What Are Left and Right in Argentina?
Cognitive Squemas of Citizens from Cordoba

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Abstract

Currently, there has been a recent revival of interest in research on political ideology. The case of Argentina is paradigmatic due to the particular meaning of left and right, considering the cultural and socio-historical context of this country. The present paper therefore aims to contribute to the understanding of "right" and "left" cognitive categories from the Political Psychology perspective. A non-random sample by quotas of 395 citizens (M_{age} = 37,6 years) was selected. Cognitive categories associated with the phrases "left in Argentina" and "right in Argentina" were explored using a free association technique. Data analysis implied an analysis of semantic networks. Among the most significant results, we identified heterogeneous and rich semantic networks of these ideological labels, which are contrastive in their level of cognitive sophistication and presence of idiosyncratic features. Finally, Chi-square Test showed statistically significant relationships between the socio-demographic variables and the notions of left and right.

Keywords: Political ideology, self-positioning, cognitive schemata, left wing politics, Argentina

O que São a Esquerda e a Direita na Argentina?
Esquemas Cognitivos de Cidadãos de Córdoba

Resumo

Na atualidade destaca-se um *revival* da pesquisa em ideologia política. O caso da Argentina é para-digmático porque tanto a esquerda como a direita têm um sentido particular e específico vinculado ao contexto socio-histórico e cultural do país. Nessa linha, o presente trabalho procurou aportar para à com-preensão dos sentidos vinculados com as etiquetas ideológicas "*esquerda*" e "*direita*" da perspectiva da Psicologia Política. Assim, mediante uma amostra não aleatória por quotas de 395 pessoas (M_{idade} = 37,6

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anos), através da técnica de associação livre, analisamos as categorias cognitivas dos participantes em torno das frases "*esquerda na Argentina*" e "*direita na Argentina*". Os dados foram analisados mediante a técnica de Redes Semânticas. Entre os resultados mais significativos, identificamos redes semânticas de uma grande diversidade e riqueza, que contrastam entre si em função do seu nível de sofisticação cognitiva e a sua presença de elementos idiossincráticos. Ao mesmo tempo, as análises de qui-quadrado feitas identificaram relações significativas entre as variáveis sociodemográficas e as noções de direita e esquerda.

Palavras-chave: Ideologia Política, esquemas cognitivos, direita, esquerda, Argentina.

¿Qué Son la Izquierda y la Derecha en Argentina?
Esquemas Cognitivos de Ciudadanos Cordobeses

Resumen

En la actualidad se destaca un *revival* en la investigación de la ideología política. El caso de Argentina es paradigmático ya que tanto la izquierda como la derecha adquieren una significación particular y específica en función del contexto socio-histórico y cultural del país. En esa línea, el presente trabajo intentó aportar a la comprensión de los sentidos vinculados con las etiquetas ideológicas "*izquierda*" y "*derecha*" desde la perspectiva de la Psicología Política. Así, mediante un muestreo no aleatorio por cuotas de 395 personas (media de edad= 37,6), a través de la técnica de asociación libre, se exploraron las categorías cognitivas de los participantes en torno a las frases estímulo "*izquierda en Argentina*" y "*derecha en Argentina*". Los datos fueron analizados mediante la técnica de Redes Semánticas. Entre los resultados más significativos se lograron identificar redes semánticas sobre estas etiquetas ideológicas de una gran diversidad y riqueza, que contrastan entre sí en función de su nivel de sofisticación cognitiva y presencia de elementos idiosincráticos. Asimismo, los análisis de chi cuadrado efectuados identificaron relaciones significativas entre las variables socio-demográficas y las nociones de izquierda y derecha.

Palabras clave: Ideología Política, esquemas cognitivos, derecha, izquierda, Argentina.

The aim of this article is to analyze and discuss the various left and right cognitive schemas of citizens from Cordoba, Argentina. This work brings an operational and methodological discussion to the debates on political ideology in Latin America from the citizens' perspective by identifying the different ways in which they appropriate and understand these categories. Thus, attempts were made to identify particular elements and characteristics of the local context that have an impact on those categories and to notice that left and right cognitive schemas are related to the socio-demographic positions and trajectories of the citizens themselves. In this way, as right and left ideological categories are presented as products of the basic processes of social knowledge, resulting from social interaction, they represent legitimate knowledge while

accounting for the "politicized character" of these processes (Ibañez, 1992, p. 23).

Over the last decade, many authors have argued that Latin America is experiencing a shift to the left (Arnson & Perales, 2007; Cameron & Herschberg, 2010; Levitsky & Roberts, 2011; Schamis, 2006). This shift has been understood as a rearrangement of citizens' electoral preferences and a reaction of party elites to protest movements against fiscal austerity programs and neoliberal political reforms that affected the region during the last decades of the 20th century (Freidenberg & Casullo, 2014). For Arditi (2009), the shift to the left is not only related to electoral victories, but also to "the production of a new political and ideological common sense" (p. 240) in a highly heterogeneous process (Mocca, 2008). In the face of

the end of ideology discourses that prevailed in the 1990s, after the end of the Cold War, the interpretation proposed by these authors is that political ideology continues to be relevant so as to understand Latin American politics.

However, Arditi (2009, p. 233) wonders "¿how can we talk about a shift to the left if we do not know so well what we mean when we make reference to left?". The starting point of his questioning is the idea that both left and right have become ambiguous categories in the current context and that they would not be a relevant element in the shaping of political identities at a subjective level.

In this regard, Arditi (2009) discusses the "mirror" configuration of the meanings related to right and left. Whereas the former has defended economic orthodoxy and public sector reforms, while promoting an alignment in foreign affairs with the United States, the prototypical left has supported the interest in altering the status quo, fostering the critical discussion of public affairs and popular participation. The author points out that after the eighties the left's imaginary included a revaluation of electoral democracy and an extension of its addressees beyond the working classes. Subsequently, after the unsuccessful application of the Washington Consensus and the crisis of 2001 in Argentina, the left also adopts slogans related to the resistance to neoliberalism and the demand for a strong State. According to Arditi, symptoms of the "post-liberal dimension present in the shift to the left" (2009, p. 236) appear: new ways of participation beyond electoral logic, but also elections and party representation as key concepts. Another characteristic of the current left is that it moves away from more Leninist positions; in that way "it tends to demand equality without necessarily abolishing capita-lism, international trade or liberal citizenship", which accounts for its more post-liberal than anti-liberal character (Arditi, 2009, p. 241). Even anti-imperialism and the concept of sovereignty have become debatable axes of left positions in the region.

Moreover, in an attempt to illustrate the diversity of this ideological shift, some authors have proposed to consider the presence of two Latin American lefts, a "good", "pragmatic", "realistic", "modern" and "democratic" left represented by Bachelet (Chile), da Silva and Roussef (Brazil), and Tabaré Vázquez (Uruguay), and a "bad", "populist", "demagogic" and "nationalist" left represented by Chávez and Maduro (Venezuela), Morales (Bolivia) and Kirchner (Argentina), among others (Borsani, 2008; Castañeda, 2006; Petkoff, 2005). Apart from the regulatory character of this distinction, the adherence of regional political regimes to these taxonomies leads to discussions about their classification (Leiras, 2007). Ramírez Gallegos (2006) makes reference to the simplistic view of this binarism, pointing out that Latin American lefts owe their heterogeneity to neoliberal institutional inheritances, to the place assigned to social movements and to the historical trajectory of progressive parties. According to Mocca (2008), part of the Latin American left made commitments with neoliberalism, reducing itself to a cultural left, less focused on socio-structural issues. For Rivarola Puntigliano (2008), these positions may also be seen as a new right or a pragmatic center.

On the other hand, Corporación Latino-barómetro (2013) proposes the existence of three lefts in the region. In this way, while countries like Brazil, Chile and Ecuador, among others, would represent the center-left; Bolivia, Cuba and Venezuela would account for the left of the socialism of the 21st century, and Argentina would be the only country with a plainly left-wing national government. In contrast, the right is univocally conceived and would be represented by the former president of Panama (Martinelli) and the center-right by the outgoing governments of Peru (García) and Chile (Piñeira), among others. For Luna and Rovira Kaltwasser (2011), instead, there would be two types of rights in the region: the one that is represented by "strongly institutionalized parties, based on an epic that redefines the legacies of recent authoritarian regimes" and that represents upper-class conservative interests, and a type II right that "does not represent an autho-

ritarian legacy", and that mobilizes the independent electorate by means of a high electoral personalization and political marketing strategies (p. 18). Figueroa Ibarra and Moreno (2010), in turn, believe that the right in Latin America is heterogeneous, although it tends to represent the interests of business elites and mass media leaders, to support the moral conservatism of the catholic hierarchy as a colonial legacy in the region, to promote an elitist democracy and to disqualify mass mobilization expressions as being "populist".

On the other hand, Rivarola Puntigliano (2008) states that left-right ideas in Latin America are still influenced by a Cold War dichotomy. In this way, left-right oppositions would be placed on the systemic/anti-systemic axis associated with capitalism/socialism. However, according to the author, reducing these ideological labels to the above-mentioned oppositions diminishes analytical ability, as the new globalization context includes parameters that challenge the established ideological definitions.

In turn, many works have revealed certain conflict axes or antagonisms resulting from the State-market dichotomy in relation to left-right orientations. Thus, the neoliberalism-statism axis is prioritized in comparative studies on the ideological position both of regional political elites (Alcántara Sáez, 2008) and of citizens (Zechmeister & Corral, 2010) from various Latin American countries. In this regard, the preference for a greater State intervention is an idiosyncratic feature of the left (Rodríguez Kauth, 2001), together with the contemporary emphasis on collectivism, multiculturalism, environmentalism, secularism, economic nationalism and anti-globalization positions. Another idiosyncratic feature is the concept of participatory democracy within the framework of increasing questioning regarding liberal representative democracy (Offe & Schmitter, 1995; Santos, 2005). In contrast, the right is associated with a greater importance of market over State, the prioritization of individual autonomy, views tending towards cultural homogenization, economic growth regardless

of sustainable development, clericalism, free trade, internationalization, the formalist subjection to representative democracy and the recognition of political parties as traditional participation channels (Alcántara Sáez, 2008). In the case of Argentina, Alcántara Sáez (2008) states that both the parliamentary representation of the Justicialist Party (*Partido Justicialista* [PJ]) and the ex president Cristina Fernández would belong to the center-left. Borsani (2008), on the other hand, holds that Argentina's current situation is particularly confusing and "hard to classify" due to "the traditionally wide political spectrum" of the Justicialist Party (p. 48).

The Justicialist Party, as an organized expression of the movement known as Peronism, includes the different ideological trajectories that have found expression in it. On the one hand, integral nationalism, militarism, the representation of working class sectors and the social justice proclamations of historical Peronism (Doyon, 1988; Spektorowski, 1991). On the other hand, the anti-imperialist left movements and anti-communist expressions of the sixties and seventies (Bohoslavsky & Vicente, 2014). Lastly, neoliberalism, the closeness to catholic conservatism, and the strategic alliance between Menemism and the United States in the nineties (Escudé, 1998; Gallo, 2008), and the Kirchnerist governments which – since 2003 – have proclaimed a period in which neoliberalism has been overcome.

At the same time, the historical presence of Peronism has led some analysts to hold that in Argentina it is impossible to strictly talk about "right" and "left" (Touraine, 2006), even though references to these ideological categories are usual in political speeches.

The ideological position of former presidents Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández has also given rise to much discussion. Borsani (2008) holds that it is a populist left or pragmatic left. For other authors, however, this would be a capitalist management of the State (Caparrós, 2011; Ogando, 2010), in line with the slogan of a "more serious capitalism" promoted by the national government and which would be tradition-

ally considered representative of right programs. In this way, the close relationship of the national government with mining companies and extractive industries, the repayment of the foreign debt, the maintenance of a regressive tax system (Ogando, 2010), among other contro-versial points, are elements that make it difficult to classify Argentina's national government as being left-wing.

On the other hand, Mocca (2008) argues that the heterogeneity of the Argentine left has been historically greater than in countries such as Uruguay or Brazil. Thus, the author points out that the socialist tradition that inherited the critical profile of Argentine liberalism which characterized the Socialist and Communist Parties coexists with and fights against the national-popular tradition that marked the alliance of left sectors with Peronism. Consequently, there is evidence of "alternative and sometimes antagonistic narratives of the past" and "equally contradictory interpretations about the present" (Mocca, 2008, p. 133).

Multiple Meanings of Left and Right from Citizens' Perspective

Beyond the discussions about the ideological classification of governments and political parties in the region in general, and in Argentina in particular, different precedents have also reported multiple ideas or assessments in relation to left and right from the citizens' perspective. Within the framework of these discussions, Political Psychology has made various efforts so as to facilitate access to Political Ideology (PI) from a micro-political perspective.

In this regard, a study conducted with 155 members of different dominant sectors of Peru (Ruiz Huidobro, 2011) indicates that for these groups reference to state intervention and respect for democracy are two defining characteristics of the left. As regards democratic defense, some interviewees hold that the left defends representative democracy but deepening it through new direct democracy channels. Ruiz Huidobro (2011) also identified meanings related to a "new democratic left", and an "old left", which is more anti-systemic (anti-capitalist, anti-

imperialist and non-democratic) and maintains the concept of class struggle.

At the same time, the existence of evaluative contents stands out in the structuring of the ideological labeling and referencing process, expressed in terms that are no longer antagonistic but differential. This is the case of the pair equality-freedom (Evans, Heath, & Lalljee, 1996; Jost, 2006) as evaluative orientations that account for significant ideological contents with regard to the definition of left and right categories. In this regard, D'Adamo and García Beaudoux (1999) looked into the contents associated by Argentine citizens with left and right, concluding that these meanings "are constructed and re-constructed in their dialectical relationship between themselves and with the environment" (p. 214). Furthermore, they point out that frequently those who identified themselves as being left-wingers consider it essential to protect minority rights, an aspect that is highlighted only by half of those whose consider themselves to be right-wingers. In turn, the vast majority of left-wingers considered that a society is fair if all the privileges are eliminated, whereas right-wingers consider the existing social hierarchies and privileges as a natural fact.

In the same sense, another local and more recent study observes "a tendency to prefer equality in those participants who classify themselves as being closer to the left" and "a greater emphasis on freedom in those who are closer to the right" (Delfino & Zubieta, 2011, p. 102). On the other hand, Jost (2006) mentions two central dimensions, relatively stable, which enable the identification of the contrast between left and right positions for citizens: attitudes towards inequity, and attitudes towards social change versus tradition.

Moreover, Ulloa (2006) conducted a semantic network analysis with Chilean students and found that the right tends to be defined by attributes different from those used in the case of the left, while in the definition of the left people make associations with a higher level of antagonism. Thus, he holds that "the left is more contrary to the right than the right is to the left" (p. 131). He also mentions the existence of a high

positive relationship between semantic richness and antagonism: the more political information is handled, the more frequently right and left are seen as opposite categories. In line with Evans et al. (1996), Ulloa (2006) notes "the great importance of historical factors to the detriment of rather current topics" (p. 136) in the structuring of these right and left antagonism dimensions. The author further observes that a core of shared negative assessments persists in both categories, which may be due to a certain load of social discredit.

Furthermore, Zechmeister (2006) states that the symbolic content of left-right labels may refer to certain relevant political groups and – when the political stage is highly personalized – to names of particular political leaders. This author highlights the fact that elites have an influence on the meaning of these labels, and that, as a consequence, it might be expected that the meanings that citizens associate them with are related to the way in which elites understand them. Her results also show that political sophistication has a negative correlation with left symbolic conceptions.

In addition, Roccato, Gattino and Patris (2000) consider that for Political Psychology the left-right distinction is based on "different sensitivities, interests and values" (p. 76). These authors find that those who define themselves to be left-wingers and show a greater interest in politics conceive the term right in a negative manner. Moreover, in order to define the left, they use definientia associated with its "noblest and most classical" features (p. 93) such as equality, solidarity, etc. Coincidentally, those who identify themselves with the right and with little interest in politics show a "perception of rejection of the left" (p. 93). As we can see, the aspects of cognitive and affective nature assigned by individuals to right and left categories are also important.

In consideration of this background, this work makes a contribution from the Political Psychology field to the understanding of political ideology by addressing the cognitive categories corresponding to the "left" and the "right" in Argentina.

Method

Participants

A quota sampling was carried out (Lohr, 2000). According to the proportions estimated by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC, 2010), quotas were established by age, sex and socio-economic level. The sample included 395 participants ranging from 18 to 65 years old from the city of Cordoba, with a mean of 37.6 years old (18-25 years old = 23%, 26-35 years old = 21%, 36-45 years old = 20%, 46-55 years old = 19% and 56–65 years old =17%). 50.1% were women; 52% belonged to typical middle, upper middle and high socio-economic levels, 22% to the upper low level, 16% to the lower low level and 10% to the marginal level.

Variables and Instruments

Socio-Demographic Variables. Closed-ended questions were prepared. Socio-economic level was measured through an index that reflects the relationship between the number of people that earn an income and the number of household members, the education level of the household's main earner, his or her occupation, as well as health care and poverty indicators (Asociación Argentina de Marketing, Sociedad Argentina de Investigadores de Marketing y Opinión, & Cámara de Empresas de Investigación Social y de Mercado [AAM-SAIMO-CEIM], 2006). For the interpretation of results, it should be noted that the higher the score on this scale, the lower the socio-economic level. In turn, the education level was evaluated based on the highest level of studies completed.

Left and Right Notions. The stimulus phrases "left in Argentina" and "right in Argentina" were presented and participants were asked to say "the first words that came to their minds and that they would associate with the phrase" in question. They were given one minute to say all the words that they associated with each phrase. This technique is called free-association technique and structured and reflexive thoughts must be avoided, as they are not useful

when investigating the meaning of a word for a social group (Vera Noriega, Pimentel, & Batista Albuquerque, 2005).

Data Analysis

A Semantic Network analysis was performed. From this perspective, concepts become significant as long as they are connected with one another, as it is impossible to attribute meaning to a term in isolation. In this way, the meaning between terms is represented by arcs that show their connection (Quillian, 1968). In order to conduct this analysis, in the first place and considering the number of similar words, a re-categorization was performed based on a concordance analysis between four experts. Then, the words that were mentioned at least 10 times were selected. As a result, 32 definientia for "left in Argentina" and 22 definientia for "right in Argentina" were obtained. Each group of definientia (left and right in Argentina) underwent semantic network analysis independently, using

UCINET software, by means of the *K-Core* method and then the *Quality* method, thus confirming their power as significant categories in the definition of each of the schemas. Then, to determine if there are significant relationships between socio-demographic variables and the different nodes of the variables created based on the semantic network analysis (notions of "left in Argentina" on the one hand, and "right in Argentina" on the other hand), estimates were performed based on the Chi-square test with a type I error probability set at < .05.

Results

¿What is "Left in Argentina" for Citizens from Cordoba?

The results of the semantic network analysis for the case of the "left in Argentina" indicate a six-node structure. This structure has shown a moderate degree of adjustment (Fitness .375), thus categorizing 91% of cases (see Figure 1).

■ Node 1; □ Node 2; ■ Node 3; ■ Node 4; ■ Node 5; ■ Node 6.
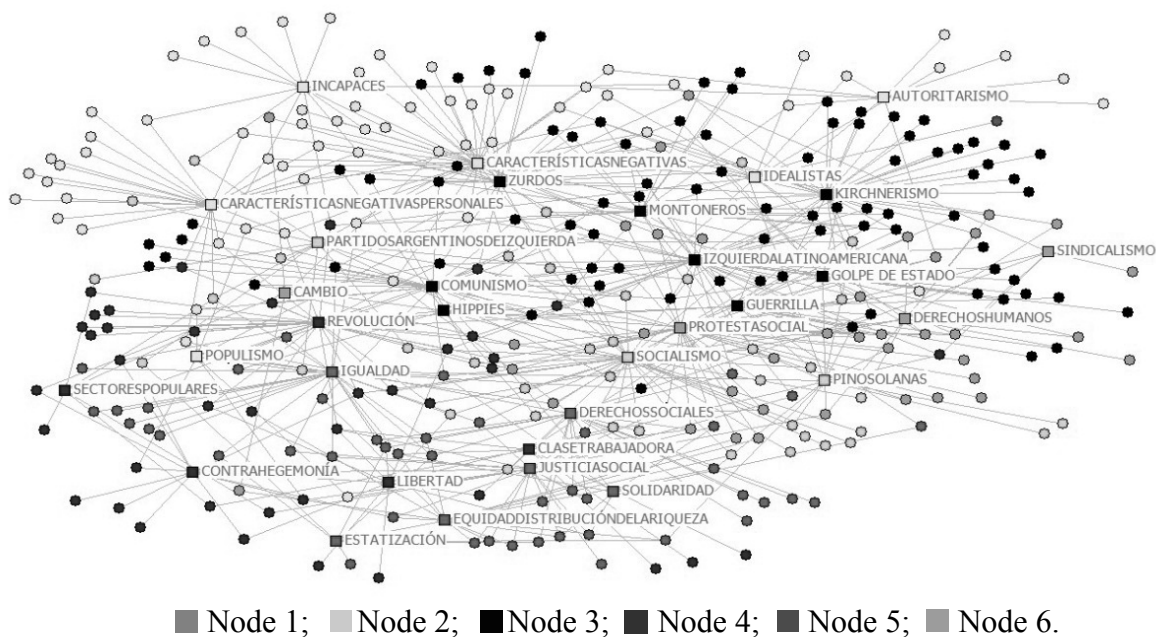
Figure 1. Graph representing the five nodes of the "Left in Argentina".

Figure 1 shows that participants have very different conceptions of the left. The main differences are related to its cognitive complexity and sophistication level, and the presence of idiosyncratic and affective characteristics. In

this way, node 1 (f = 20.4%) was called "negative conceptions", as it contains pejorative and disqualifying qualities of the left. In this regard, for example, the category "personal negative characteristics" includes definientia such as "in-

coherent", "incompetent", "criminals", "bad", "idealistic", etc. In turn, the category "negative characteristics" includes definientia that disqualify the left ideology abstractly instead of left-wing individuals in particular, such as "hypocrisy", "corruption", "deception", "stupid ideology", "populism", and "authoritarianism". These conceptions are characterized by strong affective and idiosyncratic elements, with a low level of sophistication and cognitive complexity.

The second node identified (f = 12.6%) was labeled "institutional left". This is a group of meanings that refers to political leaders and figures, as well as to Argentine political parties. Thus, it recovers elements associated with a certain parliamentary left tradition in this country. In this way, the category "Argentine left-wing parties" includes references to the "Workers' Party" (*Partido Obrero*), "United Left" (*Izquierda Unida*), among others, and to politicians such as "Zamora" and "Liliana Olivero". References to "socialism" and "Pino Solanas" were considered as individual categories because of the number of references they included. As it can be seen, this node is characterized by more sophisticated meanings than those included in node 1, which shows a certain appropriation of the political dynamics of representative democracy. In turn, this node shows the effect of current political circumstances on cognitive constructions.

Furthermore, Node 3 – the most densely populated (f = 27.4%) – groups meanings related to a "Narrative of the seventies", hence its name. Once again, like the previous node, it includes categories influenced by socio-political circumstances. However, the distinctive feature is related to senses associated with the hegemonic narrative promoted by elites. Narratives are discursive constructions in dispute, strongly tainted by ideology, which enable possible readings to describe, understand and conceive the current socio-political situation. According to Caparrós (2011, p. 259), they are the ways "in which reality is told every day", spread and legitimized by elites, and which have an influence on citizens' conceptions. In this way, the categories of this node account for the

"Kirchnerist narrative", as Caparrós (2011) calls it. This narrative groups meanings related to the "seventies" and to "Memory" politics. References to the "seventies" refer to a historical period of open confrontation between left and right. The definientia of the node include "coup d'état", "guerrilla", "*montoneros*",[2] "Kirchnerism", but also categories related to the rhetoric of Latin American unity also promoted by the national government. Therefore, reference is made to "Latin American left" (with definientia such as "Chávez", "Fidel", "Che Guevara") and "communism". The presence of the categories "*zurdos*"[3] and "hippies", idiosyncratic and with negative affectivity, give a certain pejorative connotation to this semantic network.

A higher level of complexity and sophistication was identified in the last three nodes of the semantic network. In turn, the three nodes include groups of meanings lacking affective elements. In this way, Node 4 (f = 13.8%) includes meanings associated with the "working class" and "popular sectors". It also groups definientia connected with certain anti-systemic left principles. For this reason, it was called "counterhegemonic classism". Thus, in "freedom" we find definientia such as "emancipation", "freedom of thought", "independence", which refer to freedom conceived not from the liberal logic of individual rights, but from the autonomy regarding hegemonic power. The categories "revolution" and "counter-hegemony" stress the disruption of the dominant social order, and they group definientia such as "rebellion", "revolution", "critical towards the imposed system", among others. In this case, a higher level of cognitive complexity and sophistication is found in the meanings retrieved, as they represent a systemic view, while the key actors traditionally present in the political construction of the left are identified.

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[2]   Argentine left-wing revolutionary Peronist group, active between 1970-1979. For more information see: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/391049/Montonero

[3]   Pejorative term for left-wingers.

With regard to Node 5 (*f* = 13.8%), called "great principles of the left", there is a pregnancy of traditional left principles, such as "equality", "social justice", "solidarity", "equity/distribution of wealth". Notions related to "social rights" are also retrieved, such as "legal abortion", "workers' defense", "education", "health", and economic policy principles grouped under the category "statization" (e.g., "state property", "nationalization"). Once again, we can see that the meanings retrieved in this node lack idiosyncratic and affective elements, and they show a higher level of sophistication

Finally, Node 6 was called "social left" (*f* = 11.9%). It is a node that gathers definientia that are typical of a non-parliamentary left, with reference to specific actors and certain political processes. Thus, "trade unionism" and "human rights" emphasize actors such as "guilds" and "trade unions" on the one hand, and

"Grandmothers/Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo", and "Sons and Daughters for Identity and Justice Against Oblivion and Silence" ("H.I.J.O.S"), on the other hand. "Social protest" and "change" recover institutive processes within the field of non-institutional dispute. In this regard, we can find the definientia "conflicts", "fight", "picket lines", "protest", "change", "recognition", among others. As it can be observed, this node shows an understanding of the unconventional construction logics of the left. Therefore, we hold that it has a high cognitive complexity and political sophistication.

¿What is "Right in Argentina" for Citizens from Cordoba?

For "right in Argentina", we obtained a semantic network structured in five nodes with a moderate degree of adjustment (Fitness .424), but higher that the semantic network of the left, thus categorizing 92% of cases (see Figure 2).
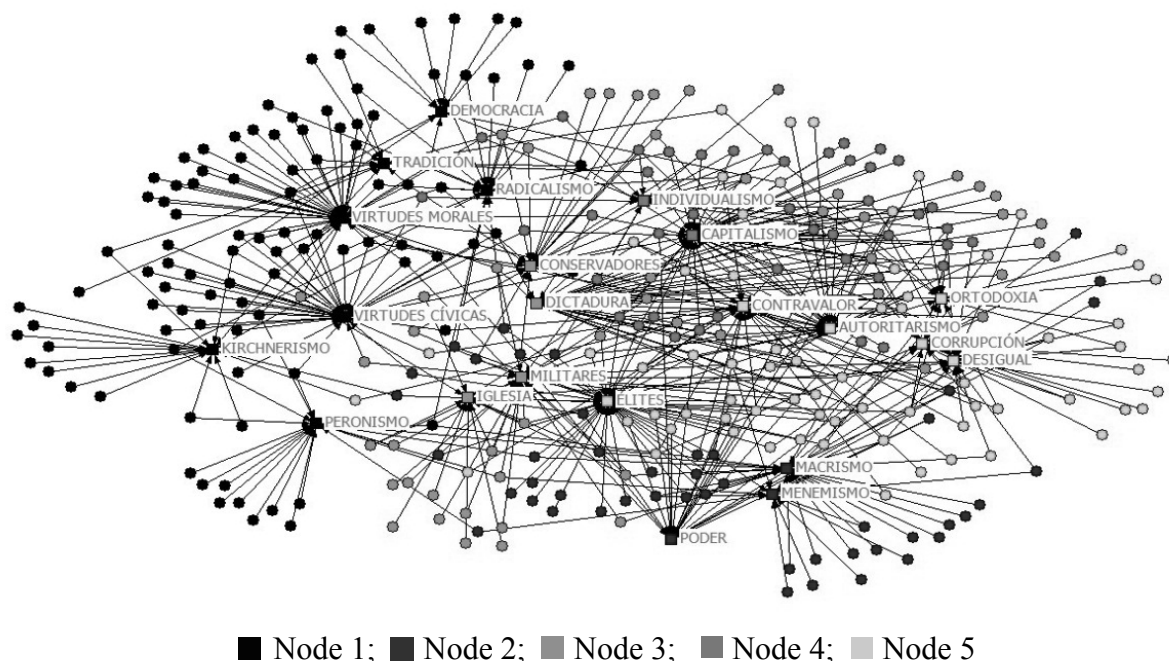

■ Node 1; ■ Node 2; ■ Node 3; ■ Node 4; ■ Node 5

Figure 2. Graph representing the five nodes of the "Right in Argentina".

Figure 2 shows that node 1, called "Argentine democratic tradition", is the most densely populated and includes 31.9% of cases. This is a node with an idiosyncratic and prototypical character in which we can find names referring

to "tradition", to "moral virtues" such as "honesty" and "work", and to "civic virtues" such as "respect for ideologies and rights", to "security" and "freedom". Moreover, this node includes references to Argentine traditional

political parties such as "Peronism" (Justicialist Party) and "Radicalism" (Radical Civic Union), as well as their main historical and current referents. This node also comprises notions with a positive value judgment regarding "democracy" and republic. Finally, this node also includes "Kirchnerism".

Node 2 ($f = 19.4\%$) includes meanings related to "neoliberal hegemony". It comprises definientia related to the category known as "power" and politicians that from their positions of power implemented neoliberalism in the nineties, such as "Alzogaray" and "Menem"; or who apply it currently, such as "Macrism", which shows the current nature of this node. Furthermore, Node 3 ($f = 18.4\%$) was called "Repressive Way", as it groups categories such as "conservatives" and "dictatorship" and includes explicit references to conservative actors of great significance in our context. In this way, there is a high frequency of mention of the categories "military", connected with the Argentine Army and its three forces, with a greater presence of references to the Air Force; and to "church" as an institution. This gives rise to a symbolic tie that accounts for the relationship between the Catholic Church and the military, which characterized the last coup d'état in Argentina (1976). There were also expressions related to dictatorship representatives in the province of Cordoba (e.g., "Menéndez").

Moreover, Node 4 ($f = 14.8\%$) represents a "Systemic view" of the right in Argentina, which includes references to "capitalism", showing that this is a node with a higher level of sophistication compared to the previous ones. Thus, we found definientia associated with "consumer society", "free market" and "private property", and references to policies that place emphasis on economics over social issues. This node also includes references related to the "commercialization" of social relations and to "individualism" as a position inherent to capitalism.

Lastly, Node 5 ($f = 15.5\%$) gathers "Negative connotations" about the right, showing a lower level of sophistication compared to the previous ones and a greater affective load. It includes references to "counter-values" (e.g., "selfishness", "injustice"), the generation of economic "inequality" and "corruption". There are also meanings related to "authoritarianism" and "orthodoxy" and "inflexibility" of thought. Surprisingly, this node also includes references to certain "elites", both to those that refer to "social elites" with more purchasing and economic power, and to the oligarchy and the bourgeoisie; and references to "political elites". The presence of these last definientia may account for a high level of social discredit of local elites.

Relationships between the Different Notions on "Right" and "Left" in Argentina and Socio-Demographic Variables

The results obtained from the Chi-Square analysis were significant in terms of the relationships found between the different notions analyzed, and socio-demographic variables (See Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1
Mean Scores of Socio-Demographic Variables for Each Notion of the "Left in Argentina" and Chi-Square Variables Relationship Test

	Notions of the "left in Argentina"						
	Node 1	Node 2	Node 3	Node 4	Node 5	Node 6	X^2
Age	41.71s	33.30	38.57	32.18	38.86	34.53	39.40*
Education level	5.83	7.15	5.87	6.43	6.75	6.45	37.22**
Socio-economic level	3.34	2.63	3.29	3.05	2.89	3.29	36.28*

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

Specifically, statistically significant relationships were identified ($p < .05$) regarding the age of participants and the notions of the "left in Argentina". Those who have "negative conceptions" (node 1) are older than those who have notions of a "social left" (node 6), "institutional left" (node 2) and a left associated with "counter-hegemonic classism" (node 4), who are the youngest, respectively.

As regards the education level variable, statistically significant relationships were also found ($p < .01$). This relationship shows that those citizens that consider the left in Argentina from "negative conceptions" (node 1) and "Narrative of the seventies" (node 3) have a lower education level than those who hold notions connected with the "institutional left" (node 2), who would be the ones with a higher education level. In relation to socio-economic level, the relationship was significant at $p < .05$, thus indicating that citizens with a higher socio-economic level conceive the left as an "institutional left" (node 2), and those who conceive it from "negative conceptions" (node 1) and from the "Narrative of the seventies" (node 3) have a lower socio-economic level.

Table 2
Mean Scores of Socio-Demographic Variables for Each Notion of the "Right in Argentina" and Chi-Square Variables Relationship Test

	Notions of the "right in Argentina"					
	Node 1	Node 2	Node 3	Node 4	Node 5	X^2
Age	40.69	32.87	35.82	36.15	39.23	42.74*
Education level	5.73	6.33	6.77	7.30	6.58	50.31**
Socio-economic level	3.36	3.10	2.89	2.61	3.00	36.28*

*$p< .05$; **$p< .001$.

Furthermore, statistically significant relationships were observed ($p < .05$) for the "right in Argentina" regarding the age of participants. In this regard, those who conceive the right as an "Argentine democratic tradition" (node 1) and from "negative connotations" (node 5) are older than those who express notions related to "Neoliberal hegemony" (node 2) and "repressive way" (node 3), who are the youngest, respectively. Regarding the education level variable, significant relationships were found ($p < .001$) indicating that those citizens who consider the "right in Argentina" as "Argentine democratic tradition" (node 1) have a lower education level than those who share the rest of the notions, who have a higher education level, respectively: "Neoliberal hegemony" (node 2), "negative connotations" (node 5), "repressive way" (node 3) and "systemic view" (node 4). Finally, significant relationships were obtained ($p < .05$) regarding socio-economic level. Citizens with a lower socio-economic level have a notion of the right based on its association with the "Argentine democratic tradition" (node 1) and "Neo-liberal hegemony" (node 2), while those who understand it from the "repressive way" (node 3), a "systemic view" (node 4) and "negative connotations" (node 5) have a higher socio-economic level.

Conclusions

This work has attempted to make a contribution to the study of political ideology from the citizens' perspective, by knowing the cognitive categories associated with "left" and "right in Argentina" resorting to assumptions of the social-cognitive theories of social knowledge. We identified six groups of meanings for the "left" and five for the "right", which allow us to understand the semantic complexity of these ideological labels among citizens from Cordoba.

In this regard, a greater semantic richness was ratified for the "left in Argentina", not only in terms of the number of nodes but also in terms of the number of definientia. This may indicate a greater appropriation by citizens of the ideas of the left in our country, which could be associated with a climate of public debate in relation to the supposed "shift to the left" of the region. Moreover, it may indicate that Mocca's (2008) claim that the Argentine left's heterogeneity is higher than the one existing in other countries is reflected not only on the parties' actions, but also on the diversity of citizens' cognitive constructions.

The greater complexity observed with regard to the category nodes that are part of this ideological position suggests, in line with Arditi's (2009) opinion, the creation of a new common sense by Argentine citizens that recovers the actions, positions and symbols of the partisan left as political-ideological center. In this regard, an event of the recent electoral context is illustrative: the presidential candidate Mauricio Macri, usually identified with the ideological right and with the economic establishment, expressly supported the policy of nationalization of the oil company YPF (*Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales*) and of Aerolíneas Argentinas, as well as a series of social and social security plans, such as the Universal Child Allowance (*Asignación Universal por Hijo* [AUH]), implemented by Kirchnerist governments, in an attempt to attract the preferences of a bigger electorate (Cué, 2015).

Moreover, both for the "right" and for the "left", each node denotes a contrast relationship with the other nodes regarding idiosyncratic, affective, cognitive sophistication and complexity characteristics.

A surprising fact is that Kirchnerism is mentioned both for the left and right categories, but value judgments are more positive regarding the latter. This fact seems to contrast with the ideological characterization that certain sectors make in relation to the governments of the former presidents Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández, although they could clearly refer to the multiple ideological trajectories historically contained in Peronism from the citizens' perspective. These contradictions are also reflected on the positions of party elites themselves: for example, after the significant progress regarding sexual and reproductive rights supported by Kirchnerist governments in the last decade (comprehensive sexuality education, equal marriage, recognition of gender identity to transgender people), the recent closeness to the Vatican hierarchy under Pope Francis's leadership has meant an increasing silencing of pending proposals related to sexual and reproductive rights, such as the legalization of abortion (Jones, 2014).

Apart from these (and some other) idiosyncratic and contextual references, the right and left cognitive schemas in Argentine citizens are still strongly influenced by historical meanings more prototypical of the Cold War context. This fact may coincide with Ulloa's (2006) suspicion that historical factors would outweigh current factors in the understanding of ideological labels.

For example, none of the nodes of the "left in Argentina" contain the definiens "democracy", while it appears in the definientia of the "right". Nor does the concept of "participatory democracy" appear in the nodes of the "left in Argentina", which is striking because, for some authors (Arditi, 2009; Offe & Schmitter, 1995; Ruiz Huidobro, 2011; Santos, 2005), one of the characteristics of current Latin American left is the demand for democracy.

In addition, seen as a whole, the nodes of the "left in Argentina" also lack an emphasis on meanings associated with anti-imperialism and sovereignty, thus confirming Arditi's (2009) impression that they are debatable axes of left-wing positions in the region. Nor are there elements associated with the resistance to neoliberalism and the demand for a strong State, which would be distinguishing features of the Argentine left after the crisis of 2001 (Arditi, 2009).

The latter is related to an antagonism axis connected with the State-market dichotomy, identified as being part of the opposition between left and right (Alcántara Sáez, 2008; Rodríguez Kauth, 2001; Ruiz Huidobro, 2011; Zechmeister & Corral, 2010). These aspects became clear in

our study with much more strength for the right than for the left. In this way, the notions about the "left in Argentina" tangentially recover these meanings, present in the definientia "statization" ("great principles of the left" node) and "social rights" ("great principles of the left" node), for example. With regard to the right, a whole node referring to these meanings was detected: "Neoliberal hegemony", which identifies specific actors that promoted the prevalence of market over State in different historical moments of the country. The node "Systemic view" also includes some definientia that refer to this dichotomy, such as "free market".

In relation to the most densely populated nodes, for the case of the "left in Argentina" it is the "narrative of the seventies" node. This is a node that, even though it refers to a history of past trajectories of the left, is presented within the framework of an ideological discourse marked by current factors. Moreover, it reveals the pregnancy of a narrative proposed by the National Executive Power and pro-government sectors which has succeeded in influencing conceptions not only of government supporters but also of opposing elites and citizens (this is shown by the presence of certain definientia of an idiosyncratic type and pejorative connotation).

In the case of the "right in Argentina", the most densely populated node was "Argentine democratic tradition", a node with a medium level of cognitive complexity, without any affective elements, which refers to an identification of the classical actors of the Argentine political scene and of the prototypical principles of the liberal tradition of representative democracy. In the case of the "left", a node that groups definientia that are similar to these in terms of the identification of key actors of local representative democracy is the "institutional left" node. Even though it is not the most densely populated node, it is a node that seems to represent the electoral left mentioned by Arditi (2009), as it refers to a parliamentary left tradition. These are definientia with a medium level of cognitive sophistication, exclusively focused on symbolic elements of ideological labels, although they are the main meanings retrieved by those with

a higher education level. These data partially confirm the negative relationship between sophistication and symbolic conceptions of the left suggested by Zechmeister (2006), as in our case this is not the less sophisticated node with regard to the understanding of the "left in Argentina". Nevertheless, in the case of the "right" it is indeed the node mainly held by individuals with a lower education level.

Furthermore, for the case of the "left" another node that recovers symbolic elements was detected. It is the "social left" node, which includes actors and processes related to the non-parliamentary left, that is to say, a left that does not entail a representation dispute limited to the exclusive sphere of State institutions, in line with Zechmeister's (2006) findings in Mexico. In this regard, it could be associated with the "post-liberal dimension present in the shift to the left" suggested by Arditi (2009, p. 236), which recovers ways of participation beyond the liberal framework and the electoral logic.

On the other hand, both for the "left" and for the "right", a "Negative conceptions" node was identified. These are nodes that include pejorative and disqualifying adjectives, with a high presence of affective and idiosyncratic elements. This may reveal –in agreement with Evans et al. (1996) – the persistence of negative value judgments related to a significant load of social discredit regarding ideological labels. Moreover, both for the "left" and for the "right", these are nodes held by people that are older than those who conceive these labels from other dimensions, which could suggest a higher level of cynicism and disappointment with the political system of those generations that have taken part in the political dynamics of Argentina for a longer time.

Furthermore, also for the case of both labels, we detected nodes that refer to a systemic understanding with a higher level of cognitive complexity and political sophistication. For the case of the "left", it is the "counter-hegemonic classism" node and for the right the "systemic view" node. They both recover some of the elements that, according to Arditi (2009) and Jost (2006), are characteristic and contrasting core meanings

of these ideological positions, with reference to the systemic/anti-systemic dichotomies associated with capitalism/socialism (Rivarola Puntigliano, 2008) and social change/preservation of the status quo. In turn, with regard to the "counter-hegemonic classism" node, it can be understood as a more classical left opposed to the new post-liberal left proposed by Arditi (2009) or else as part of the "old left" (Ruiz Huidobro, 2011). In the case of the "left" this node is held by younger people who associate the left with other semantic nodes. Once again, this could suggest a generational or life-cycle effect, in line with positions that hold that rebellion and the questioning of the status quo are characteristics of the youth, which decrease with age.

For the case of the "right" we also detected the "repressive view" node, which identifies it with the main actors that took part in the last military coup d'état in Argentina: the military and the Catholic Church. It is the only node that makes reference to meanings connected with authoritarianism and with the repression perpetrated during the seventies in our country.

For the "left" we also identified a node that focuses on meanings related to value contents assembled in the form of "great principles". These principles may correspond to a new wave of the left that moves away from more Leninist or revolutionary positions (Arditi, 2009).

Finally, results reveal the heterogeneity of the ideological labels "left" and "right in Argentina". As pointed out by Arditi (2009), it is important to know what we are talking about when we talk about left or right, as these are multi-faceted categories in the current Latin American context, and in particular in the Argentine context. Moreover, a psycho-political approach as the one suggested in this work makes it possible to overcome Touraine's (2006) reluctance to talk about "right" and "left" in Argentina. It is a question of prioritizing approaches that retrieve the socially shared meaning that these categories have for the citizens who use them. In this regard, even though the empirical limitations of a study conducted with a non-probabilistic sample and reduced to only one city of the vast Argen-

tine territory do not allow us to generalize the assumptions contained in this work, we believe that this study is a relevant contribution to understand, from an operational perspective, how citizens conceive the left and the right in a specific context.

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