PRECEDENT NAME: FROM THE SOURCE SPHERES "LITERATURE" AND "CINEMA" IN THE TARGET SPHERE "POLITICAL DISCOURSE" (BASED ON MATERIAL OF THE SPANISH-LANGUAGE MEDIA)[1]

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Abstract. In this article, we consider the metaphorical use of precedent names from the source spheres "literature" and "cinema" in the political discourse of modern Spanish-language mass media. The names of heroes of ancient mythology, works of classical Spanish and foreign literature, including children's literature, as well as movie characters, carriers of certain qualities and properties, are widely used as precedents. As a result of the study, the grounds for metaphorical transfer from the named source spheres to the target sphere are established. The function of precedent names is also revealed not only as actualizers of the precedent situation, but also as a means of characterizing political opponents in the sphere of political discourse in the context of the struggle of political forces for the possession, preservation and disposal of power. The modern political discourse of the Spanish-language media as an arena of political confrontation is characterized by intolerance, agonality, and the "language of hostility" marking opponents as "alien" in the "friend – alien" binary opposition with the predominance of discrediting characterizations of political opponents aimed at debunking a given politician's claims to leadership, demonstrating his or her incompetence and hanging labels. In the context of the language game, precedent names are used as a metaphorical definition of the names of current politicians. For characterization, precedent names are taken with both negative and positive connotations, imparting a negative connotation to the object of characterization due to the emerging phenomenon of enantiosemy when used as a metaphorical definition of proper names. The atmosphere of language play created in journalistic texts using well-known precedent names from

works of popular culture, as well as the playful connection of the name of a politician with the precedent name of a fictional character, imbue such texts with the quality of informational and entertainment journalism. At the same time, these techniques implement the pragmatic function of precedent names aimed at manipulating the addressee, encouraging him or her to act for the purposes of one political actor or another, and reveal a certain political strategy, despite the obvious intentions of the author.

Keywords: language game, precedent name, precedent situation, media discourse, linguistic and cultural community, manipulative influence

The research material was selected using random sampling from publications posted on the websites of Spanish media outlets

Research subject: the literary and cinematic precedent name in the political discourse of the media.

Research objective: to clarify the semantic and stylistic function of the precedent name as a phenomenon of textuality in political discourse and the methods of its implementation; to describe the linguo-pragmatic potential of the precedent name as a means of verbal attack in terms of its ability to change the content plane of a politician's image; and to identify the feature underlying the metaphorical transfer.

Research methods (selected with the research objectives in mind): analysis and synthesis of linguistic material and theoretical research; analysis of the contextual implementation of the meaning of a word; descriptive method using the techniques of comparison, generalization and classification; contextual analysis that makes it possible to identify the communicative and linguo-pragmatic parameters of the use of the linguistic units and contextual features of the implementation of their meaning in the text as a product of communication.

Relevance of the research: the attention paid by linguists to political discourse, which is reflected in publications in the media about the struggle for political power conducted in large part using precedent names – one of the most effective means of characterizing a political opponent in order to change the content plane of his or her image.

Political Discourse as a Dynamic System

In recent decades, the focus of linguists has increasingly turned to the study of political discourse as a reflection of the struggle of various forces for power, which is the main problem of politics.

In this paper, political discourse is understood as a complex communicative phenomenon, as "any speech formations where the subject or addressee's content has anything to do with politics" (Sheigal 2004: 15).

There is a distinction in political discourse between the discourse of professional politicians and the discourse of journalists, viewed as different communicative-speech segments (Tsutsieva 2014: 35). Political discourse is a dynamic system: E. Kubryakova notes that discourse is always a "product of its time, that is, the entire system of conducting discursive activity and all its features are determined by the state of society and the roles the person plays within it (Kubriakova 2004: 62).

Political discourse is characterized by the following features: *connotativity*, meaning that "evaluations are distinguished by a pronounced polarity, built on binary oppositions that exclude any gradation" (Gudkov 2008) and line up with the author's intention to influence the reader, the target audience; *institutionality*, where "the speaker speaks on behalf of a certain social institution" (a government agency or media outlet) and thus "communication occurs within the framework of status-role relations" (Karasik 2000) (both political discourse and media discourse are institutional in nature); and *intertextuality* as the dialogical interaction of texts that helps the author increase the impact of a given statement.

Political discourse is "[full of] conflict, agonal, where the struggle for votes is never-ending" (Gudkov 2008) which "turns out to be a struggle for fundamental group values" (Sorokin 1997: 5).

The term *agonality* (from the Greek αγων – "struggle, competition") refers to the characteristic of discourse to express the spirit of rivalry through speech acts. *Agonality* is manifested in the binary opposition "self/other" (Issers, Rakhimbergenova 2007), as well as in intolerance (the reluctance to compromise), aggressiveness and destructiveness as a strategy of speech behaviour.

The agonistic nature of political discourse arises in the competition between its participants, which is based on the struggle between the ruling party and the opposition, between representatives of different political ideologies.

Precedent Name in Journalistic Discourse

In modern mass communication, the metaphorical use of precedent names is widely used to describe a person whose character traits, position, actions or appearance are similar, in the opinion of the person writing, to the traits of the bearer of the precedent name. It is a technique used in a language game that allows the author to express, vividly and convincingly, his or her attitude towards a given person and convey this opinion to the addressee in such a way as to have a specific impact on them.

Literature and cinema are among the most productive source spheres of precedent-making and metaphorization in the media.

Like N. Arutyunova and A. Baranov, we understand metaphor "in the broad sense, where the word can be applied to any kind of word usage to achieve an indirect meaning" (Arutyunova 1990: 296).

Journalists make frequent use of precedent phenomena to describe and evaluate the main players of their publications. These include: a precedent text – "a finished and self-sufficient product of speech-thinking activity"; a precedent situation – "a situation that has occurred in reality or has been created by the artist's imagination; or a precedent name – "an individual name associated either with a widely known precedent text or with a precedent situation" (Krasnykh 2003: 171–172), the differential features of which are actualized in the recipient's consciousness without the need for an explication of the name or the situation, since the precedent name itself is self-sufficient. Each precedent phenomenon is capable of functioning as a condensed metaphor.

Precedent names are an effective means of characterizing politicians during particularly intense inter-party rivalries and information wars in the media. They are frequently used as part of language games, becoming a powerful evaluative mechanism that controls public consciousness. The actualization of precedent names stems from a specific extralinguistic situation, events in which the person being described is an active party, or is motivated by a specific context that ensures its transparency and understanding.

When referring to a common knowledge base, cooperative contact is established with the interlocutor. In this case, the precedent name acts as a kind of "password" that is used to identify "us" (Gudkov 2008), which makes the impact on the addressee more effective.

Analysis of the Material

The reference to the precedent name source spheres of "literature" and "cinema" allows us to present the author's point of view in a figurative form, evoke corresponding associations in the recipient, and achieve a pragmatic and often manipulative effect.

For example, following the December 2015 parliamentary elections in Spain, where the People's Party and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) failed to win enough votes to form a single-party government, the PSOE's Secretary General at the time, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, commented that a potential coalition government made up of representatives of the socialists, the Podemos party, communists, nationalists, radical supporters of regional independence and moderates would be a *Gobierno Frankenstein (a "Frankenstein government")*.[2] Rubalcaba resorted to the use of a precedent name Frankenstein from the book *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* by the English writer Mary Shelley, the main character of which – the young scientist Victor Frankenstein – is obsessed with the idea of creating an artificial man, a perfect creature that will give rise to a new breed of people. And he successfully

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[2] ¿Qué es un 'Gobierno Frankenstein'? ¿Cuál es el significado de esta expresión? *La Informacion*. 30.05.2018. URL: https://www.20minutos.es/lainformacion/archivo/que-es-un-gobierno-frankenstein-cual-es-significado-esta-expresion-5311242/ (accessed: 05.02.2025)

creates an anthropomorphic monster from various body parts collected from dissecting rooms, execution yards and slaughterhouse and brings it to life. But the monster, named after its creator, starts to take revenge on him, destroying members of his family and ultimately killing him.

Shelley's novel has been adapted for the screen on multiple occasions (the first such adaptation appeared in 1931), with both the Frankenstein precedent name and the corresponding precedent situation being reproduced each time, with some plot differences.

The metaphorical image of Frankenstein appeared in the Spanish media again in 2019. The circumstances surrounding its appearance were similar: this time it was the Socialists who failed to win a majority of the votes and were unable to form a single-party government and were thus faced with the prospect of creating a coalition government with the same parties as three years earlier. The precedent name Frankenstein again becomes a metaphorical attribute (***Gobierno Frankenstein*** – **a Frankenstein government**), as well as part of the telescopic formation *Gobierno Sánchezstein* (a **Sánchezstein** government) made up of the full surname of the PSOE's Secretary General Pedro Sánchez and the final fragment of the surname of the literary and cinematic character Franken**stein**.[3] Such a government, assembled from foreign "pieces," according to the author of the article, is not viable and is harmful to the country. He uses the arguments put forward by Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba himself and adds his own clarification to highlight the differential features of the precedent name: *"… ese Ejecutivo 'no puede ser' porque los socialistas 'no pueden' ir a la investidura de la mano de partidos independentistas 'que quieren romper aquello' que ellos quieren gobernar. Se refería a la Nación española"* ("… there 'cannot be' such a government because the Socialists 'cannot' form a government with parties that support independence and 'want to destroy' the very thing they want to govern. He was referring to the Spanish nation").[4]

Thus, the use of the literary and cinematic precedent name "Frankenstein," which actualizes the corresponding precedent situation, introduced a series of combinations that were distributed in the media as a pejorative reference to the government, the electoral process, and the ruling coalition: ***Gobierno Frankenstein*** – *a Frankenstein government;* ***mayoria Frankenstein*** – *a Frankenstein majority;* ***investidura Frankenstein*** – *a Frankenstein election (of the president);* ***reinvestidura Frankenstein*** – *a Frankenstein re-election (of the president);* ***alianza Frankenstein*** – *a Frankenstein alliance.*

The **Sánchezstein** composite appears again in another publication:[5] *"Una **mayoría Frankenstein** no para gobernar España, sino para que **Sánchezstein** mandara cesáreamente sobre sus escombros cual Neron sobre una Roma devorada por las llamas"* ("A kind

[3] Rosell F. 2019. 'MacGuffin' Sanchez y el 'Valls' de Rivera. *El Mundo.* 23.06.2019. URL: https://www.elmundo.es/opinion/2019/06/23/5d0e6823fc6c836f4f8b4619.html (accessed: 05.02.2025)

[4] ¿Qué es un 'Gobierno Frankenstein'? ¿Cuál es el significado de esta expresión? *La Informacion.* 30.05.2018. URL: https://www.20minutos.es/lainformacion/archivo/que-es-un-gobierno-frankenstein-cual-es-significado-esta-expresion-5311242/ (accessed: 05.02.2025)

[5] Rosell F. 2020. Dorian Gray en la Moncloa. *Revista de Prensa.* 13.12.2020. URL: https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/dorian-gray-en-la-moncloa/ (accessed: 06.02.2025)

*of "**Frankenstein majority**" formed not to govern Spain, but to allow "**Sánchezstein**" to become the sole ruler of its ruins, like Nero who ruined Rome that had been devastated by fire").*[6]

This microtext contains an appeal to a precedent name that characterizes the person and the ruling coalition in a new situation that could lead to the country's destruction. There is a clear negative connotation in the attribute and the entities to which it is addressed – two obligatory components of "hate speech"[7].

The second part of the surname – the fragment -**stein**, which means "stone" in German and appears as a suffix in many surnames that appeared in the German linguistic culture – has suffered a loss of its internal form, and when it is used as part of the contaminant **Sánchezstein** (in the context of media publications on the state of the Spanish government) it clearly serves as a reference to the literary character whose well-known qualities provide an evaluative context.

The author of one of the articles characterizes the current coalition government in Spain through the literary and precedent name of a vampire, carrying an exclusively negative connotation: *El gobierno ha pasado de ser una **coalición Frankenstein** a la **coalición Dracula**. A todo el que pacta le contagia" ("The government has gone from a Frankenstein coalition to a Dracula coalition. Anyone who joins it becomes infected").*[8]

Count Dracula is a vampire, the progenitor of werewolves, and the main character of Irish writer Bram Stoker's Gothic novel *Dracula* (1897). Dracula appears in many works of popular culture, including several film adaptations. The character has a long-term plan for world domination and rule through bloody terror. His worldview is inherently predatory.[9]

One article makes assumptions about the intentions of the Spanish prime minister to present the cabinet he heads to the public in the most attractive light possible, appealing to a mythonym in the form of the precedent name of an ancient god: *Lo que pretende hacer Sánchez es convertir su **gobierno Frankenstein** en un gobierno **Apolo** dotado de todas las gracias y digno de la admiración universal" ("What Sanchez intends to do is transform his **Frankenstein government** into a kind of **Apollonian government** that is attractive and worthy of universal praise").*[10]

The image of the mythological figure of Apollo is most definitely positive given the association of the name with a number of qualities and properties: he is the personification of male beauty, a patron of the arts, a prophet, and a god of healing. However,

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[6] Rosell F. 2020. Cuando lo que prima es mandar, no gobernar. *Revista de Prensa*. 30.08.2020. URL: https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/cuando-lo-que-prima-es-mandar-no-gobernar/ (accessed: 31.08.2020)

[7] Evstaf'eva A. V. 2009. *"Iazyk vrazhdy" v sredstvakh massovoi informatsii: lingvisticheskie i ekstralingvisticheskie factory funktsionirovaniia/ ['The language of enmity' in the mass media: linguistic and extralinguistic factors of functioning]*. Dissertation Abstract. Tambov.

[8] Pablo Casado habla de Dracula, Frankenstein y se lia con los zombies y los vampiros. *MARCA*. 08.02.2022. URL : https://www.marca.com/tiramillas/actualidad/2022/02/08/620298de46163f0e4c8b4631.html (accessed: 07.02.2025)

[9] Dracula. *Wikipedia*. URL: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Дракула (accessed 23.10.2022)

[10] Gonzalez Quiros J. L. 2022. ¿Qué obtiene Sánchez a cambio de dos grandes mentiras? *Disidentia*. 19.11.2022. URL : https://disidentia.com/que-obtiene-sanchez-a-cambio-de-dos-grandes-mentiras/ (accessed : 07.02.2025)

the first element of the opposition (the terrifying monster of Frankenstein) serves to highlight in the polysemic (that is, possessing a combination of two or more characteristics (Gudkov 2020: 89) image of Apollo the quality of male beauty – perfection as a complex characteristic of the indisputable positive qualities of the government in the future. The juxtaposition of Frankenstein and Apollo here is ironic and is intended to show that it is patently impossible for one entity to transform into the other.

In the following example, we are also dealing with a kind of argumentation regarding the authorities, but in the form of *reductio ad absurdum: "Aunque abundan en el mundo gobiernos tiránicos, sin embargo, en las democracias occidentales el poder busca adoptar una faz suave, no desea mostrarse como Leviatán dominador" ("While there are many tyrannical governments in the world, in Western democracies the government tends to adopt a soft guise, not wanting to show itself as an all-powerful Leviathan").*[11]

In the Old Testament, Leviathan appears as a beast, a terrible sea monster of incredible strength and size, as the embodiment of all-destroying power. In modern culture, the image of Leviathan is generally seen as having the meaning that was given to it by the 17th-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, for whom the name is a symbol of supreme power, a supremely powerful state. In this statement, the precedent name **Leviathan** serves as a negative evaluation, which, in the author's opinion, does not relate to the power wielded by Western democracies.

People can be characterized based either on their physical appearance, or on the complete lack of a physical appearance. In this case, the category of "incorporeal" is assumed: *Video de Joe Biden estrechando su mano **"a un hombre invisible"** se ha reproducido en las redes miles de veces" ("A video of Joe Biden shaking hands with an **"invisible man"** has been reposted thousands of times online").*[12]

"Invisible man" is not a proper name, it is an appellative that became the title of a novel based on a feature with which the hero of the story has been endowed. The precedence of this name in the example given is indicated by the quotation marks and the indefinite article, which is used to indicate the similarity of one person or object to another.

In H. G. Wells' novel *The Invisible Man* and many of its film adaptations, the scientist Griffin, the main character of the work, is one of the "evil geniuses" in world art, hatching plans to intimidate people and establish power over them. But it is not ambition that the author of the statement about Biden is referring to; rather, they are alluding to Griffin's most distinctive feature – his invisibility – thus demonstrating the U.S. president's dissociation from reality at a time when there are serious concerns in

[11] Rodriguez Magda R. M. 2023. Sobrevivir a la cultura de la cancelación. *El Pais.* 04.02.2023. URL : https://elpais.com/opinion/2023-02-04/sobrevivir-a-la-cultura-de-la-cancelacion.html (accessed: 07.02.2025)

[12] Video de Joe Biden estrechando su mano "a un hombre invisible" se ha reproducido miles de veces. 15.04.2022. *El Diario.* URL : https://eldiariony.com/2022/04/15/video-de-joe-biden-estrechando-su-mano-a-un-hombre-invisible-se-ha-reproducido-miles-de-veces/ (accessed : 05.02.2025)

society about his physical and mental capacity. There is no direct assessment of Biden's condition here; the assessment is instead indirect, illustrated by way of a video accompanied by the comments of a journalist.

Another proper noun (formerly an everyday word and written with a capital letter) that is used to characterize people metaphorically is **MacGuffin** – a conventional plot device that denotes an object that everyone is busy looking for. This is essentially the plot of Alfred Hitchcock's film *The 39 Steps,* which is where the term comes from. In actuality, the MacGuffin is nothing, it does not exist. It is an "empty space,"[13] as implied in the following microtext: *"A ese Gobierno Sanchezstein solo le falta un **MacGuffin** como ha sido **Borrell**, ministro-coartada, durante el ultimo ano"*[14] *("The only thing that this Sánchezstein government lacks is a **MacGuffin**, something that **Borrell** – the alibi minister – has been over the past year").*[15]

This precedent name performs the function of negatively assessing and discrediting a faceless politician who represents "who knows what" and is being used as a cover. *Mac* is a traditional prefix for Scottish surnames, and *guff* means "empty chatter," or "empty." What we thus get is MacGuffin = "Mr. Nonentity."

The author of another article similarly calls Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez **MacGuffin Sánchez,** yet at the same time appeals to other qualities of the "polysemic image" of the non-existent hero, namely, uniqueness and irreplaceability, the ability to confuse everyone, and the desire to remain in power: *"[Sánchez] Confunde a muchos hasta el grado insólito de hacerles creer que lo que busca lo hace obligado... Hay que reconocer la habilidad del equipo de efectos especiales y montajes para introducir incesantemente martingalas que sustraigan a la opinión publica de aquellos otros contenciosos que comprometen al Gobierno o de su negligente gestión sanitaria de la pandemia, así como de sus secuelas económicas con una cifra de parados sin parangón en Europa... MacGuffin Sánchez"* *("[Sánchez] confuses many to the point that they believe he **just has to** achieve his goals… The ingenuity of his special effects and editing team when it comes to using tricks to distract public opinion from the controversial issues that compromise the government, the failures in the fight against the pandemic and its economic consequences, and rising unemployment, unprecedented in Europe, are quite obvious… MacGuffin Sánchez").*[16]

There is also an animal metaphor used in the process of secondary nomination through the creation of a contaminant, where the apparent similarity in the appearance and personality of the literary and cinematic character Bambi – a defenceless

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[13] MacGuffin. *Wikipedia*. URL: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Макгаффин (accessed: 03.08.2021)

[14] Rosell F. 2019. 'MacGuffin' Sanchez y el 'Valls' de Rivera. *El Mundo*. 23.06.2019. URL: https://www.elmundo.es/opinion/2019/06/23/5d0e6823fc6c836f4f8b4619.html (accessed: 05.02.2025)

[15] The appointment of Josep Borrell, a Catalan native who is opposed to the idea of Catalan independence, as Spain's foreign minister of 2019 was interpreted in the press as a cover-up of the fact that the PSOE had come to power thanks to the support of separatist parties.

[16] Rosell F. 2021. MacGuffin Sánchez apisona la realidad. *Revista de Prensa*. 07.03.2021. URL: https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/macguffin-sanchez-apisona-la-realidad/ (accessed: 07.02.2025)

fawn living in a world full of danger in the book *Bambi, a Life in the Woods* of by the Austrian writer Felix Salten and the better-known cartoon adaptation – on the one hand, and then President of the United States Barack Obama, on the other, noted by one journalist serves as the basis for characterizing the latter through a telescopic formation: *"el veterano ex combatiente de Vietnam [John McCain] puede comerse con patatas al cervatillo … al que Maureen Dowd ha bautizado como **Obambi**" ("a Vietnam veteran [John McCain] can eat deer with fries … which Maureen Dowd [a columnist for The New York Times] dubbed 'Obambi'")*.[17]

A precedent name with a positive connotation can also be used in the context of a language game to paint a politician in a negative light by comparing sharply contrasted real and precedent situations to express irony. For example, for a period, the global media extensively reported the actions of the newly elected French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who had inserted himself deeply into European and world politics by taking a whirlwind trip to Chad in 2007 to try and free French journalists and crew members of a Spanish plane who had been detained there.

Sarkozy's ability to respond quickly, as well as the dynamism and effectiveness of his actions, served as the basis for comparing him with a comic book character widely known in the West, namely **Superman**, a superhero with extraordinary physical abilities ("superpowers") that he uses for the common good. Witty journalists thus christened the French President **Sarkoman** (**Sarko**zy + Super**man**), a contamination of his surname and the name of the comic book, and later film, character full of sarcasm and irony: as far as the French public and European politicians saw it, Sarkozy was putting on a "political show" (*"politica espectaculo"*) and was in no hurry to make good on the promises he had made during his election campaign.

The publication in question was accompanied by a drawing of Sarkozy in a Superman costume flying above the earth.

Sarkozy also earned the nickname **Jack Bauer de la diplomacia (the Jack Bauer of diplomacy**) after the fictional character and protagonist of the Fox series 24, who for the majority of the show's run performed quite a variety of functions and often worked at the Counter Terrorist Unit fighting threats to U.S. national security. The person who made this comparison adds a clarifying characteristic to the precedent name "line of business – diplomacy," thereby explaining the use of this name in relation to the politician.

The following conclusion is made as a result, albeit one that appeals to another precedent name: *"No se puede dirigir un Estado creyéndose **el Zorro**" ("You can't lead a state when you see yourself as a **Zorro**")* (from the Spanish zorro, meaning "fox"; *Señor Zorro*).18 Zorro is another fictional character, a variation on the theme of Robin Hood,

[17] Ramírez P. J. 2008. Mejor 'Billary' en mano que 'Obambi' volando. *Revista de Prensa*. 10.02.2008. URL: https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/mejor-billary-en-mano-que-obambi-volando/ (accessed: 07.02.2025)

[18] Weinsteiner R. 2007. Sarkoman: "No me eligieron para mirar pasar los trenes". *Empresas Argentinas por la Argentina*. 06.11.2007. URL: https://empresasargentinas.wordpress.com/2007/11/06/sarkomanno-me-eligieron-para-mirar-pasar-los-trenes/ (accessed: 20.07.2019)

a folk hero who comes to the aid of commoners in New Spain. The character has been depicted in numerous films.

The use of these precedent names to refer to Nicolas Sarkozy is based on the phenomenon of *enantiosemy*, or *autoantonymy* – the ability of a word (in this case the proper name of a character) to express antonymous meanings. This occasionalism serves to express an emotive negative evaluation under the guise of a positive one: it highlights a personal quality that is not characteristic of the person, actions that do not align with his or her real abilities. In this case, the precedent name acquires the properties of a contextual autoantonym that describes Sarkozy: "he is not a diplomat," nor is he a "defender of the common man."

The appeal to the literary precedent name Sancho Panza serves as a means of discrediting the left-wing politician and co-founder of the Podemos movement Pablo Iglesias, who led the Podemos party and then the Unidas Podemos coalition in 2014–2021 and persistently sought the highest positions in the coalition government of the PSOE and Unidas Podemos.[19] Having finally being appointed Minister of Social Rights and 2030 Agenda and Second Deputy Prime Minister of Spain on January 13, 2020, Iglesias left the government on March 31, 2021 to lead a party list in the May 4, 2021 elections to the Madrid Assembly.

This move attracted a range of opinions in Spanish society, some of them sarcastic. For example, in an issue of the newspaper *El Español,* Iglesias was referred to by composite name **Pablo Panza** (**Pablo** Iglesias + Sancho **Panza**), an allusion to the precedent name of the squire and the precedent situation of his self-flagellation, something that had to be done voluntarily:[20] "… so that the most beautiful Dulcinea of Toboso would return to her former appearance," who "by terrible witchcraft had been transformed from a noble lady into a simple peasant woman…", "Sancho must give himself three thousand three hundred lashes." Sancho Panza could have freed Dulcinea from her spell by self-flagellation, but he took it as a condition for assuming governorship of the island in order to "make some money," and he refused to whip himself (Cervantes 1605).

The precedent name Panza is a polysemic name. The folk hero receives a comprehensive and deep characterization in the novel: he is a faithful squire and a kind, noble, sympathetic, humane, generous, wise, practical, fair, and merciful ruler; but he is also a rogue, a selfish man with many weaknesses who always seeks material gain.

This last quality is particularly highlighted by the writer of the article, drawing an analogy between Panza and the real politician: *"Pablo Iglesias no quiere ser Sancho Panza. O, mejor dicho, sólo quiere serlo para ejercer de gobernador de una ínsula en permanente expansión, a costa de la tierra ministerial. Y, desde luego, sin tener que pagar el*

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[19] Unidos Podemos (United We Can) was formed by the United Left and other left-wing and far-left parties in May 2016 to take part in the Spanish general elections later that year. It changed its name to the feminine form Unidas Podemos ahead of the April 2019 general elections.

[20] Ramírez P. J. 2020. La rebelión de Pablo Panza. *Revista de Prensa.* 27.12.2020. URL : https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/la-rebelion-de-pablo-panza/ (accessed: 05.02.2025)

precio de la sumisión a los autoinfligidos azotes del pragmatismo y la corresponsabilidad. Sánchez necesita a Sancho, como el caballero necesita al escudero. Pero en el ADN de **Pablo Panza** *no está servir de acompañante. Él necesita ser protagonista autónomo de una parte del proyecto gubernamental, aun a costa de desnaturalizar el conjunto"* ("Pablo Iglesias does not want to be Sancho Panza. Or, rather, he does want to be Panza insomuch as he wants to govern an "island" that is constantly growing in ministerial resources. And, naturally, not at the price of the submissive fulfilment of voluntary self-flagellation in the form of considerations of pragmatism and shared responsibility. [Prime Minister] Sanchez needs Sancho like a knight needs a squire. However, **Pablo Panza***'s DNA lacks the companion gene. He needs to be an autonomous decision-maker as part of the government project, even at the cost of emasculating the whole").[21]

In the episode described by Cervantes, the image of Sancho Panza is connected with the folk carnival culture of laughter (it is no coincidence that at one point in the story jokers throw him on a blanket, like a scarecrow or dog in accordance with the ancient Spanish carnival custom). In the context of traditional culture, the politician Pablo Iglesias is given the name/characteristic "Pablo Panza" as a self-interested person who does not take any responsibility (i.e. "voluntary self-flagellation") and seeks unlimited power by occupying a high position in government.

In this case, the person who wrote the article characterizes the politician through contamination-crossing, the merging of two combinations of similar semantics formed according to the same syntactic models and consisting of the person's first and last names. Contamination-crossing can be described using the letter scheme **AB + CD = AD.**

The same model of contamination-crossing is used to form an onomastic occasionalism from the nickname of a real person and the surname of a politician as a way to satirize the tendency of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez to flip-flop on his policies and opinions – **Groucho Sánchez (Groucho** *Marx +* Pedro **Sánchez***): "Groucho Marx,[22] alardeaba de que siempre podía tener "otros principios", caso de que los inicialmente proclamados no gustaran lo suficiente, Sánchez acaba de demostrar que él puede cambiar de enemigo con la misma facilidad, si el oficialmente nominado se le cae del caballo al cruzar el río"* ("Groucho Marx boasted that he could always have "other principles" in case the ones he originally professed did not please him. Sánchez has just proven that can just as easily change his enemy if his current one falls of his horse while crossing a river").[23]

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Julius Henry "Groucho" Marx was an American actor, comedian, and member of the comedy troupe known as the Marx Brothers, which performed in the genre of the theatre of the absurd.

[23] Ramirez P. J. 2022. El puro de Groucho Sanchez. *Revista de Prensa*. 17.07.2022. URL: https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/el-puro-de-groucho-sanchez/ (accessed: 05.02.2025)

A slightly modified form of the technique of characterization through contamination-crossing was employed by the writer of an article about the Spanish politician Albert Rivera, one of the staunchest opponents of Catalan nationalism and separatism who served as chairman of the Citizens Party from its founding in 2006 until the 2019 parliamentary elections, after which he announced his retirement from politics due to dwindling voter support. This move was seen as a cowardly evasion of the goals he had himself set, leading to the appearance of the contaminant *Peter Pan Rivera* in the Spanish press – a combination of the full name and surname of the popular character *Peter Pan* depicted by Scottish novelist and playwright J. M. Barrie in the 1904 play *Peter and Wendy* and the novel of the same name published in 1911 and the surname of the politician using the "formula" **AB + CD = ABD** (**Peter Pan** + Albert **Rivera**). Peter Pan is a boy who does not want to grow up and remains forever young.[24] The journalist offers the following characterization of Rivera: *"Después de acusársele con reiteración a Peter Pan Rivera de no sacudirse del síndrome que impide aceptar las responsabilidades propias de la edad adulta y de no saber qué deseaba ser de mayor, en cuanto ha tratado de sustanciar un proyecto que no se limite a ser un partido bisagra..., el líder naranja afronta la mayor crisis de su partido desde su Fundación"* (*"After Peter Pan Rivera was repeatedly accused of not properly dealing with the syndrome that prevented him from taking on the responsibilities of an adult, and of not knowing what he wanted to be when he grew up, the first time he tried to put forward a project for a party that could function without having to form a coalition with other forces, the party fell into the deepest crisis it had ever faced"*).[25]

Irony is used as a means of highlighting the discrepancy between the politician's past intentions and his current actions.

Due to the increase in life expectancy and the aging Spanish population – and the fact that people will naturally be taking out their pensions for longer – the government of Pedro Sánchez announced that it was planning to cut pensions to ensure that the existing fund would be sufficient to cover payments over a longer period.

The move was roundly criticized in the press, as was Prime Minister Sánchez himself, who was called *Sánchez Manostijeras (Sánchez Scissorhands)* and *Pedro Manostijeras (Pedro Scissorhands).* This is a clear reference to the hero of Tim Burton's 1990 film *Edward Scissorhands* (called *El joven manos de tijera* in Latin America and *Eduardo Manostijeras* in Spain), a dark fantasy with elements of romance that is quite popular in the Spanish-speaking world.

The main character of the film is a young man named Edward, the creation of an old inventor. Instead of hands, Edward has something resembling scissors, a fact that allows him to become a skilled hairdresser.

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[24] Peter Pan (fictional character). *Wikipedia*. URL: http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Питер_Пэн_(персонаж) (accessed: 26.08.2021)

[25] Jimenez Losantos F. 2019. Tanto ego, tanto desastre. *El Mundo*. 17.07.2019. URL: https://www.elmundo.es/opinion/2019/07/17/5d2e0fc1fdddff6bb18b45f0.html (accessed: 17.07.2019)

Some have claimed that the scissors-for-hands motif was inspired by the plot of ten didactic children's poems written by the Frankfurt psychiatrist Heinrich Hoffman extolling good behaviour and the importance of good hygiene. These edifications are wrapped up in a frightening, and at times frankly bloodthirsty, form.[26] The collection was published in 1845 as *Der Struwwelpeter* (variously translated into Spanish as ***Pedro Melenas***, *Pedro El Desgreñado,* both of which mean "Pedro the Disheveled", or *El Despeluzado* – "The Disheveled"). The hero of the poems suffers from a genetic disorder called uncombable hair syndrome – a rare structural anomaly of hair that causes it to stick out in different directions and does not respond to combing a styling. The collection features numerous illustrations, with Pedro depicted with shaggy hair sticking out in all directions and long hooked fingernails.

While the hero of the film is called Edward, the title of the article ("Pedro Melenas y Eduardo Manos Tijeras" – "Pedro the Disheveled and Edward Scissorhands") contains a "projection" from the literary precedent name Pedro to the cinematic image, thus creating an allusion to Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez,[27] whose proper name is clearly related to both the "native name" of his literary "namesake" and the image of the hero in journalistic articles, in which he is referred to as ***"Pedro Scissorhands"*** and ***"Sánchez Scissorhands"*** who destroys everything he touches.[28]

The newspaper article was accompanied by an ominous image of the metaphor in the form of a collage – a photograph of the prime minister with scissors for hands that are raised above the head of a pensioner.

The nickname "Scissorhands" has also been used in reference to the female politician Susana Díaz, a member of the Socialist Workers' Party. The opposition People's Party used the ***Manostijeras*** attribute to criticize the repeated cuts to the Andalusian budget during Díaz's tenure as head of government of the autonomous region: *"Moreno, a Díaz: Los profesionales sanitarios la llaman "Susana Manostijeras"; que desde que llegó a la Presidencia de la Junta ha recortado 1.600 millones en sanidad"* (*"Moreno to Díaz: Health workers call you Susana Scissorhands because you have cut health funding by 1.6 billion euros during your time as head of the regional government"*).[29]

The Spanish journalist Federico Jiménez Losantos is often compared to the comic book character Captain Haddock for his critical comments about his opponents. This literary precedent name serves as a characterization of the journalist, and the description of his actions is critical in tone: *"Quien mostró más agresividad fue Federico Jiménez Losantos, un artista del insult en su programa de radio en el que la información es*

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[26] Der Struwwelpeter. *Wikipedia*. URL: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Стёпка-растрёпка (accessed: 11.12.2022)

[27] Sánchez 'Manostijeras': cuchillada a las pensiones. *OK. Diario.* 09.02.2021. URL: https://okdiario.com/opinion/sanchez-manostijeras-cuchillada-pensiones-6804392 (accessed: 05.02.2025)

[28] Bustos J. 2022. Pedro Manostijeras. *El Mundo.* 08.03.2022. URL: https://www.elmundo.es/opinion/columnistas/2022/02/08/620149e621efa0bf7c8b459c.html (accessed: 09.03.2022)

[29] Moreno, a Díaz: Los profesionales sanitarios la llaman 'Susana Manostijeras'. *Europa Press Andalucia.* 28.04.2016. URL: https://www.europapress.es/andalucia/sevilla-00357/noticia-diaz-acusa-pp-dinamitar-sanidad-moreno-llama-susana-manostijeras-20160428143409.html (accessed: 12.01.2020)

sólo el gancho con el que ir hilando toda una serie de invectivas contra sus enemigos. Es un poco el Capitan Haddock de la radio. No necesita un guion para lanzar sus epítetos ofensivos. Le salen de la boca a borbotones" ("The most aggressive was Federico Jiménez Losantos, a master of insults on his radio show, where the delivery of information is nothing but an excuse for a cascade of attacks on enemies. He is like the Captain Haddock of the radio. He doesn't need a script to hurl offensive epithets – they just fly out of his mouth one after the other").[30]

Captain Haddock is a comic book character created in 1940 by the Belgian artist Hergé and developed in numerous editions of *The Adventures of Tintin* until 1976. The character is prone to emotional outbursts, and his vocabulary is replete with words that one might not typically expect in this genre, which he spews out with anger, using them as swear words of sorts: "troglodyte," "anacoluthon," "catachresis," "ectoplasm," "parasite," "carnival pirate," "bashi-bazouks," "Visigoths," "kleptomaniac," "vegetarian," "ectomorph," "duck-billed platypus," and so on. Hergé replaced rude expressions that an "old sea dog" might use in real life with these harmless words, since the comics were mostly intended for children and adolescents.[31]

The occupation of the literary and film hero, the secret service agent James Bond, along with some of his distinctive features, most notably his adventurism and womanizing nature, prompted one journalist to compare him to a police officer who found himself at the centre of a public scandal after it came out that he had infiltrated the Barcelona social and trade union movement with the purpose of collecting information about it with no legal grounds for doing so: *"Es grave que el Estado autorice o tolere que un policía nacional acceda a través del sexo a informaciones íntimas, personales y políticas con el objetivo de entrar en espacios legítimos de la sociedad civil... ¿Cómo es posible que una buena parte de la reacción en redes sociales haya sido reírse o atacar a estas mujeres activistas y tratar al agente como un **James Bond** patrio? "* ("The danger is that the State would authorize or allow an officer of the National Police to gain access through sex to personal, private and political information in order to gain entry into legitimate spaces of civil society… How is it that the reaction on social media has mostly been to ridicule and attack these female activists, while treating the agent like a Spanish **James Bond**? ").[32]

The features of the fictional character – the bearer of the precedent name – might be assessed without a negative connotation. However, when we are talking about the role of the state and the actions of a real person who is obligated to stay within the established legal framework, a sharply negative assessment is offered.

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[30] Saenz de Ugarte I. Cuando la derecha mediática saca los cuchillos, llama a urgencias. *El Diario*. 22.01.2023. URL: https://www.eldiario.es/politica/derecha-mediatica-saca-cuchillos-llama-urgencias_129_9885780.html (accessed: 02.02.2023)

[31] Capitan Haddock. *Wikipedia*. URL: https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capitan_Haddock (accessed: 02.02. 2023)

[32] Marcos Oliva R. 2023. El infiltrado, las activistas y la responsabilidad del Estado. *El Diario*. 03.02.2023. URL: https://www.eldiario.es/opinion/zona-critica/infiltrado-activistas-responsabilidad_129_9920340.html (accessed: 03.02.2023)

A different assessment of the actions of the authorities in certain other countries is given in the following case. One of the proposals put forward for finding money to replenish the state funds in Europe was to introduce a so-called "Robin Hood Tax," named after the noble thief and hero of medieval English folk tales who famously stole from the rich and gave to the poor: *Los gobiernos de diez países europeos han estado negociando la introducción de la Tasa* **Robin Hood** *o Impuesto a las Transacciones Financieras" ("The governments of ten European countries have been negotiating a* **"Robin Hood Tax,"** *or the Financial Transaction Tax").*33

The precedent name Robin Hood, which is associated with the positive image of a noble and fair patron of the disadvantaged, serves as an indirect designation: a) of the intended purpose of funds directed for the benefit of society as a whole; and b) of a legitimate method of replenishing the budget, in contrast to the method practiced by the hero.

It follows from the contexts we have looked at that the images of literary and film characters, generated by the imaginations of their creators, are transformed into concepts. Their names, assigned to a real person, are filled with meaning and sense. Saturated with connotative and descriptive meaning, they are metaphorized, which gives them the properties of expressive-evaluative means.

Research Results

The research carried out here on a selected corpus of political discourse texts reflecting the judgements of political antagonists allows us to conclude that characterizations of politicians using precedent names derived from the fields of "literature" and cinema" are dominated by discrediting nominations that carry a certain negative, pejorative connotation and are consistently associated with the traditions and background knowledge of the Spanish-speaking linguacultural community.

The "language of hatred" expresses intolerance towards a politician or government body both through the precedent name of literary and film characters who are the embodiment of absolute evil *(Frankenstein, Dracula)* and through the "speaking" precedent name of a film character with a "zero value" *(MacGuffin)*.

Precedent names with a positive connotation can also be used negatively to characterize an opponent, which in the appropriate context acquires an antonymous meaning and becomes an auto-antonym *(Jack Bauer de la diplomacia, el Zorro)*.

Precedent names are actively used to discredit a political opponent, debunk their claims to leadership, present them in an ironic light *(Peter Pan Rivera)* or a comic situation, demonstrate their greed, incompetence and other qualities *(Pablo Panza)*, or label them *(MacGuffin Sanchez)*.

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33 Los ministros de finanzas de la UE retrasan la Tasa Robin Hood. *Actualidad Humanitaria.* 23.02.2017. URL : https://actualidadhumanitaria/los-ministros-de-finanzas-de-la-ue-posponen-la-decision-sobre-la-tasa-robin-hood/ (accessed: 10.12.2017)

At the same time, political actors (the objects of characterization) are clearly marked as "other," which magnifies the atmosphere of confrontation and the agonal and intolerant nature of political discourse.

The properties, qualities and behavioural characteristics of fictional literary or film characters are attributed to real people through metaphorical transfer from the source sphere to the target sphere, the basis of which is the real or attributed:

- similarity of names *(Pedro Melenas – Pedro Sanchez)*;
- similarity of properties and qualities *(MacGuffin Sanchez)*;
- similarity of external features *(Obambi)*;
- similarity of actions *(Scissorhands = cutting of funds)* by combining the metaphors "somatic" + "artefact"; in this particular combination, the metaphor is realized with the help of a graphic image in the publication;
- "morphological" similarity *(coalicion Frankenstein)*;
- similarity of the consequences of an action *(Gobierno Frankenstein)*;
- similarity of life principles *(Groucho Sanchez)*;
- the phenomenon of contextual auto-antonymy *(Jack Bauer, Zorro)*.

The phenomenon of contamination *(Sancheztein, Obambi)* allows us to characterize these politicians in a concise form, with an economy of verbal means.

A metaphorical definition expressed by a precedent name can be used either before or after the proper name that is being defined. It can consist of one *(Frankenstein)* or several elements *(Peter Pan)* or be represented by a "non-speaking" fragment of a precedent name *(-stein, -man)* that nevertheless conveys the full meaning of the precedent name thanks to the contextual environment.

In many cases, the loss of a connection between the precedent name and the original precedent phenomena is obvious, and the only thing that can be spotted in them is the evaluative component of the semantics as a whole.

A common noun that has come to be used as a proper noun is the "speaking" "birth name" of a politician (MacGuffin – *MacGuffin Sanchez*); and a full proper noun can become a "birth name" *(Peter Pan Rivera)* attributed to a politician.

The examples we have analysed are characterized by the use of the well-known rhetorical device *argumentum ad personam* – the transition to personalities in the form of a statement containing a sharply negative assessment of the opponent.

Conclusions

Attributing negatively epithets and qualifications to well-known politicians and state institutions, in addition to expressing a subjective and emotion-filled attitude, to achieve tactical goals, serves a number of tactical goals: the argumentative manipulation of the addressee who is forced to make a choice regarding the characterization of a given object; and the pragmatic function of encouraging people to act in accordance with the interests of a given political actor.

The appeal to the source spheres "literature" and "cinema" is based on the author's understanding of the recipient's literary and linguacultural knowledge. The precedent name of a literary or film character serves as a metaphorical attribute of the proper noun of a real person to create an expressive effect, relying on the background knowledge of the recipient of the information. When using a particular precedent name, the author is confident that the recipient will understand its meaning, react appropriately, and show empathy.

The atmosphere of language play created in journalistic texts using well-known precedent names from works of popular culture, as well as the playful connection of the name of a politician with the precedent name of a fictional character, imbue such texts with the quality of informational and entertainment journalism. At the same time, these techniques reveal a certain political strategy, despite the obvious intentions of the author.

In the political discourse language game, precedent names are often used to make verbal attacks on the professional and personal aspects of a politician's image. The characterization of an opponent using the means we have described, expressed in a categorical, peremptory form, emphasizes the agonistic nature of political discourse.

Precedent names are expressive in their laconicism, do not need to be expanded upon, stand by themselves, express a complex of qualities and properties, and represent an effective means of combatting opponents in the era of information wars.

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