

Substance vs. Packaging: An Empirical Analysis of Parties' Issue Profiles

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Paper delivered at the 1995 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, September 1.

Introduction

Previous studies of party manifestos (a.k.a. “programs” or “platforms”) have established the importance of those documents as a focus of study. One of the principal investigators of the path-breaking Comparative Manifesto Project, for instance, argued that written platforms are a worthy focus of serious study for a number of related reasons:

Election programmes ... occupy a unique position as the only fully authoritative statement of the party policy for an election. They constitute the only medium-term plans for the whole of society regularly produced by any organization. As such they have been shown to have an important agenda-setting role for governments. Their centrality for parties is shown by the extensive debates, often fiercely fought in conferences and conventions, over what should go into the document. (Budge, 1994: 455)

Indeed, it has become commonplace to see references to manifestos as the parties' written issue “profiles,” and changes in such documents as constituting changes in the parties' “images” or “identities,” with the latter terms often used interchangeably to capture the role of platforms. We share the view that party platforms are important and worthy of study, and we certainly agree that these documents can serve as issue profiles that contain valuable information about parties' images and identities. Where we differ from much of the extant literature, however, is that we believe projection of a party's “identity” and its “image” are two possible functions for its manifesto, not just one, and that it is important for the building and testing of theory that this distinction be maintained (until and unless it is shown, empirically, to be irrelevant).

It is not unreasonable, after all, to assume that parties' platforms are written for two audiences, one internal and the other external. The idea that parties have more than one focus for their attention is certainly not new with us; Jean Charlot, for instance, has put it in terms of the “two faces” of parties.

All the political parties have two faces - a public face turned towards the media, the voters and the rest of the world, and an inward-looking face reserved for the initiated, activists, elected representatives and leaders, who have access to their secret garden - two faces and two publics in which the dividing lines pass between the sympathisers and activists of each party. (1989: 361)

If, as Charlot argues further, parties are constantly trying to “achieve the impossible focal adjustment” which will result in one clear profile from the two faces, it is reasonable to think that parties are well aware of the need to address both audiences when writing platforms.

“Electoral” manifestos are, obviously, written in part (and perhaps in large part) for the external audience of potential supporters in the next election. But they are also written, at least in some small part, to satisfy current members and activists, and to attract new ones. Though we ourselves have, in the past, used “identity” as a synonym for “image” [*author’s publication to be cited here*] we now understand that those two words, when used correctly, can actually go far in capturing the distinction between the two purposes (and audiences) for platforms.

Gioia and Thomas (1996: 372) have done a good job of describing the identity/image distinction in the context of organizational literature:

Both concepts have been explored at various levels of analysis... For example, personal (self) identity and social (collective) identity have long been recognized as critical constructs in the organizational behavior literature (Ashford and Mael, 1989). At the organizational level, corporate or organizational *identity* concerns those features of the organization that members perceive as ostensibly central, enduring, and distinctive in character that contribute to how they define the organization and their identification with it (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Sutton and Callahan, 1987; Dutton and Dukerich, 1991)...

Image generally has been defined in the organizational literature as how members believe others view their organization (Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail, 1994). This descriptive view, labeled as “construed external image,” complements a more projective view of the concept in the work of Whetten, Lewis, and Mischel (1992). [They] refer to image as characteristics organizational elites want stakeholders to ascribe to the firm (which can be termed a desired or communicated image). The thread that runs through these definitions is that organizational image is tied to perceptions of how external constituencies view the organization, regardless of whether these views are normative or manipulated. (emphasis added)

It follows, then, that for a political party, the relevant audience for the party's identity consists of its leaders and members; its image would be found in the eyes of the beholding electorate and others in the political system. For those who are “part of” the party – usually taken to include the membership but not those who are merely “supporters” – an intimate understanding of the party's organization and mission may be expected to result from regular involvement in party activities. But for those who are “outside, looking in,” perceptions of the party are less intimate, and may consist more of broad, vague outlines than of the “nitty gritty” of the party's true self.

An underlying dimension of this distinction is, obviously, the difference between “content” and “packaging.” To the extent that a party's *identity* is found in its platform, it is embodied largely, if not exclusively, in the *substantive content* of its issue *positions*. The party's *image*, on the other hand, is projected through the manifesto's *packaging*, as indicated – in significant part – by the *relative emphases* placed across a range of issues.

And though an election manifesto may be written primarily to project a desirable image to the electorate (i.e. the party's supporters), its content cannot be written without regard for the membership as well. The most successful platforms – from the standpoint of appealing to both members and supporters, to make one clear, focused profile from the two faces – would seemingly be those that could optimize the public “image” of the party while accurately capturing the members’ preferred “identity.” It probably goes without saying that the same “content” can come in many different “packages,” and this is no less true of party platforms than other consumer goods. A given party identity can be packaged in many different ways – all equally acceptable to the membership, but not all equally inviting to the electorate. If this is so, then the objective of the platform writers must be to pick the best package for the “given” content.

It is our major contention here that an important and rather flexible part of the packaging consists of the relative amounts of space attributed to different issues/positions. This is particularly important for studies of party “change,” since it would seemingly be possible to change the relative amounts of space given to different issue positions, while leaving the actual positions unchanged, or to change positions without changing the proportion of the manifesto devoted to the issue. Hence, theories to explain why parties change their issue positions may not be so helpful in understanding changes in issue emphases, and vice versa. Indeed, different strategies for adapting to environmental or internal changes may call for altering either positions or emphases, specifically, but not both. In order to get a complete picture of what is involved in party profile change – and especially particular types of profile change – it is very important (until proven otherwise) to distinguish clearly between the dependent variables of change of position and change in relative emphasis.

It is our ultimate purpose here to investigate the relevance of the emphasis/position distinction for building theory of party change, by applying the (electoral performance hypothesis,) already tested for Comparative Manifesto Project data on emphasis change (Janda et al, 1995), to other data designed to capture change in actual issue positions. If the hypothesis performs significantly differently for the two types of manifesto change, the test will provide clear evidence for the necessity of maintaining the distinction between emphasis and position as two distinct dimensions of party profile change.

Before producing the test of theoretical relevance, though, we must first establish the existence of effective measures of issue emphasis and issue position. And then, using those measures, we must further establish that emphasis and position are empirically distinct. Empirical analyses are based on election manifestos for the nine most significant parties of Britain (1950-1997), West Germany (1949-1990), and the United States (1952-1992).¹

¹ Included are Britain's Conservative, Labour, pre-Alliance Liberal, and post-Alliance Liberal Democrats; West Germany's CDU, FDP, Greens, and SPD; and America's Democratic and Republican parties. The analyses establishing empirical distinctiveness of position and emphasis employ data for all platforms during these time periods, covering all manifestos for which Party Change Project position data have been coded. Analyses produced for establishment of theoretical relevance of the conceptual distinction are limited to manifestos produced during the period covered by Janda et al's (1995) test of performance theory: 1950 through 1987.

Measuring Issue Emphasis and Position

Data produced by the Comparative Manifesto Project (hereafter CMP; formerly the Manifesto Research Group) directly tap a manifesto's "relative emphases" on a range of issue concerns. Inspired by the CMP's original "saliency theory of party competition," positing that parties "compete by accentuating issues on which they have an undoubted advantage, rather than by putting forward contrasting policies on the same issues" (1987, 391), the investigators' focus was clearly upon salience (i.e., relative emphasis) rather than policy position.² In keeping with that central focus, team members from the countries involved were charged with painstakingly classifying each statement (sentence or quasi-sentence) in a manifesto into one of 54 content categories, from which was then computed the percentage of the platform's total statements devoted to each category.³ For some issues, such as "environmental protection," all statements were coded into one content category (for "positive" statements) and the proportion of the manifesto attributed to such statements constitutes the issue's relative emphasis. For other issues, such as "decentralization," coders were offered two categories, one for "positive" and a second for "negative" statements; for such an issue, the relative emphasis reflects the totality of the statements on both sides ("*total relative emphasis*").⁴

Like the CMP data, the issue data collected by Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda's Party Change Project (PCP) and used in this analysis are also based on election platforms.⁵ Unlike the CMP, though, researchers for the PCP used judgmental coding procedures to directly code each platform's actual content (i.e., policy positions) on specific issues. It is an underlying contention of the PCP that substantive content – unlike salience/emphasis -- cannot be directly "counted," whether in words or in statements; instead a position can be ascertained and ultimately quantified only by reading, interpreting, and then making a judgment as to which numerical code is appropriate. First, parallel coding schemes were prepared for each of 19 issues, with possible codes for each issue consisting of 11 "positions" arrayed from -5 (the most extremely "leftist" position in the case of left-right issues) to +5 (the most rightist position), with "0" indicating neutrality.⁶ After identifying, gathering, and carefully reading all of a manifesto's passages

²According to Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge (1994: 23), the CMP relied heavily on "saliency theory" in its research on party platforms. This theory suggests that, contrary to Downs (1957), parties don't really alter their issue positions when they are competing for elections so such as "selectively emphasizing or de-emphasizing issues in their policy inventory" (Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge, 1994: 24). The extent to which these issues are emphasized in a party manifesto indicates their "saliency" in the platform and thus to the electorate. "These packaging strategies by the parties present electors with the task of deciding which of the competing bundles of issues is most important rather than deciding what specifically to do about any of the contents" (Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge, 1994: 26). By expressing the proportion of a manifesto statements dealing with each thematic category, the manifestos data were initially intended to reflect how parties packaged issues, not what positions the parties took on those issues.

³Chapter 2 and Appendix B of Budge, Robertson, and Hearl (1987) discuss in detail the research procedures of the party manifesto project.

⁴To compute a total relative emphasis score that would be conceptually similar to "Foreign Aid" in the PCP data, we actually summed the relative emphases for two pairs of opposing categories from the CMP data. Specifically, we summed the proportions for "Foreign Special Relationships: Negative", "Internationalism: Negative", "Foreign Special Relations: positive" and "Internationalism: Positive."

⁵Other issue data were coded for the PCP on the basis of secondary literature. Only the issue variables coded on the basis of election manifestos are included in the analyses for this paper.

⁶Verbal descriptions were provided for at least half of the possible values for each issue. See http://www-polisci.tamu.edu/upload_images/44/Issue%20Change-F06.htm for coding details.

relevant to a given issue, coders then assigned the numerical code which, in their judgment, best reflected the overall content of those statements. A coder's judgment, based on standardized application of detailed coding instructions to a manifesto's actual *content* pertaining to a particular issue, thus provides a direct measure of the party's substantive position on that issue in that particular program.⁷

Before turning to analyses of these data, it is noteworthy that there have been a number of attempts recently to utilize word-counting procedures to place parties left-to-right. Intuitively, it would seem that such procedures are better designed to measure relative emphases than actual left-right positions of parties, since both the CMP data and these more recent procedures are based in "counts," first of sentences and then of words (see Benoit and Laver 2003; Benoit, Laver, and Mikhaylov 2009; Budge and Pennings 2007a; Laver and Garry 2000; Laver, Benoit and Garry 2003, Slapin and Proksch 2008). While evidence from recent comparisons of the word-counting and sentence-counting procedures actually suggest that the two approaches may not be measuring exactly the same thing (Budge and Pennings 2007a),⁸ we are nonetheless loath to simply assume the word-count scores are measures of left-right *positions*. And it is beyond our scope here to empirically analyze the relationship of word-count scores to the PCP position scores. In any case, for our purposes it is necessary only to correlate one valid measure of salience with one of position, and the CMP salience scores and PCP position scores – whose meanings are more readily apparent – suffice.

Empirical Distinctiveness of Emphasis vs. Position

As measured by the CMP and PCP respectively, are relative issue emphases and issue positions empirically distinct? Or do they correlate so highly as to suggest they may be tapping the same dimension of party profile variability, and hence reasonably thought of and used as mutually substitutable measures of the same thing?

Table 1 presents the first set of evidence: bivariate correlation coefficients for 11 issue *position* variables from the PCP and their *relative emphasis* counterparts from the CMP. For left-right issues, a negative relationship indicates that positions further to the left are associated with higher relative emphasis. While three of the relationships – those for social services, environmental protection, and state ownership – are relatively substantial and significant at the .05 level, none are large enough to support treating position and emphasis as mutually substitutable.⁹ Though there is no definitive standard (i.e., minimal threshold) for mutual

⁷ For the parties of the U.S. and U.K., two coders – graduate research assistants at Texas A&M University -- independently coded all platforms for all issues for the 1950-1992 period. For instances where the coders assigned different codes, final judgments were made jointly by co-PI Harmel and the two original coders, after re-reading and discussion of the relevant passages and coding instructions. For the parties of West Germany, coding was done by a graduate research assistant under supervision of Thomas Poguntke. In all cases, coders prepared paragraph-length statements to support each numerical code assigned.

⁸ For a debate that has waged recently over the word-frequency vs. CMP approaches, see Budge and Pennings 2007a, Benoit and Laver 2007, and Budge and Pennings 2007b.

⁹ An illustrative example of the disparity that can exist between relative emphasis and actual position can be found in the 1970 platform of the Labour Party. Though only four tenths of one percent of the platform's statements are coded by the CMP as favoring nationalization, indicating only minimal emphasis relative to other concerns, the lines that are devoted to the issue include: "In the public sector large but essential investment programmes are being carried out in the railways, the national air-lines, the telecommunications industries, in the rapid exploitation of

substitutability, a correlation of .80 is a reasonable rule of thumb (based both on standards for reliability and for multicollinearity).¹⁰ By that standard, none of the correlations from Table 1 approaches mutual substitutability.¹¹

** Table 1 about here **

For Table 1, though, we have considered only *total* relative emphasis on a particular issue. But since it is the *net* relative emphasis B involving the difference between (positive) and (negative) statements on a particular issue B which has actually been used by some as an indicator of policy *position*, it behooves us here to investigate that relationship as well.¹² For the

North Sea gas and in the supply of electricity... Publicly owned industries are playing a key role in our industrial transformation... The old restrictions on the activities of the nationalised industries are being removed... Public enterprise also plays an important part in regional development and this we mean to extend... The greatest danger in communications is the danger of growing concentration of private ownership, and the parallel danger of domination by commercial values." Such statements indicate very strong support for nationalization, and hence PCP coders assigned a score of "-4" (i.e., strongly left-oriented). It is clear from this example that it is not necessary to say a lot in order to take a position that is strongly pro- or anti-. As Laver and Garry (2000: 620) have put it in another way: "Two parties may have *quite different substantive positions on the same issue, but emphasise this issue to precisely the same extent* in their respective manifestos."

¹⁰ For purposes of measurement theory, the simple correlation between two variables is read directly as alpha, the coefficient of reliability. DeVellis (1991, 31) sets his personal comfort range for reliability of scales with multiple items as "below .60, unacceptable; between .60 and .65, undesirable; between .65 and .70, minimally acceptable; between .70 and .80, respectable; between .80 and .90, very good; much above .90, one should consider shortening the scale" (DeVellis, 1991, 85). Because we are primarily concerned with the importance of maintaining the distinction for theoretical reasons, it is also relevant that in discussions of multicollinearity, it is noted that correlations between independent variables in excess of .80 result in redundant explanation and imprecise parameter estimation. (For instance, see Kennedy, 1992, 177-180; Gujarati, 1988, 299). One recommended solution for the problem is to remove one of those independent variables, thereby allowing the other to "stand in" for the pair. Hence, our terminology of "mutual substitutability." There is a DeVellis 2003 book... I am waiting on the library

¹¹ Though total relative emphasis devoted to an issue may not be mutually substitutable with a party's actual position on that issue, a related but separate question is whether total emphasis given to a particular issue might at least be mutually substitutable with the "extremeness" of the party's position on that issue, regardless of whether the extremeness is on the left or on the right. Using the distance between a party's actual position and the abstract "center position" (0) as a measure of extremeness on a given issue, computed simply as the absolute value of the party's position on a scale from -5 to +5, the correlations with total relative emphasis (followed immediately by significance probability and number of cases) are as follows: foreign aid (-.19,.104,72), defense spending (.42,.000,86), centralization of power (-.08,.498,69), social services (.36,.000,97), education (-.08,.553,60), personal freedoms (.19,.139,62), environmental protection (.31,.009,70), agricultural supports (.27,.014,85), cultural supports (.12,.290,85), state ownership (.32,.005,76), and regulation (-.09,.390,88). So for five of the eleven variables analyzed, the relationship between extremeness and total emphasis is statistically significant at the .05 level; it is beyond the scope of this paper to report more than "mixed results" on the hypothesized relationship between total emphasis and extremeness of position.

¹² Both Laver and Budge's (1992) and Budge and Laver's (1993) work on policy position and coalition building and Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge's (1994) study of program priorities vs. policy behavior, for instance, make heavy usage of a "left-right" scale based on relative emphases for 26 different concerns. Similarly, Strom and Leipart (1993) have followed the CMP's procedures to apply a left-right scale to Norwegian parties, interpreting the emphasis-based scores as "the policy positions taken by the various parties in their electoral platforms." Though these studies have used composite "left-right" measures based on several relevant directional "emphasis" variables, it is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate the relationship between composite left-right emphasis-based scores (using CMP scores) and composite left-right position scores (using PCP data). The latter has already been thoroughly addressed using those data, however, by Harmel et al. (1995), who found that while the correlations were

first five variables listed in Table 1, CMP coders were actually provided with two content categories for each variable: one for (positive) and the other for “negative” statements regarding the issue. By subtracting the one category from the other, one can develop a directional, “net relative emphasis.”¹³ If position and relative emphasis are empirically indistinguishable, the relationships between PCP position scores and CMP “net relative emphases” should be at or above (or at least near) the .80 rule of thumb. But the actual correlations, presented in Table 2, fall short of that mark; only the coefficient for “Defense Spending” comes even close.

Though net relative emphasis shares directionality with position, what it shares with total relative emphasis is equally defining: both variables based on “counting statements” are measures of relative emphasis, and neither measures issue position. Indeed, it is our conclusion thus far that *position* and *relative emphasis* -- whether in the “total” or the “net” variety -- are both conceptually *and empirically* distinguishable.

** Table 2 about here **

Until now, though, we have only analyzed relationships between content-and emphasis-based measures at the level of individual issues, while Budge (1994) and his associates (Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge, 1994) and others (including Strom and Leipart, 1993) have worked primarily with composite left-right scores based on sums of emphases for groups of left- and right-oriented concerns. As described in Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge,

The index ... is constructed by first summing two sets of percentage emphases in the election programs of each party ... Thirteen “left” items are summed; thirteen “right” items are summed; and the latter sum is subtracted from the former to yield a new “left minus right” score. ... The result is an interval left-right score for each party in each election in each country. (Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge, 1994: 39)

Whether Budge and his colleagues have meant to use their “emphasis” data as a substitute for actual issue “positions,” the usage that has been made of their data could easily suggest that the available data on issue emphases are a reasonable substitute for unavailable data on parties' actual substantive positions.¹⁴ It is then a small leap into the precarious territory where “relative emphasis” is seen as conceptually synonymous with “issue position,” and is used accordingly in the building of theory. As clearly stated by Laver and Garry,

Whatever subsequent use has been made of their data, MRG researchers set out to measure the *relative emphasis* placed on an issue by a party in a manifesto, not the party's *substantive position* on this issue. Position and emphasis are quite distinct parameters of party politics. (Laver and Garry 2000: 620, emphasis in original)

“significant and quite substantial,” they did not come near the .80 “rule of thumb” required for mutual substitutability.

¹³ To compute a *net* relative emphasis score that would be conceptually similar to “Foreign Aid” in the PCP data, we summed the net relative emphases for two pairs of opposing categories from the CMP data. Specifically, the sum of proportions for “Foreign Special Relationships: Negative” and “Internationalism: Negative” was subtracted from the sum of proportions for “Foreign Special Relations: Positive” and “Internationalism: Positive.”

¹⁴ See note #12 above.

To assess empirically the relationship between composite left-right indices based in measures of salience and of position, we developed composite left-right measures for both position and emphasis.¹⁵ Left-right position was computed as the arithmetic mean of a manifesto's numerical codes for the four Party Change issues most obviously tied to a left-right, economic continuum: social services, taxes, state ownership, and regulation of the private sector. Because the Manifesto Project's own index based on 26 categories covers much more area than the limited "economic" content of our left-right position scores, we have correlated left-right position with not only their original left-right emphasis placements but also with emphasis placements based on a reduced set of nine "economic" categories.¹⁶ To make these emphasis-based scores consistent in sign with the Party Change Project's position data, we subtracted the total of "left" emphases from the total on the "right," with the result that negative scores indicate manifestos with net emphasis on the left.

Table 3 presents Pearson correlation coefficients for composite left-right position scores with both the original and the modified composite measures of left-right emphasis.¹⁷ When all manifestos are included for which at least one of the four issues was assigned a position code by the PCP, the correlations between emphasis- and position-based measures fall far short of the .80 desired for mutual substitutability. But as is also apparent from Table 3, the parallel correlations are substantially improved when the cases with missing position data are removed from the analyses.

While requiring a manifesto to have "non-missing" values on all four issues would have the advantage of standardizing the meaning of the index score, an obvious negative consequence is the significant reduction in the number of cases, from 101 with at least one issue coded to just 56 with all four issues coded. More importantly, it is highly unlikely that the "missing issues" are distributed randomly across parties and manifestos, such that the 56 remaining cases are no longer representative of the total sample.¹⁸ Furthermore, if a party addresses just one of the four issues with enough clarity to justify application of a non-missing position code, then it is reasonable to understand that single code as indicating the manifesto's true left-right position, as interpreted either internally by party operatives or externally by the electorate.

¹⁵ As argued by Laver and Garry (2000: 620): "Recent expressions of saliency theory do assert a strong relationship between party position on, and party emphasis of, an issue—and even that "emphases equal direction" in a particularly forthright statement of the model (Budge, 1999). This, however, is acknowledged to be an empirical proposition to be tested as part of the evaluation of saliency theory. Testing the proposition, furthermore, requires independent estimates of direction and emphasis, rather than an indicator that conflates the two."

¹⁶ The five economic concerns associated with the "left" are: regulation of capitalism, economic planning, controlled economy, nationalization, social services expansion (+). The four economic concerns associated with the "right" are: enterprise, incentives, economic orthodoxy, and social services expansion (-).

¹⁷ In coding parties' issue positions for the data used in this analysis, coders were instructed to distinguish between neutral positions (0) and no mention of the issue at all in the manifesto (-0, or "missing"). This distinction reflects the judgment that parties may choose not to mention a particular issue for a number of reasons, many of which would not involve neutrality.

¹⁸ It should also be noted that German parties produced the bulk (33) of platforms with missing left-right issues, nearly limiting this analysis to British and American manifestos; only six German programs remain.

Thus, while correlation coefficients between the composite left-right position and emphasis scores draw close to the .80 benchmark for substitutability when the requirement is for three or all of the four issues to be “non-missing,” we feel the more valid results are the substantially lower (though admittedly still substantial) correlations based on all cases where at least one relevant issue was coded. The latter correlations are well below the .80 anticipated if position and emphasis were synonymous.

** Table 3 about here **

So overall, the correlations between position and emphasis scores for individual issue variables fail the test for mutual substitutability and the findings regarding left-right composite measures might be regarded as “mixed” at best. Hardly the level of support necessary to conclude mutual substitutability of emphasis/salience and position!

Theoretical Relevance: Application to Performance Hypothesis

Earlier, Janda et al. (1995: 185) set out to test a prominent hypothesis from the extant party change literature, positing that electoral defeat is a necessary but not sufficient reason for major change in manifesto packaging in electorally motivated parties. Already employing a distinction between “substance” and “packaging” similar to that discussed earlier here, they limited their hypothesis to manifesto “packaging,” probably because the only relevant longitudinal data available at the time were the Comparative Manifestos Project's emphasis data.

But they also suggested theoretical reasons for doubting that dramatic changes in issue “substance” would be as reliant upon, or even much associated with, periods following bad election performance.

As a theoretical matter, parties and party strategists may approach quite differently the prospects of changing the substance and the packaging of their most public statements of principle. It seems reasonable to assume that, in general, the packaging is more easily altered than the substance of the party's platform. Hypothetically, a party hoping to do better in the next election could avoid some of the infighting and the ultimate risk involved in changing its basic positions on issues, but still strategically downplay some issues that were emphasized in the last manifesto, while playing up others. This could have the effect of altering one dimension of the party's profile (the packaging) while leaving another (the substance) intact. (Janda et al. 1995: 178-9)

Their analysis provided substantial empirical support for the hypothesis that poor electoral performance is necessary (though not sufficient) for dramatic change in issue emphases; 15 of their 19 cases (78.9%) of manifesto pairs with highest amounts of emphasis change had disappointing or calamitous intervening elections. However, lack of position data would have kept them from testing our presumption that poor performance would not be similarly linked to change in issue substance. Now, position data are available for the same manifestos covered in

Janda et al's earlier work, thus equipping us for a quasi-replication of their study. This time, though, we are positing, for sake of direct comparison, that

Hypothesis 1: Electoral defeat is a necessary but not sufficient condition for major change in manifesto substance in electorally motivated parties.

Our own expectation, based on the above reasoning, is that Hypothesis 1 will be rejected and the null hypothesis will be supported in this case.

Though it might seem desirable to do an exact replication of the procedures used for Janda et al.'s (1995) article, the fact is that those procedures do not lend themselves to issue position data as they did to data on "relative emphasis." In the earlier study, they correlated percentages of statements devoted to various topics in a party's manifesto for one election with the percentages in the party's next manifesto; the lower the correlation, the greater the change in issue emphases from one manifesto to the next. The logic of using correlation coefficients for paired-manifesto relationships of emphasis distributions across a range of topics, where the total should always be a constant (1.00), does not apply for sets of issue position data. Here there is no constant sum of "scores," such that a positive change for one issue would have to be offset by change(s) for other issues in the opposite direction. In fact, if a party moved consistently to the left or to the right on all issues, such that all issue codes were increased (or decreased) by some constant number of points, the correlation coefficient of 1.00 would hide the considerable change that occurred between the two platforms.

To capture the totality of change between manifestos in judgemental position data covering a range of issues, we simply sum the magnitudes of differences across the issues. This procedure is symbolized in the following equation:

$$\text{cumulative difference} = \sum_{i=1}^n |\text{position}_{i,t+1} - \text{position}_{i,t}|$$

Though this procedure does not duplicate that used for the emphasis data, we are confident that it maintains the essence of what Janda et al. (1995) were doing in their analysis. Where low correlation coefficients capture the total magnitude of a party's change in emphasis between two election manifestos, the sum of magnitudes of differences does the same for change in position.¹⁹

In all other ways, we are duplicating the procedures from Janda et al's study. Our samples consist of the same three countries, eight parties, 26 elections, and 70 pairs of consecutive manifestos. We again employ their earlier classification of elections as calamitous, disappointing, tolerable, gratifying, and triumphal (Janda et al. 1995: 182-5), with the first two categories constituting "electoral defeat" (or "poor electoral performance") for our hypothesis. In their analysis of emphasis change, attention was focused upon the 19 lowest correlations (i.e. highest overall change) between adjacent election manifestos (Janda et al. 1995: 186 Table 5); for analysis of position change, we will focus upon the situations involving the highest

¹⁹ We should probably note here that we are again distinguishing between concepts (i.e., change in emphasis and change of position) that Budge would merge. In his 1994 article on spatial theory of party competition, he asserts that "Policy change consists in de-emphasizing previous priorities and taking up new ones" (455; emphasis added).

“cumulative difference” scores, coming as close to the “19 highest” as is reasonable. Using the standard of a minimum of 12 units of change produces a set of 17 cases, while a minimum of 11 units of change produces a set of 22 cases; lacking a better decision rule, we report the relevant data for both in Table 5.

First evidence that dramatic cumulative change in issue position need not co-occur with dramatic emphasis change comes from the fact that only five manifesto-pairs qualify for both Janda et al.’s (1995) top 19 cases of emphasis change and our expanded top 22 cases of position change (comparing our Table 5 with Table 5 in Janda et al. 1995: 186).²⁰ That in itself, though, would not automatically preclude the possibility of finding support for Hypothesis 1. The fact that the hypothesis is not supported can be determined independently.

Of the 17 cases of manifesto pairs with cumulative differences greater than eleven, 10 had intervening elections that would be classified as tolerable, gratifying, or triumphal. The 7 cases (41.2%) involving disappointing or calamitous elections are hardly sufficient to justify continued confidence in a hypothesis that poor electoral performance is a necessary precursor of dramatic cumulative change in parties' issue positions.²¹ Analysis of the expanded set of 22 manifesto pairs with cumulative differences greater than ten reveals that 12 had good or tolerable intervening elections, with ten (45.5%) involving poor elections, again supporting the same conclusion: lack of support for the electoral performance hypothesis.

** Table 4 about here **

Conclusion

Our finding of non-support for linking dramatic position change to poor election performance stands in clear contrast to Janda et al.’s earlier finding of considerable evidence that bad performance may be necessary for dramatic change among emphases. To use the more general language of their article, whereas packaging change seems to be a response to poor electoral performance, dramatic substantive change occurs frequently in the absence of bad elections, and hence requires other explanation. In fact, the contrasting findings of the two studies are quite consistent with our arguments that a party's internal identity and public image are distinct dimensions of its issue profile (an argument that is also supported by our analysis of relationships between content-and emphasis-based measures at the level of individual issues).

²⁰ The five manifesto pairs that qualify for both sets of “greatest change” are UK Conservatives 1966-1970 and 1974b-1979, US Democrats 1968-1972, and US Republicans 1960-1964 and 1964-1968.

²¹ It should be noted that we assume here that “no mention” of an issue in a manifesto would not be intended to, and in fact would not, convey “neutrality.” (In coding the data we are using for this paper, the PCP coded neutrality as “0” and “no mention” as missing.) In keeping with that assumption, it would be inappropriate to treat a change from/to some non-neutral position to/from “no mention” (i.e., missing) as though it was a change to/from the neutral position (i.e., “0”). While such a shift would clearly indicate a change in emphasis (and was treated that way in Janda et al, 1995), the lack of mention of the issue in one of the platforms might create public ambiguity but could not be taken as an indicator of a change in position. (Indeed, party leaders may deliberately create public ambiguity by changing emphasis -- even to the point of silence -- while maintaining internal coherence by leaving the party's actual position unchanged.) Hence, for our analyses, all such shifts are treated as contributing no change in actual positions. For example, a shift from a position coded “-4” to “missing” is treated as zero change for purposes of computing the cumulative differences score.

It appears from our analyses, compared to those of Janda et al. (1995), that “poor electoral performance” alone goes further in explaining change in image than is so for identity. And since identity is to “internal” as image is to “external,” it seems reasonable to at least speculate that the principal keys to understanding change in identity are to be found within the party itself. Given the supposed difficulty in getting insiders to change their party's identity in any significant way, it may be that dramatic identity change is conditioned upon a major shift in the dominant faction or coalition, or some similar internal stimulus.²²

We are certainly not alone in arguing that it may be in some ways easier for parties to change their image (i.e. the “packaging”) than their identity (or “substance”). Wilson (1994) put it in terms of “tactics” and “programs,” but he was clearly making an argument that is similar to ours.

It is sometimes easier for parties to adjust to changing tactics than to re-examine their electoral bases and programs ... Programs and party doctrine are laden with symbolic values that make their modification costly in terms of both the length of internal party debates and the likelihood of offending party loyalists and activists by upsetting the delicate balance of the previous doctrinal and programmatic statement ... In contrast, decisions on specific campaign tactics and election rhetoric can be made without the danger of such disruptions. (1994: 271)

Even closer to our own argument is this by Klingemann et al:

Parties will be wary of repudiating previous positions outright, to be sure. But there is much less to prevent them from selectively emphasizing or de-emphasizing issues in their policy inventory. (1994: 24)

As repositories of parties' profiles, including aspects of both image and identity, election programs are useful sources of data on parties and party change. The manifesto data that we have analyzed in this paper come from two different projects, and are of two quite different types. We have contended, and found, that emphasis-based measures and content-based measures are in fact measuring different aspects of the party's public profile. Further, we have found it very reasonable to think that the relative emphases tap external image while actual positions reflect the internal identity, and to assert that a party may have different reasons for changing the one than for changing the other. Whether for studies of party change, of coalition behavior, or of strategies for competition, an understanding of the dual dimensionality of party manifestos can and should make them an even more valuable tool in the building and testing of empirical theory.

²² For more discussion of internal factors in party change, see Harmel et al. (1995).

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Table 1

Position v. Total Emphasis	Correlation	Probability	N ²³
Foreign Aid	.20	.091	72
Defense Spending	.07	.508	86
Centralization of Power	.01	.946	69
Social Services	-.42	.000	97
Education (Government Role)	-.04	.752	60
Personal Freedoms	-.07	.578	62
Environmental Protection	-.26	.029	70
Agricultural Supports	-.11	.305	85
Cultural Supports	-.14	.192	85
State Ownership	-.47	.000	76
Regulation	-.03	.770	88

²³ The column headed N in the table represents the total number of manifestos that were jointly coded by the CMP and PCP for the nine parties in Britain (1950-1997), West Germany (1949-1990), and the United States (1952-1992).

Table 2

Position v. Net Relative Emphasis	Correlation	Probability	N
Foreign Aid	.12	.303	72
Defense Spending	.69	.000	86
Centralization of Power	-.11	.346	69
Social Services	-.55	.000	97
Education (Government Role)	-.07	.592	60

Table 3: Correlations for Left-Right Position v Composite Left-Right Emphasis

# of issues missing (of 4 ²⁴):	≤3	≤2	≤1	≤0
Left-Right Emphasis (original)	.59 (.000)	.69 (.000)	.75 (.000)	.75 (.000)
Left-Right Emphasis (modified)	.57 (.000)	.65 (.000)	.73 (.000)	.73 (.000)
N	101	97	78	56

Note: p-value shown in parentheses

²⁴ This refers to the number of “missing data” for left-right issues only, including Social Services, Taxes, State Ownership, and Regulation of the Private Sector.

Table 4

Country	Party	Years	Cumulative Difference ²⁵	Type of Election	Hypothesis 1
Germany					
	<i>CDU</i>	<i>1969-1972</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Disappointing</i>	+
	CDU	1976-1980	13	Tolerable	-
	CDU	1983-1987	12	Triumphal	-
	SPD	1957-1961	12	Disappointing	+
	<i>SPD</i>	<i>1976-1980</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Tolerable</i>	-
	FDP	1976-1980	14	Disappointing	+
	FDP	1980-1983	15	Triumphal	-
	<i>FDP</i>	<i>1983-1987</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Tolerable</i>	-
Britain					
	LAB	1983-1987	12	Calamitous	+
	CON	1955-1959	12	Gratifying	-
	CON	1966-1970	15	Disappointing	+
	CON	1974b-1979	14	Calamitous	+
	LIBDEM	1964-1966	17	Tolerable	-
USA					
	<i>DEM</i>	<i>1968-1972</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Disappointing</i>	+
	DEM	1976-1980	13	Gratifying	-
	REP	1952-1956	18	Triumphal	-
	REP	1956-1960	14	Gratifying	-
	REP	1960-1964	26	Disappointing	+
	<i>REP</i>	<i>1964-1968</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Calamitous</i>	+
	REP	1968-1972	18	Gratifying	-
	REP	1972-1976	27	Triumphal	-
	REP	1976-1980	18	Disappointing	+

²⁵ This table references the 22 cases with cumulative difference of 11 or above and the 17 cases (excluding those in italics) with cumulative difference of 12 or above.