Relationships between Political Ideology and cognitive schemas about "the left" in Argentina

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This study aims to contribute to the understanding of left-wing political ideologies from a Political Psychology perspective. We gathered data regarding ideology's symbolic and operative aspects, and citizens' cognitive categories about the "left in Argentina". The sample included 495 18- to 65-year-old citizens from Cordoba (Argentina). The data was analyzed in two phases, considering a mixed method approach: 1) semantic network analysis of cognitive categories about the "left in Argentina", 2) exploratory analysis and ANOVA. The most significant results included a rich semantic network regarding the "left in Argentina" structured into six nodes –negative conceptions, institutionalist left, "narrative" of the seventies, counterhegemonic classism, great principles of the left, social left. After a moderate degree of adjustment (Fitness, 375) 91% of the sample was categorized. Furthermore, the ANOVA provided data about differences between cognitive categories and ideological indicators. Finally, post hoc analysis shows that those who see "the left" in Argentina from "negative conceptions" and "narrative" of the seventies, are located further to the right while those who see it as "left institutionalist", " counterhegemonic classism ","great principles of the left" and "social left" positioned further to the left.
Keywords: Political ideology, ideological self-placement, cognitive schemas, left wing politics, mixed-method.

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Relaciones entre Ideología Política y esquemas cognitivos sobre "la izquierda" en Argentina

El objetivo del presente trabajo fue contribuir a la comprensión de las ideologías políticas de derecha-izquierda desde la perspectiva de la Psicología Política. Se recolectó información concerniente a las dimensiones simbólica y operativa, y a los esquemas cognitivos sobre "izquierda en Argentina". La muestra incluyó a 495 ciudadanos/as de Córdoba (Argentina) de 18 a 65 años. Los datos fueron analizados en dos fases, a partir de una metodología mixta: 1) análisis de redes semánticas de las categorías cognitivas sobre "izquierda en Argentina", 2) análisis exploratorios y ANOVA. Los resultados más significativos denotan una rica red semántica vinculada a "izquierda en Argentina", estructurada en seis nodos −concepciones negativas, izquierda institucionalista, relato "setentista", clasismo contrahegemónico, grandes principios de la izquierda, izquierda social− que con un grado de ajuste moderado (Fitness ,375) permitió categorizar el 91% de la muestra. A su vez, el ANOVA otorgó datos acerca de las diferencias entre categorías cognitivas e indicadores ideológicos. Por último, en los análisis post hoc se aprecia que quienes conciben a la izquierda en Argentina desde "concepciones negativas" y el "relato setentista", se ubican más a la derecha que aquellos que la consideran como "izquierda institucionalista", "clasismo contrahegemónico", "grandes principios de la izquierda" e "izquierda social", posicionados más hacia la izquierda.
Palabras clave: Ideología Política, auto-posicionamiento ideológico, esquemas cognitivos, política de izquierda, métodos mixtos.

Relações entre ideologia política e esquemas cognitivos sobre "esquerda" na Argentina

O objetivo do presente trabalho foi contribuir para a compreensão das ideologias políticas de direita e esquerda desde a perspectiva da Psicologia Política. A informação coletada foi sobre as dimensões simbólica e operativa da ideologia política, e os esquemas cognitivos sobre "esquerda na Argentina". A amostra incluiu 495 cidadãos/as de Córdoba (Argentina) de 18 a 65 anos. Os dados foram analisados em duas fases, com base numa metodologia mista: 1) análise de redes semânticas das categorias cognitivas sobre "esquerda na Argentina", 2) análise exploratória e ANOVA. Os resultados mais significativos denotam uma rica rede semântica ligada à "esquerda na Argentina", estruturada em seis nós - concepções negativas, esquerda institucionalista, narrativa "setentista", classismo contra-hegemônico, grandes princípios da esquerda, esquerda social - que com um grau de ajuste moderado (Fitness, 375) permitiram categorizar 91% da amostra. Ao mesmo tempo, a ANOVA forneceu dados sobre as diferenças entre as categorias cognitivas e os indicadores ideológicos. Finalmente, a análise post hoc mostra que aqueles que concebem a esquerda na Argentina a partir de "concepções negativas" e " narrativa setentista" são mais à direita do que aqueles que a consideram como "esquerda institucionalista", "classismo contra-hegemônico", "Grandes princípios da esquerda" e " esquerda social", posicionados mais para a esquerda.
Palavras-chave: Ideologia política, auto-posicionamento ideológico, esquemas cognitivos, política de esquerda, métodos mistos.

Relations entre idéologie politique et schémas cognitifs à propos de "la gauche" en Argentine

L'objectif du présent travail était de contribuer à la compréhension des idéologies politiques de droite et de gauche du point de vue de la psychologie politique. Des informations ont été recueillies concernant les dimensions symboliques et opérationnelles et les schémas cognitifs relatifs à la "gauche en Argentine". L'échantillon comprenait 495 citoyens de Córdoba (Argentine) âgés de 18 à 65 ans. Les données ont été analysées en deux phases, à partir d'une méthodologie mixte: 1) analyse des réseaux sémantiques des catégories cognitives sur «gauche en Argentine», 2) analyses exploratoires et ANOVA. Les résultats les plus significatifs dénotent un réseau sémantique riche lié à "la gauche en Argentine", structuré en six nœuds - conceptions négatives, gauche institutionnaliste, histoire des "années soixante-dix", classisme contre-hégémonique, grands principes de gauche, gauche sociale - un ajustement modéré (Fitness, 375) a permis de classer 91% de l'échantillon. À son tour, l'ANOVA a fourni des données sur les différences entre les catégories cognitives et les indicateurs idéologiques. Enfin, dans les analyses post hoc, on peut voir que ceux qui conçoivent la gauche en Argentine à partir des "conceptions négatives" et du histoire des "années soixante-dix" se trouvent plus à droite que ceux qui la considèrent comme "gauche institutionnaliste", "classisme contre-hégémonique" "grands principes de gauche" et "gauche sociale ", positionnés plus à gauche.

Mots-clés: idéologie politique, auto-positionnement idéologique, schémas cognitifs, politique de gauche, méthodes mixtes.

A complex articulation exists between macro-political processes, social experiences, and cultural expectations that have a significant impact on the subjective construction of citizenship. Thus, political ideology (PI) operates as a social mediator articulating the creation of citizen's political attitudes and the ideological references of elites in power through top-down and bottom-up processes (Jost, Federico & Napier, 2009).

Within these discussions, Political Psychology greatly contributed to the understanding of PI from a micro-political perspective. Along these lines, PI has been defined as a system of socially shared beliefs (Homer-Dixon, Leader Maynard, Mildenberger, Milkoreit, Mock, Quilley, Schröder & Thagard, 2013) with cognitive, affective, and motivational components (Jost, et al., 2009) that gives meaning to the political universe. It appears heuristic, making the interpretation of this universe simultaneously simpler and more complex, and possesses a significant ability to shape political action (Brussino, Rabbia, Imhoff & Paz Garcia, 2011; Jost, 2006; Lau Redlawsk, 2006). In addition, in each historical context, the nuances of PI highlight a series of antagonisms and conflictive political perspectives that are representative of each society.

Furthermore, different authors agree that *stability, coherence,* and *contrast* are core and unique attributes of PI (Converse, 1964; Jost, 2006; Knight, 2006). Along these lines, Jost et al. (2009) point out that PI's *operational dimensions* (that is, positions on different political and ideological issues) and *symbolic dimensions* (in terms of self-placement along a political ideology spectrum) are not always coherent with each other. Likewise, factors such as education, experience, and political sophistication could be directly related to these attributes of ideological positions (Jost, 2006; Jost et al., 2009). At the same time, cognitive dissonance, personality traits, epistemic motivations, psychological needs

and social values help explain why conservatives have more stable and coherent ideological positions than liberals (Brusssino, Imhoff, Rabbia & Paz Garcia, 2013; Carney, Jost, Gosling & Potter, 2008; Jost et al., 2009; Nam, Jost & Van Bavel, 2013; Sheldon & Nichols, 2009). In addition, dissonance and attribution theories help us understand differential cognitive processing of ideological information by citizens (MacCoun & Paletz, 2009).

Due to ideology's heuristic nature, we might expect that every construction about the political world also be tainted by this belief system; consequently, we could identify those three attributes in these types of constructions. However, few studies analyze the relationship between the *symbolic dimension* of ideology, its *operational dimension* and the *cognitive construction* of the notions of left and right, taking into account stability, coherence, and contrast. We would like to address this gap in this paper.

Therefore, it is fundamental to consider studies that attempt to retrieve the main meanings of ideological labels, even if they do not focus on those attributes of PI. In this regard, Mocca (2008) argues that the "left" in Argentina has been historically more heterogeneous than in other countries in the region. Some other authors consider that it is not possible to strictly talk about "right" and "left" in Argentina (Touraine, 2006). Along these lines, Arditi (2009) states that the category "left" has become cryptic and ambiguous in the current context.

Rivarola Puntigliano (2008) points out that concepts associated with the "left" and the "right" in Latin America are still influenced by the Cold War dichotomy: systemic/anti-systemic related to capitalism and socialism. Other studies have emphasized ideological conflicts or antagonisms related to the State/market dichotomy. Comparative studies regarding the ideological positions of political elites (Alcantara Saez, 2008) and of the citizens of different Latin American countries (Zechmeister & Corral, 2010) focus on neo-liberalism/nationalization. As a result, preference for major State intervention (Rodríguez Kauth, 2001), along with the contemporary emphasis on collectivism, multiculturalism, environmentalism, laicism, economic nationalism, and

anti-globalization postures are idiosyncratic characteristics of the left. Another particularity of the left is the interest in participative or deliberative democracy (De Sousa Santos, 2005).

In agreement with the above, Ruiz Huidobro (2011) notes that State intervention and respect for democracy are two definitional characteristics of the left that are prioritized by members of the Peruvian elite. In addition, conceptions related to the democratic "new left" and an anti-systemic "old left" have been identified. Other frequent comments noted the left is concerned with poverty, social justice, equality, solidarity, and changing the *status quo*.

Jost (2006) points out two relatively stable core dimensions, which allow us to contrast positions on the left and right: on the one hand, attitudes towards inequity, and on the other hand, attitudes towards social change; and Piurko, Schwartz and Davidov (2011) emphasize the importance of personal values as determinants of citizens' political orientation.

Ulloa (2006) looks at the issue from a different perspective, using Semantic Network Analysis in a study of Chilean high school students and finding that when defining the left, as opposed to the right, people make more antagonistic associations. He also found a high positive correlation between semantic richness and antagonism: exposure to more political information results in more antagonistic left and right categories. Evans (1997) and Ulloa (2006) agree that in the structuration of these antagonisms, historical factors are more important than current conditions. The latter also notes that a nucleus of shared negative valuations persists in both categories because of the social discredit associated with these categories.

According to Zechmeister (2006), when the political scene is very personalized, the symbolic contents of left and right labels may also include references to the names of particular political leaders. The author also emphasizes that elites influence the social connotations of these labels, and therefore it is to be expected that citizens' connotations of the left and right be related to the way in which the elite understands them. At the same time, political sophistication negatively correlates

with symbolic conceptions of the "left". Finally, her research shows that party support also has an impact on the meanings of these labels.

Other studies also mention stability, contrast, and coherence characteristics in the construction of the notions of "left" and "right", taking into account ideological self-placement. Along these lines, Roccato, Gattino and Patris (2000) consider that in Political Psychology the distinction between left and right is based on "different sensibilities, interests, and values", which create "different modes of perception, causal attribution, and valuations of the self and the social environment" (p. 76). Authors found that those who define themselves as leftist tend to have negative connotations of the "right". They also define the "left" using "noble and classic" terms (2000, p.93) such as equality and solidarity.

Thus, cognitive and affective aspects that people associate with ideological categories gain relevance. Likewise, a local study observed that those who self-subscribe to "left" ideology tend to value equality more than liberty (Delfino & Zubieta, 2011). Furthermore, D´Adamo and Garcia Beaudox (1999) show that those who identified as leftist consider that it is fundamental to defend minority rights and work for a more just and fair society by eliminating privileges.

A large part of the studies presented above examine PI using left-right self-placement. Even though self-placement is a measure that has empirical support due to its discriminative power; it is not sufficiently explanatory in the context of Argentina (Brussino, et al., 2011), where the contrast, stability, and coherence attributes pointed out by Knight (2006) are not evident enough. Furthermore, some authors consider important to develop complex approaches to "study political belief systems, to overcome some of the fragmentation in the current scholarship on ideology" (Homer-Dixon, et al., 2013, p. 337). Consequently, through this work we try to contribute to Political Psychology by providing explanations of left PIs using a method that triangulates three different ways to approach this phenomenon. We studied how different *cognitive categories* that correspond to the notion of the "left in Argentina" are related to PI's *symbolic dimensions* (self-placement) and

operative dimensions (attitudinal positioning on specific political issues). We were also interested in analyzing how the different notions that citizens have about the "left in Argentina" differ, taking into account the participants' PI. Finally, we hope that this analytical strategy – placed within the frame of a mixed method approach – will contribute to expanding and enabling a more complex understanding of PI, more accurately capturing contrast, stability, and coherence characteristics.

Method

Exploratory empirical study using mixed method approach (Creswell, Klassen, Plano Clark & Smith, 2011). Mixed method approaches emphasize the utility of combining qualitative and quantitative inquiries for a better and more complex comprehension of research objects.

Participants

Quota sampling was applied (Lohr, 2000). Taking into account proportions estimated by National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC), we established quotas by age, sex, and socio-economic level. The sample included 495 participants ranging from 18 to 65 years old from Cordoba (aged 18-25 = 23%, 26-35 = 21%, 36-45 = 20%, 46-55 = 19% and 56–65 =17%). Of these, 50.1% were women and 49.7% were men; 52% belonged to middle, middle superior and high socio-economic level, 22% to low superior level, 16% to lower inferior and the remaining 10% to marginal level.

Measures

Responses to the survey questions were collected in individual face-to-face interviews, emphasizing voluntary and anonymous participation. The instruments used are described below in the order in which they were applied:

Socio-demographic variables: closed-ended questions. The 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 level of education of the household's main earner, his or her occupation, as well as health care and poverty indicators (Institutional Cooperation Commission, AAM-SAIMO-CEIM, 2006). The level of education was evaluated based on the highest completed level of studies.

Left notions: notions about the "left in Argentina" were studied from a qualitative perspective, using Semantic Network Analysis. This approximation includes a first stage of data collection using free association technique: participants were asked to say – in a minute – the first words that came to their minds in relation to the stimulus phrase "left in Argentina". In this technique structured and reflexive thoughts must be avoided (Vera Noriega, Pimentel & Batista Albuquerque, 2005).

Ideological self-placement: participants were asked to identify themselves with a label that best describes their beliefs along a political ideology spectrum that stretches between (1) "totally left" and (7) "totally right", (3) being the option for center (middle-of-the-road). The following options were also accepted as a response: "cannot self-position", "none", "no answer", including the alternative categories "apolitical" and "independent".

Political ideology: the Political Ideology Scale was constructed based on Brussino, et al´s (2011) proposal. The scale's items evaluate positions on specific issues (social politics, economy, sexuality, drugs, etc.), taking into account State intervention or lack thereof. Each item was measured on a five-point scale ranging from (1) "do not agree" to (5) "totally agree". Concerning proof of validity, the internal structure of the scale was analyzed using exploratory factor analysis. The feasibility of the analysis was evaluated with the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) measure of sampling adequacy, which presented a value of .843 and the Bartlett test of sphericity, which presented significant results (gl=496; sig=.000). In accordance with Kaiser-Gutman´s rule, a five-factor structure was observed, explaining 44% of the variance. The first factor corresponding to a scale called *Sexual and Religious Conservatism* (10 items) explained 12% of the variance; the second factor, called

Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism (6 items) explained 10% of the variance, while the third and fourth factors, *Environmental Progressivism, and Multicultural Progressivism* (6 items each), explained 8% of the variance each. The fifth factor called *Rights-based Progressivism* (4 items) explained 6% of the variance. The five factors had acceptable reliability values (*Sexual and Religious Conservatism* α=.83, *Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism* α=.79, *Environmental Progressivism* α=.73, *Multicultural Progressivism* α=.61 and *Rights-based Progressivism* α=.60).

Data analysis

First, we performed a semantic network analysis in order to analyze notions of "*the left in Argentina*". In accordance with this perspective, concepts are not significant if they are considered in isolation. They only show their significance in relation to other concepts to which they are connected by arches (Quillian, 1968). Several procedures have been proposed to reveal the natural organization and hierarchy of semantic networks, based on the relationship between the concepts and their definientia (Cabrero & Vidal, 1996). The semantic network model is foremost a propositional format proposal for knowledge representation. This approach has been used before to analyze cognitive categories about social and political objects, such as "the political" (Imhoff, Gutiérrez & Brussino, 2012), "citizenship" (Rabbia, Fernández Dols & Brussino, 2006), "information and communication technologies" (Zermeño, Arellano & Ramírez, 2005), and "subjective well-being" (Anguas Plata, 2001).

Firstly, and because many similar words arose, four experts performed a re-categorization. Re-categorization is the first step of this analysis, and implies assembling similar semantic meanings under a unifying category. Subsequently, categories mentioned at least 10 times were selected, obtaining 32 definientia for the "*left in Argentina*". These definientia underwent semantic network analysis with UCINET software, using *K-Core* and *Quality* methods. As a result, several semantic nodes were identified regarding the notions about the "left in Argentina" given by the participants. Semantic nodes gathered related

definientia identified by UCINET software considering the use of each definien by participants. The adjustment of these nodes to fitness standards confirmed as truly significant categories for defining each scheme. Finally, each participant was categorized by UCINET software considering which node he or she used more frequently to refer to "left in Argentina" (for example, if the person gave three definientia belonging node 1 and only one definien regarding node 2, that person was categorized as node 1).

Then, all the data underwent univariate and bivariate exploratory analysis. Finally, a single factor variance analysis (ANOVA) with different size groups was performed. This analysis was performed using the notions of the "*left in Argentina*" constructed during the semantic network analysis as a Factor variable in order to estimate variance between the groups, thus indicating whether significant differences exist between different notions and ideological positioning. In addition, post-hoc comparisons were performed with a type 1 error probability set at <.05.

Results

a) Notions about the "left in Argentina"

We obtained a semantic network structured in six nodes with a moderate degree of adjustment (Fitness .375), thus categorizing 91% of the cases. Node 3 is the largest one grouping 27.4% of the cases, while node 1 regroups 20.4%, node 2 12.6%, nodes 4 and 5 13.8%, and node 6 only 11.9% of the study participants. Their contents are specified in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, participants have very varied conceptions of the "left". The main differences can be noted concerning sophistication, idiosyncratic and affective characteristics. Node 1 (N1) was called *negative conceptions*, as it contains judgmental and disqualifying qualities of the left. These conceptions are characterized by strong affective and idiosyncratic elements, with a low level of sophistication and cognitive complexity.

Table 1

Nodes identified in the representation chart

Factions	Components	Freq.
1. Negative Conceptions	incompetent - negative characteristics - negative personal characteristics - populism - authoritarianism - idealists	20.4%
2. Institutionalist Left	Argentinean Left parties - socialism - Pino Solanas[1]	12.6%
3. "Narrative" of The Seventies	communism - hippies - "zurdos"[2] - montoneros[3] - kirchnerism - coup d' etat - guerrilla - Latin-American left	27.4%
4. Counter Hegemonic Classism	Counter-hegemony - working class - freedom - revolution - popular sectors	13.8%
5. Great Principles of The Left	equality - social rights - social justice - solidarity - equity/distribution of wealth - statism	13.8%
6. Social Left	change - syndicalism - human rights - social protest	11.9%

[1] Fernando "Pino" Solanas, is the leader of the political party "Proyecto Sur" that considers itself a "political, social and cultural movement". This party is considered ideologically left-of-center (De Luca & Malamud, 2010). For additional information see: http://www.proyectosur.org.ar/

[2] Pejorative term for leftists.

[3] Argentine left-wing revolutionary Peronist group (guerrilla). Active between 1970-1979. For further information see: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/391049/Montonero

Node 2 (N2) was denominated *institutional left*, because it includes categories associated with the parliamentary left tradition, related to political parties and specific leaders in Argentina. These definientia have a much higher level of sophistication than the previous ones, and are also strongly influenced by current political circumstances; at the same time, they are guided by the political dynamics of representative democracy.

"Narrative" of the seventies was the name used to describe the definientia of Node 3 (N3). These categories influenced by socio-political circumstances included elements from the hegemonic narrative promoted by the elites. "Narratives" are disputed discursive constructions, strongly tainted by ideology. Thus, the categories of this notion contain core elements of what Caparros (2011) calls the "Kirshnerist narrative" and its strategic symbolic ties with the seventies and with Memory and Justice politics. The presence of the categories "*zurdos*" and "*hippies*" in this node, tainted by negative affectivity, give judgmental and pejorative connotations to this semantic network, possibly suggesting that the government's opposition uses them.

The last three nodes have a higher level of complexity and sophistication than the previous ones and do not employ affective elements to describe the stimulus phrase. Node 4 (N4) is called *counter-hegemonic classism* and it includes categories associated with the "*working class*" and "*popular sectors*", and connections with some anti-systemic left principles. In this case, there is a higher level of complexity and sophistication, suggesting a systemic outlook. In addition, key actors traditionally claimed by left-wing politics were often mentioned.

Node 5 (N5), called *great principles of the left*, is composed of traditional leftist claims such as "*equality*", "*social justice*", "*solidarity*", and "*redistribution of wealth*". Again, this is a node with a higher level of sophistication and an absence of idiosyncratic and affective categories.

Finally, Node 6 (N6) was labeled the *social left*. This node is comprised of categories related to actors and processes associated with the non-parliamentary left, that is, a left that does not seek to be represented within the exclusive field of State institutions. This is another node with higher cognitive complexity and political sophistication, thus highlighting an understanding of left's unconventional logic of construction.

Later, we will analyze the differences between these nodes taking into account ideological self-placement and PI.

b) Relationship between PI's symbolic and operative dimensions and the notions of the "left in Argentina": contrast, coherence, and stability

The main purpose of this study was to analyze how these subjective constructions of the "*left in Argentina*" relate to broader PI cognitive frames. For this reason, we examined the relationship between PI's symbolic functions and its operative dimensions.

First, we analyzed how citizens position themselves along the left-right spectrum. Results indicate that the "center" (middle-of-the-road) category has the highest proportion (30.1%) and we recorded a decline at both extremities. Thus, the options "somewhat to the left" (19.2%), "very to the left" (7.3%), and "totally left" (4.1%) add up to 30.6% of all the cases, while "somewhat to the right" (13.9%), "very to the right" (4.3%), and "totally right" (2%) add up to 20.2% of the participants. The results included a surprisingly high number of cases that cannot self-position (19.1%). Analyzing the relationship between citizens' self-placement along the left-right continuum and their attitudinal positioning before different issues, we observed that subjects who self-position to the "right" present a stronger correlation with conservative dimensions (see Table 2). The correlation with progressive dimensions is weaker for people who self-position to the "left", although it is still statistically significant.

Table 2

Correlation between self-placement and Political Ideology Scale

	Sexual and Religious Conservatism	Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism	Environmental Progressivism	Multicultural Progressivism	Rights-based Progressivism
Ideological self-placement	.41**	.56**	-.28**	-.24**	-.39**

**p< .000.*

Finally, in Table 3 the five conceptions of "*the left in Argentina*" are incorporated into the analysis above. That way, the relationships between self-placement and Political Ideology Scale were analyzed again, but this

time controlling the relationships by "left in Argentina" nodes. Thus, only people categorized as "node 1" were selected and the relationships between the variables were calculated, then repeating this procedure for people of node 2, and subsequently people of the other nodes.

Table 3

Correlation between self-placement and Political Ideology Scale, controlling the relationship by "left in Argentina" nodes

Left Notions (Nodes)	Sexual and Religious Conservatism x ideological self-placement	Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism x Ideological self-placement	Environmental Progressivism x ideological self-placement	Multicultural Progressivism x Ideological self-placement	Rights-based Progressivism x ideological self-placement
1. Negative conceptions	.38***	.52***	-.24*	.07	-.133
2. Institutional left	.45***	.60***	-.51***	-.62***	-.62***
3. "Narrative" of the seventies	.13	.49***	-.13	-.17	-.25*
4. Counter-hegemonic classism	.50***	.56***	-.22	-.17	-.08
5. Great principles of the left	.38*	.54***	-.27	-.47***	-.49***
6. Social left	.71***	.69***	-.36*	-.39*	-.440*

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

As can be noted, the relationship trend from the previous analysis persists, except that most correlations between self-placement and PI positioning on issues are stronger when controlled for nodes 2 and 6, and in some cases nodes 4 and 5 of the *"left in Argentina"*. However, when controlling for nodes 1 and 3 the relationships become weaker, and in some cases, there are no significant correlations between self-placement and PI.

A detailed analysis shows that those who conceive the *"left in Argentina"* based on *negative conceptions* (N1), present a positive but slightly weaker correlation with both conservative PI dimensions and "right"-wing ideological self-placement, compared to the relationships shown in Table 2. However, correlations with Religious and Sexual Conservatism are moderate and strong with Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism. In addition, the inverse relation between Environmental Progressivism and "right" self-placement becomes even weaker for those whose conception of the left is based on this node (N1). At the same time, Multicultural Progressivism and Rights-based Progressivism's relation to ideological self-placement loses statistical significance in this group. These results suggest there is coherence between conservative PI and "right" ideological self-placement amongst those participants who conceive the "*left in Argentina*" based on negative conceptions.

When controlling for the *institutional left* (N2), all correlations between PI and self-placement are stronger, in keeping with the results shown in Table 2. Stronger positive relationships are observed between conservative PI dimensions and "right" ideological self-placement. At the same time, the inverse relationship between "right" ideological self-placement and progressive PI dimensions is also stronger. This shows that people with this conception of the *"left in Argentina"* present improved coherence between PI's symbolic and operative dimensions. Whereas, the "*narrative of the seventies*" node (N3) presents the least coherence between the analyzed ideological dimensions. Thus, Religious and Sexual Conservatism's relation to ideological self-placement, as well as Environmental and Multicultural Progressivism's relation to self-placement, lose their statistical significance. It was observed that Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism has a positive correlation with "right" self-placement and Rights-based Progressivism has an inverse correlation with "right" self-placement amongst those participants whose understanding of the "left" is grounded in this point of view, although the correlations are weaker than those shown in Table 2.

The *counter-hegemonic classism* node (N4) only presents a significant relationship between conservative dimensions of PI and

"right" self-placement, losing statistical significance in the case of correlation with progressive dimensions. At the same time, the positive relationship between Religious and Sexual Conservatism and "right" self-placement appears stronger than in Table 2, while the correlation between Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism and "right" self-placement is slightly weaker. This might mean that mostly rightists support this node and points to a dimension of this node that had not been detected a priori. Those who conceive the *"left in Argentina"* based on the *great principles of the left* (N5) have a weaker positive correlation, than the one in Table 2, between the two conservative dimensions of PI and "right" self-placement, while the inverse correlation of "right" self-placement with Multicultural and Rights-based Progressivism becomes stronger. The relationship between Environmental Progressivism and self-placement loses statistical significance amongst people who comprehend the "left" in this manner.

Finally, the *social left* node (N6) presents stronger relationships between all dimensions of PI and self-placement, in keeping with Table 2. Thus, the positive correlation between all PI conservative dimensions and "right" self-placement, as well as the negative correlation between progressive dimensions and "right" self-placement both become more evident when controlling for this node, thus improving the coherence of the manifestations of PI.

c) Ideological differences amongst the notions about the "left in Argentina"

Results obtained using ANOVA provided significant data about the differences found amongst notions of the *"left in Argentina"* when considering PI related variables (see Table 4). More specifically, the variables ideological self-placement and PI's scales of Sexual and Religious Conservatism, Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism, Environmental Progressivism and Rights-based Progressivism showed significant differences with regards to the node groups ($p<.001$). PI's Multicultural Progressivism scale showed significant differences but these were slightly lower ($p<.05$) than those of the previous scales.

Table 4

Mean Scores and significance of the differences in the studied variables based on notions of "the left in Argentina"

	Notions of the "left in Argentina"						
	N1	N2	N3	N4	N5	N6	F
Ideological Self-placement	4.59	3.32	4.22	3.53	2.67	3.71	16.8***
Sexual and Religious Conservatism	24.89	19.45	25.19	21.25	20.45	21.71	5.97***
Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism	19.08	13.38	18.42	15.48	11.27	13.72	15.5***
Environmental Progressivism	26.21	26.79	26.28	27.67	28.60	27.83	4.38***
Multiculturalist Progressivism	24.25	25.38	23.34	25.37	25.51	25.12	2.76**
Rights-based Progressivism	15.86	17.28	15.61	17.47	19.36	16.35	4.72***

***$p < .001$. **$p < .01$. *$p < .05$.

Post-hoc analysis of PI variables shows that citizens with *negative conceptions* (N1) and "*narrative*" *of the seventies* (N3) outlooks on the "left" self-place farther "right" than those with *institutionalist left* (N2), *counter-hegemonic classism* (N4), *great principles of the left* (N5) or *social left* (N6) notions. At the same time, participants in node 5 are situated farther "left" than all the rest. This trend can also be observed in the differences in the relationship between PI factors 1 and 2, namely, *Religious and Sexual Conservatism* and *Neo-Liberal and Repressive Conservatism*. Most sexual and religious conservatives perceive the "left" based on *negative conceptions* (N1) and "*narrative*" *of the seventies* (N3) and differ significantly from those who understand it as an *institutional left* (N2), *great principles of the left* (N5) ($p < .000$) and as *counter-hegemonic classism*

(N4) (p<.05). The latter are less conservative on this issue. Participants that consider the "left" as *institutional* (N2) are the least conservative with regards to this dimension of the PI scale. While most Neo-liberal and Repressive Conservatives, who perceive the left based on *negative conceptions* (N1) and on the "*narrative*" *of the seventies* (N3), present differences with those who understand it as an *institutionalist left* (N2), *great principles of the left* (N5) and as a *social left* (N6), at *p*<.000, and as *counter-hegemonic classism* (N4), at *p*<.05 who are less conservative in this regard. Citizens that comprehend it based on the *great principles of the left* (N5) are the least conservative in Neo-liberal and Repressive terms.

A similar trend, though with inverse direction, can be seen in relation with Environmental Progressivism (factor 3 of PI). In this sense, significant differences were found between those who view the *left in Argentina* based on *negative conceptions* (N1) and the "*narrative*" *of the seventies* (N3), who score lower with regards to this type of progressivism, and those who perceive it based on *great principles of the left* (N5) (*p*<.005) who are environmentally more progressive. No other significant differences were found for the remaining groups.

With regards to differences found in terms of Multicultural Progressivism (PI factor 4), significant differences can be noted between those who perceive the "left" based on the "*narrative*" *of the seventies* (N3) – they score lower in this type of progressivism –, and those that perceive it as *counter-hegemonic classism* (N4) and based on the *great principles of the left* (N5) (*p*<.05 respectively), who are more progressive in multicultural terms. Those who conceive the "left" based on the *great principles of the left* (N5) score highest on this aspect. No significant differences were found among the other groups.

Finally, with regards to Rights-based Progressivism (PI factor 5), significant statistical differences were found between those who perceive the "*left in Argentina*" based on *negative conceptions* (N1), and the "*narrative*" *of the seventies* (N3), who present lower rights-based progressivism, and citizens whose perspective is based on the *great principles of the left* (N5) (*p*<.000), who score highest. No significant differences were found among the other conceptions of the left.

Discussion

The first step of this research project was to discover the cognitive categories that citizens associate with the "*left in Argentina*". We identified six clusters of notions that allowed us to capture the semantic complexity that these ideological labels produce amongst the citizens of Cordoba. This could suggest that Mocca's (2008) statement about the heterogeneity of left in Argentina being greater than the existent in other countries, it embodies not only the actions of political parties and organizations, but also in the diversity of citizens' cognitive constructions. At the same time, each node stands in contrast to the others based on their sophistication, idiosyncratic and affective characteristics.

A first aspect that stands out is that in none of these identified nodes appears the 'democracy' definien. In the same line, the concept of 'participative' or 'deliberative democracy' (as an opposing model to the liberal democracy), was not present in the different nodes. This is worth mentioning because some authors (Arditi, 2009; Ruiz Huidobro, 2011; Sousa Santos, 2005) agree that one of the characteristics of the left in Latin American cojuncture is the vindication of democratic system and electoral democracy, as identitary signs that appear after the defeat and the attempt of political annulment that meant the repression in the frame of the coup d' etats of the region.

Likewise, the six nodes altogether lack of an emphasis on senses associated to anti-imperialism and the idea of sovereignty, confirming Arditi's (2009) impression that those ones would be debatable axis of left positions. Only the definiens 'statism' (present in the node "great principles of the left") and 'freedom' (present in the node "counter-hegemonic classism"), seem to approximate to these senses, without referring to them in an explicit way in none of the cases.

Also, no senses associated to a resistance to neo-liberalism and a demand for a strong State, which would constitute distinctive traits of the left in Argentina after the socio-political and economic crisis of 2001 (Arditi, 2009), were part of the semantic nodes of this group of citizens. In consonance, certain axis of conflict or antagonism resulting from State/market or neo-liberalism/State dichotomy, pointed out by

some authors as constitutive of the opposition between left and right (Rodríguez Kauth, 2001; Ruiz Huidobro, 2011; Zechmeister & Corral, 2010; Zechmeister, 2006), are neither represented as part of the nodes in our present study. However, the reference to 'social rights' present in the node 'great principles of the left' seem to be suggesting the presence of notions in that line, even when there is no explicit reference of the elements pointed out by Arditi (2009) as central in the Latin American left after the Washington consensus' failure.

About each particular node, it was evidenced that the 'narrative' of the seventies node was the most densely populated regarding the quantity of definiens, at the same time that it gathered 27.4% of the cases. This is a faction that even when it remits to a 'history' of past trajectories of the left, it appears in a contemporary frame of an ideological speech contextually marked. This in turn, accounts for the pregnancy of a narrative proposed by the kirchnerist national government that has managed to impose conceptions not only in their adepts but also within the elites and citizens opposed to it (as it is evidenced by the presence of certain definiens with an idiosyncratic and pejorative connotation). Complementarily, this is the only faction that recovers elements that according to Arditi (2009) characterized the experience of political struggle of the left during the 60's, such as the Cuban revolution and Che Guevara's leadership.

The node that follows regarding the quantity of cases it represents (20.4%) and the amount of definiens that it possesses is the one correspondent to "negative conceptions' about left. This is a node that gathers mainly adjectives (not nouns) of a pejorative cut. It is the node with major presence of affective and idiosyncratic elements and that also registers the lowest level of sophistication and cognitive complexity. This could be indicating – coincidently with Evans (1997) – the persistence of a nucleus of negative values that may suggest an important charge of social discredit.

It should be pointed out that these two nodes are the most prolific in terms of contained definiens, and are at the same time the ones that have the highest frequency between people who self-position to the

right on the ideological spectrum and that sustain ideological positioning before issues coincidental with Religious Sexual Conservatism and Neo-Liberal Repressive Conservatism. Likewise, they are the ones that present a lower level of Environmental Progressivism and Rights-based Progressivism, in difference with the remaining groups. These aspects could be understood as evidence on the association between semantic richness and antagonism (Ulloa, 2006). However, the lower level of political sophistication and cognitive complexity present in these nodes (even lower in the case of "negative conceptions"), just as the presence of idiosyncratic and affective contents, suggest that more than "semantic richness" we would be talking about a major verbal fluency on the ideological label 'left' by those who consider themselves as ideological antagonists to this position.

About the nodes "counter-hegemonic classism" and "great principles of the left" (13.8% of the cases each), we can observe that both recover some of the elements that according to Arditi (2009) and Jost (2006) still constitute semantic nodes characteristics of 'left'. They also show a higher contrast with 'right' positions: the interest to alter the status quo, promote equality, solidarity and social justice. Concerning the first node, is feasible to understand it as a more classic left that is against a new post-liberal left postulated by Arditi (2009) or it is part of the 'old left' (Ruiz Huidobro, 2001). That is to say, a 'left' that prioritizes its anti-systematic characteristics, while at the same time vindicates its classic audience: the working class and the popular sectors. This is the only faction that gathers senses referent to the classic systemic/anti-systemic dichotomy associated to capitalism-socialism (Rivarola Puntigliano, 2008). The reference to an ideological order of systemic character informs about the cognitive complexity and sophistication of this node.

The second node focalizes in senses associated with a series of value contents that articulate in the way of great principles. These principles could correspond with a new wave of the 'left' far from Leninist, revolutionary or anti-systemic postures (Arditi, 2009). Just as the previous one, this faction denotes a higher level of sophistication and an absence of idiosyncratic and affective categories.

Also, the institutional left node (12.6%) seems to be related to the electoral left mentioned by Arditi (2009), inherits from the socialist left (in opposition to the national popular tradition) referred by Mocca (2008), because it remits to a parliamentary left tradition. These are definiens with a medium level of sophistication, due to the fact that they exclusively focalize in the symbolic elements of the ideological labels: name of political parties and political leaders. In addition, this nod recovers definiens strongly marked by the political conjuncture, which becomes particularly evident by the fact that 'Pino Solanas' constituted a definien by itself. This node can be associated with a 'modern', 'socio-democratic' or 'pragmatic left' referred by some authors (Rivarola Puntigliano, 2008), that is, a non-radical or anti-systemic left, opposed at the same time to a populist left.

Ultimately, the social left node (11.9%) reunites processes associated with the non-parliamentary left, that is to say, the one that does not effectuate a dispute of representation limited to the exclusive area of State institutions, similarly to Zechmeister's (2006) findings in Mexico. It is also a node of an elevated level of cognitive complexity and political sophistication, which evidences a comprehension of left's non-conventional logics of construction. In this line, it could be associated to the 'post-liberal dimension present in the turn to the left' according to Arditi (2009, p. 236) that recovers ways of participation beyond the liberal frame and the electoral logic. Results also indicate that these last four nodes ('counter-hegemonic classism', 'great principles of the left', 'institutional left' and 'social left') are hold mainly by persons who position themselves to the left of the ideological spectrum and that sustain with minor frequency conservative ideological positioning before issues. Among them, those who conceive 'left' from the "great principles of the left" faction would be positioned more to the left in the context of all groups, and evidence a minor presence of conservative positioning before situational topics and more presence of the three types of progressivism. These aspects ratify the coherence characteristic of PI pointed out by Knight (2006).

Results also highlight the heterogeneity that surrounds the ideological label "left in Argentina", which indicates the importance of not considering it unambiguous. Just as Arditi (2009) points out, it is important to know what we are talking about when we talk about 'left', since it is a multi-faceted category in the current Latin American context. At the same time, the cognitive categories found elucidate the presence of senses which go far beyond the dichotomies of Cold War (systemic/anti-systemic; capitalism/socialism), in contradiction to what was proposed by Rivarola Puntigliano (2008). Likewise, a psychopolitical approximation as the one suggested by our present work, allows overcoming Touraine's (2006) resignation to strictly speak about 'left' and 'right' in Argentina. More than a resignation, we stand out for approaches that recover the particular sense that these categories have for the citizens that use them. Therefore, it is possible to complement the phenomenon definition articulating theoretical reason criteria (Arditi, 2009) with social senses of what 'left' is in our country based on empirical reason criteria.

This deeper comprehension of what 'left' category implies for citizens, combined with an exploration of operative functions of PI (attitudinal positioning about issues) allows to investigate with major complexity the stability, contrast and coherence characteristics of PI. It also demonstrates that a simple approach of ideological self-placement constitutes an insufficient measure by itself to know the ideological constructions of people. In that regard, our results also suggest coherence between ideological self-placement and the citizens' PI, which turns out to be more stable amongst rightists than leftists. This way, those who self-position to the right evidence a stronger correlation with conservative dimensions, while those who self-position to the left have no considerable – though significant – relations with progressive dimensions. This confirms a series of previous studies that show stronger links between conservative positions and stability and coherence attributes than those noted in progressive positions (Brussino, Imhoff, Rabbia & Paz García, 2013; Jost et al., 2009; Nam, Jost & Van Bavel, 2013; Sheldon & Nichols, 2009).

From yet another perspective, PI's *Multicultural Progressivism* registered the least significant differences amongst the variety of notions of the *"left in Argentina"* when considering PI variables. This is coherent with Mocca's (2008) assumption that part of the Latin American left has made compromises with neo-liberalist positions and has reduced itself to a simple cultural left, lessening its opposition to conservative positions.

Furthermore, this relationship between ideological self-placement and PI becomes more complex when introducing cognitive categories about the "*left in Argentina"* into the analysis. This way, some relationships get stronger and some get weaker or disappear while controlling for the semantic nodes hold by citizens. This emphasizes the *heuristic* character of PI and confirms our hypothesis that the construction of meaning regarding the political world is also tainted by PI, while at the same time the way in which we give meaning to the political world has an impact on how we self-position ideologically. These results also support the coherence we noted between ideological self-placement and the "*left in Argentina"* nodes. Thus, we can once again point out PI's contrast and coherence, even among the less politically sophisticated participants.

Lastly, we address the ideological importance of Kirchnerism. There are many interpretations regarding the ideology of the current Argentine presidency. Even though we cannot draw firm conclusions based on our data, we do have to point out that neither those who self-position to the left, nor those who generally maintain progressive positioning, identified the category "Kirchnerism" as part of the *"left in Argentina".* This category appears in the "*narrative of the seventies"* node, which was mainly subscribed by rightist or persons with mostly conservative attitudinal positioning.

In conclusion, we point out that – despite the empirical limitations of a non-probabilistic study – our results contribute evidence regarding the complex configuration of citizens' PI. Nevertheless, future studies should go further in the investigation of these aspects with a probabilistic sample. On the other hand, some results contradict some authors'

assumptions (Arditi, 2009; Touraine, 2006) that left and right categories are no longer a relevant element in the configuration of people's political identities. In this line, it would be interesting to deeper analyze the impact of PI in the configuration of political identities by examining its role in endo-group and exo-group identification of different political organizations, through Social Identity Perspectives.

At the same time, results do support Jost et al.'s (2009) assertions that everyday most citizens use a series of values or principles that justify and explain different social and political events. This is why citizens should be considered ideological, even if their use of abstract concepts depends on their level of cognitive complexity. The coherence and contrast levels that have been confirmed in this study, plus the complexity and semantic diversity of the "*left in Argentina*" category, emphasize the existence of elements that significantly affect the constitution of citizens' political subjectivity. Finally, this research is part of a tradition of studies that highlight the relevance of psycho-political perspectives regarding political ideology.

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