



Using Holistic Grading to Compare Regions and Documents



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Research questions

We have a substantive question reflecting our regional interests, but also two methodological questions for Team Populism:

1. How populist are political parties across Europe and Latin America?
2. Can we apply holistic grading to measuring populist discourse (a) for all parties in a country and (b) to other texts besides speeches (i.e., manifestos)?
3. Can we do so at lower cost?

Method: Holistic grading

In holistic grading, coders read and assign a score to the entire text, using a set of anchor texts as reference points (Sudweeks, Reeve, and Bradshaw 2004; White 1985). Holistic grading is faster than human-coded techniques based on word, sentence, or paragraph-unitization and is a more accurate approach for latent sets of meanings. As a human-coded technique, it is also more amenable to analyses of multiple countries and languages.

We use the same procedure as in Hawkins (2009). Coders are trained in English using a rubric describing key elements of populist discourse, and anchor texts representing high (2), moderate (1), and low/no levels of populism (0). Texts score:

- 2 when they contain strong, consistent references to both a united will of the common people and an evil elite
- 1 if there are clear references to these concepts but they are either inconsistent (mixed with pluralist or pragmatic elements) or weak (core concepts are poorly developed using a moderate tone)
- 0 if the core elements of populism (people + elite) are largely absent. Strongly Manichaeian texts are still coded as 0 if the populist core is absent.

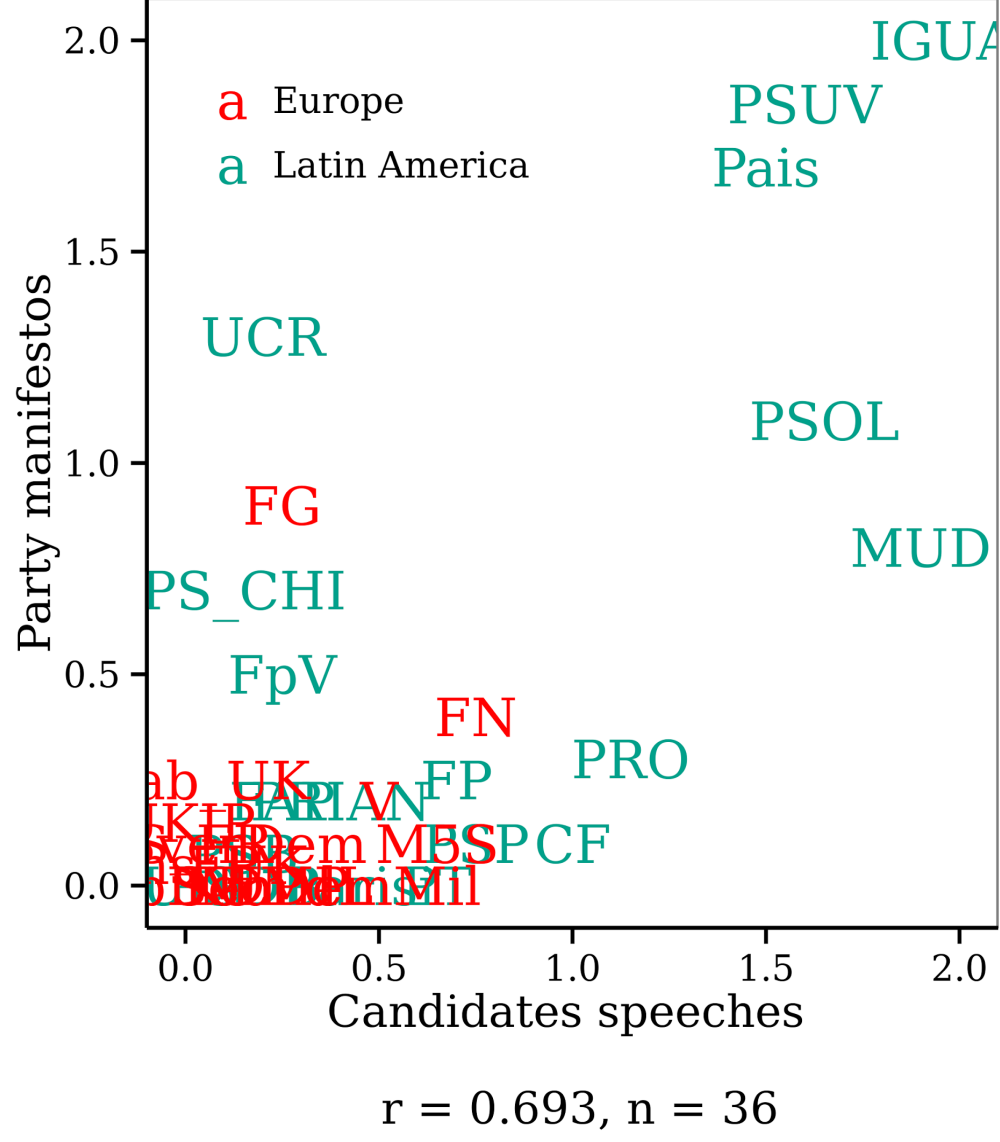
For the first time, we allow readers to assign a *decimal score*, ranging continuously from 0.0 to 2.0. This overcomes a problem evident in earlier research: the original 3-point scale is blunt.

Another novelty is that we use only one coder per text, with occasional double-coding to gauge intercoder reliability. Thus, we see if we can extract reliable data at lower cost.

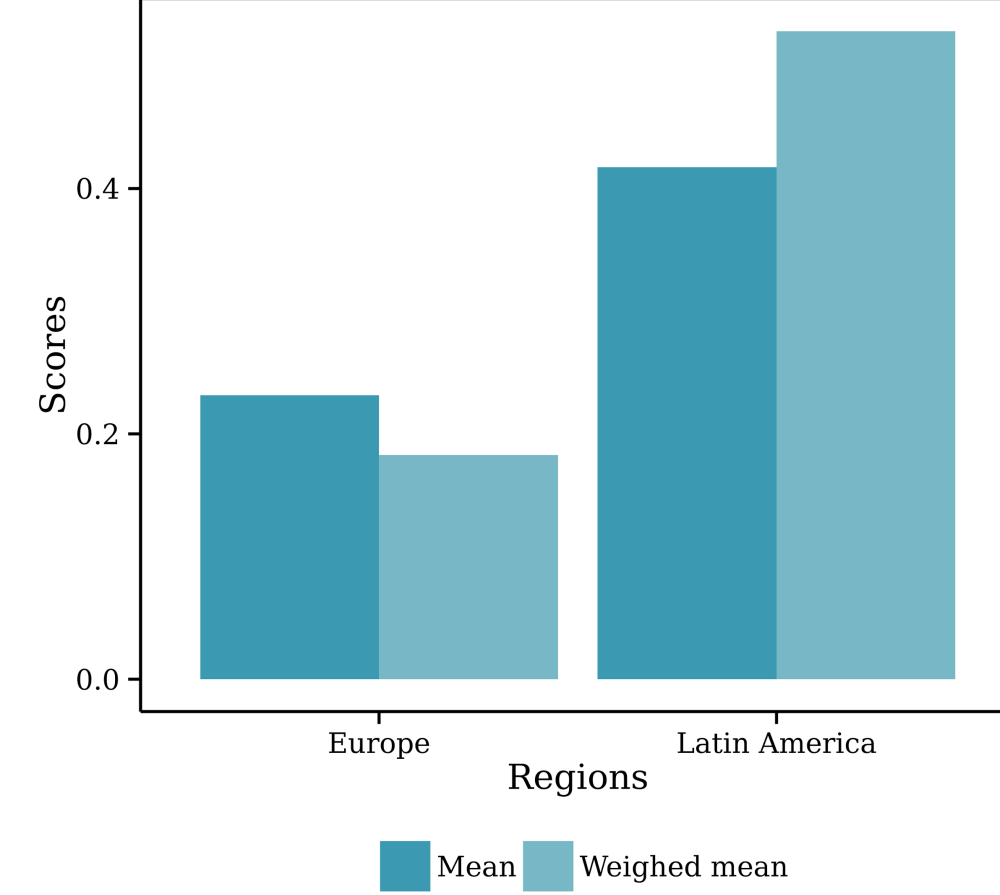
Manifesto and speech scores

Country	Year	Party	Manifesto	Speeches	Country	Year	Party	Manifesto	Speeches
Argentina	2011	FAP	0.2	0.25	Germany	2013	FDP	0	
Argentina	2011	FpV	0.5	0.25	Germany	2013	SPD	0	
Argentina	2011	FP	0.25	0.7	Germany	2013	AfD	0	
Argentina	2011	UCR	1.3	0.2	Germany	2013	CSU	0	
Argentina	2011	CF	0.1	1	Germany	2013	Linke	1.3	
Bolivia	2014	MAS	1.55		Germany	2013	NPD	1.4	
Bolivia	2014	PDC	0.3		Mexico	2012	PAN	0.1	
Bolivia	2014	UD	0.25		Mexico	2012	PRI	0.05	
Brazil	2014	PSDB	0	0.15	Mexico	2012	PRD	0.95	
Brazil	2014	PSB	0.075	0.15	Mexico	2012	PNA	0.05	
Brazil	2014	PSOL	1.1	1.65	Norway	2013	A	0	
Brazil	2014	PT	0	0.65	Norway	2013	FrP	0	
Canada	2006	BQ	0.75		Norway	2013	H	0	
Canada	2006	Cons_CA	0.8		Peru	2013	AGC	0	
Canada	2006	Greens	0.2		Peru	2013	F11	0	
Canada	2006	Lib	0		Peru	2013	PNP	0.55	
Canada	2006	NDP	0.3		Peru	2013	PP	0	
Chile	2013	PS_CHI	0.7	0.15	Peru	2013	SN	0	
Chile	2013	UDI	0	0.025	Portugal	2011	BE	0.4	
Chile	2013	PRO	0.3	1.15	Portugal	2011	CDS-PP	0.05	
Chile	2013	Parisi	0	0.45	Portugal	2011	PCP	0.7	
Chile	2013	IGUAL	2	2	Portugal	2011	PS_PT	0	
Colombia	2014	CD	0.35		Portugal	2011	PSD	0.05	
Colombia	2014	PCC	0		Spain	2011	GIU	0.25	
Colombia	2014	PDA	0.1		Spain	2011	IU	1	
Colombia	2014	PVC	0.1		Spain	2011	PNV	0.25	
Colombia	2014	U	0		Spain	2011	PP	0.4	
Ecuador	2013	CREO	0.6		Spain	2011	PSOE	0	
Ecuador	2013	Pais	1.7	1.5	Spain	2011	UpyD	0.1	
Ecuador	2013	PRIAN	0.2	0.4	Sweden	2014	M	0	0.1
Ecuador	2013	PSP	0.1	0.75	Sweden	2014	C	0	
France	2012	FG	0.9	0.25	Sweden	2014	FP	0.05	0.1
France	2012	FN	0.4	0.75	Sweden	2014	KD	0	0.1
France	2012	MoDem	0		Sweden	2014	Mil	0	0.65
France	2012	PS_FR	0.1	0	Sweden	2014	SocDem	0	0.25
France	2012	UMP	0	0.25	Sweden	2014	SverDem	0.1	0.15
France	2012	Verts	0.15		Sweden	2014	V	0.2	0.5
Ireland	2011	FF	0.025		UK	2010	BNP	0.5	
Ireland	2011	FG	0.25		UK	2010	Lab_UK	0.25	0.05
Ireland	2011	Lab_IR	0.3		UK	2010	LibDem	0	0
Ireland	2011	SF	0.325		UK	2010	Cons_UK	0.05	0
Italy	2013	M5S	0.1	0.65	UK	2010	UKIP	0.15	0
Italy	2013	LN	0.1	0	Uruguay	2014	FA	0.05	
Italy	2013	PD	0.6	0.3	Uruguay	2014	PC	0	
Italy	2013	PdL	0	0.35	Uruguay	2014	PI	0.15	
Italy	2013	SC	0		Uruguay	2014	PN	0	
Italy	2013	RCI	0.4	1.5	Uruguay	2014	UP	1.2	
Italy	2013	SEL	0.1		Venezuela	2013	PSUV	1.85	1.6
Germany	2013	CDU	0		Venezuela	2013	MUD	0.8	1.9
Germany	2013	Gruene	0.2						

Correlation between Manifestos and speeches scores

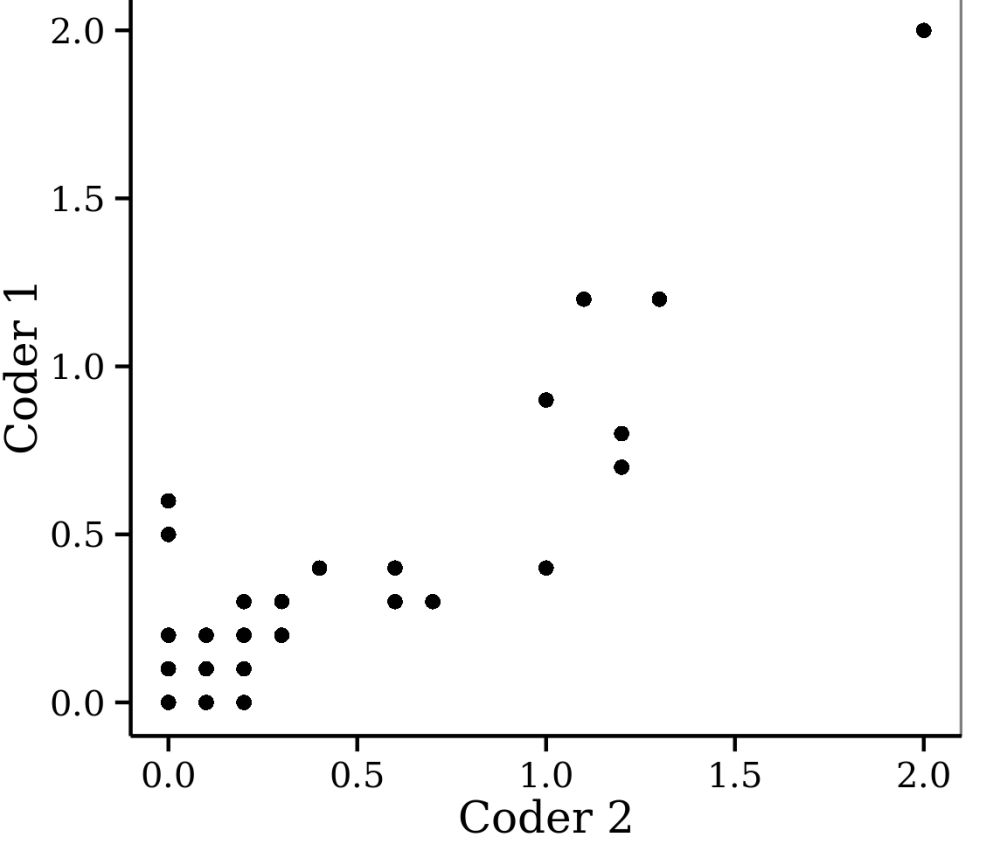


Average populism in party manifestos



Average manifesto score by region. The light blue columns present a mean of scores weighed by electoral results. N = 99.

Intercoder reliability
Manifestos and speeches



Each point represents one code (speech, manifesto preamble, manifesto list of issues, or manifesto overall). n = 73. Krippendorff's alpha: considering the scale as interval, 0.94, considering ratio, 0.56. Pearson's r = 0.94.

Sampling

The sample includes 99 parties from 20 countries in Latin America and Western Europe. Manifestos and speeches from the last national elections in each country were coded for all parties with more than 5 per cent of the popular vote. In some countries, smaller parties were also included.

The European sample is partly of convenience: it had to be limited to countries from which we had students able to read and code manifestos in the original language. While this is not ideal, we cannot identify any evident bias. The Latin American sample covers all South American countries plus Mexico.

We use campaign material for two reasons: first, it is the only moment when all parties produce comparable documents. All parties have some sort of program or manifesto for elections, and all party leaders make campaign speeches. Second, the campaign is the moment when parties summarize their views and the public is most exposed to their discourse. Therefore, if we want to identify populism in a moment when political discourses matter for a larger part of the population, that is during electoral races. As for using speeches and manifestos, these are two kinds of text that are similar in format and purpose across all cases.

The time-frame used was the most recent national election in each country of interest (except for Canada) where the highest executive office would be decided. The electoral threshold tries to capture relevant political forces while not being limited to only major parties.

Results

1. There is a regional cut: the average level of populism is higher in Latin America than in Europe. Also, weighing average scores by electoral results increases the Latin American mean and decreases the European, indicating Latin American populists to be stronger.
2. There is a reasonable correlation between grades for speeches and manifestos, but using only one kind of document is probably not a good idea.
3. Where two coders were used, intercoder reliability is high, indicating one coder may be enough.

Costs

Time to prepare texts: 0 hours
Time to code each manifesto: 2 hours/coder
Time to code each speech (transcript): 1 hour/coder
Time to code each speech (video): 2 hours/coder

References

Hawkins, Kirk A. 2009. "Is Chávez Populist? Measuring Populist Discourse in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Political Studies* 42 (8): 1040–67.

Sudweeks, R. R., S. Reeve, and W. S. Bradshaw. 2004. "A Comparison of Generalizability Theory and Many-Facet Rasch Measurement in an Analysis of College Sophomore Writing." *Assessing Writing* 9 (3): 239–61.

White, Edward M. 1985. *Teaching and Assessing Writing: Recent Advances in Understanding, Evaluating, and Improving Student Performance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.