

# **State-wide party *responses* to the challenges of multi-level electoral competition in Spain. (1977-2009).**

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## **Abstract**

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The aim of this work is analyzing the electoral strategies and alliance of PP and PSOE in the different Autonomic Communities in order to demonstrate that a same party can adopt simultaneously different party responses. This behaviour according to the theory adopted here is due that each community presents different attitudes in front of the competences, above all those that have important parties whose field is not national.

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## Introduction<sup>3</sup>

The development of multiple-level government system has conditioned the evolution of party politics in different directions. In order to face the challenges that come from the new institutional situations, the national parties can adopt a myriad of organized answers, ideological and tactical. The more exploited aspect until now has been the consequences of the decentralization over the party organization (Smiley, 1987; Thorlakson, 2001; Renzsch, 2001). In contrast to the organizing analysis, the analysis of the effects on the programs and the party politics and on the electoral strategies and of government coalitions, keeps unexploited with some exceptions. For example, Stefuric (2009) analyzes the government coalitions in the CCAA and its consistency with governability in the national scope. Fravre and Martinez (2009) explore the ideological differences of the national parties on the different levels of competence. Also, recently, Hepburn y Detterbeck (2009) have investigated the responses of the parties to the multi-level contexts. These authors have identified different types of strategies based on the mechanism of the decision-taking of the party and the level of autonomy of the territorial sections, distinguishing federal strategies, modernizers, centralists and autonomists. These Works provide some clues not only in the organizing change but also too in how the parties compete in the same circle. Following this path the objective of this paper is to analyze which are the electoral strategies and of government coalition adopted by both the two main national Spanish parties, the Spanish Worker Socialist Party Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and the Popular Party Partido Popular (PP) between 1980 and 2008 in the Autonomic Communities.

Most of the theoretical formulations relating to the consequences of the decentralization of the politic parties, present, in our opinion, two fundamental restrictions that very often make difficult the explanation of the behavior of the parties in the multi-level system. In the first place, some authors support that changes in the institutional field affect every party in a particular direction. In this sense it has been emphasized the fact that all the parties operating in the same system will act in the same way. From this fact, some models of parties and of system of parties have been established. This limitation has been over passed by the fact that several works have demonstrated that consequences in each party can be different (Chandler y Chandler, 1987). The second of the limitations, stays as it does not consider that a single party may have different reactions simultaneously, as this work will try to prove.

According to this, the main argument of this work will be that a single party can develop simultaneously and through the time different electoral strategies and of government coalition in the different no-national fields. In an exploratory mode a hypothesis is being established: the fact that explains the strategies adopted by the parties in the political field, are the characteristics of system of parties in each community and as a consequence the characteristics of the political competence. This can explain, apart from the strategy that every national party adopts, why each of the parties does not

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always adopts the same strategy in each and every community. In accordance with this we expect to observe that PP and PSOE apply strategies of competition differently among the autonomic communities and that these will be different also through the legislatures of a same community. This way, the existence of the relevant non-national parties in the community and, as a consequence, the dynamic of the different competences will be one of the main factors to take on account to explain the strategies of the party. The purpose of this work is to test empirically the validity of this theoretical proposition.

The first section of this work defines different types of electoral strategies and of government coalitions. In the second place, an analysis of the characteristics of the political competence in the autonomic communities has been made. Thirdly, there has been an empirical analysis of the strategies of the PP and PSOE and there is an attempt of classification of these strategies. The last section, establishes some relationships between the parties and the dynamics of competences of the CCAA.

## **1. The electoral strategies and the government coalition of the multi-level system of parties**

In the federal systems there are different levels of elections and as a consequence, the parties tend to speak to different electorates. This is why they may have to present different programs and propositions, even if these elections are being done simultaneously on different levels or in the same level but different regions (Chandler y Chandler 1987). In any case, it is a fact that the celebration of under-national elections helps that the parties tend to regionalize their tactics and their organization. Also, it is been observed that in those territories in which non-national parties exist, this phenomenon tends to be stronger, as there are many more incentives for the parties to be decentralized (Downs, 1998; Chibber y Kollman, 2004; Roller y Van Hauten; Hopkin y Bradbury, 2006). All this may help, on the other hand, the existence of political alliances vertically or horizontally from the different national parties. On vertical terms, Stefiruc (2008) has warned of the importance of being congruent in the strategies of government coalition applied by these on different levels (Chandler y Chandler 1987).

It is common, even if not problem free, to accept as a general assumption that the primary aim of the national parties in the national field is to maximize votes in the national elections. Using this supposition in a ambient of multi-level interaction, in this work we will assume that the parties, as rational actors, aspire to maximize profits in all those institutional levels in which they compete. So, the parties will look forward achieve the best results in terms of votes in order that they will be the best situated to form parliamentary majorities and governments. The search of the profits in different levels of competition may result when conflicts of interests appear among the central organization and the territorial section, or when a certain strategy in one of the levels assumes elevated costs on another level. This is why, the parties will tend to articulate the strategies in which they maximize profits en every level

and in which they reduce the costs and the damaging effects on the rest of the levels.

According to the rational classical approximation, the strategies that a party may develop are the group of possible alternatives to achieve a goal (Von Neumann and Morgenstern, 1944: 44). The group of strategies that may elaborate the political parties can be very extensive according to the fields to be considered.

To limit the politics of territorial alliances followed by the national parties it is necessary to proceed previously, to the elaboration of a classification of the different political alliances that the parties may follow. According to the premises of the seminal work by Duverger (1957), one of the basic dimensions to understand the politics of alliances of the parties resides on making differences between the fields of the political competence to the ones the party can get: on the election, in the parliament and the government. In order to simplify the analysis, our classification proposes a small reformulation of the scheme distinguishing between the election and the government-parliament collaboration (table 1).

In order to compete in the elections, a party can present itself alone or it can also coordinate some kind of pre-electoral alliance (through a team candidate or including other candidates from another party). In political systems with a presence of non-national parties there can also be permanent territorial alliances between these and national parties. These alliances between national parties and PANE are based on the territorial principle, based on whom the PANE becomes in the homolog of the PAE in this territory as an exchange that this one renounces to be present in this territory. With this strategy, the PAE realizes a transfer of internal authority very elevated to its homolog territorial organization. This opens an important gap to foster the conflicts between the central and the peripheral directions.

If the party reaches a parliament representation, it pops up a new series of alternatives: to maintain itself alone (in the opposition and rejecting an eventual presence in the parliament majority, or also, creating a solitary government, or even in minority); to collaborate with other parties only in a parliament level (entering in a stable way in the parliament majority but without obtaining government positions); or even to form a part of a government coalition with executive posts.

The decisions taken during the electoral period can condition more or less the available alternatives for parliament collaboration and in the government, but there are no causal or determinant relations between them. No electoral alternative invalidates necessarily a later parliament alternative. This is why, among the combination between the alternatives of parliament combination and the parliament and government collaborations we can create a type of typology of nine possible strategies (table 2). In a certain way, this set of strategic alternatives forms an axis in which are distributed the different graduations of collaboration with other formations that a party can reach in the context of an inter-party competence.

In an entourage of multi-level competence, the main issue to which the strategies of the parties will have to face is with whom they will have to collaborate in every step of the political competence that the party will be able to get: on the election, in the parliament and the government. Of course, as Von Neumann and Morgenstern remember, there are situations in which there is no possibility of coalitions nor compensations between actors (1944: 44). In a context of two actors in which one of them obtains absolute majority, these collaboration dilemmas are void and as a consequence, it is not possible to consider real strategic alternatives. On the contrary, as soon as the number of parties and the profits to share grow (for example, the options to create a government), the strategies of collaboration will be diversified.

In an extreme, a party can establish a strategy of collaboration very intense with another party. This is the scenario in which the PAE responds strategically to every challenge of the multi-level competence forming a territorial alliance permanently with a PANE, through which government coalitions will be articulated with third parties (AGG strategy). In these cases the PANE can decide whether to act all alone or to reach compromises only in the parliament (ATP and ACP strategies), to avoid interferences with the strategies of the PAE on other levels. On the other hand, pre-electoral deals can be achieved between a PAE and another autonomic party, forming an electoral coalition or through the inclusion in the lists of members of another party, that later they can be translated to parliament collaboration or a government coalition, in which third parties (CE, CEP and CEG strategies) can also be included. Also, the PAE can decide rejecting a pre-electoral coalition and establishing freely parliament collaborations or of government after the elections (CP and CG strategies).

The other extreme means that the party can present itself on solitary and it can keep acting this way in the parliament field and in the government field (SOL strategy). Generally, this may be the natural strategy of even the priority strategy, as the parties want to extend maximally their representation and to govern alone the institutions. However, in some cases the solitary option means a specific strategy, due to its assumed costs and risks. This happens when a party decides forming a government with a minority with no steady alliances, when it chooses to break a steady alliance kept with other parties or when it rejects establishing a pre-electoral coalition with other parties on a level while it keeps it on another level.

In this last case it is shown a second crucial aspect in the election of the strategic answers: where they are applied. The parties can apply different strategies regarding another party depending on the level, or they can prepare those strategies on a certain level in order to prepare, facilitate or condition the competition on another level. Our work will observe the behaviours of the parties on an autonomic level and we will leave apart the strategies applied on the national and local levels. However, we cannot forget that the displayed strategies on those levels have also a relevant impact in the autonomic politic. The centrality of the national level tends to drag the strategies of the parties on the autonomic field, especially those from the PAE. A coalition between the

PAE and a non national party is more probable that when the PAE needs the non-national party in the national scope. Likewise, a PANE can be conditioned by his margin to contribute in the national scope according to its position in the autonomic scope. The local level is not less relevant and its diversity offers a good field of experimentation for the parties to collaborate on superior levels. Even the strategies in the autonomic scope can be conditioned by the targets of the local parties. This happens when a party has the objective to reach in the government of an important city, by its symbolism, or when the target is controlling a local institution whose competences condition the decision taking of an autonomic government.

In the case that any kind of alliance has been made it is necessary to consider the moment in which it takes places in the political and electoral schedule. This implies, for example, to take on account if there horizontally or vertically coincidence with another election. Presumably if there is coincidence there will be more stimuli to have more coherence among the different actions of the party, although it is not necessary to be always like this, and this depends on the dynamic of the competence in each territory and on the preferences of the electors. Generally, we must consider the dynamic character of the strategies. As it has been said in the last pages, a party does not keep one same strategy for a long time. In some situations, to be present only in one election, staying on the opposition side or becoming part of a coalition can be unavoidable decisions. Sometimes, these decisions can be risked or even they can be rejected as being counterproductive. It is necessary to observe how theses strategies alter and evolve through the time, in order to understand better its logic and the motives for which they were taken.

Finally, the application of a strategy can also depend on the involved actors. It has been discussed before the diversity of the organisational forms that can be found during the creation of the parties in the regional scope. In order to simplify our analysis, in the Spanish case three cases of different actors ought to be considered: the main PAE of the political system (PSOE and PP), that edify the target of our analysis and that will tend to be present in each autonomy, directly or through permanent territorial alliances, the secondary PAEs of the political system, whose presence will be determined by its social importance and the electoral autonomic system, the PANE that may exist in that territory. The presence of these last parties can have a particular importance as they can change substantially the dynamic of the competence comparing to the national level. Likewise, the existence of other PAEs in a region may condition the weigh of the PANEs and render easy or difficult the solitary strategies. In the Spanish case, for example, it is easier to avoid alliances between a PAE where CDS or IU also have a representation.

## **2. the electoral competence in autonomic Spain**

The Spanish parties compete in a complex scenario, in which different institutional level are superimposed asymmetrically. Not every territory celebrates elections at the same time nor they possess the same kind of under-national institutional configuration. At the same time in order to understand the dynamic of the inter-party competition in Spain it is necessary

taking into account the presence of different under-systems of regional parties and its relationship with the general system of parties.

The system of parties in Spain is formed by two main PAEs (PSOE and PP, besides the former UCD in 1983), some small PAE of oscillating and decreasing strength (PCE-IU and CDS) and several PANE, of weight and influence capacity in a wide range. The evolution of the system of parties has been characterized by the growth of the competition and the concentration of the vote of PSOE and PP, basically against the small PAE. The tendency of the concentration of votes in the big PAEs and the decline of the small PAEs has given great political importance to the PANEs in the national political field and has reinforced its role in the autonomic field. The result is, as there are not absolute majorities from the PSOE or the PP in the deputy congress, the weight of the PANE is decisive. In those cases, the PAEs have adopted the decision to create minority governments, sustained by parliament majorities formed by coalitions with one or several PANE of uneven stability. The existence of parliament alliances between PAE and PANE in the national parliament has stimulated the apparition of exchanges and counterparts between the national field and the under-national field, based on the creation of parliament pacts or government pacts between PAE and PANE in the autonomic parliaments.

This has transformed the autonomic field in a place of great influence on the political dynamic in the national field. The establishment of the autonomies was progressive and gave way to different electoral cycles, according each community. This is why, the political have adopted by degrees to the apparition of autonomic parties. The main distinctive trait of the non-national scenario is the heavy political weight of the PANE that changes thoroughly in each community. Seeing the huge diversity of PANE, it is necessary to distinguish among them that are relevant in the national field (CiU, PNV and CC) and those whose electoral importance stays mainly in the autonomic field. This does not avoid that some other PANE have also temporally led an important role in the national field (ERC, BNG, PAR). A lot of these PANE are placed ideologically on the centre-right, but the existence of a second axis of competences (that comes from the centre-periphery cleavage) has allowed them to maintain parliament coalitions with PSOE as with PP.

The gap for the inter-exchanges between the national field and the autonomic field has been conditioned by the different electoral schedules that exist, and that they have led to the formation of electoral cycles according to the evolution of the inter-party competences. There are two main groups of the autonomic communities according to the moment in which the elections are celebrated. On one hand, there are those communities whose elections are celebrated jointly, and also with the municipal elections. This electoral day has made easy the phenomenon of nationalization of the electoral campaigns, although it has not avoided that its results could condition the general political dynamic. In any case, the reforms of the status of autonomy realized from 2006 have given to the autonomic communities more freedom in the announcement of regional elections. The autonomic elections of 1983 and 1987 took place months after the general elections and they acquired a

meaning of going on of the cycle began in these. So, the elections of 1983 continued the electoral expansive cycle of the PSOE and led to the apparition of several PANE emerged after the implosion of the UCD. The 1987 elections benefited the incoming in the local and autonomic scene of CDS and of IU, which hurt the interests of the PANE. From 1991, the autonomic and municipal elections brought a meaning to the anticipation of the electoral tendencies of the general following elections.

On the other hand, the autonomic communities that got to the different way (Basque Country, Catalonia and Andalusia) had from the first moment the possibility of dissolving the parliaments, and as it is they have tended to celebrate their elections independently. As a consequence, the electoral results of these have had a meaning much less certain according to the nacional politic, due to the fact that one single party has dominated electorally a region for a very long time (PNV for the vascos, CiU in Catalonia, PP in Galicia and PSOE in Andalusia). They were specially relevant the firsts elections in each autonomy, as they set the ascension of the more important PANEs (victories of PNV and CiU in 1980) and the defeat of UCD that benefit AP (Galicia, 1981) and PSOE (Andalusia, 1982). Lately, the relevant elections in which changes of government in every autonomy have been accomplished. The elections of 2003 in Catalonia resulted especially important as they meant the decline of the position of influence of CiU in the national politic, benefiting ERC and ICV and conditioned lately the PSOE politic of alliances.

### **3. The electoral strategies and of coalition of the PP and the PSOE in the Spain of Autonomies**

#### **3.1. The strategies of the Popular Party**

Table 3 shows the strategies developed by the PP in the different autonomic communities through several legislatures. One the most relevant corresponds to the territorial permanent alliance established by the PP and the Union of the People of Navarra between 1991 and 2008 in Navarra. According to this relationship, the PP announced having a territorial section in Navarra and became part of the UPN. This model of relationships had its height during a decade of divisions in the navarran right wing that had made easy the government in minority of the PSOE during the first two legislatures. From 1979, UPN and AP present themselves in a unique candidature in the general elections. Thanks to this UPN would achieve representation in the congress and the senate. However, they presented themselves separately in the autonomic elections (Barberà, 2009). Thanks to the integration in UPN, the PP could access to the government of Navarra in a minority in 1991 (ATP strategy) and since 2003, in coalition with CDN, a scission appeared after the integration of PP in 1991 (AGG strategy). Nonetheless, after the autonomic elections of 2007, the support of the PSOE to the government in a minority of UPN and CDN increased the differences between foralists and populars and ended provoking the decision of the PP in 2008 to break up their alliance with the UPN and recover their own territorial section of Navarra.

The PP has established several types of post-electoral alliances with other parties in nine communities, which has allowed them to govern and reach the presidency in six of them. In some cases, these alliances were preceded by pre-electoral coalitions.

In Aragon and Canarias, the PP has always governed by the community of coalition with a PANE but without forming pre-electoral alliances (CG strategy). In Aragon, this government alliance has extended for three legislatures, with regionalist president between 1989 and 1993, and with a president from the PP between 1995 and 1999. On the contrary, the post-electoral alliance between the PP and IC-CC in Canarias has permit to the PP to govern between 1987 and 1991 and since 1995, but never being the first party in the government nor in the autonomic presidency. Between 1996 and 2004, the autonomic government coalition between CC and PP met with the support of CC to the government majority of the PP in the Spanish parliament. In 2005, the PP broke up with the government coalition and dropped all its autonomic counsellors, leaving the government in a minority. However, two years later he reedited the coalition with CC two avoid that the PSOE took the government of Canarias.

The PP has governed alone as in coalition with PANE in the Valencian community, Barleares, la Rioja and Cantabria. Excepting Cantabria, in every case the PP has always had autonomic presidency while in the government. Baleares and the Valencian Community constitute two of the most relevant cases. In the Valencian community, the PP reach the government through a post-electoral Alliance with the Valencian Union (UV) in 1995 (CG strategy). This way, they followed the method that four years before it had allowed them to snatch the mayor's office from the PSOE and force the decline of the PSOE in this community. After four years of autonomic government coalition, the PP absorbed most of the elite of the regionalist party and its electoral base in the next elections. The UV started in a deep crisis and the PP adopted the regionalist speech from UV, reaching a position of electoral dominance.

In Baleares, the PP used different strategies in its collaboration with the regionalists from Mallorcan Union (UM). The relationship between both parties had initially a form of parliament collaboration (CP strategy), in which the UM offered this support to the minority government of AP (1983-1987). From the next legislature, the alliance was reinforced by the incorporation of UM to the government, and with the creation of a pre-electoral coalition PP-UM for the autonomic elections of 1991 (CG and CEG strategies). In the same way, in 1989 UM renounced to being present at the general elections and in replacement asked the vote for the PP. however, the progressive consolidation of the alliance between PP and UM unleashed a strong internal crisis in UM, between advocates and opponents of this strategy. The victory of the critic side from UM with the PP rapprochement led way to the break up of the government alliance and the isolation of the PP from the rest of the parties. In the subsequent legislatures, this situation has provoked an alternation of absolute majority of the PP and, when lacking this option, coalition government of the rest of the parties.

In the Rioja and the Cantabria, the PP has kept different government coalitions with other PANEs that have resulted difficult and that have not been maintained more than one legislature. In the Rioja, the lost of the absolute majority in 1987 made possible a government coalition between AP, CDS and the PRP regionalists (CG strategy), after that AP tried helplessly to form a government alone without stable alliances. However, the worsen of the relations between AP and PRP derived in a impeachment and the appointment of a new government, formed by PSOE and PRP, that was reedited in the next legislature. Finally, from 1995, the absolute majority of the PP has allowed to keep a government in solitary apart from those with the regionalists.

In Cantabria, AP presented themselves since 1983 under a pre-electoral coalition with PDP with which they shared a national alliance and that allowed them to govern with an absolute majority (CEG strategy). Nonetheless, the internal divisions from the coalition provoked that the popular parliament group would finish supporting an impeachment against their own president in 1990. As a result, the PP joined a coalition government directed by the PSOE in which you could also find the CDS and the PRC (CG strategy). In the next legislature, the PP maintained the CG strategy to govern with the UPCA, the PANE created from the excision appeared inside the party after the support to the impeachment in 1990. All through the legislation, the internal and judicial problems of the UCPA led to a progressive return of a lot of posts to the PP. In the next legislature, from 1995, the PP established a government coalition with the PRC. The governmental alliance had not a second term because four years later the PRC decided to change its partner and form a government with the PSOE.

In two communities, the PP strategies have been limited to collaborations with PAE. In Galice, AP formed a coalition government with UCD in the first legislature. After the disappearance of UCD, during the second legislature AP showed itself willing to form a government coalition with the regionalist party Coalicion gallega (CG). However, the internal discrepancies of CG prevented the deal. The instability derived from the government in a minority led to an impeachment in 1987 that took the place of the AP in the power until the next elections. From 1991, the PP took all the electorate from centre and right wing, which provoked the disappearance of CG and gave him the opportunity of a long period with absolute majority.

In Castilla y Leon, the CDS gave its support to AP in 1987 in order that Aznar would become autonomic president. AP kept a minority government for a legislature, with punctual alliances from the CDS and, from the next legislature, it has won the successively every election with absolute majority.

In catalonia, the PP kept a parliament collaboration (CP strategy) with CiU between 1996 and 2003. The support of the PP to the government of Jordi Pujol would have its counterpart in the support of CiU to the governmental majority of Aznar in the Spanish parliament. This strategy generated some conflicts in the national direction of the PP and in the direction of its territorial

section in Catalonia, that led to a resignation of the regional president of the PP, that opposed a collaboration with the catalan nationalists.

The PP has established pre-electoral alliances with PANE in two autonomic communities in which, despite these alliances, later they have not had the success to reach a government majority (CE strategy). In both cases, vascos and Extremadura, the alliance gave way to the inclusion in the PP lists of some candidate of a PANE, thanks to which he obtained a seat in the autonomic parliament. In the Pais Vasco, Unidad Alavesa (UA) was created from an excision of the PP in Alava and had reach and exceeded this last with votes in this circumscription. During the elections of 2001 the PP established a coalition with UA, for which a candidate of this party was included in the electoral lists of this party. The foralist deputy left the parliament group of the PP through half legislature but could not have back her seat in the next elections. UA was dissolved in 2005 and most of its members came back to the PP.

On the contrary, the PP strategy in front of the PANEs of the vasc nationalism has been of rejection of any type of alliance. This attitude has a particular relevance as the vasc system of parties' results of being very fragmented, in which way that never a single party has obtained the absolute majority in the vasc parliament. This marks a contrast with the period of parliament collaboration in the Spanish parliament (1996-1998), during which the PNV gave its support in the parliament to the PP government majority. Following this strategy of rejection of the vasc nationalism, in 2009 the PP decided to form a parliament majority with the PSE-EE and support a government of this party alone (CP strategy).

In extremadura, the electoral hegemony of the PSOE has limited the parliament presence of the PANEs and has avoided any possibility of relevant collaboration between PP and other PANEs. Nonetheless, in 2007 the PP established a deal with Extremadura Unida (EU), for which this party included a candidate in the electoral lists in elevated posts, which allowed the regionalists party to obtain an autonomic seat, that lately was integrated in the parliament group of the PP.

Finally, there are five communities in which the PP has maintained always a solitary action (SOL strategy), as it has not established any kind of collaboration with other parties. In Murcia and Castilla la Mancha this has been the strategy with no alternative option, due to the absence of third parties with which establish a collaboration. In Madrid, the absolute control of the PP among the centre-right wing and the right wing space (except in 1987 and 1991) has left with no other party for collaboration. In other communities (ANdalucia y Asturias), the solitary option has also been the result, in one hand, of the weakness of the PANE and the control of the PSOE.

In Anadlucia, the PP has always been in the opposition and has not had, until now, a possible option of throwing out the PSOE in the government. In Asturias, the PP reached the autonomic government in 1995, after wining the elections. However, it reached almost the absolute majority for two seats in

the chamber of deputies, the lack of understanding between PSOE and IU made easy the formation of a minority government. The weakness of the PAS, that only had a seat available, prevented the possibility of an alliance with the PP. the PAS did not give support to the government in a minority during the legislature in the most relevant subjects. On the other hand, the internal division of the PP during the legislature gave way to a internal excision that led to the creation of a new party, the URAS that gave its support to the new autonomic president in the last period of the legislature. On the elections of 1999, the division between the PP and the URAS vote and the recovery of the PSOE allowed the socialist victory with an absolute majority.

### **3.2. The strategies of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party**

The strategies developed by the PSOE in every Autonomous Community during different terms are gathered in table 4. Firstly, the territorial alliance existing since the beginnings of democracy between the PSOE and the PSC in Catalonia needs to be pointed out. In 1977's elections, the PSOE decided to establish a pre-electoral coalition with the *Partit Socialista de Catalunya - Congrés* (PSC-c), which turned into the the most voted candidature in Catalonia. The success of this coalition fueled the process of integration of both parties, with the addition of the *Partit Socialista de Catalunya – reagrupament* (PSC – r), that took place one year later, resulting in the *Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya* (PSC-PSOE) formation. According to the agreements of this new formation, the PSOE stopped taking part in Catalan elections and dissolved its Catalan federation. The new organization was legally recognized as an autonomous party, although the political and organizational relationships with the federal structure of the PSOE were kept. Even though this relationship model has been subjected to strong stress, specially when PSOE and PSC have coincided respectively in the central and autonomic governments, the relationships have remained inalterable and the PSC has kept its position as the first electoral force in all general and municipal elections held.

The strategy to integrate the PSOE in the PSC has had different versions. Since 1980, the PSC ran independently and kept in the opposition, rejecting even the option to govern in coalition with CiU in 1980 (ATP strategy). In 1999, the PSC ran in coalition with the Ciutadans pel Canvi organization, created from the socialist environment to support the candidature to the Generalitat's presidency of Pasqual Maragall (which means a combination of CE and ATP strategies). Subsequently, CpC has never run independently in general or autonomic elections. From 2008, the PSC has governed Catalonia in coalition with other PANE (ACG strategy). This strategic option has had the explicit support of the PSOE, although it has also generated strong tensions between PSOE and PSC.

The PSOE has tried to achieve several post-electoral alliances with other parties in twelve communities. For half of them, it has only been able to govern in coalition with PANE, which has often allowed it to the autonomic government without being the first electoral force. No previous pre-electoral

coalitions were established in these cases, either at the autonomic or state level [1] (strategy CG).

In Baleares and in Galicia, a coalition with the rest of the PANE (with UM and PSM in Balares in 1999 and in 2007n with BNG in Galice in 2005) allowed them to form government without being the most voted party and leaving the PP in the opposition. However, in both cases the PSOE lost the government in the next legislature, after the PP achieved the absolute majority (so it happened in Baleares in 2003 and in Galicia in 2009).

In Cantabria, in 1990 the PSOE established a government coalition with the rest of forces (PP, PRC and CDS) alter the victory of the impeachment against Ormaechea. In 2003, although it standed second after the PP, the PSOE decided to establish a government coalition with the third party, the PRC, in which they gave up the power to the PSOE in the autonomic presidency. In 2007 this pact was reedited, after that PSOE lifted till the third electoral position.

In a similar, in the Rioja, the PSOE also had access in 1990 to the autonomic presidency after an impeachment with the support of the regionalists of PRP. This coalition of government was kept after the 1991 elections, but, also finalized in 1995 when the PP obtained the absolute majority.

In other communities, the PSOE has only recurred to post-electoral alliances with other parties sometimes of minorities, without forming necessarily a government of coalition. When the parliament weight of IU made it possible, PSOE chose them instead of the PANEs in minority situations.

In Canarias, the PSOE governed the first autonomic legislature with the parliament support of a PANE, that had access to stay out of the executive (CP strategy). In 1991 he needed again the support of the PANEs to govern and in this occasion he established a government coalition (CG strategy). However, two years later, the allied PANEs presented an impeachment that left the Saavedra president and took the government into a minority government of CC.

In Navarra, during the first two legislatures, a government of socialist minority was form, although it obtained the collaboration in the parliament of the UPN for the most important issues (SOL strategy). In 1995, after being left as second force, the PSOE recovered the autonomic presidency after reaching an alliance with CDN (CG strategy). However, a year later the resignation of the president because of justice problems, dissolved the pact and delivered the PSOE to the opposition. Finally, in 2007, the PSOE renounced to form a government of coalition with PANEs of left wing and accepted to support in the parliament a government of coalition of UPN and CDN (CP strategy). This collaboration led, as it has been said before, to the break up of the alliance between PP and UPN.

In Aragón, in 1999 the PSOE established a coalition of government with the PAR (CG strategy), that vacated the executive from the PP, that was the first

electoral force and that had governed the last legislature with the PAR. Lately, the PSOE has reedited this alliance but as first electoral force.

Being different to other communities, in Asturias, in Madrid and in the Comunidad Valenciana, the PSOE formed a coalition in the parliament with IU when left in minority (CP strategy). In Asturias, the parliament alliance became also a government coalition PSOE-IU between 2003 and 2007 (CG strategy). This strategy also took place during the fourth legislature in Extremadura.

In Andalucia, the coalition of the government with the PA longed for two legislatures after the PSOE was left in minority in 1994. However, after the recover of the absolute majority, the PSOE put an end to the alliance and left in a deep crisis the PA.

Finally, in the Pais Vasco the PSOE chose a government coalition with the PNV from 1986 until 1998 (only withdrawn for some months in 1991), during the government of the lehendakari Ardanza. From 1991, the coalition was amplified to Euskadiko Ezkerra (EE). In the next months, the crisis in which was deepen EE gave way to the process of absorption of this party from the vasc PSOE, that changed its name to PSE-EE. Since 2009, the PSOE governs in minority with the support of the PP in the autonomic parliament.

The unique pre-electoral coalition that the PSOE has ever realized in an autonomic level with a PANE has taken place in Extremadura. In the elections of 2003 and 2007, the PSOE got into a deal to incorporate the member of the PREX-CREX to its candidates, which allowed the recuperation of the representation for the regionalists (inside a parliament group of PSOE) and the obtaining of some secondary posts of the government for this party. This decision was not free from internal critics inside the PSOE of Extremadura. However, this pre-electoral alliance was led lately to an alliance of the parliament, as the deputies of PREX-CREX gave their support to their government PSOE (ACP strategy), this support did not become decisive until the now, due to a clear parliament majority of the PSOE in Extremadura.

To this case it must be add the pre-electoral punctual coalitions that the PSOE reached in 1997 in Galicia (with the territorial Galician section of IU) and the PSC in 1999 with ICV in three circunscriptions (Girona, LLeida and Tarragona). In both cases, this coalition did not hace a continuity in the parliament or the government in that legislature (CE strategy) and was not reedited in later legislatures.

Also, in the case of the PP, the PSOE has maintained a continuous strategy of solitary acting in those communities in which there are no PANEs and in which IU and CDS are too weak (Murcia or Castilla la Macnha). In Castilla y León this collaboration between PSOE and PANE has been limited to the municipal field.

### **3.3. The strategies of the national political parties at the decentralised level**

Following the stated above we could affirm that there are not significant differences in the use of strategies by the PP and the PSOE although there are some differences in the frequency of that use.

Generally the predominant strategy is the SOL one, meaning that given political party stands for election alone and either goes in the opposition or gets to govern alone (with or without majority). In that last case, the party usually does not have a consistent support by other political parties. Nevertheless, this strategy has been used less than expected since it's only occur in half of the legislative terms which has presented a real strategic dilemma. The PP has recurred to this strategy in more occasions than the PSOE.

Whenever a party considers that it's not profitable to stand for election and rule alone, establishes alliances with other parties after the elections have taken place. On the contrary neither the PP nor the PSOE has tended to develop pre-electoral alliances (strategies CE, ATP, CEP, ACP, CEG and ACG), and when they have established such strategies it has been on the basis of a permanent territorial collaboration (strategies ATP, ACP and ACG). The socialist party has only developed some pre-electoral collaboration in 13 of the legislative terms, of which 8 where with the PSC in Cataluña. In even smaller rate, the PP has only had pre-electoral alliances in 9 occasions, 5 of which were with the UPN in Navarra.

Overall the political parties prefer waiting until after the election for their choice of strategic alliance since that allows them to manoeuvre accordingly. When it comes to establishing post-electoral alliances, the main tradeoff for both PP and PSOE seems to be whether go in opposition or govern in coalition with another party. On the contrary, there are virtually no occasions in which collaborations have been created strictly at parliamentary level. The PSOE has had parliamentary collaborations with other political parties in 10 of the legislative terms whilst the PP in only 6 occasions. In neither of these, the collaboration had any precedents as pre-electoral coalition (strategy CP), with the only exception of the PSOE in Extremadura (strategy CEP).

Consequently for both the PP and PSOE the alternative to standing alone for election tends to be forming a coalition for government with other political parties (strategies CG and ACG) which has occurred in a third of the legislative terms that have presented a real strategic dilemma (in 22 terms in the case of the PSOE and in 19 for the PP). Such governmental coalition generally occurs after the party has stood alone for election (strategy CG) or through a permanent territorial alliance (strategy ACG).

It seems relevant to highlight that the main differences between the PSOE and the PP lay in the respective parliamentary positions from which they decide the strategies for their governmental alliances. The PSOE tends more frequently to form alliances with PANE as a mean to get to govern despite not being the first parliamentary force (they favoured this option in 14 out of 22 terms) than the PP (in 8 out of 19 legislatives terms). Moreover, in the majority of occasions, that strategy has allowed the PSOE to hold the presidency of the Autonomous Government (in Aragón, the Balearic Islands, Cataluña, Galicia, Navarra, La Rioja and the Basque Country), whilst the PP has never achieved the presidency trough that mean.

#### **4. The PAE and the dynamic of competence in the CCAA: elements of the discussion**

In this work we wanted to show that the main parties in the national field in Spain apply different strategies in the different CCAA and that these change through the time according to the dynamic of competence party that exists.

Table 6 shows the maximum level of collaboration reached by PP and by PSOE with other parties in the autonomic communities. This allows drawing some preliminary conclusions about the strategic relations of PP and PSOE and the dynamic of the competence of the CCAA.

In the first place, it can be observed that the PAE can only act alone or in some degrees of collaboration only on an electoral or parliament level where there are no PANE or very weak. On the contrary, in those communities in which there is a stable presence of PANE in the parliament, both parties have tended to apply strategies of government collaboration in one or several legislatures. In those communities, the PAEs, that keep strategies alone or with little gap for a collaboration with the PANE, have little chances to get to the autonomic government and they lose it when in minority. This situation is prejudicial especially for PP in Galice, Baleares or Catalonia. For this reason; even in situation of weakness of the PANE, the PAEs will have to establish a kind of relation, if this one allows them to fix a parliament majority or to consolidate his electoral space.

Finally, the establishment if principal alliances usually guaranty the PP and the PSOE a great role of influence in the systems of parties highly fragmented, as it happens in Catalonia to the POSE or in Navarra to the PP. But at the same time, this alliance can also generate conflicts and contradictions with the applied strategies by the PAE in the national politic.

#### **Conclusions**

The aim of this work was to analyze the electoral strategies and of coalition adopted by the PP and POSE in order to show that a same party can adopt simultaneously different strategies in different autonomic communities. This behaviour according to our approach can be explained as each community presents a different dynamic of competence very different, especially in which there are relevant non-national parties. In fact, it has been possible to identify those different electoral strategies and of coalition used by the PSOE and the PP simultaneously in the different CCAA and also it can be concluded that the characteristics of the competence en in each territory is a determinant factor to explain the adoption of a strategy or another.

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## TABLES

**Table 1. SWP's collaborative relations: electoral and parliamentary arenas.**

		Parliamentary - Government collaboration		
Electoral Collaboration		Alone	Parliamentary coalition*	Government coalition
	Alone	1	4	7
	Electoral coalition	2	5	8
	Permanet alliance	3	6	9

NOTA: \* Se considera coalición parlamentaria como apoyo estable parlamentario desde el momento de la investidura. Sólo se tendrá en cuenta un voto favorable en la votación de la investidura o bien una abstención con contrapartidas políticas.

**Tabla 2. Types of collaborative strategies with other parties**

Type	Strategy	Description
1	SOL Standing alone	The SWP stands alone in the opposition or in government (absolute majority) or majority minority.
2	CE Pre-electoral coalition in the opposition	Forms an electoral coalition but stays in the opposition.
3	ATP Permanent alliance with no more collaboration	The alliance stays in the opposition or forms a government (absolute majority) or majority minority.
4	CP Parliamentary coalition	The SWP stands alone reaching parliamentary agreements but without having seats in the cabinet.
5	CEP Electoral and parliamentary coalition	The SWP forms a coalition and reaches parliamentary agreements, but without having seats in the cabinet.
6	ACP Permanent alliance and parliamentary coalition	The permanent alliance reaches parliamentary agreements, but without having seats in the cabinet.
7	CG Government coalition	The SWP stands alone in the elections but has seats in the coalition government.
8	CEG Electoral and government coalition	The SWP forms a coalition that after the election becomes a coalition government (eventually with other parties).
9	ACG Permanent alliance and government coalition	The permanent alliance forms a coalition government with other parties.

**Tabla 3. PP's collaborative relations in different terms.**

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
Andalucía	S *	S	S	S	SOL	S	S	S	-
Aragón	S	SOL CG	CG	CG	SOL	SOL	SOL	-	-
Asturias	S	SOL	SOL	SOL	S	SOL	SOL	-	-
Baleares	CP	CG	CEG SOL	S	S	S	S	-	-
Canarias	SOL	CG	SOL	CG	CG	CG	CG	-	-
Cantabria	CEG	SOL CP	CG	CG	CG	S	S	-	-
Cataluña	SOL	S	S	S	CP	CP	SOL	SOL	-
Castilla León	SOL	CP	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Castilla-la Mancha	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Extremadura	S	S	S	SOL	S	S	CE	-	-
Galicia	CG	SOL	S	S	CE	S	S	S	-
Madrid	S	SOL	SOL	S	S	S	S	-	-
Murcia	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Navarra	SOL	SOL	ATP	ATP	ATP	ACG	ACG	-	-
La Rioja	S	SOL CG	SOL	S	S	S	S	-	-
País Vasco	SOL	SOL	SOL	SOL	SOL	SOL	CE	SOL	CP
Com. Valenciana	S	SOL	S	CG	S	S	S	-	-

**FUENTE:** Datos propios de los autores. **NOTA:** Para la lectura de las siglas, consultar tabla 2. \* Se considera que una actuación en solitario resulta forzada (S) cuando no existen otras alternativas estratégicas. Esta categoría corresponde a tres casos: 1) El partido queda en la oposición porque otro partido obtiene mayoría absoluta; 2) El partido obtiene y decide en consecuencia gobernar en solitario (excepciones: Andalucía (1996-2000) y Cataluña (1984-1986)); 3) El partido queda en primera posición, sin mayoría absoluta, pero ningún otro partido está dispuesto a colaborar con él.

**Tabla 4. PSOE's collaborative relations in different terms.**

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
Andalucía	S *	S	S	S	CG	CG	S	S	-
Aragón	S	SOL	SOL	SOL	CG	CG	CG	-	-
Asturias	S	SOL	CP	SOL	S	CG	SOL	-	-
Baleares	SOL	SOL	SOL	S	CEG	CE	CG	-	-
Canarias	CP	SOL	CG	SOL	SOL	SOL	SOL	-	-
Cantabria	SOL	SOL CG	S	SOL	SOL	CG	CG	-	-
Cataluña	ATP	ATP	ATP	ATP	ATP	ATP <sup>+</sup>	ACG <sup>+</sup>	ACG <sup>+</sup>	-
Castilla León	SOL	SOL	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Castilla Mancha	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Extremadura	S	S	S	CP	S	CEP	CEP	-	-
Galicia	SOL	CG	S	S	CE	S	CG	S	-
Madrid	S	CP	CP	S	S	S	S	-	-
Murcia	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Navarra	SOL	SOL	SOL	CG SOL	SOL	SOL	CP	-	-
La Rioja	S	SOL CG	CG	S	S	S	S	-	-
País Vasco	SOL	SOL	CG	SOL CG	CG	SOL	SOL	SOL	CP
Com. Valenciana	S	CP	S	SOL	S	S	S	-	-

**FUENTE:** Datos propios de los autores. **NOTA:** Para la lectura de las siglas, consultar tabla 2. \* Se considera que una actuación en solitario resulta forzada (S) cuando no existen otras alternativas estratégicas. Esta categoría corresponde a tres casos: 1) El partido queda en la oposición porque otro partido obtiene mayoría absoluta; 2) El partido obtiene y decide en consecuencia gobernar en solitario (excepciones: Andalucía (1996-2000) y Cataluña (1984-1986)); 3) El partido queda en primera posición, sin mayoría absoluta, pero ningún otro partido está dispuesto a colaborar con él. + No se ha tenido en consideración la coalición PSC-CpC (1999,02003 y 2007), porque CpC nunca se ha presentado por separado. Tampoco se ha tenido en cuenta la coalición PSC-ICV en Tarragona y Lérida de 1999.

**Tabla 5. PSOE and PP's collaborative relations: a classification.**

		PARL-GOB		
		Alone	Parliamentary coalition	Government coalition
ELECT	Alone	PP 53,1 % (34) PSOE 47,9 % (34)	PP 9,4 % (6) PSOE 11,3 % (8)	PP 23,4 % (15) PSOE 26,8 % (19)
	Electoral coalition	PP 3,1 % (2) PSOE 2,8 % (2)	PP 0 % (0) PSOE 2,8 % (2)	PP 3,1 % (2) PSOE 1,4 % (1)
	Permanet alliance	PP 4,7 % (3) PSOE 8,5 % (6)	PP 0 % (0) PSOE 0 % (0)	PP 3,1 % (2) PSOE 2,8 % (2)

NOTA: Total de legislaturas analizadas: 124. Quedan fuera las legislaturas con estrategia solitaria forzada (PP=64; PSOE=53). Los porcentajes se realizan sobre el resto de legislaturas para cada partido (PP N=60; PSOE N=71). Los porcentajes no necesariamente suman 100%, porque un partido pudo utilizar dos estrategias diferentes en una misma legislatura.

**Tabla 6. Spanish AACC depending on the highest degree of collaborative relations.**

		PP			
		Alone	Electoral	Parliamentary	Government
PSOE	Alone	Castilla la Mancha Murcia	-	-	-
	Electoral	-	-	Castilla y León	-
	Parliamentary	Asturias Madrid	Extremadura	-	Com. Valenciana
	Government	Andalucía		Cataluña País Vasco	Aragón Balears Canarias Cantabria Galicia La Rioja Navarra