

Electoral Strategies of the Left in the Era of Democratic Backsliding:

Analyzing the campaign of the left-wing opposition in 2014 Hungary

By

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Abstract

The hollowing and backsliding of democracy has aroused the interest of scholars concerned about the future of democratization. Newly established democracies are especially endangered by these trends as even the most successful countries of the transition in Central Eastern Europe, such as Hungary, are now facing authoritarian tendencies. However, the rise of the right-wing government dismantling the democratic system in Hungary only followed the landslide electoral defeat of the left-wing government in 2010. This suggests that democratic backsliding in Hungary and the collapse of the Left are two sides of the same coin. Furthermore, the national elections in 2014 could have been an opportunity for the Left to change the right-wing government and return to the path of democratization. In my thesis I highlight how oppositional political parties attempt to reengage the public to enhance democratization after their defeat in 2010 and as potential challengers of the nondemocratic government in 2014. Based on a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the speeches of leading left-wing politicians during the campaign I find that the central thematic focus of their campaign is the incumbent right-wing Prime Minister and not their own initiatives. In addition to the content analysis I also conducted interviews with campaign managers and reconstructed the strategic considerations behind the campaign. I conclude that the parties of the opposition in Hungary see the reengagement of the voters and the reestablishment of democracy as a technical issue and not as value-based challenges that might guarantee the consolidation of democracy in Hungary.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

The hollowing of Western democracies, understood as a constant decline in political participation (Mair 2013) threatens to undermine contemporary democracies whose proper functioning rest on the broad and fair involvement of the public in democratic decision-making processes through representative channels. When democracy is hollow the public becomes disinterested and even cynical about politics, hence refusing to participate, since politics seem to be only a game of a small elite that is therefore “ruling the void” (Mair 2013). In order to have a more precise understanding of the mechanisms of political participation and to mitigate the increasing “emptiness” of democracy, studying the modes of voter engagement might be crucial.

Newly established and fragile democracies might be especially endangered by these challenges. When analyzing the countries of East Central Europe, Greskovits (2015) finds that in this region the threat is twofold: the region is marred not only by “hollowing” - decline in people’s political engagement - but also by “democratic backsliding” - regression to semi-authoritarian practices. This means studying the processes of public inclusion in this region might yield new academic insights into the prospects for democratization and de-democratization.

When analyzing the situation of East Central European countries Greskovits (2015) points out that whereas Hungary presents the weakest signs of “hollowing” in the region, it is the frontrunner in democratic backsliding. Hungary’s rapid illiberal turn is indeed a puzzling case, since after the transition to democracy in 1990 Hungary’s commitment to catch up to Western democracies was the strongest in this region. Therefore the current aggressive practices aiming to dismantle important democratic institutions came as a surprise.

Scholarly interest in analyzing these illiberal tendencies in Hungary is revolving around different aspects of this phenomenon. One of the main concerns is the dismantling of democratic institutions. Scholars have thoroughly analyzed the legislation and the constitution (Bánkuti, Halmai, and Scheppele 2012; Jenne and Mudde 2012; Uitz 2015; Pogany 2013), regulations on civil society (Kover 2015; Toomey 2016), corruption and state capture (Fazekas and Tóth 2016) and the role of the European Union might be also relevant as a guardian of liberal democracy (Müller 2013; Sedelmeier 2014). Viktor Orbán's character and personality (Rupnik 2012) and how he created his own "mafia state" (Magyar 2015) is a topic of interest for some authors. Other scholars pointed to structural conditions that could pave the way for illiberalism such as the unconditional adoption of market economy (Stanojević 2014), the cultural conditions for populism, hence for illiberalism and nationalism (Enyedi 2015) and the challenges of the EU integration and the global economic crisis that hit especially hard this region (Ágh 2013; Beissinger and Sasse 2013; Ekiert 2012).

The political dimension and the role of the left-wing opposition attracts the least attention in analyzing Hungary's illiberal turn. As Ekiert (2012) pointed out, illiberal tendencies emerge in this region when right-wing organizations are in power. During the transition the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), as a party strongly committed to European values, was one of the main catalysts of democratization and electorally the most successful party compared to the other left-wing parties in the region (De Waele and Soare 2011). Given this context the sudden shift to democratic backsliding is also unique, since in 2010 the current government led by Viktor Orbán came into power only as a result of the landslide defeat of MSZP. Although studies on illiberalism mention the responsibility of the former political elites and how they paid insufficient attention to deepen the process of democratization (Bozóki 2013), few of them

capture left-wing political discourse and their presented image aiming to engage the voters in the era of democratic backsliding. Comparative studies on competitive authoritarian regimes suggest that the success of the opposition against the regime is based on the unity with civil society, on a sophisticated campaign strategy and on belief – the framing of a “more optimistic scenario for the future” (Bunce and Wolchik 2010, 67).

The aim of this study is to reveal *whether and how the left-wing opposition attempt to reengage the public in order to enhance democratization*. Since political campaigns are the most obvious fields of increasing public engagement and political participation, in this research I also seek to answer to the following questions regarding the campaign of the left-wing coalition in 2014 Hungary:

- What is the “character” and the tone of the 2014 campaign of the Left?
- How does the left-wing coalition address the political and social problems in Hungary and what are their proposed solutions?
- What were the considerations behind the campaign communication of the left-wing coalition?

After introducing my topic I review the related literature in Chapter 2. First I elaborate the concepts of the hollowing and backsliding of democracy. I highlight the role of parties and their struggle in maintaining the balance between responsibility and responsiveness, and how they are losing their character and hence fail to preserve their core supporters. These processes are especially relevant for the parties of the Left. Since the collapse of democracy in Hungary went hand in hand with the collapse of the Left, I briefly review the common patterns of parties of the Left in the CEE region and in the Visegrad Group in particular. Finally, I also review the literature on electoral campaigns with particular attention devoted to negative campaigns. In

Chapter 3 I introduce my research design. I describe the process of case selection in terms of the country investigated as well as the selection of the particular campaign of the Left in 2014 in Hungary. I continue with formulating empirically observable expectations that drive my analytical strategy. I close the chapter with introducing the methods of analysis and the sources of data. In Chapter 4 I present and discuss the results of my three pillar analysis: the quantitative thematic analysis, the qualitative framing analysis and the interviews with campaign managers. Finally, In Chapter 5 I draw the conclusions of the research.

My main findings are that although the 2014 campaign of the Left was slightly more negative, than positive it rather could be described as an “empty” campaign. Since left-wing politicians almost exclusively focus on the current right-wing Prime Minister and on his government and mainly concerned about forming an electoral coalition, there was basically nothing left to communicate towards their voters. In this regard left-wing politicians do not concentrate on empowering their potential supporters against the government, but focus on technical issues instead during their campaign.

Although the left-wing coalition was defeated on the 2014 elections, studying an unsuccessful campaign in an illiberal political regime has both theoretical and political relevance as well. It is important to note that I do not intend to draw stretched conclusions about their defeat. However, I believe studying their campaign is an important element of the whole picture and of the political situation in Hungary as well. Beyond the perspective of their electoral loss analyzing this campaign is beneficial from the viewpoint of understanding that, as potential challengers of the illiberal regime, how the oppositional political actors make sense of the political reality in Hungary. In addition, how they reflect on their role in aligning the voters against the illiberal threat and therefore enhancing democratization.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 *From the hollowing to the backsliding of democracy*

The growing disillusionment of voters with liberal democratic politics signals the weakening of modern societies. This might be the harbinger of deep crises and profound changes. The hollowing of Western (Mair 2013), for example, urges the study of possible modes of public reengagement.

Mair (2013) identifies the *hollowness of democracy* as the constant decline of political participation measured usually by voter turnout. Although there is a scholarly debate over the changes in turnout rates (Stolle 2005; Franklin 2002), its steady declining trend is an established fact (Blais et al. 2004; Gray and Caul 2000).

Mair's other two indicators for demonstrating the hollowing of democracy are *party membership* and *voter volatility*. These indicators point to the key role of political parties in democracies as they reflect on and represent the needs of certain social groups embracing their involvement in democratic decision-making and in policy-making processes. However, the process of hollowing weakens party identification as well (Mair 2013). Since the public becomes *disenchanted* about politics, the leaders of the parties usually get lost in their technical roles as governors or as members of parliament and lose sight of their representative functions (Mair 2006, 33).

Other scholars also point to that parties in established democracies are facing a decline in their voter base and the *weakening of partisan identification* (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000). Since political identification is fading away together with material values turning into post-material values creating new cleavages (Inglehart 2008), class-based politics are in decline. This

means that socialist parties, originally organized along class-lines, needed to change their appeal from class-based politics to reflecting on other social cleavages and appealing to other social groups. This could be a challenge for left-wing parties, since they risk losing their core supporters. In addition, there might be a relationship between parties converging towards the center of the political spectrum (in the quest for the median voter (Downs 1957)), hence losing their main characters, and the decline in participation (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, 237). Moreover, “[t]his centrist tendency was especially pronounced among socialist parties” (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000, 210).

Mair (2009) captures the process how administration distracts party leaders and governments by juxtaposing the notions of *responsibility and responsiveness*. The concept of responsibility implies expertise and professionalism and the governments’ commitment to international rules and economic integration. Responsiveness, however, means that the governments are committed to the demands of the public and respond to their needs. Balancing between responsibility and responsiveness might also be understood as a governmental effort to maintain a balance between “democracy and efficiency” (Mair 2009, 10). And due to the changes of the environment and of the circumstances in which parties and governments act, Mair proceeds, the gap between responsibility and responsiveness is widening and becoming more and more unmanageable.

Studies of the phenomenon of hollowing out of democracy mainly concentrate on established Western democracies. However, it is also important to understand these tendencies in newly established democracies as well, since they may be the most vulnerable to the disappearance of the demos from democracy. When studying East Central Europe, Greskovits (2015) argues that this danger might be even twofold: it is not only “hollowing”, the declining

political involvement of the citizens, that threatens this region, but “backsliding” of democracy as well. The term backsliding refers to the “destabilization or even a reversal in the direction of democratic development” (Greskovits 2015, 28) that might also lead to semi-authoritarian or illiberal practices. However, when comparing all CEE countries in the European Union (except Croatia) Greskovits (2015) finds the interesting case of Hungary, which is the least affected country by hollowing, yet the frontrunner in backsliding started mainly from 2010.

The widening gap between responsibility and responsiveness is the main cause of the erosion of the public involvement in the democratic processes according to Mair: the lack of involvement is a crucial factor both behind the hollowing and the backsliding of democracy. In this context the political behavior and especially electoral campaigns of parties are crucial factors to understanding voter reengagement. Since the parties of the Left are at the center of the decline in political participation they might be also crucial to reengaging citizens to take part in democratic politics again. *In this study my aim is to demonstrate that managing the gap between responsibility and responsiveness is not only a crucial task for governments but for oppositional parties as well if they want to stop the fading away of their representative function.* To better understand party political behavior in the context of democratic backsliding in the following section I briefly review the major developments of Left-wing politics in Hungary and the Visegrad region.

2.2 *The Left in East Central Europe*

In the beginning of the 1990s most researchers hypothesized the overall and stable decline of the Left¹ in Central and Eastern Europe. The electoral failures of the successor parties of the communists (Bozoki 1997) on the first democratic elections in this region and particularly in the Visegrad Group (V4) seemed to fulfill these expectations (De Waele and Soare 2011). However, on the second democratic election the Polish successor party (SLD) and the Hungarian Socialists (MSZP) regained their electoral dominance. Although in the Czech Republic and Slovakia the left-wing bloc was divided between successor parties and other parties on the left, the other left-wing parties (social democrats) came to power later in these two countries as well. With its successful bid for reelection in 2006, the Hungarian MSZP became the most successful post-socialist party of the region (De Waele and Soare 2011).

The Hungarian MSZP in its electoral successes followed a similar pattern to the Polish SLD. After the first democratic election, the newly elected right-wing parties were facing serious social problems as a result of economic reforms. Thus both MSZP and SLD won credit as a result of emphasizing their expertise and experience as opposed to the new party's political amateurism. In the case of MSZP, professionalism, pragmatism and modernization became its most dominant image after its success during the second democratic election in 1994 (Ziblatt 1998). Although they won the election on the basis of social disillusionment with the performance of the first Right-wing government, once in power they followed even harsher austerity policies under the slogan of "modernization". Evoking Mair's concept of responsibility and responsiveness, MSZP

¹ Throughout my thesis I use the term Left in a positional and not ideological sense, as being in opposition to the right-wing government (or facing a right-wing opposition when in government). With the emergence of a bipolar party structure in Hungary the Left in the Hungarian context refers to the Socialist party and its allies, the Right refers to Fidesz and its allies in the 2000s. The parties of the Left in Hungary would be harder to categorize as ideologically left-wing parties due to their strong pragmatism and focus on modernization.

could be the prime example for choosing the path of effectiveness contrary to responsiveness Mair (2009).

Another common pattern of the parties of the Left of the V4 (similarly to Western democracies) is the trend towards concentrating on the voters of the political center (De Waele and Soare 2011; A. M. Grzymala-Busse 2002; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000), that lead to a blurring of political identities (De Waele and Soare 2011). In times of crisis when social problems increase this centrist tendency and the weak identity of the Left might contribute to the widening of the gap between responsibility and responsiveness. Furthermore throughout the region “the weakness of the communist state left its successor open to predation” (A. Grzymala-Busse 2003, 1127; Biezen and Kopecký 2007) leading to high levels of corruption. Left-wing parties, including MSZP, payed for their corruption scandals with their creditability undermining their responsible appeal.

Besides these similar patterns among the Left-wing parties in the V4, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) also had to face structural constraints during its time in power between 2002 and 2010. The dual challenge of joining the European Union in 2004 and the economic crisis in 2008 put pressure on MSZP to carry out economic reforms and perform harsh cuts on social spending (Ágh 2002). These attempts for economic stabilization “necessitated policies of economic liberalization and privatization and brought extensive social costs” (De Waele and Soare 2011, 292). As Ekiert (2012) argues, in such situation, illiberal political and economic practices may be therefore more attractive to countries hit hard by the Great Recession in 2008.

In Hungary, Left-wing parties expressed a strong engagement to catching-up to the Western countries’ and asked for patience from the public towards their economic reforms and austerity measures. After joining the European Union in 2004 the Socialist government in

coalition with the liberals (SZDSZ) imposed further economic reforms demanding even more patience from the public by introducing a user fee in health care and tuition in higher education (Ténytár 2013). The contrast between “responsibility” and “responsiveness” pointed out by Peter Mair (2009), was increasing. By counting on the patience of the Hungarians, the Socialist-led government gave up the concept of being “responsive” to the public’s needs and decided to be “responsible” instead, from the standpoint of the national economy. This means the government implemented labor market and other reforms by ignoring social dialogue (Bohle and Greskovits 2010) and by saying people only need to “tighten their belts” for the sake of the country’s economy. By the time of the global economic crisis in 2008, Hungary faced major protests and demonstrations resulting in violent actions and police brutality, making Hungary one of the most contentious country in the region during the period of the crisis (Beissinger and Sasse 2013).

In my thesis I do not intend to evaluate the political economy of the previous governments in Hungary, instead I aim to highlight the possible process of the erosion of the voter base of the Left in Hungary, in order to reflect on their attempt to reconnect with the public in 2014. The fate of the Hungarian Left followed a similar trajectory to that of the Polish Left. As described by Ost (2005), Solidarity faced a constant decline of its supporters, since it refused to acknowledge the public’s economic anger fueled by strict market reforms and increasing economic insecurity. According to Ost, Solidarity should have articulated class interests and grievances, since “class cleavages are crucial for the long-term consolidation of inclusive liberal democratic politics” (p185). However, Solidarity rejected to represent class cleavages, thus paved the way to “identity politics” or in other words nationalist appeals that is, according to Ost, a danger for the Polish democracy.

As a result, emerging class conflicts became articulated not as conflicts over interests but as conflicts about identity, thus promoting an illiberal political culture that has haunted Poland's democratization process ever since (Ost 2005, 179).

However, I believe that identity politics cannot be conceptualized as an alternative to class-based politics. Class based politics requires identity building entailing normative beliefs non-reducible to material interests. Ost (2005) is clear about the role of political culture and the role of ideologies but he does not provide a fully-fledged theory of identity-building to explain the fate of the Polish Left. We need therefore *to turn to the field of communication* to investigate how the Left in the region intends to attract the voters and mobilize the public and how the Left presents itself to earn public support. Hence, studying left-wing campaigns might capture the image of the Left and their key messages mirroring conceptions of what attracts the voters and of what resonates among the public. Framing theory provides a sound basis to identify these messages, since it focuses on communication where specific frames could activate (and build up) certain identities that engage members of society in collective action. Therefore analyzing campaign frames of the Left might provide a sound understanding of how political actors communicate and how they adjust their image to make it more appealing to the public. In the following section I introduce the key notions of postmodernization and negative campaign to facilitate the analysis of the 2014 oppositional electoral campaign.

2.3 Campaign designs

In the processes of hollowing of democracy and the decline in partisan support electoral campaigns could stimulate not only electoral reengagement, but partisan identification as well. Therefore political campaigns are essential components of democracies, since campaigns could persuade voters to participate in public life (Norris 2002; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

In the recent decades scholars have observed a cumulative evolution in electoral campaign techniques and as a result, identifying three waves of evolution (Norris 2003): the premodern (from the mid-19th to the 1950s) and the modern wave (in the postwar era), and the rise of postmodern campaign techniques, caused by the technological development and the spread of the Internet, also known as the Americanization of political campaigning (Negrine and Papathanassopoulos 1996). This notion holds certain common features (Swanson and Mancini 1996), such as the personalization of campaigns conveyed by campaign technicians relying on scientific measurement and target marketing, with a consequence of the detachment of parties from citizens paired with the diminishing relevance of political parties for campaign professionals (Plasser 2001).

Professional campaign management is in the increase in Central Eastern Europe as well (Plasser and Plasser 2002; Kiss and Mihályffy 2009) Campaign professionals in this region have mixed feelings about these trends, as some are concerned with the intensifying negativity and the aggressive tone of the campaigns, whereas others see no huge differences compared to the communist era (Plasser and Plasser 2002). Considering that campaign effects are stronger in newly established democracies (Lawson and McCann 2005; Baker, Ames, and Renno 2006), the postmodern logic in the American style of campaigning dictating a strong propensity for negativity could lead to increasing cynicism among the public towards the political processes and institutions (Maarek 2007; Swanson and Mancini 1996; Plasser and Plasser 2002), thus might endanger the fragile democratic system as well. Therefore studying campaign communication of parties in the CEE region could provide not only valuable insights into their concepts on the needs of the public, but it might allow us to draw inferences even on the parties' potential to grow from the perspective of the future of the fragile democracies in this region. Thus the choices of

campaign design and campaign messages might be key decisions in the light of realigning the public and foster democratization. The two ideal types of campaign design are *positive and negative campaigns*. In my research relies on the definitions provided by Lau and Pomper: the objective criterion *for negative campaigning* is “talking about the opponent – criticizing his or her programs, accomplishments, qualifications, and so on. Positive campaigning is just the opposite: talking about one’s own programs, accomplishments, qualifications, and so on” (2001, 4).

Since postmodern campaigns are going hand in hand with the increase of negative campaigns (Maarek 2007; Swanson and Mancini 1996) and the growing cynicism about politics among the public (Swanson and Mancini 1996), one of the most common concerns regarding political campaigns is their negativity. While some scholars argue that by helping the voters to distinguish the candidates and drawing the attention to important issues (Sides, Lipsitz, and Grossmann 2010), negative campaigns could increase political participation and voter turnout (Finkel and Geer 1998; Freedman and Goldstein 1999). Other scholars, however, argue that the effects of negative campaigns could backfire, since it lowers voter turnout and decreases trust in the political system (Ansolabehere et al. 1994; Iyengar and Ansolabehere 2010). In their extensive article Lau and Rovner (2009) came to a similar conclusion that negative campaigns could harm the political system, if not directly by decreasing voter turnout, then by reducing political efficacy and trust. Besides relying on Lau and Pomper’s (2001) definition on negative and positive campaigns, I also incorporate the emotional aspects of negativity and positivity from the theory of social movements. As Tarrow also pointed out,

[m]uch of the "work" of meaning-making is cognitive and evaluative – that is, identifying grievances and translating them into claims against significant others. But

in order to maintain solidarity among activists and to transform claims into action, emotion work needs to be done (2011, 261).

In my research I reflect on the emotional appeals of the campaign by focusing on certain expressions that are trigger fear, sadness, anger or happiness and peace. Since the most prominent person who could trigger and direct emotions is a political leader, I analyze the campaign of the Hungarian left-wing coalition in 2014 based on the speeches of the main leaders of the coalition (two former Prime Minister and one Prime Minister Candidate). I also analyze how campaign frames and campaign messages are developed throughout the campaign to understand the construction of the political identity of the Left-wing coalition in Hungary. Although the quantitative analysis of campaign effects is beyond the scope of this research, by analyzing “the supply side” of politics we can understand how political actors tried and ultimately failed to manufacture the political conditions necessary for defeating the illiberal government.

Chapter 3 – Research Design

3.1 Case Selection

Studying the case of Hungary allows us to understand the dynamics of democratic backsliding in more detail. Hungary validates Ekiert's (2012) argument on the relationship between illiberalism and right-wing governments, since after 2010 the right-wing government (Fidesz) began to dismantle the democratic institutions in the country. These practices led to among others an almost exclusive control over the media, non-transparent decision-making and corruption scandals (for a description of non-democratic institutional practices see the Tavares Report of the European Parliament). Prime Minister Viktor Orbán himself declared that Hungary now is an illiberal democracy (The Budapest Beacon 2014). After the illiberal “coming out” of the Hungarian Prime Minister, there is now a threat, that others will follow his footsteps in the region (Barber 2015; The Economist 2015; Mueller 2016).

However, the Hungarian Right is not the only actor behind democratic collapse. The rapid democratic backsliding from 2010 could only took place after the historic landslide defeat of the Left (MSZP) in the 2010 elections (they got only 15.3 % of the total seats in the National Assembly which is less than the half of 49.2 in 2006 (Ilonszki and Schwarcz 2013, 71)). The Hungarian case is especially puzzling since the Hungarian Socialist Party was the strongest post-communist party in the region with the strongest pro-European commitment (De Waele and Soare 2011). Therefore the collapse of the Left and Hungary's democratic backsliding in the CEE region are two sides of the same coin. Since the Fidesz government changed the electoral system (for an overview see (Political Capital 2013)), parties of the divided Left were forced to cooperate in order to challenge the ruling Fidesz. After 2010 new parties emerged on the Left, such as

Democratic Coalition (DK) that is the party of the former Prime Minister (2004-2009), Ferenc Gyurcsany who depart from the Socialists (MSZP). In addition the other former Prime Minister (2009-2010) Gordon Bajnai also established a new party, Together (Együtt) that formed an alliance with a small green-left party, Dialogue for Hungary (PM). In this study I do not go into details of party politics and how they formed a coalition, for an overview see (Györi 2015, 25–27). However, it is important to note that I analyze the campaign of the Left between October 2012 and April 2014², since this strategic period was all about preparations for the national elections. In this sense the period between October 2012 and January 2014 was the pre-campaign and from January to April 2014 was the official campaign. However, on the 2014 national elections the left-wing coalition was defeated again (they got 19% of the seats (Györi 2015)). Still, we could gain valuable insight into – as potential challengers of the illiberal regime – how they attempted to reconnect to the public in order to return to the path of democratization. In this regard studying the left-wing campaign in 2014 might provide some important implications regarding the potentials of the Left in mobilization, hence regarding their identity, and pertaining to the working of campaign frames in the era of democratic backsliding. In this research I analyze *how the Hungarian Left intends to reengage the public and fight for democratization in the era of democratic backsliding*.

It is important to note that in my analysis on the 2014 campaign of the left-wing coalition I do not intend to draw stretched conclusions about their defeat. There are many aspects of their electoral performance and of their electoral loss, thus one should treat the topic at hand cautiously. Therefore I do not suggest that the results of the 2014 national elections are the direct consequences of the campaign of the left-wing alliance. However, I believe studying their

² In my thesis I refer to this period as 2014 campaign or the left-wing campaign in 2014, since from at the end of 2012 the preparation for the 2014 elections defined the strategies and communication of the parties of the Left.

campaign is an important element of the whole picture and of the political situation in Hungary as well. Beyond the perspective of their electoral loss analyzing this campaign is beneficial from the viewpoint of understanding that, as potential challengers of the illiberal regime, how the oppositional political actors make sense of the political reality in Hungary. In addition, how they reflect on their role in aligning the voters against the illiberal threat and therefore enhancing democratization.

Studying the campaign of the Hungarian left-wing coalition in 2014, four years after the collapse of the Socialists, could capture how left-wing parties construct their image and messages in an illiberal political environment. Identifying the main themes and frames of their campaign is essential for understanding what the parties are the most effective messages and how they express their image in order to build a collective identity among the voters.

In my research I choose the analysis of an electoral campaign, since it could provide a more solid grasp of a party's identity and its strategic vision regarding the elections than studying party programs (Ziblatt 1998). In addition, I analyze the 2014 campaign of the left-wing coalition in order to identify the most prominent campaign frames dedicated to convince the public to vote for them, and the way they present themselves to the public within the constraints of an illiberal regime. Besides, as Janda et al. (1995) finds poor electoral performance in the prior election drive the parties into changing their identities. This suggests that after their electoral collapse in 2010, the Hungarian left-wing coalition might modify their identity in their campaign in 2014.

Redefined and strengthened party-citizen relationship could be an ultimate solution for the hollowing and backsliding of democracy. After their landslide defeat in 2010 the Hungarian Left was in the need of rebuilding their social basis and learn to reconnect to the public in order to gain back its previous political position. Therefore, similarly to social movements, in order to

reengage the public and return to their roots the Left have to define and “making new meanings” for engagement and for partisanship.

3.2 Expectations

As the literature suggests, parties in oppositional position more often go negative in their electoral campaigns than the incumbents (Lau and Rovner 2009), and the Hungarian Left-wing coalition is in opposition in the 2014 elections. Besides the new electoral law posed the need for cooperation to the parties, thus they only could identify with a broad message that puts them in the position that is against the government. Therefore my first expectation is, that

1. *The campaign of the left-wing coalition in 2014 is mainly negative.*

As both their historic technocratic image and their market-friendly policies suggest, Hungarian left-wing parties are struggling with responding the demands of the public and with the recognition of their grievances. Although usually parties in governmental position have such problems, their deep commitments to pragmatism and expertise could make the parties of the left unable to be more responsive and to build collective identities, even in their oppositional position. Therefore my second expectation is that

2. *In their 2014 campaign the left-wing parties were more concerned about technical issues, such as forming a coalition, than about the voters' needs.*

These expectations suggest that Janda et al.'s (1995) findings on parties' identity change due to poor electoral performance in the prior election, are not hold for the Hungarian left-wing coalition in 2014.

3.3 Methodology

Scholars using quantitative research methods regarding political campaigns mainly analyze the effects of different campaigns focusing on the “receiver” side of political communication: the voters (Chong and Druckman 2013; Hill et al. 2013; Iyengar et al. 2008; Stevenson and Vavreck 2000). In this analysis I concentrate on the “message-sender” side that is on the parties and political leaders. This perspective allows an exploration of how oppositional left-wing *parties attempt to engage voters in an illiberal political environment to return to the path of democratization*. In addition, my analysis will highlight the key factors that influenced the design of campaign messages. In this exploratory study I use mixed methods to evaluate the tone of the campaign, the message-building process along with highlighting how the parties attempted to adapt to the illiberal circumstances and regain public support at the same time.

To address my research question of *how left-wing political parties attempt to reengage the public in order to enhance democratization*, I approach the analysis of the 2014 campaign with the following sub-questions:

- What is the “character” and the tone of the 2014 campaign of the Left? Since the literature on campaigning suggests that electoral campaigns have become more negative I analyze whether the predominant tone of the campaign was negative or positive.
- How does the left-wing coalition address the political and social problems in Hungary and what are their proposed solutions? This approach will shed light on how the Left presents itself to the voters and how they perceive voters’ needs.
- What were the considerations behind the campaign communication of the left-wing coalition? Considering the high level of disillusionment among voters in

Hungary, a key challenge of oppositional forces is to address the needs and desires of voters to win the battle for their hearts and minds. Therefore I analyze to what extent the parties of the opposition considered voters' needs and desires, or if they designed their campaign messages built on technical issues of the coalition formation.

In order to answer these questions I apply three kinds of methods in my thesis to examine the 2014 campaign of the Left from different perspectives.

3.3.1 Analytical strategy

First, I carry out a quantitative thematic analysis (Roberts 2000) of political speeches of three key political leaders of the left-wing coalition during the 2014 campaign. The reason for selecting political speeches as reflections on the campaign is that speeches could clearly mirror how oppositional parties present themselves to gain the support of the public. In addition, the process of making meaning – that is essential for parties especially during campaigns – happens discursively with speech acts that could stimulate action (Halperin and Heath 2012, 311). Therefore by analyzing the speeches of political leaders we could gain valuable insights into their understanding of the political situation in Hungary and into their concepts about themselves and about what they think their voters might want from them. For this study I selected the political speeches of two former Prime Ministers of Hungary from two new, smaller political parties: Gordon Bajnai from Together-PM (Együtt-PM), Ferenc Gyurcsany from Democratic Coalition (DK) and of the coalition's Prime Minister-candidate, Attila Mesterhazy from the Socialists (MSZP).

The quantitative thematic analysis of the selected campaign speeches of the left-wing political leaders will allow us to investigate the tone of the campaign. This method is useful to compare themes in the speeches related to negativity and positivity and assess whether negativity is dominant. This method will also allow us to explore other prominent themes of the campaign and their development over time. We will, therefore, gain a solid grasp of the character of the left-wing coalition's campaign and could draw inferences on what it means in relation to the voters. However, one of the main limitation of this method is that it cannot handle figurative speaking, irony, sarcasm and idioms (Tausczik and Pennebaker 2010) that are important traits of a political speech. Besides, since the major part of this method is to prepare a dictionary, complex concepts in the speeches might be left out or lost in the coding process. Such complex concepts for instance are democracy and democratization. Therefore to overcome this challenge I apply a second type of method as well.

To understand how political leaders of the Left construct their campaign messages I conduct qualitative framing analysis on the speeches of the political leaders mentioned above. I focus on the "sender" side of political communication that implies that I think that in political discourse politicians have a decisive role. Effective frames in politicians' speeches are essential, since they could link political parties' goals and mission to the voters' perceptions of reality and trigger action. In this sense "framing is central to what politics is, and struggles over framing are as old as politics itself" (Lakoff 2010, 94). However, the role of the media in shaping politics cannot be disregarded either. In fact, one might argue that media is more powerful in influencing people's views and forming their thoughts and opinions than political parties and politicians themselves (Iyengar 2005). I believe, however, that analyzing the Hungarian left-wing campaign in 2014 by focusing on the frames in media coverages might be misleading because of the new

media regulations that make news coverage one-sided and make them more in favor of the Fidesz government. In addition, social media enables a more direct and interactive communication between political parties and their voters, therefore it could bring back the importance of political speeches and politicians' frame building processes in political discourse. Finally, in this thesis I concentrate on the parties' and party leaders' own concepts of what voters want and of what motivates them. Thus analyzing frames in political speeches could provide a sound understanding of what party leaders think they should communicate effectively in order to gain public support and win the elections.

Finally, in order to reflect on the factors that influenced the parties' frame building process and to address the question of "what were the considerations behind the campaign communication of the left-wing coalition" I conducted interviews with campaign managers of the parties of the Left-wing coalition. Since the qualitative framing analysis cannot reflect on the environment that influenced the oppositional parties' frame building process, by interviewing campaign managers we could get valuable insight into their communicational strategies and the reasons for their campaign design. In this regard this approach supplements the results of the framing analysis, since it treats frames as dependent variables (D. Scheufele 1999). In other words this perspective is dealing with frame building process and identifies key factors influencing this process, as the decision of how to frame a certain issue is a result of internal considerations (Edelman 1993). These considerations could be ideological, organizational or could be based on external pressures as well (D. Scheufele 1999). By arranging interviews with campaign managers I intend to highlight whether they treat the voters as the basis for building political messages or rather they pay more attention to technical issues such as forming the coalition. This method could allow us to draw inferences about how much the political address

the problem of de-democratization in Hungary and how they see their role in finding solutions for this political situation.

3.3.2 Sources of the data

One of the biggest advantages of collecting speeches for content analyses is that they reduce bias, since they are unobtrusive (Halperin and Heath 2012). In this regard political speeches during the given time period (from October 2012 to April 2014) are not affected by the intentions of the investigator, and content analysis is not obtrusive like other methods, for instance surveys, experiments or interviews. Therefore political speeches clearly reflect on particular political moments and to the parties' goal to gain support and win the elections. Many political speeches and press conferences are available on the parties' channels on the popular video sharing website, YouTube. Given the time constraints I selected 25 speeches from each party's channel that are more political in their narrative, reflecting on the other political parties or the government (this means I usually skipped press conferences and manifestos) and transcribed them. Although collecting more data could have made my research more reliable, these 25 speeches that I selected may be the most prominent and important events of the given timeframe, since the leaders gave these speeches on open-air demonstrations, national holidays and their year assessments, that were broadcasted by the media as well. I selected also two politically important press conference about their electoral coordination in the electoral districts and about forming the coalition itself. These events were also highly covered by the media. In addition, the selected speeches cover the whole period of the campaign, since I selected speeches from almost every month from October 2012 to April 2014 (see Timeline for the speeches in the Appendices 1).

In my thesis I arranged interviews with campaign managers from the communications and not from the organizational branches of the campaign teams. I interviewed three campaign managers from two political organizations that were part of the left-wing electoral coalition in the 2014 elections: from Together-PM (Együtt-PM) and from the Democratic Coalition (DK), the two new parties of the two former Prime Ministers of Hungary. The interviews were semi-structured face-to-face interviews (Halperin and Heath 2012) that took 60-70 mins and I recorded and transcribed them as well. I also prepared an interview guide with probes (see Appendices 2 and 3). During the interviews I asked the campaign managers to reflect on their personal roles in the campaign, about the pre-campaign period and finally about the official period after forming the coalition. My main questions were concerned with how they could define the image of the parties and how it relates to the image of the leader and how they could evaluate their campaign's focus and messages. With probing I intended to get information about their main considerations about their campaign communication and how they attempted to adapt to the illiberal political environment and attract the voters at the same time. Finally, considering the voters and their target groups I asked them about identity-building and indirectly about negative campaigning, along with inquiring about their future plans as well.

Chapter 4 – Analyses and Results

4.1 *Quantitative Thematic Analysis*

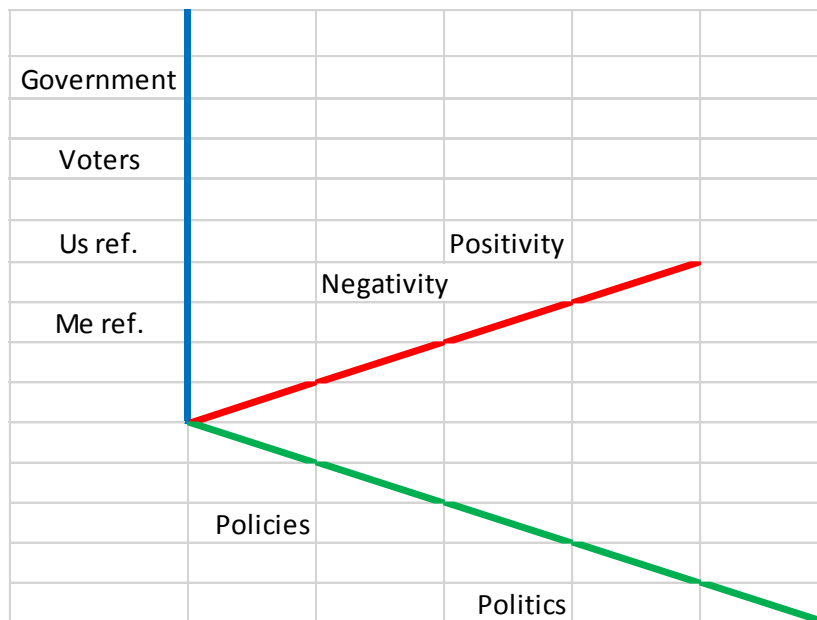
4.1.1 Identifying the central themes

I created one part of the themes for the quantitative thematic analysis deductively from the literature on campaigns and especially on negative campaigns. Since – as mentioned earlier – the most common feature of negative campaigns is when political actors are mainly focusing on the opponent (Lau and Pomper 2001) and constantly attacking them in their campaign communication. In this analysis, however, I created separate themes for mentioning the government and for negativity, since the literature suggests that negative campaigns could also be informative campaigns that could induce the voters to pay close attention to campaign messages and seek for more information (Sides, Lipsitz, and Grossmann 2010).

In order to facilitate the analysis of these themes developed measurements in three dimensions: the first dimension measures the tone of the speech, the second dimension measures the subject, the third dimension the political object of the speech. This logical structure can be portrayed on a three dimensional diagram (see Figure 1). On each axis of the diagram the themes are mutually exclusive, meaning that within one logical unit (for instance an expression or a half sentence) the words could only be either negative or positive or could be part of either politics or policies. Whereas Positivity theme could be linked together with Us reference or Negativity with the government or the Nation (to describe the situation in Hungary). However, the theme Nation is an outlier in this case, since it could form a logical unit with, for instance, the government (Hungarian government), therefore I did not include it in this figure.

The “subjects” in the speeches (me reference, us reference, voters, the government) compose one axis of the diagram, the objects of the speeches (i.e. politics and policies) are placed in the second axis and negativity and positivity themes are represent in the third dimension. This means that these themes reflect on the actors (subjects), the topics/object (policies and politics) and the tone/character or the sentiments (negativity and positivity) of the campaign. In this analysis, however, my main focus is to highlight whether political leaders in their speeches create a sense of hope towards changing the illiberal government (positivity) or warn about the illiberal threat, therefore creating a sense of “alert” (negativity). I analyze the other themes in relation to their co-occurrences within specific speeches on an important event, such as the oppositional coalition last rally one week before the elections.

Figure 1 - The dimensions of the themes



In the Negativity theme I included words that trigger negative emotions, such as fear, anger, hopelessness and pain. This idea is also benefits from the literature that suggests emotions

play a crucial role in people's way of thinking and motivation (Pennebaker 2013, 105), not only in everyday life but also during political campaigns (Brader 2006). However, scholars are divided in the effects emotions have on the voters' political behavior in campaigns periods. Some researchers find that negative emotions such as anxiety and fear could make the voters attentive to campaign messages and urge them to involve in information-seeking (Valentino et al. 2008). Other scholars state that positive emotions such as enthusiasm "possess broad motivational power" and it could "inspire greater interest in the election and stimulate to volunteer and vote", while the motivational potential of fear is "narrowly limited to those with higher levels of civic competence" (Brader 2006, 14–15).

These considerations therefore led to the creation of the themes "The government", "Negativity" and "Positivity". Following the suggestions of the literature on text analysis methods that recommends to create new "definitions" or categories to find appropriate codes for specific texts (Halperin and Heath 2012, 323), I also created other themes inductively from the data of the speeches. Since politicians in their speeches consciously use first person singular and plural pronouns to emphasize their role as a leader and their community I created separate self-reference themes that are "Me reference" and "Us reference". In addition, politicians also regularly address other groups of the electorate as well, thus I created the theme of the "Voters". In order to avoid the intersections of the categories I also created a "Nation" theme, since political leaders often refer to the country or to the "Hungarians" as the electorate. I also created two additional themes that are "Policies" and "Politics", since when talking about themselves and their community political leaders regularly mean by that the political situation and their political organizations. Also, leaders often address the current state of the economy and express their policy positions.

4.1.2 Coding

In relation to the coding process the unit of analysis of my research is one speech, and the recording units within one unit of analysis are paragraphs in the speeches. Since the speeches are transcribed from YouTube in the data set I structured the paragraphs of the speeches by hand keeping in mind the analysis of theme co-occurrences in these paragraphs. The coding process is not computer-based that means I coded the speeches also by hand to prepare the dictionary.

When preparing the dictionary for the analysis I built on the program developed by Pennebaker and his colleges who created a dictionary for quantitative text analyses to identify negative and positive emotion-words. This program is called Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) (Pennebaker et al. 2015; Andrei 2014). However, this program is not accessible for free, my protocol for coding Negativity and Positivity themes stems from the idea of this program.

In this regard in my Negativity theme I included words from the speeches such as fear, anger, disappointment, hopelessness, destroy, sad... etc. Whereas in the Positivity theme I included words such as hope, happiness, freedom, calmness, peace... etc. Here the challenge was whether to code words that politicians use positively in the speeches, although these words are not necessarily positive or sentimental without the context. For instance political leaders in these speeches regularly mention democracy, the democratic system, the rule of law and the republic with a positive tone, since according to them the current Fidesz government demolished these institutions and the oppositional leaders' main goal is to reestablish these. Yet, I apply a strict protocol for coding positive words in order to avoid ambiguity and to clearly reflect on sentimental words, thus I did not include these words in the Positivity theme.

The third deductively created theme, The government, refers to the current Fidesz government in Hungary. This theme consists words that are closely related to the Fidesz, that are

Viktor Orban (in every form and affixation), ministers of the government, and people in the background who have close ties to Viktor Orban. In this coding process the challenge was that the oppositional leaders frequently refer to the Fidesz government in third person plural forms, such as “they” or “them”. However, these words in other contexts could mean the voters or the other political parties as well. As a result, although these plural forms refer to the Fidesz government most of the times, I did not include these words in this theme to avoid the intersections of the themes. This could mean that in the analysis I underestimate the occurrence of the theme of The government. Yet the results of this analysis could still provide a sound basis for the comparison of the “subject” themes (Me, Us, Voters, The government) in the speeches.

With regard to the other “subject” themes in the speeches I created separate themes for the self-reference of the political leaders. In the Me reference theme I included first person singular pronouns (I, mine, my) and words with appropriate Hungarian suffixes (-om, -em... etc.), since often in the Hungarian language these suffixes signals the pronouns. In the Us reference, however, besides including first person plural pronouns (we, us, ours), I created codes to find every word with the appropriate suffixes in the Hungarian language (-unk, -ünk, -juk, -jük) in order to speed up the process of coding. In the Me reference I did not create such codes, since those suffixes could denote words that cannot be included in this theme. For instance, “I think” in Hungarian can also mean “gondolok”, where the suffix “-ok” could also mean “reason” in Hungarian. To overcome this challenge I included whole words in this theme that might affect its occurrence in the analysis compared to the Us reference. Considering the Voters theme I included second person singular and plural pronouns (you, yours) and concrete groups of the society that political leaders often mentioned, such as the youth, women, pensioners, employees... etc. This

theme could provide a stable basis to assess how often political leaders address the voters in their speeches.

The themes of Policies and Politics consist words such as the economy, social policy, housing, taxation, pension scheme... etc. while Politics theme refers to the other political parties, other leaders, coalition formation, the elections... etc. These themes – as mentioned earlier – are mutually exclusive as the other themes as well. Regarding the Nation theme, however, this refers to every word and expression that is related to Hungary, such as Hungarians, nation, patriots, Hungarian... etc. This theme appeared from the data and I only analyze this theme when the political leaders refers to this theme unusually often.

In sum, when coding the words and expressions in the speeches I was attentive not to code words with more meanings and those expressions that could hold different meanings in different contexts. For instance, I did not include in the coding process words like “increased” or “decreased”, since they could be interpreted both positively and negatively. Similarly, although it is an often mentioned word in the speeches I did not code “responsibility” or “responsible” either for the same reason. “Responsible government” might be a positive expression, whereas “Viktor Orban is responsible [he is the one to blame] for our desperate situation” is a negative expression in Hungarian.

4.1.3 Results

At the beginning of my analysis I examine the overall occurrences of the nine themes – Me reference, Us reference, Voters, The government, Policies, Politics, Negativity, Positivity and Nation – during the whole period of the campaign (from October 2012 to April 2014). Table 1 demonstrates the sums of the coded words in each theme. As it is the case with the most quantitative thematic analyses, the relevant words counted in each theme are much less, then the

word count of the whole data set. The reason for that originates from the general feature of a text or a speech, namely that the majority of the words that are used in speeches are articles, auxiliary verbs, conjunctives (such as “a”, “and”, “because”)... etc. Therefore in order to have a clear analysis of the themes I counted the percentages of the themes in relation to the sum of the relevant words that were counted. These percentages show that the theme occurred most in the speeches during the campaign is “Us reference” (18 percent), while the second and the third most frequent themes are Negativity (14 percent) and Positivity (13%) closely followed by the Voters theme (13%).

Table 1 - Overall theme occurrences in the speeches during the campaign

Statistics											
	# of words in recording unit	Me reference	Us reference	Voters	The government	Policies	Politics	Negativity	Positivity	Nation	Sum of relevant words
Sum	46316.00	1286.00	1963.00	1399.00	757.00	839.00	1163.00	1527.00	1420.00	776.00	11130.00
Percentages of relevant words		11.55	17.64	12.57	6.80	7.54	10.45	13.72	12.76	6.97	100

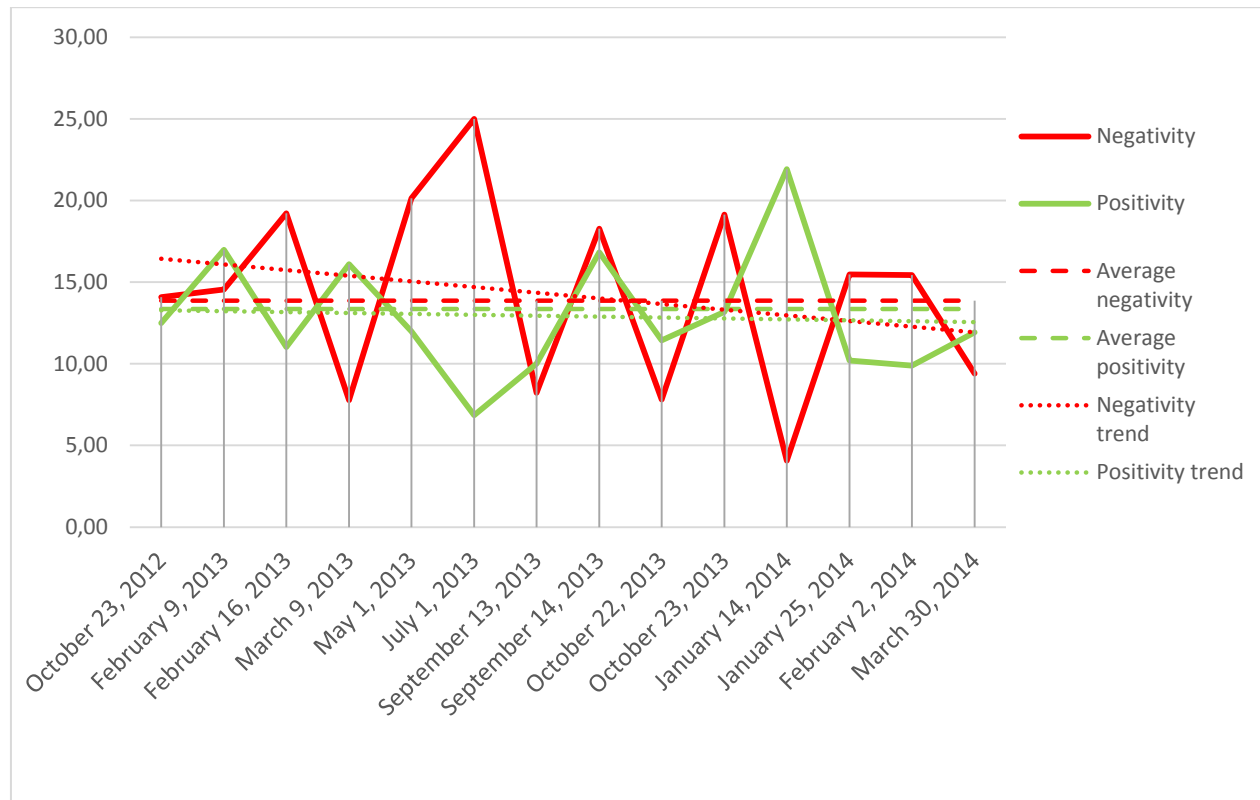
Following the logic of the three dimensions of the themes (see Figure 1), Table 1 shows that in the dimension of the “subjects” the most prominent theme in the speeches during the campaign is the Us reference with 18%. In this dimension The government theme is mentioned the less often in the campaign with 7 percent. However, after running a simple word count with the Spitta program – that puts the words in order according to their occurrence-rate in the speeches – one finds that the second most popular word in the speeches is “Orban” (after the word “Hungarian” and with ignoring the articles, conjunctives and pronouns) (see Appendices 4).

Regarding the “topic” dimension of the themes political leaders mention words related to politics more often (10%), than words related to policies (8%). Whereas the “character” or the tone of the speeches is slightly more negative (14%) than positive (13%) during the campaign.

Since the overall results do not reflect on the changes in the dominance of the themes during the campaign, one should analyze their development in time as well. In order to take a closer look on the third dimension of the themes or on the tone of the campaign I analyze the changes of themes of Negativity and Positivity over time. Since there could be more speeches on a particular date I counted the average of the percentages of the themes within one speech. The specific dates when I counted the average percentage of these two themes are: October 2012, May 2013, October 22 and 23 2013, January 14 2014, February 2014, March 2014 (for further details see Timeline for the speeches in the Appendices 1).

As Figure 2 demonstrates the theme Positivity “outrun” Negativity for six times during the campaign, while the speeches are more negative eight times during the campaign. The most positive and the least negative event was on January 14, 2014 when the parties held a press conference where they announced that they form a coalition for the national elections. Considering the trends in negativity and positivity Figure 2 shows that there is a juncture of the campaign period where these trends meet and slightly change. However, regarding the trend in positivity the campaign did not become more positive at the end, but rather less negative.

Figure 2 - Negativity and Positivity themes over time



The trend of negativity shows a steady decline, whereas the trend of positivity did not increase considerably. After the juncture in the campaign the next date when the speeches' sentiment is more positive on the average is the rally of the coalition one week before the elections, on March 30, 2014. However, both the Negativity and the Positivity scores are lower than the average scores of Negativity and Positivity themes for the whole campaign (see Figure 2).

Since this might be one of the most important events of the campaign – considering this event was one week before the national elections – one should zoom in to discover how the two political leaders (former Prime Ministers) and the Prime Minister-candidate structured their speeches to motivate the voters. In order to do this I counted the percentages of the themes in each speech in relation to the sum of relevant words in each speech and I also added campaign

averages as a comparison. I counted two types of campaign averages for the whole period of the campaign, one for the exact dates (to analyze the development of themes over time) and for the exact speeches, to analyze the structure of a speech on a given date.

As Table 2 demonstrates, not the Prime Minister-candidate, Attila Mesterhazy (AM) gave the most positive speech on this rally, but one of the political leaders, Ferenc Gyurcsany (FGY) (18%) that is also higher than the campaign average (13%). However, his speech was the most negative on this event as well (13%), which is slightly below the campaign average (14%). The other political leader, Gordon Bajnai (GB) hit a positivity score (10%) even below the average, yet he was still more positive, than the Prime Minister-candidate, Attila Mesterhazy (7%). In addition, Attila Mesterhazy gave the second most negative speech as well. This means that the positivity trend in Figure 2 on this day was only affected by one political leader's speech, who is not even the Prime Minister-candidate with an above the average score in Positivity.

Regarding the “subject” themes of the campaign, it seems that only one political leader created a collective atmosphere on the event, since Ferenc Gyurcsany used words related to the “Us reference” the most often (37%) and also hit a much higher score, than the average (19%) (see Table 2). The other political leader, however, Gordon Bajnai clearly devoted his speech to the voters, since the frequency of the Voters theme in his speech (35%) is 3 times higher, than the average (11%). Furthermore Gordon Bajnai mentioned the government the most often in his speech as well, with an almost 2 times higher score (13%) than average (7%) percentage. Ferenc Gyurcsany mentioned the government the least frequently on this event (5%), which is even higher, than the “Me reference” in his speech with 1% that is the tenth of the average (10%). The Prime Minister-candidate, however, has the highest “Me reference” point (17%), that is above the

average as well, but he talks about the voters a slightly more often in his speech (19%), that is also higher than the campaign average (11%).

Table 2 - Theme percentages on March 30, 2014

	Me	Us	Vote rs	Governme nt	Polici es	Politi cs	Negativi ty	Positivi ty	Natio n	Numb er of releva nt words
<i>March 30, 2014</i>										
GB	11.5 4	12.8 2	35.04	13.25	2.14	5.13	5.56	10.26	4.27	234
FGY	1.05	37.3 7	7.89	4.74	1.58	4.74	12.63	18.42	11.58	190
AM	16.9 6	11.9 5	18.58	10.02	12.76	5.82	10.02	7.11	6.79	619
Campaign averages	10.1 3	19.0 3	11.34	6.67	5.98	11.95	13.66	13.31	7.94	

Considering the “topics” of the campaign the Prime Minister-candidate is an outlier in this case as well (see Table 2). While the other two political leaders talk about politics more often, than policies – however, with half of the campaign average frequencies – Attila Mesterhazy talks about policies 2 times more often in his speech (13%), than the campaign average (6%). In relation to the Nation theme it is interesting that in the speech of Ferenc Gyurcsany it is the third most popular theme after the “Us reference” and “Positivity”. The Prime Minister-candidate talked about the nation a slightly more often (7%), than Gordon Bajnai (4%), but these scores are also below the campaign average as well (8%).

In order to analyze the structure of a speech more precisely, one should zoom in again on an exact speech. I selected the last speech of the Prime Minister-candidate, Attila Mesterhazy, since – I already mentioned – March 30, 2014 was an important campaign event, since it was one week before the elections. Moreover, as the Prime Minister-candidate, Attila Mesterhazy might have the most potential to convince the voters to vote for the coalition on the next week. To

analyze the structure of the speeches I merged the paragraphs in the speech into four almost equal parts.

Table 3 - Themes in the last speech of the Prime Minister-candidate (in percentage)

		Me	Us	Voter s	Governme nt	Polici es	Politi cs	Negativi ty	Positivit y	Natio n	Num ber of relev ant word s
Marc h 30, 2014	Attila Mesterha zy	7.1 1	2.5 8	2.10	3.88	1.62	3.07	4.20	1.29	1.94	172
		2.7 5	1.9 4	5.33	1.94	4.52	0.65	0.81	1.29	2.58	135
		2.4 2	2.7 5	4.68	1.78	4.52	0.32	3.72	2.26	1.13	146
		4.6 8	4.6 8	6.46	2.42	2.10	1.78	1.29	2.26	1.13	166

As Table 3 shows, at the beginning of his speech Attila Mesterhazy talked about himself the most often (7%) along with the government (4%) – as the other subject in the campaign –, and addressed politics (3%) with a negative sentiment (4%). In the middle of his speech his focus shifted to the voters (5%) and to his policy proposals (5%) in a faded positive tone (1%) that he changed to a negative tone (4%) at the end of the middle of his speech. He closed his speech addressing the voters (6%) and mentioning himself and his community almost equally often (5%) and the government as well (3%), as the third most frequent theme in this part of his speech. He talked about policies more, than politics (2%) with a rather positive tone (2%), which suggest that the Prime Minister-candidate closed his speech with an attempt to convince the voters by drawing their attention to the coalition's policy proposals.

I discuss the results of this analysis together with the results of qualitative framing analysis supplemented by the findings in the interviews later, in the Discussion section of my thesis. Until that this quantitative thematic analysis helped us to get a clear and measurable

picture of the thematic structure of the political speeches of the left-wing leaders during the 2014 national election campaign. However, such a quantitative analysis could only provide a rudimentary understanding of the way politicians constructed the political situation and the dynamics during the campaign. Therefore one should turn to a qualitative analysis of the speeches as well, in order to highlight how political leaders build up their messages and how they frame their campaign communication in order to gain the support of the voters and to win the elections.

4.2 Qualitative framing analysis

4.2.1 Identifying the central frames

The notion of framing is a complex concept that is widely used by scholars from the fields of cognitive science, social movement theories and political communication. Since the concept of framing is dealing with selection and salience of issues (Entman 1993), it is often confused with agenda-setting or priming (Cacciatore, Scheufele, and Iyengar 2016). The major difference between framing and agenda-setting is that while the process of agenda-setting is to select and make salient a particular issue, framing is the selection of a specific aspect or attribute of that exact issue and put a strong emphasis on it (D. Scheufele 1999).

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation (Entman 1993, 52).

My analysis on identifying frames in the left-wing political leaders' speeches is built on the definition mentioned above of framing. In addition, I supplement my analysis with the images of the "subjects" in a particular frame in order to reflect on how political leaders present themselves and how they see the voters whose support they want to win. Therefore in this study I

concentrate on frames that (1) address the problem, (2) propose a solution, (3) depict the “character” of the person who solves the problem, and finally (4) portray those who could benefit from the solution. In other words I identify frames in the speeches of the left-wing political leaders based on:

How do political leaders of the Left define the social or political problem during the 2014 campaign, that has to be solved in Hungary?

- What is the leaders’ proposed solution?
- What is the image of the politicians who could solve the problem?
- What is the image of the voter who could support the proposed solution?

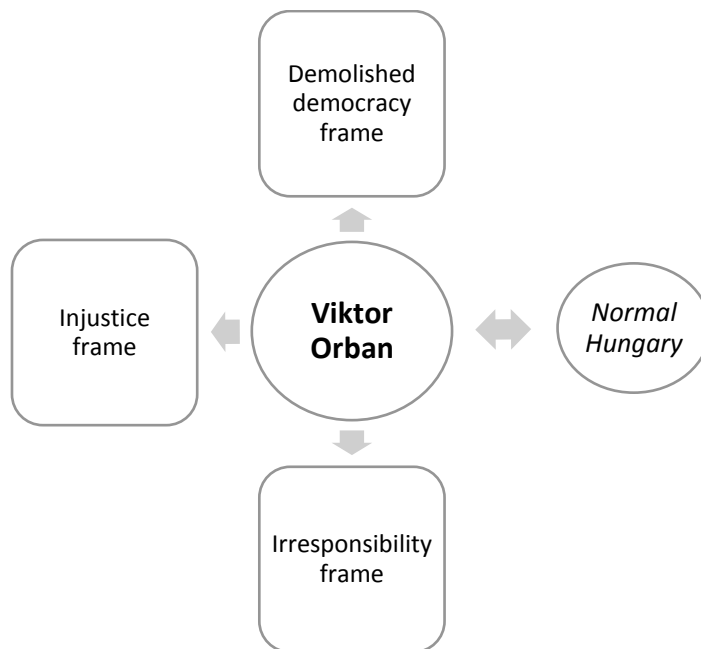
4.2.2 Results

The left-wing leaders in their speeches mainly establish a diagnosis on the current situation in Hungary during the 2014 campaign, rather than emphasizing the dynamics of political action. In this analysis I identified three frames in the left-win leaders’ speeches that are (1) the demolished democracy frame, (2) the irresponsibility frame, and (3) the injustice frame. In addition, there are two key element in their speeches as well: the overarching theme of Viktor Orban and the political leaders’ vision about the future.

Figure 3 demonstrates the relation of these frames to the other two elements of the political leaders’ speeches. When political leaders are talking about their goals, policies and about their political partners the current Fidesz government and it’s Prime Minister, Viktor Orban is a recurring theme that links together and defines all the left-wing parties’ objectives and actions. However, there is a slight difference between the leaders regarding their diagnosis. One of the leaders does not see Viktor Orban as the root of every problem, since he emphasizes that

“changing the government is not enough, the era itself has to be changed!” (Bajnai, October 2012). This means that political actors should learn from the lesson of the defeat of the Left in 2010 as well. This concept, however, fades away during the 2014 campaign and Viktor Orban defines the core of the left-wing leaders’ diagnosis. Furthermore, as an overarching theme Viktor Orban and the Fidesz government define the self-definition of the political leaders of the Left as well. As the Prime Minister-candidate indirectly put it “... the whole country will win with us, since we won’t trample on democracy, we won’t begin political witch hunt based on fake charges and I could list even more advantages of a Socialist government” (Mesterhazy, September 2013).

Figure 3 - The relation of the frames to the key elements of the speeches



Another recurring element in the speeches is the left-wing leaders’ vision about the future. However, it cannot be identified as a frame, since this element is only a consequence or a conclusion of the other frames in the speeches. Moreover, the leaders connect their vision about the future to Viktor Orban and to the Fidesz government as well (see Figure 3). As one of the

leaders states “...there is only one way for us to achieve change: if we dismiss the current Prime Minister. Only then there will be welfare, security, predictability and freedom in Hungary” (Mesterhazy, October 2013). Or to be more precise “Orban-country or normal Hungary? This is the question!” (Bajnai, February 2014). In addition, even though the left-wing leaders’ vision is a recurring element, they put much less emphasis on it compared to the overarching theme of Viktor Orban.

Demolished democracy frame

As I already mentioned left-wing leaders in their speeches establish an overall diagnosis on the situation in Hungary and they deduce their goals and actions based on this diagnosis. One of the main frames that characterizes their speeches is the *demolished democracy frame* (see Figure 4). According to the left-wing politicians the major problem in Hungary is that the current Fidesz government dismantled the democratic institutions and “systematically broke the spine of the Hungarian democracy vertebrae by vertebrae” (Bajnai, October 2012). One of the politicians goes even further in expressing the threat posed by Viktor Orban that Hungary have to face: “We do not call that democracy where the Constitution is overruled by personal will. We call that tyranny” (Gyurcsány, February 2013).

In this sense left-wing leaders during the campaign picture Viktor Orban and his government as highly undemocratic and position themselves clearly against these undemocratic tendencies. In their speeches political leaders recurrently call themselves “democrats” and label themselves as the only democratic bloc that is committed to return to democratization. Among other undemocratic measures of the Fidesz government left-wing politicians heavily criticize the Orban government regarding the new electoral law that made the electoral system majoritarian

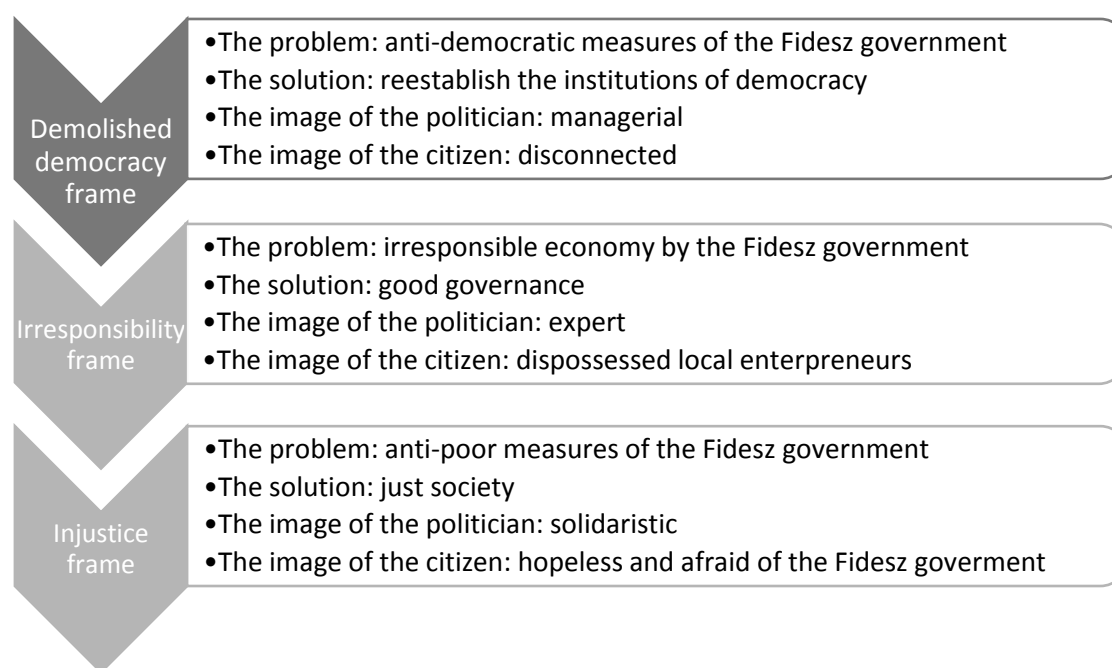
and forced the divided left-wing parties to cooperate on the elections. In their speeches the left-wing politicians often mention the difficulties with this task and express conflicting views regarding this challenge. On the one hand they accept that they have to cooperate in order to win but in the meantime they are blaming Viktor Orban for putting them in such a situation, instead of creating a hopeful atmosphere around the idea of unity: “we need a wide democratic unity and not just the pact of one or two political parties... Dividing the democrats means supporting Orban” (Gyurcsany, May 2013).

On the other hand after they formed the coalition the left-wing politicians still communicate how much they dislike the idea of cooperation. As one of the leaders put in on their last rally one week before the elections, “let us repair this evil electoral system that could allow us to compete for your trust separately in the future” (Bajnai, March 2014). Furthermore, even when left-wing politicians attempt to mobilize their potential voters they mainly focus on positioning themselves against the Fidesz government warning the public that they support the government if they do not vote on the elections: “If you are staying at home, you are voting for Viktor Orban” (Bajnai, March 2014), states one of leaders of the left-wing coalition.

Together with stating the problem of the undemocratic measures of the current right-wing government (see Figure 4) left-wing politicians also propose their solution that suggests the reestablishment of the democratic institutions is a prior requirement for solving other social problems in the country. As one of the politicians argues “strong democracy is needed in order to have freedom and welfare” (Mesterházy, January 2014). In this sense oppositional politicians portray themselves as political managers of democratic institutions, who by establishing and effectively managing these institutions help Hungary to prosper.

In their speeches during the campaign oppositional leaders also picture the voters in relation to their concerns with Hungary's democratic backsliding (see Figure 4). They see their potential voters disconnected from the institutions of democracy – such as the elections or the political parties. As they argue the voters withdrew into their everyday life and it might be because sustaining democracy requires their contributions as well, which could be tiring. As one of the politicians address it “it is often hard to explain to the electorate not to neglect democracy while they say they do not care, since they are more concerned about their own livelihood” (Mesterházy, January 2014). In addition, “in the 20 years history of Hungarian democracy people got tired of the numerous democratic debates” (Gyurcsany, February 2013). This might suggest that even though oppositional politicians acknowledge that voters are disconnected from democracy, they still present themselves as the representatives of the democratic system, who know how to manage democratic institutions properly compared to the Fidesz government that broke these institutions down.

Figure 4 - Overview of the frames in the speeches



Irresponsibility frame

The second frame in the speeches of the left-wing politicians that I have identified based on my qualitative text analysis is the *irresponsibility frame* (see Figure 4). This frame refers to how the oppositional politicians depict the right-wing government's irresponsibility in relation to Hungary's economy. Political leaders of the Left in their speeches often express their concerns regarding the current government's decision-making process favoring economically those who are loyal to them:

...but that the main political power and its immediate surrounding, the inside circle of the Fidesz world is getting richer and richer with institutionalized corruption, this is a new phenomenon in Hungary (Gyurcsany, February 2013).

Moreover, the measures of Fidesz government are not only corrupt, but they threaten Hungary's prospects for economic development. Or as one of the politicians put it "Viktor Orban destroys the economy, thus destroys our future" (Bajnai, October 2013). This means that "the lords of the regime govern badly, therefore they lost their expert base to lead the country" (Bajnai, July 1) as one political leader concludes. Furthermore the political leaders also worry about how Viktor Orban turned away from the Western countries and seeks new relationship with countries from the East, such as Russia:

Today Hungary is isolated. While Hungary was the most European country in region, now it looks towards the East... Unfortunately a righteous democrat now have to be ashamed of his government (Gyurcsany, February 2013).

In this regard according to the oppositional politicians Hungary needs expertise and *good governance* in order to rebuild its good relations to the Western democracies, since only international investors from the West could make the Hungarian economy thrive. This might imply a top-down approach from the international economy to the local society, where the good

politicians are primarily experts who focus on responsible economy instead of being responsive to the public “at the bottom”.

We have to restore trust in Hungary. If there is trust, there is investment... We need responsible economic policy in order to finance our goals in social policy (Mesterhazy, January 2014).

With regard to their proposed solution to irresponsibility political leaders of the Left reflect on those who are the most affected by the irresponsible practices of the government. In their speeches they portray dispossessed local entrepreneurs suffering from the actions of the Fidesz government when they “[t]ook away the tobacco shops... and went on and took away the lands” (Mesterhazy, January 2014) from the local small and middle enterprises. The purpose of the left-wing politicians is to help these citizens, who could improve their enterprises if the political environment was not ruled by the current right-wing government: “We should help the striving citizen, we should help those who are willing to actively better their own faith in order to make them flourish” (Bajnai, February 2013).

Since political leaders of the Left follow a top-down approach in this *irresponsibility frame* they present themselves as – contrary to the Fidesz government – responsible experts, whose task is to attract investors to help the local entrepreneurs, who are otherwise capable of help themselves in the context of good governance (see Figure 4).

Injustice frame

The third frame in the speeches of the political leaders of the Left is the *injustice frame* (see Figure 4). This frame refers to the “anti-poor” practices of the current right-wing government that favors its rich loyal partners against the poor people:

This government distributes the goods in a way to make the rich richer and the middle class poorer. And who is poor, he is the poorest (Bajnai, October 2012).

Oppositional politicians criticize heavily the priorities of the right-wing government that ignores poverty focuses on, for instance, improving Hungarian soccer. As one politician put it “[b]uilding stadiums instead of tackling with child poverty is an awkward value preference” (Mesterházy, January 2014). The political leaders of the Left express emotions the most within this frame to emphasize the contrast between the measures of the Fidesz government and the Hungarian reality. They exclusively blame the current Prime Minister and his government for Hungary’s desperate situation, where the people could not confront the right-wing government, since they are afraid of them. “Poverty, emigration and fear – these are what Viktor Orban’s government brought us” (Mesterházy, March 2014) – as one of the politicians states. Or in other words “[t]he Orban-government is the government of hopelessness” (Bajnai, February 2013). In this sense oppositional politicians do not communicate about empowering the public directly, since they see the solution in changing the government and practicing solidaristic policy-making that could bring back hope to the people. As left-wing leaders see the biggest difference between the right-wing government and the previous left-wing government regarding social issues is that during the left-wing government the poor people were hopeful at least about their children’s future whereas now they do not see any possibility for their children either:

Poverty always existed and I suspect it will always exist... but the difference is that earlier there was hope for the poor parents that even if it was not good for them, there was still hope for their children. Today the hope is lost (Gyurcsany, February 2013).

With regard to this situation in Hungary in order to ease poverty a politician has to be solidaristic. In this sense left-wing politicians see themselves as leaders concerned about the social future of the country and the solution for this situation is institutional that means left-wing

parties have to change the government first. As one of the politicians describes “[w]e want to live in a solidaristic society, where it is harder to slide down, but easier to rise” (Bajnai, October 2012).

The *Injustice frame* in the speeches of the left-wing politicians supplements their diagnosis about Hungary’s demolished democracy and irresponsible economy. This frame also provides the third attribute that these politicians present about themselves: they can manage the democratic institutions effectively and they are responsible experts who are concerned about solidarity as well. In addition they see the members of society as disconnected from the complex concept of democracy where the dispossessed entrepreneurs’ potential are blocked and there is no hope for the poor. As I already mentioned they express a top-down perspective where changing the government is needed to help the citizens and not expressing commitment to armor the citizens first in order to change the government.

4.3 Discussion

In my thesis I applied three types of analysis. The quantitative thematic analysis highlights the character and the tone of the campaign and finds that during the 2014 campaign of the Left politicians used emotionally slightly more negative than positive words. With qualitative framing analysis I identify the key element of the 2014 campaign of the Left that is a recurring reference to Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his current government. The results of the word count of quantitative thematic analysis suggests the same, since the second most frequently mentioned word in the campaign of the left-wing opposition (after “Hungarian”, with ignoring the articles and pronouns) is “Orban”. Considering the previously mentioned definition of negative campaign that is focusing almost exclusively on the opponent, I could state that my prior

expectation that the 2014 campaign of the Left is negative is justified. However, not necessarily regarding the use of negative-emotion words, but the focus on the current Fidesz government.

In the interviews the campaign managers also acknowledge that during their campaign the root of their arguments is the critique of the Prime Minister and his government. However, one of the main contributions of arranging interviews is that the interviewees could raise issues regarding the context that neither quantitative thematic analysis nor qualitative framing analysis could reveal. According to the campaign managers one of the main considerations behind their anti-government rhetoric during their campaign is the left-wing politicians' lack of credibility.

Usually the opposition is against the government in their campaigns... Yet, along with political contradictions in this country tend to be bloody military conflicts, there is another reason for that [for the anti-government rhetoric], which is... the left-wing content was not working. Not because there was disagreement in the content... but because obviously the whole thing was defined by a huge credibility issue (Campaign manager³, Together-PM⁴).

Therefore their problems with credibility defined their argumentation in their campaign especially when they criticized the nondemocratic practices of the government. In the qualitative framing analysis I identified the *demolished democracy* frame that refers to the main problem of the country according to the left-wing politicians, that is how the current government destroys democratic institutions. As I mentioned earlier, however, one of the politicians has a different opinion regarding the root of Hungary's problems. His message about "changing the era" ('korszakváltás' in Hungarian) refers to the previous governments' actions before Fidesz came into power, but this message faded away during the campaign. As it turned out during the

³ Later on abbreviated as CM.

⁴ Together-PM is the party of the former Prime Minister, Gordon Bajnai.

interviews the reason for why this messages faded away is also the result of the “credibility crisis” of the Hungarian Left.

This is a big contradiction, because the messages itself was stronger than the credibility of Gordon Bajnai... all of my friends said to me that ‘changing the era? With these guys?! (CM, Together-PM).

In this regard according to the campaign managers the only key issue left for them is to communicate their concerns about Hungary’s democratic backsliding. Even though, according to one of the campaign managers it does not necessarily resonate among the public. As he states “only with the program of reestablishing democracy you cannot win elections. However, this was the only thing that the political actors agreed in” (CM, Together-PM). In this regard the problem with credibility put constraints on the opportunities for the Left. Especially when they are not only discredited, but unpopular as well. In this case their arguments about their commitment to Europe and democratization are very limited:

This cloven hoof role is a huge disadvantage. As they say his [Ferenc Gyurcsany] potential to get votes is limited... However, he still has a European image along with his image as the former successful challenger of Orban... Therefore we pay less attention on his negative perceptions among the public (CM, DK⁵).

As I find in the quantitative thematic analysis when measuring the tone of the campaign, the trend lines of negativity and positivity meet at one point in January 2014. This was the date of the coalition formation that seems to have a slight influence on the tone of the campaign. The issue with coalition formation becomes more prominent in the qualitative framing analysis, when within the *demolished democracy* frame left-wing politicians express how much they dislike this political process. During the interviews the campaign managers also express their strong concerns regarding political cooperation stating that this was the strategy of Viktor Orban to take

⁵ DK stands for Democratic Coalition, the party of the former Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsany.

advantage of their division in order to stay in power. As one of the campaign managers argues “the key institution for the Orban regime to stay alive is the single-round electoral system” (CM, Together-PM), still “we could only win against Orban if we cooperate” (CM, DK).

Cooperation appears to be a huge dilemma for the left-wing parties, since they see the concept of unity as a strategic consideration of Viktor Orban against them, and not as an opportunity to present themselves as an inclusive, united force. In addition, the oppositional parties lost valuable time while figuring out the ways of overcoming this dilemma. And after the parties finally formed the coalition in January 2014, basically nothing left to communicate to the voters. As one campaign manager put it “still, ‘anti-orbanism’ was the leading message and besides, it could have been a positive message that we finally formed the coalition... but everyone new that it was a cumbersome process” (CM, Together-PM). And as another campaign manager depicts the campaign “all that remained from the campaign is that there were billboards picturing the candidates with Attila Mesterhazy. And that’s it” (CM, Together-PM). In this regard referring back to the trends I find in the quantitative thematic analysis, the slight slope of negativity does not go together with strengthening positivity. Instead, it portrays how, after solving their collective action problem created by the Fidesz government, the campaign of the left-wing coalition became completely “empty”. In addition, in relation to negativity the results of quantitative thematic analysis suggests that although the campaign could be categorized as more negative, than positive it is not that obvious if one considers the changes over time. This was also a dilemma for the left-win political actor resulted from the coalition formation.

It was a big question whether this whole political game is about winning the ‘stakeholders’ or winning the voters. In other words we didn’t have an answer to the dilemma that whether this is a negative campaign against Orban or a positive campaign (CM, Together-PM).

Therefore it seems that although the results of the quantitative thematic analysis suggest that oppositional politicians pay more attention on voters than on themselves on their last rally, the overall picture of the campaign is different. In addition, all of the frames – *demolished democracy*, *irresponsibility*, *injustice* – in the speeches of the politicians also portrays a top-down approach. In this sense left-wing politicians do not reflect on empowering the citizens to change the government, but on changing the government to help the citizens in need. As one of the campaign managers concluded “in fact, the focus was not on the voters. When Bajnai positioned himself he sent his message to the other parties” (CM, Together-PM).

To conclude, my prior expectations on the 2014 electoral campaign of the Left are half fulfilled. My first expectation was that the campaign was negative. As the results of quantitative thematic analysis suggests, where I assessed negative-emotion words in relation to positive-emotion words, the campaign was slightly more negative. However, the picture is more complex in relation to the changes of the tone over time. Still, the almost exclusive focus on the current Prime Minister Viktor Orban suggests that, since the campaign is not about the own initiatives of the left-wing coalition, the campaign could be categorized as negative. Yet, I borrow the words of one of the campaign managers and conclude that this campaign is rather “empty” than anything else.

Considering my second expectation that the left-wing politicians concentrated more on technical issues than on the voters’ needs, the picture is clearer. As both the results of qualitative framing analysis and the statements of campaign managers suggest that the politicians of the Left are more concerned with solving their collective action problem and overcoming the dilemmas of coalition formation, than with finding campaign communicational strategies appealing to the voters. In this regard my second expectation was unambiguously fulfilled by the results.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

In my thesis I analyzed how the left-wing opposition attempt to reengage the public in the era of democratic backsliding. As potential challengers of the illiberal regime such attempts for guiding the voters back to public life might enhance the prospects for democratization as well. Therefore analyzing the campaign of the Hungarian left-wing opposition might yield new theoretical insights into the mobilizing strategies of the parties in a less democratic political environment.

Carrying out quantitative thematic analysis, qualitative framing analysis and interviews one of my main findings is that the campaign of the Left was slightly more negative, than positive. Besides, the almost exclusive focus on the current Prime Minister Viktor Orban suggests that, since the campaign is not about the own initiatives of the left-wing coalition, the campaign could be categorized as negative. Yet, I borrow the words of one of the campaign managers and conclude that this campaign is rather “empty” than anything else. Regarding scholarly concerns about negative campaign’s tendency to increase cynicism among the public towards the political system, I could argue that any campaign might be more effective than an empty campaign.

In addition, due to the new electoral law that requires coalition formation from the divided Left in order to win the elections, in my analysis I find that the left-wing opposition was more concerned about overcoming their collective action problem than about reconnecting to their voters. That is highly surprising considering their landslide defeat in 2010 and the literature that suggests parties reconsider their identities after a huge electoral loss. Regarding their technocratic, managerial attitudes in this region I could argue that the Hungarian Left is still trapped into the contradiction of responsibility and responsiveness as they prioritize external pressures over being responsive to the needs of the public.

These findings suggests that the Hungarian left-wing opposition is having a hard time convincing the voters to return to the path of democratization. In this sense studying the campaign communication of oppositional parties in the context of illiberalism might encourage future research on the “receiving” side of political communication in relation to their expectations regarding democratic parties. These research could highlight whether focusing on and empowering citizens against illiberal governments is the way to go towards consolidation of democracy.

Appendices

1. Timeline for the speeches

2012.

- *October 23 – National holiday*
- 1. Bajnai
- 2. Gyurcsany

2013.

- 3. February 9 – Bajnai's Year Assessment
- 4. February 16 – Gyurcsany's Year Assessment
- 5. March 9 – Mesterhazy's Year Assessment
- *May 1 – Labor Day*
- 6. Bajnai
- 7. Gyurcsany
- 8. Mesterhazy
- 9. July 1 – Bajnai's speech on an open-air demonstration against corruption
- 10. September 13 – Mesterhazy in Miskolc
- 11. September 14 – Gyurcsany's Season Opening speech
- *October 22 – signing the electoral cooperation agreement*
- 12. Bajnai
- 13. Mesterhazy
- *October 23 – National holiday*
- 14. Bajnai
- 15. Gyurcsany
- 16. Mesterhazy

2014.

- *January 14 – Forming the coalition with a joint list*
- 17. Bajnai
- 18. Gyurcsany
- 19. Mesterhazy
- 20. January 25 – Mesterhazy's Year Assessment
- *February 2 – Open-air demonstration against the new nuclear power plant in Paks*
- 21. Bajnai
- 22. Gyurcsany
- *March 30 – Open-air rally one week before the elections*
- 23. Bajnai
- 24. Gyurcsany
- 25. Mesterhazy

2. Interview guide – Together-PM

Date:

Campaign communication of the Hungarian left-wing coalition in 2014

INTRODUCTION

- About myself
- Focus & purpose of study
- The process: discussion duration recording transcription anonymisation
deletion of recording
- Ethical issues: confidentiality of discussion & data handling withdrawal at any time

Any questions / clarifications?

- Informed consent
- Permission to record

<p>PERSONAL DETAILS</p> <p>You led the campaign team of Together-PM in 2014...</p> <p>a. What was your role?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">→What was the process of decision-making?</p> <p>b. What were the most exciting moments of your work?</p>	
<p>PRE-CAMPAIGN</p> <p>Milla, Szolidaritás + PM</p>	
<p>1. <u>How would you define the image of Together-PM?</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Probe:</i> Did you change it?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">→If yes, why?</p> <p>2. <u>Did Gordon Bajnai have a separate image?</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Probe:</i> Should we separate it from Together-PM?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>(Responsibility vs responsiveness)</i></p> <p>3. <u>How did you reflect on the current government in your communication?</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Probes:</i> was Viktor Orban a central figure?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">→Who were your target groups? + Why?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>(collective identity building)</i></p>	

COALITION FORMATION – THE CAMPAIGN	
<p>4. <u>What are your memories of this period?</u> <i>Probes: key players + could you influence the process?</i></p> <p>5. <u>How could you sum up the message of the coalition? Was there a united message?</u> <i>Probe: Unity, cooperation or anti-government attitudes?</i></p> <p>6. <u>Who were the main target groups of the coalition? Did it change compared to the previous groups?</u> → How did this influence your campaign communication? <i>Probe: How so / why not?</i></p> <hr/> <p>On the last rally of the coalition one week before the elections: <u>Gordon Bajnai March 30, 2014</u> <i>“Those who stays at home votes for Viktor Orban! ...My dear friend, I would like you to think.”</i></p> <p>7. Was this style intentional? <i>Probe: responsibility vs responsiveness + minds vs hearts</i></p>	
<p><u>Ferenc Gyurcsany March 30, 2014</u> <i>“We have a shared dream! This dream is the dream of freedom, the dream of dignity, the dream of respect. In this dream every Hungarian supports the other, every Hungarian understands the other. In this dream Hungary and Europe is the home of every Hungarian.”</i></p> <p>8. Was it a strategic decision, that Ferenc Gyurcsány would be the most positive in tone? <i>Possible follow-up: in your opinion why the coalition did not focus on similar messages during the campaign?</i></p>	
OVERALL EVALUATION	
<p>Your main message at the beginning: “changing the era”, but it faded away.</p> <p>→ Was it a strategic decision to reconsider your message? And if yes, why? (In your opinion what was your most important message?)</p> <p>9. <u>In your opinion what was the atmosphere of this period?</u> → Creating hopeful expectations about the future?</p>	

<p>→How did you feel this personally?</p> <p>10. <u>What do you think what are the lessons of this campaign?</u></p> <p>→What advice would you give to your past self?</p> <p>→Could be these suggestions valid in 2018 as well?</p> <p>Anything else to add?</p>	
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CLOSING ISSUES

- Ethical issues: confidentiality of discussion & data handling withdrawal at any time
- CONCERNS: Noémi Oláh Olah_Noemi@student.ceu.edu **THANK YOU!**

3. Interview guide – Democratic Coalition

Date:

Campaign communication of the Hungarian left-wing coalition in 2014

INTRODUCTION

- About myself
- Focus & purpose of study
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deletion of recording
- Ethical issues: confidentiality of discussion & data handling withdrawal at any time

Any questions / clarifications?

- Informed consent
- Permission to record

<p>PERSONAL DETAILS</p> <p>You were in the campaign communication team of Democratic Coalition in 2014...</p> <p>c. What was your role?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">→What was the process of decision-making?</p> <p>d. What were the most exciting moments of your work?</p>	
<p>PRE-CAMPAIGN</p> <p>11. <u>How would you define the image of Democratic Coalition?</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Probe: Did you change it?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">→If yes, why?</p> <p>12. <u>Ferenc Gyurcsany is the leader of DK. Did he have a separate image?</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Probe: Should we separate it from DK?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(Responsibility vs responsiveness)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Probe: What is the message of his personality?</p> <p>13. <u>How did you reflect on the current government in your communication?</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Probes: was Viktor Orban a central figure?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">→Who were your target groups? + Why?</p>	

<p><i>(collective identity building)</i></p> <p>14. <u>What is your opinion on the message of Together-PM “changing the era”?</u></p> <p>Probe: from your perspective, what does this message mean? What does this mean for the DK?</p>	
<p>COALITION FORMATION – THE CAMPAIGN</p>	
<p>15. <u>What are your memories of this period?</u></p> <p>Probes: <i>key players + could you influence the process?</i></p> <p>16. <u>How could you sum up the message of the coalition? Was there a united message?</u></p> <p>Probe: <i>Unity, cooperation or anti-government attitudes?</i></p> <p>17. <u>Who were the main target groups of the coalition? Did it change compared to the previous groups?</u></p> <p>→How did this influence your campaign communication?</p> <p>Probe: <i>How so / why not?</i></p> <p>On the last rally of the coalition one week before the elections:</p>	
<p><u>Ferenc Gyurcsany March 30, 2014</u></p> <p><i>“We have a shared dream! This dream is the dream of freedom, the dream of dignity, the dream of respect. In this dream every Hungarian supports the other, every Hungarian understands the other. In this dream Hungary and Europe is the home of every Hungarian.”</i></p> <p>18. Was it a strategic decision, that Ferenc Gyurcsány would be the most positive in tone?</p> <p><i>Possible follow-up: in your opinion why the coalition did not focus on similar messages during the campaign?</i></p>	
<p>OVERALL EVALUATION</p>	
<p>19. <u>In your opinion what was the atmosphere of this period?</u></p> <p>→Creating hopeful expectations about the future?</p> <p>→How did you feel this personally?</p> <p>20. <u>What do you think what are the lessons of this campaign?</u></p> <p>→What advice would you give to your past self?</p> <p>→Could be these suggestions valid in 2018 as well?</p>	

Anything else to add?	
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CLOSING ISSUES

- Ethical issues: confidentiality of discussion & data handling withdrawal at any time
- CONCERNS: Noémi Oláh Olah_Noemi@student.ceu.edu **THANK YOU!**

4. Word counts in the speeches

Words	Occurrence
<i>a</i>	3713
<i>az</i>	1640
<i>hogy</i>	1537
<i>és (+ És)</i>	1459
<i>nem</i>	912
<i>is</i>	590
<i>azt</i>	494
<i>egy</i>	436
<i>kell</i>	416
<i>ez</i>	403
<i>van</i>	329
mi	300
magyar	169
orbán	133
én (+Én)	117
magyarországon	112
kormány	107
magyarországon	98
demokratikus	92
én	70
politikai	68
ő	63
szocialista	58
viktor	57
erős	55
miniszterelnök	51
együtt	49
ők	48
fidesz	46
ellenzéki	42
igazságos	29
európai	28
remény	25
gazdaság	24

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