties.

		PSOE	*PP*	*Ciudadanos*	
Performer	Progressive	13.8%	20.0%	36.6%	21.9%
	Conservative	1.5%	24.4%	7.3%	9.9%
	Unattributed	84.6%	55.6%	56.1%	68.2%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: created by the author

In practical terms, the conservative parties have included more performers with a progressive ideology than the socialist party. The above data suggest that this phenomenon has been widespread in Northern American campaigns and has been reflected in Spain in some cases. Thus, Trump has used progressive singers, some of which have publicly denounced the use of their songs. This was the case in Spain concerning VOX, an extreme right party who employed lyrical deviation in the song by Juanes *A Dios le Pido*. Denouncements in the case of the United States confirm the underlying idea of what has been observed in the case of Spain. Songs are helpful for the party and the message they want to convey regardless of the performer's ideology.

The discrepancy between the performer's ideological commitment and the party that uses their music is a phenomenon that occurs due to three circumstances. First, because the themes of some songs are detached from the performer's ideas, particularly in older, more commercial songs. Secondly, the most commercially successful songs are also successful in terms of audience, enabling them to have a more transversal reach among the electorate. Therefore, some songs can be used by a conservative party even when their composer is not, and vice-versa. The third reason is the potential for connotation that facilitates the lyrical deviation, thus generating a different meaning to the original one. An example of this is the Partido Popular's use of the song "Cecilia Mi querida España". A song whose lyrics were censored and were critical of Francoism, but whose chorus is a simple and direct message for a conservative voter. In the 2019 campaign music, these three elements allow the song to have more relevance than the performer.

The other indicator of the nature of the campaign music is the presence of performers with no known ideological commitment. 84% of the performers in the PSOE's playlist do not have a political commitment to any party. It is the themes of the song that are substantial for the message. Overall, in the three party's playlists, the use of campaign music prevails, to the extent that the celebrities' public image is not the message, so much so that their public image does not interfere or distort the emotional meaning of the song. The song, not so much the performer, is the message. In other words, the songs are used as campaign music, comprising a musical cluster. This set of songs defines an emotional discourse that appeals to the electorate's memory and life experience in a segmented way.

3.3. The ideological and emotional thematisation

The third objective, given that the songs define the message is to what extent their musical styles and the songs' themes can express an ideological perspective that allows us to differentiate among the three parties. From the point of view of political ideology, the PSOE is progressive. Ciudadanos defines itself as a centre party, and the Partido Popular aims to offer an image of centre right. Therefore, the question is whether it is possible to observe ideological continguites and divergences among parties based on their campaign playlists' thematic contents and musical styles.

In principle, the competition or the desire to occupy a political space should be expressed in the chosen songs' themes and their political music styles. In other words, if the songs are vehicles for connecting with the electorates and the party's calling card, it should be seen in the songs and musical styles chosen. It is important to remember that each musical style has its own emotional attributes (Alaminos-Fernández, 2019). Thus, in Spain, heavy metal music or punk is associated with agressiveness or violence. Pop music has a conventional image, and Indie tends to be connected with social denouncement, especially after the 2011 social movements (del Val and Fouce, 2016; Alaminos-Fernández, 2021). These features are socially stereotyped attributes, consequently the image of a heavy metal fan is very different to someone who listens to *boleros* or punk music. In practice, musical styles are an essential differential feature when shaping so-called urban tribes, together with other stylistic and image attributes that have been used profusely in advertising.

The first significant observation is the lack of styles that can be considered to be aggressive, such as punk or heavy metal. The songs in Spanish make up 75% of the music; the most usual styles are pop, rock, and alternative/indie music: 51% are pop, 16.6% rock, and alternative/indie music 7.4%. The remaining 25% of the songs are distributed over several styles such as *copla*, singer/songwriter, dance/electronic music, electropop, flamenco, hip hop/rap, house, electronic music, new flamenco, *pasodoble*, R&B, reggaeton, rumba, salsa, and Sevillanas.

The analysis of music styles in the three parties' playlists shows statistically significant differences. Table 9 shows the lack of independence between the political parties and their musical styles, with Pearson's **chi-square** of 48.556 for 4 degrees of freedom and an **asymptomatic significance** (bilateral) of 000. In practice, the coefficients show that there is an association between the two variables.

Table 9. Music styles according to political parties.

	PSOE	*PP*	*Ciudadanos*	Total
New styles	44.4%	8.9%	2.4%	22.1%
Modern styles	52.4%	68.9%	97.6%	69.8%
Traditional styles	3.2%	22.2%		8.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: created by the author

The Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) uses "new styles" more often, with 44.4% of their songs in this style. The Popular Party's use (8.9%) or Ciudadanos' (2.4%) use of this style is much more token. The "modern" styles appear on all the political parties' playlists. However, Ciudadanos stands out as 97.6% of their songs are in this style. It is also central to the Popular Party's (68.9%) and the PSOE's playlists (52.4%). The conservative parties' playlist is more conventional and appeals to a broad spectrum of the population. In the case of "traditional styles," the Partido Popular includes 22.2% of their songs in this style. Just 3.2% of the PSOE's songs are "traditional styles," and Ciudadanos does not feature any on their playlist. The relational structure between the styles and the political parties can be seen through the corresponding analysis in graph 1.

Graph 1. Analysis of the musical styles and political parties
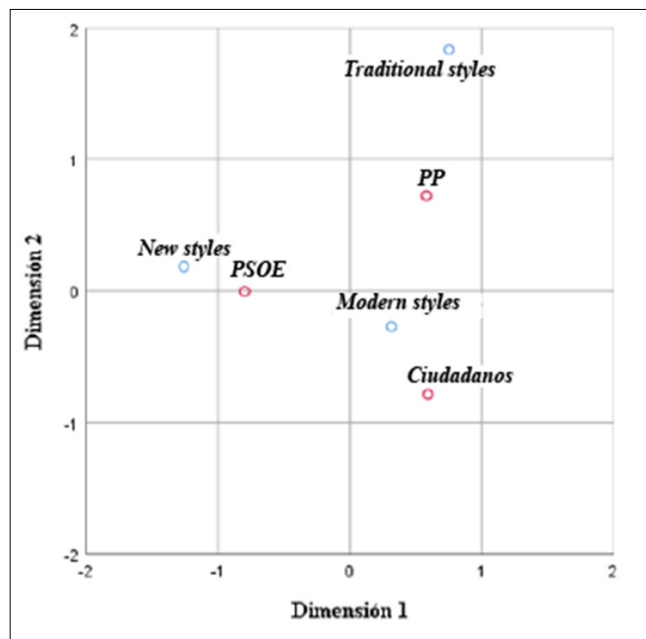
Source: created by the author. Symmetric normalisation

It can be seen that the new styles are characteristic of the PSOE, as are the traditional styles for the PP. While necessary for Ciudadanos by proximity, modern styles also have a significant gravitational weight in the other two parties' lists.

If we consider musical styles, commercial and conventional styles can be seen in the three parties, as they appeal to the general population. They expressed modernity to the older generations in their time, and their continuity over time has made them familiar with society as a whole. This is a Ciudadanos' fundamental feature, making these genres (pop and rock) the keystone to its musical message. In the case of the Popular Party, the use of traditional styles appeals musically to the segments of the population who most identify with the idea of homeland and Spain. The analysis of themes confirms this, as we shall see below.

The party most focused on youth, current affairs, and diversity is the PSOE. Almost half of its songs have styles with segmented audiences and some with a markedly progressive image, such as Indie. Likewise, in several cases, the contents of their lyrics contain social denouncement and are therefore consistent with the musical presentation. The socialist party's songs correspond to more specific musical tastes than other parties', giving more weight to the diversity of youth styles.

The preference for one style shows a clear timestamp. The newest styles may not be familiar to older generations, whose contact with those musical genres is more indirect (for example, through their children). According to several studies, adolescence and youth are the age stages in which songs are more emotionally impregnated, especially from personal experiences. In any case, the boundaries between generations and cultural climates are blurred, and there is no precise and categorical delimitation between them. Table 10 shows the non-independence between political parties and the musical decades of their songs, with a Pearson's chi-square of 31.114 for 10 degrees of freedom and an asymptotic significance (bilateral) .001. The association coefficients indicate that in practice, there is an association between the two variables.

Table 10. Dates of the release of songs according to parties

	PSOE	PP	Ciudadanos	Total
1965 -1975	1.6%	11.1%		4.0%
1976 - 1985	4.8%	17.8%	19.5%	12.8%
1986 - 1995	7.9%	15.6%	19.5%	13.4%
1996 - 2005	17.5%	26.7%	14.6%	19.5%
2006 - 2015	33.3%	15.6%	9.8%	21.5%
2016 - 2019	34.9%	13.3%	36.6%	28.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: created by the author

In the PSOE's lists, almost 70% of their songs are post 2006. This, in interaction with the styles, suggests a more significant commitment to the younger generations. In the case of Ciudadanos, a double gravitation to the youngest and the "Movida" generation is observed. Regarding the younger generation songs, 36.6% are post-2016, and the more mature generations' songs correspond to 40% with the Post-Franco and the cultural era of the *Movida*. The PP has a list with a broader generational spectrum. Starting from Franco's developmental period in the 1960s, moving onto the transition and the *movida*; the number of songs from the period of Aznar's governments to today increases. The Partido Popular appeals musically to all generations, including the older ones. We need to consider that the Partido Popular's electorates have an aging demographic, which is addressed with musical nostalgia to establish an emotional bridge. One of the Partido Popular's strategic objectives was to recover demobilised electorates or undecided voters. This type of music gives the impression of being oriented to recovering former voters rather than attracting new ones.

In any case, the aim is to appeal to the electorates' emotional memory in the most intergenerational way possible. To this end, two elements stand out in the playlists' design. First, by choosing songs that represent a style and an era. Adorno (1946) defined this as songs that express the "gold standard" of the musical style of an era. Thus, songs such

as "Que Se Mueran los Feos" by Los Sirex (1965), Marisol and Corazón Contento (1968), Raphael with "Mi gran noche "(1968), Nino Bravo performing "Libre" (1972) or Las Grecas with "Te Estoy Amando Locamente" (1974). These songs usually appear in Spanish music golden hits list, archetypically identifying a style, an era, and an emotional climate. In that sense, despite their age, although they express a special message for a generation (the older generation), they preserve the component of popularity that keeps them alive with cultural vitality.

Another second element that generationally cross-cuts the older songs is updating the versions, either with new performers who bring them back into fashion or with original performers who do a new version. In the first category we can find Muchachito Bombo Infierno with "La quiero a Morir" in 1998 (original version 1979), Las Chillers and Mujer contra mujer performed in 2018 (1988 original), Niños mutantes "Como te amo" in 2007 (1980 original). In the second category, updating of the same artists' hit, we can find Shakira and Alejando Sanz with "La tortura", Miguel Bosé and Bimba Bosé "Como un lobo", Calle 13 and Silvio Rodríguez in "Ojos Color Sol", Bombai and Bebe "Solo si es contigo", Barricada, Rosendo and Aurora Beltrán in "Maneras de vivir". Both strategies increase generational cross-cutting, as they are songs that represent an era in the terms proposed by Adorno, or the song is updated by reintroducing it years later in the greatest hits list.

Another element that characterises the political parties' message through the playlist is the themes in the songs. In this sense, the New York Times' analysis of the campaign songs chosen by the North American political leaders in the 2020 North American presidential elections found a clear association between ideology and the theme of the songs. Thus, Bernie Sanders wanted to emphasise a "revolutionary" spirit in his playlist and innovative spirit in his campaign, using songs that contained phrases like "power to the people," "revolution, and " "change" in songs like Power to the People by John Lennon. Biden, this followed Obama's strategy (Alaminos-Fernández, A.F, 2018) by using thematically and racially balanced songs that presented him to voters as the middle-class politician (Middle-Class Joe).

An initial observation on the song lyrics is that, except for lyrical manipulation, the choices are made on the available repertoire. Moreover, they are songs that must be well known to the target population. In this context, emphasising some themes over others implies choosing certain styles and periods. For instance, using songs that highlight the fight against gender violence excludes decades of popular music in Spain. It is not surprising that the main themes in recent decades have been romantic relationships, either in a romantic key or by recently incorporating explicit sexualisation. When designing a list of popular songs for electoral purposes, thematic dependence and limitation come from the music industry in this sense. Songs are one of the products commercialised in the market, and the patterns of musical composition respond to the market's needs. These limitations frame the possible choices for electoral playlists.

Table 11 shows the distribution of song themes according to the parties' playlists. We observe the non-independence between political parties and the musical themes of their songs, with a Pearson's chi-square of 34.729 for 6 degrees of freedom and an asymptomatic significance (bilateral) of,000. Again, the association coefficients indicate that there is an association between two variables.

Table 11. Themes of the song according to the political party

|	*PSOE*	*PP*	*Ciudadanos*	Total
Personal moods	31.7%	40.0%	29.3%	33.6%
Romantic relationship emotions	38.1%	44.4%	61.0%	46.3%
Sectorial sociopolitics	30.2%		7.3%	14.8%
Identity sociopolitics		15.6%	2.4%	5.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: created by the author

In the PSOE's lists there are no songs of an identitarian nature. It shares the most frequent themes in commercial Spanish music like the other parties, showing individual emotional states (31.7%) or romantic relationships (38.1%). It contains many songs with social themes (30.2%) dealing with gender violence, inequality, female empowerment, sexual freedom, etc. We have already noted the consequence of such thematic choices, both in terms of musical styles and dates of the songs.

The Popular Party also chooses songs that preferentially express individual emotional states (40%) or romantic relationships (44.4%). Songs extolling the Spanish identity appear as a characteristic feature (15.6%). National identity and traditional regionalist features are part of their ideological discourse.

Ciudadanos' list is the only one out of the three that contains all four themes, although more disproportionately among categories. 61.9% of their songs deal with the theme of romantic relationships. According to the established coding rules, they deal with heterosexual romantic relationships. 29.3% of the songs express individual emotional states. Overall, 91% of the songs are egocentric, both in the experiences of the couple's relationship and state of mind. 14.8% of the songs contain social content themes, like "Girasoles" by Rozalen. They also refer to identity in 2.4% of their songs.

The corresponding analysis of graph 2 shows the relational pattern between parties and themes again. The PSOE party's lists deal with themes of a sociopolitical nature, such as violence or inequality. The identitarian or idiosyncratic themes are particular attributes of the Popular Party's. In both parties, songs that express mood contribute to their profile. In Ciudadanos, romantic emotions predominate, although their songs also feature personal moods. In Ciudadanos, unlike the Partido Popular, its songs gravitate towards the individual and his or her emotions.

Graph 2. Themes of the songs according to the political parties
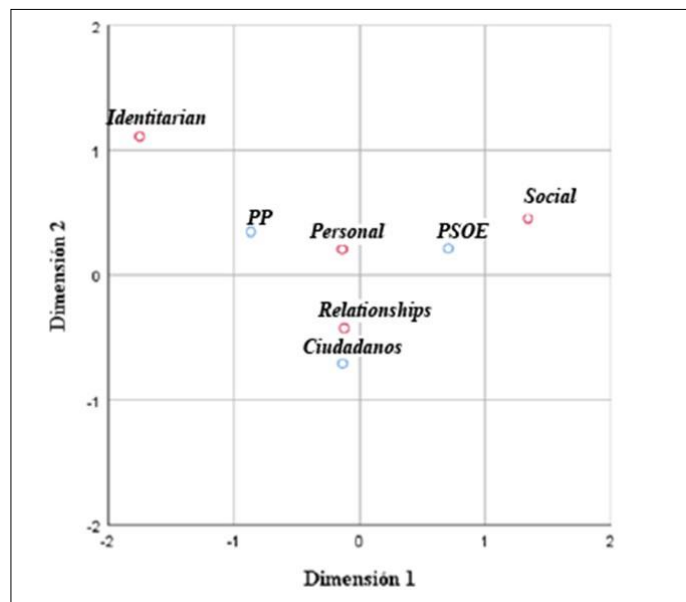
Source: Created by the author. Symmetrical normalisation

General themes such as moods and affective relationships define the emotional bridge that attempts to humanise the parties. Parties are personified, by trying to understand the voter they too suffer anguish, which means they comprehend the pain caused by love or disappointment. It is not a message with social content that appeals to a politically significant topic, like gender violence, equality, or homeland. Messages aimed at reason and the brain. Their message is purely emotional, seeking empathetic closeness to the voters. This part of their playlists aims to be the heart and soul of the party, opening itself to others. In this sense, the 2019 electoral party playlists in Spain contain more heart (emotion) than brain (reason).

4. Conclusion and debate

The analysis of the electoral party playlists allows us to make several empirical conclusions. First of all, the parties considered intend to develop their own personal music profile. With this objective, the differentiation is maximised by using performers and songs that are different from other parties. Thus, songs and performers in the PSOE's list coincide with Ciudadanos' playlist and those of this party with PP's. The only performer common to the three parties is Queen, and although it is the same performer, they use different songs.

Another conclusion is that the song has a greater functional weight concerning the artists, showing that the right-wing parties use performers indiscriminately, who position themselves on the left. In this sense, the fame factor takes a back seat to messages (emotional and content) of the songs in its functional use of the campaign music. This phenomenon of dissociation occurs due to three circumstances. The first, that the themes of some songs have been disassociated from the performer's ideas, particularly in older and commercial songs. Secondly, the most commercially successful songs are also popular with audiences. having a more transversal reach among the electorate. Therefore, some songs can be used by a conservative party even when their composer is not. The third reason is called lyrical deviation, where the meaning attributed to the song is different from the original one.

The songs and their electoral message have been analysed generationally, according to musical styles and themes. The songs express a type of emotional geerational stratigraphy. In this sense, two resources are produced to activate generational memories to provide them with the widest age range**.** First of all, the songs that represent a style and a period, expressing the "golden pattern" of the musical style of a period. The second element that cross-cuts the older songs generationally is using current versions that have recently appeared in the musical rankings.

The styles, generations, and themes are intertwined with each other. In this way, the social content themes (present in the socialist playlists) use more recent musical styles, which have incorporated those themes into their lyrics. At the other extreme, the songs with an identity theme employ more traditional styles, such as the *copla* or the *pasodoble*, from a past era, such is the case of the Partido Popular's playlists. The most conventional styles that are considered modern (pop or rock) tend to deal with personal moods or emotional tensions in a relationship and originate from a broad generational spectrum from the decade of the 1960s. These musical genres and themes are the most usual on Ciudadano's playlist, although more current songs appear. In socio-demographic terms, the PSOE focuses on youth and current social themes. At the same time, the Partido Popular uses nostalgia and identity as differential elements within its broader generational appeal. It is an attempt to recover and mobilise old voters and attract new ones. Ciuadadanos designs a list starting from Post-Francoism, which focuses on the so-called period *"Movida."* Demographically it is especially oriented to appealing to mature and young electorates. In any case, the most notable element is the lack of a political message. A substantial part of the list acts on an emotional level seeking proximity, and the electorates identify through the humanisation of the party. A party that is personalised and acquires souls because it shares songs with personal moods, existential and romantic crises.

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