

How the variable *gender* is treated in news broadcasts

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- *This article studies the speaking time allocated to females on news broadcasts during the period 2003-2005 from various perspectives. First, the percentage speaking time and the number of inserts are established for women compared to men on each channel, also specifying whether they belong to political or non-political groups and the trends over the three years. Then the broad news themes are chosen for each channel in which women have a speaking time higher than 75% of the total time in order to study which news items give a voice to women. Finally, a comparison is made between the real proportion of women belonging to the Catalan and Spanish governments for the two legislatures of the period analysed and how they are reflected in the speaking time allocated on news broadcasts.*

Keywords

Pluralism, news broadcasts, Catalonia, gender, women, men

Trends in speaking time related to the *gender* variable

The presence of agents on news broadcasts is determined by the number of inserts (insertion of images and voice of a political or non-political agent, without any kind of narration on the part of the channel) and speaking time (the duration of these inserts). On all channels analysed for the period 2003-2005, both speaking time and the number of inserts are much higher in the case of males than females. In this respect, men's speaking time on news broadcasts ranges between 74% on Localia and 82.5% on TV3. At the same time, the number of inserts of men on Localia accounts for 74.4% of the total number of inserts. This percentage is similar on all the channels, with the peak of TV3, reaching 80.7%. We can therefore state that, on all the channels analysed and during the period 2003-2005, males have a much higher percentage in terms of their right to speak.

If we distinguish between groups of political and non-political agents, in spite of the fact that the percentage speaking time for the female gender is always lower than that of the male gender, in the case of political agents it is slightly lower than that of non-political agents. On TV3, TVE in Catalonia, BTV and Citytv the percentage speaking time of female political agents ranges between 9.5% and 13.2% of the total; on the same channels, the percentage speaking time of female non-political agents ranges between 24.8% and 34.5%. Therefore, if the presence of women with a right to speak on news broadcasts is already very small, in the case of politics their presence is even scarcer. But we should analyse, however, if this low representation is due to any inequalities in the political situation. Localia, for its part, allocates a higher percentage speaking time to females than the rest of the channels: 20.6% in the case of political agents and 30.9% in the case of non-political agents.

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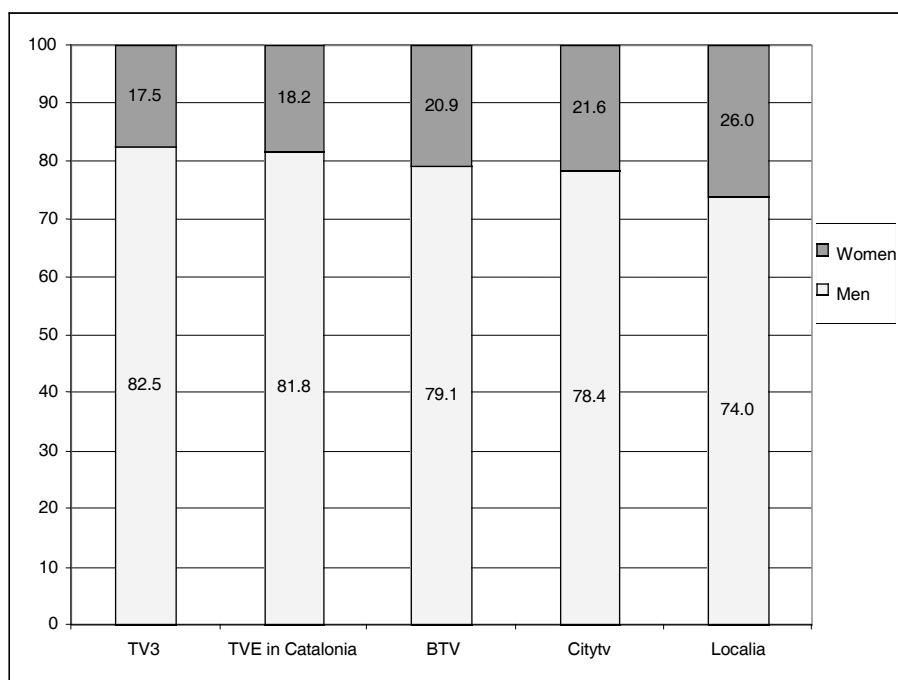
Analysts from the Technical Services of the CAC

Table 1. Percentage speaking time and number of inserts according to the variable *gender* per channel (2003-2005)

Channel	Speaking time		Number of inserts	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
TV3	82.5	17.5	80.7	19.3
TVE in Catalonia	81.8	18.2	79.5	20.5
BTV	79.1	20.9	77.2	22.8
Citytv	78.4	21.6	78.2	21.8
Localia	74.0	26.0	74.4	25.6

Source: in-house.

Table 2. Percentage speaking time according to the variable *gender* per channel



Source: in-house.

From the graphs (see tables 3 and 4) we can see that women's speaking time remains at a much lower level than men's throughout the three years on all channels. Citytv cannot be compared with the others because its news broadcasts usually give little speaking time to agents and therefore the presence of inserts is intermittent over the years.

In the case of political groups, this trend is maintained on all channels at under 24% total speaking time, although a slight increase can be seen at the start of 2003. If, in the first

quarter of 2003, channels allocated 7% to 11.5% speaking time to women belonging to political groups, in the last quarter of 2005 this percentage went from 11% to 23.3%. Citytv, as we have already mentioned, is not comparable with the rest.

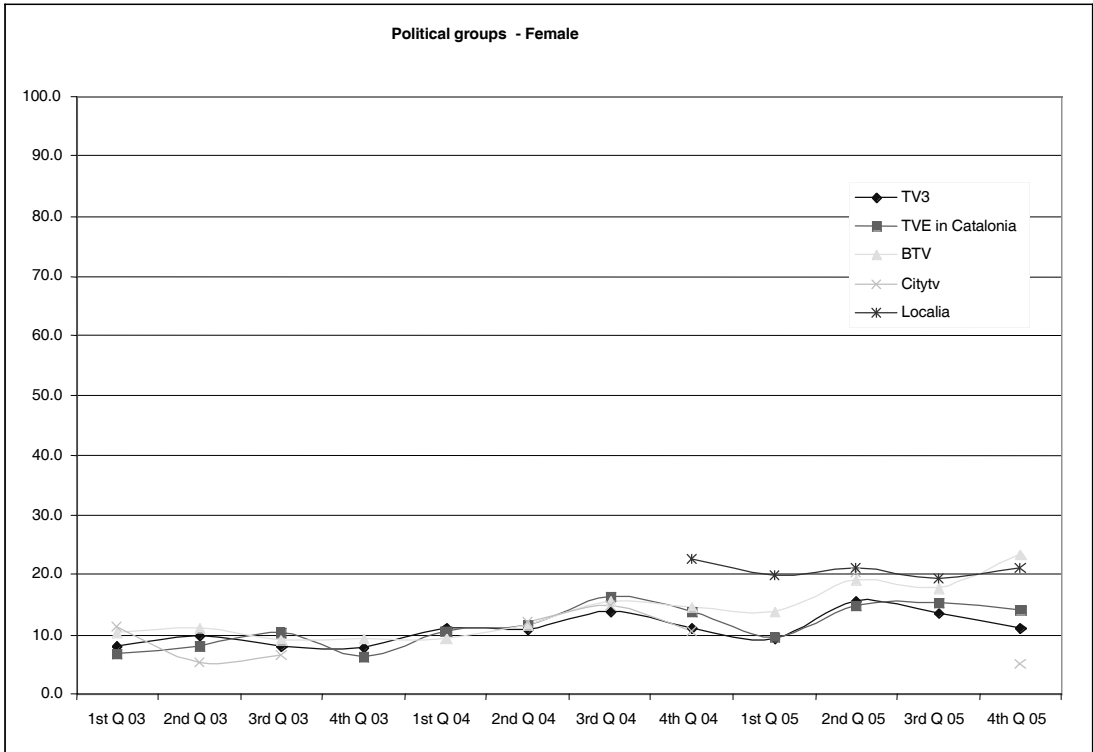
In the case of non-political groups, the trends in female speaking time remain between 21.2% and 35.5%. This percentage is higher than that for political groups but in this case no increasing trend has been observed.

Table 3. Percentage speaking time of political and non-political groups according to the variable gender

Channel	Grouping	Male	Female
TV3	Political groups	89.0	11.0
	Non-political groups	75.2	24.8
TVE in Catalonia	Political groups	88.4	11.6
	Non-political groups	72.3	27.7
BTV	Political groups	86.8	13.2
	Non-political groups	72.1	27.9
Citytv	Political groups	90.5	9.5
	Non-political groups	65.5	34.5
Localia	Political groups	79.4	20.6
	Non-political groups	69.1	30.9

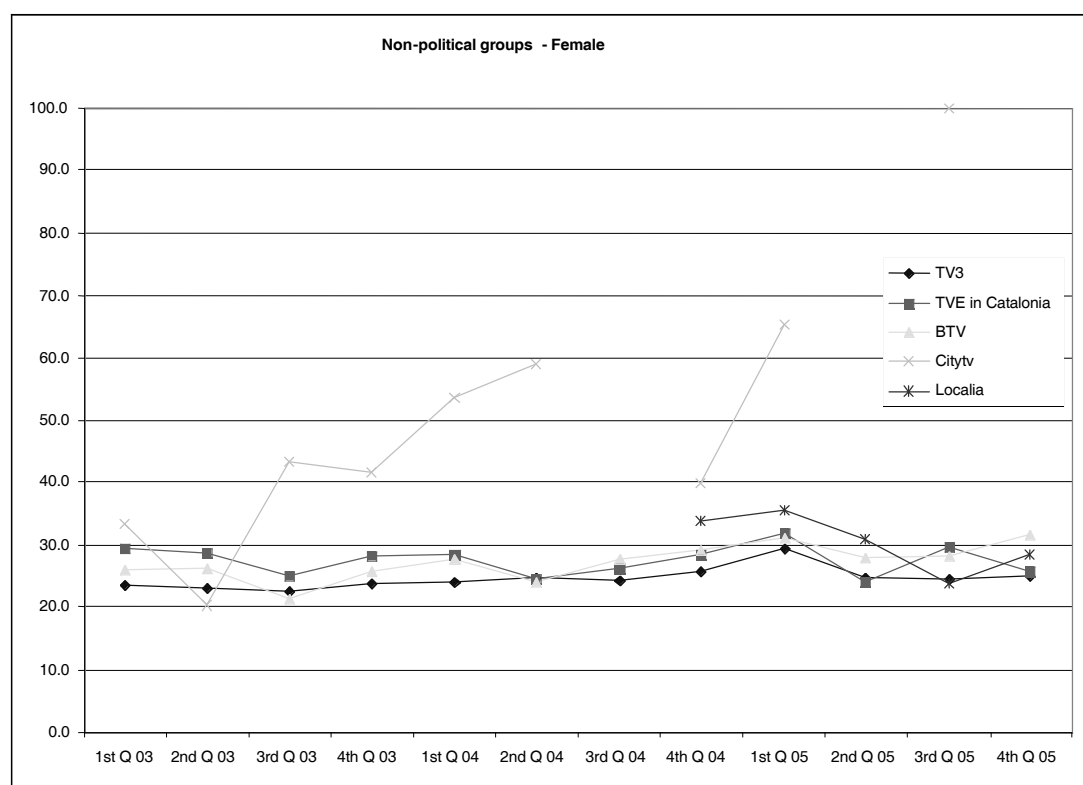
Source: in-house.

Table 4. Trends in speaking time for women belonging to political groups



Source: in-house.

Table 5. Trends in speaking time for women belonging to non-political groups



Source: in-house.

Speaking time on news broadcasts is given to males in a much higher percentage than to females. When it is a question of giving voice to agents representing political groups, this percentage increases further. On the other hand, women from non-political groups, although still lower, gain a few percentage points. The trends in speaking time according to the variable of gender over the three years are stable in the case of agents from non-political groups and tend to increase the presence of females in the case of political agents.

Events with more than 75% speaking time for women

In order to select these news items, all the broad themes have been ordered with most speaking time and, out of

those exceeding two minutes, the items have been chosen that gave more than 75% speaking time to females. This criterion has been applied to TV3, TVE in Catalonia and BTV. Given that the sample of news broadcasts on Localia is much smaller than on the rest and that Citytv has a very small number of inserts, the decision was taken not to include them in this analysis.

Among the main items that allocate a high speaking time to women, all the channels include news items for which the following are the central theme: *International Day for Women Workers*, *International Day against Gender-Based Violence*, *World Day against Breast Cancer*, *Aid for working mothers* and the *Euromed Women's Summit*. However, the channels also give greater speaking time to females in other news items, although these often don't coincide across channels.

Table 6. TV3. News items with a total speaking time greater than 2 minutes and a percentage higher than 75% allocated to females

News item	% female speaking time	Total speaking time
International Day against Gender -Based Violence (2004)	100.0	0:05:09
World Day against Breast Cancer	100.0	0:02:43
International Day for Women Workers (2005)	100.0	0:02:25
Heatwave (summer 2005)	94.7	0:03:08
Fire in Girona (14/11/04)	93.5	0:02:49
New European directive on tobacco	89.8	0:02:46
International Day for Women Workers (2003)	88.3	0:02:25
Rebel uprising in Haiti	87.2	0:04:02
Aid for working mothers	86.8	0:02:47
International Day against Gender-Based Violence (2003)	83.0	0:05:24
Trial of karate teacher accused of sexual harassment	76.6	0:05:03
International Day for Women Workers (2004)	75.4	0:07:44

Source: in-house.

In addition to the items already mentioned related to women, TV3 also gives a significant amount of speaking time to females in other events: the *Heatwave of the summer of 2005* has a high percentage of inserts of women representing the area of health and the government of Catalonia (the minister for health, Marina Geli). The *Fire in Girona in the middle of November 2004* also gave a majority voice to women, either representing the category of *Others* (residents affected by the fire) or the government of the city council (mayor Anna Pagans). The *New European directive on tobacco*, and specifically news items related to the possibility of including photographs on cigarette packets, includes many inserts by women representing various groups: health (doctors), economics (business women), from the Spanish government (the health minister, Ana Pastor) and *Others* (smokers). Also, the *Rebel uprising in Haiti*, in the first quarter of 2004, affected the Spanish families who were in the process of adopting a child from the area. That is why there is a large percentage of female inserts in the category *Others* (adoptive mothers), *Associations* (aid workers) and the government of Catalonia (department of Welfare and Family of the Generalitat). Finally, the *Trial of karate teacher accused of sexual harassment* (May 2005) includes quite a

number of inserts by women from the lawyer, the forensic psychologist, the coordinator of the related charity (Associació de Dones Agredides Sexualment) and a female teacher.

On TVE in Catalonia we find that female speaking time predominates related to *World Alzheimer's Day*: by doctors, psychologists, volunteers, the president of the AFAB (Associació de Familiars amb Malalts d'Alzheimer de Catalunya) and the female health minister of the Generalitat. In the news item on the *Start of the 2005-2006 school year* there are a large number of inserts by Marta Cid, education minister for the Generalitat, and various teachers. The *1st anniversary of the Madrid bombings* includes a high percentage of speaking time by women, such as the lawyer from the National Audience, the spokesperson for the charity Associació de Víctimes de l'11-M, Pilar Manjón, the spokesperson for the Spanish government and the Catalan minister for the Interior. Finally, the news item on the *Stopping of the application of the LOCE (Education Quality Act)*, there are inserts by the Catalan female minister for Education, the two female ministers for the Spanish ministries of Culture, Education and Sports at that time (from the two parties, the PP and the PSOE, the latter replacing the former in April 2004), the Vice-President of

FAPAC (Federació d'Associacions de Mares and Pares d'Alumnes de Catalunya) and a headmistress of a secondary school.

We should particularly mention the fact that TVE in Catalonia does not include in these main news items any insert by females belonging to the category *Others* (occasional

agents affected in some way by the news but which cannot be included in any of the political and non-political groups established).

In the news item *International Day of Children's Books*, BTV gives 100% speaking time to females, including inserts with a female bookseller and a director of a publishers, both

Table 7. TVE in Catalonia. News items with a total speaking time greater than 2 minutes and a percentage higher than 75% allocated to females

News item	% female speaking time	Total speaking time
World Alzheimer's Day	89.3	0:02:20
Start of the 2005 -2006 school year	88.5	0:02:36
World Day against Breast Cancer	86.8	0:02:31
1st anniversary of Madrid bombings	85.9	0:05:05
Stopping the applicati on of the LOCE	85.7	0:02:27
International Day against Gender -Based Violence (2003)	84.4	0:03:00
International Day against Gender -Based Violence (2004)	81.6	0:02:16

Source: in-house.

Table 8. BTV. News items with a total speaking time over 2 minutes and a percentage higher than 75% allocated to females

News item	% female speaking time	Total speaking time
International Day of Children's Books	100.0	0:04:24
International Day against Gender -Based Violence (2004)	100.0	0:03:12
World Day against Breast Cancer	93.3	0:03:58
Euromed Women's Summit	90.9	0:03:06
International Day for Women Workers (2005)	90.1	0:15:08
World Alzheimer's Day	88.3	0:08:59
International Day against AIDS	87.6	0:14:45
Education Act	87.1	0:02:58
International Day against Gender -Based Violence (2003)	83.0	0:05:05
Kyoto treaty	82.1	0:02:36
International Day for Women Workers (2004)	81.4	0:05:45
2005 Barcelona Book Fair	77.7	0:06:43
Trial for the murder of two policemen in l'Hospitalet	76.6	0:02:04
Inauguration of the new Santa Caterina market	76.1	0:10:57

Source: in-house.

therefore representing the cultural world. A large amount of the speaking time for *World Alzheimer's Day* was allocated to women from the areas of health, associations, the government of Catalonia, Barcelona City Council, the category of *Others* (relatives and carers of Alzheimer's sufferers) and *Experts* (psychologists and social educators). In the news item *International Day against AIDS* female speaking time also predominates: female doctors, representatives from local authorities, ministers for welfare, family and health from the Generalitat, as well as various spokespeople from associations related to the illness, such as: Comitè 1r de Desembre, ACTUA, Fundació Salut i Comunitat, Stop Sida, Amnesty International, Médecins Sans Frontières and Acció contra la Fam. The news programmes on BTV, for the news item *Education Act*, also gave a high percentage speaking time to women representing the Catalan government (Marta Cid), the Spanish government (María Teresa Fernández de la Vega and María Jesús Sansegundo), the PP (Ana Pastor), FAPAC and the unions CC.OO and USTEC. In the news item *Kyoto treaty*, various inserts include the participation of the minister for the environment Cristina Narbona and a university lecturer. With regard to the *2005 Barcelona Book Fair*, there's a high speaking time for the female director of the fair and a member of the organising committee, as well as a teacher. Speaking time allocated to women in the news item *Trial for the murder of two policemen in l'Hospitalet* corresponds to the female minister for the Interior of the Generalitat, to Núria de Gispert (CiU), to a woman representing the association of women jurists Themis and the female president of the TSJC. And to conclude, female speaking time for the news item *Inauguration of the Santa Caterina market* was aimed mostly at female stallholders, the female president of the association of market sellers and Benedetta Tagliabue, one of the architects.

So it can be concluded that the news items that allocated most speaking time to females coincide, on all channels, with themes focusing on women: *International Day for Women Workers*, *International Day against Gender-Based Violence*, *World Day against Breast Cancer*, *Aid for working mothers* and *Euromed Women's Summit*. Apart from these common news items, each channel has different news items that allocate more than 75% speaking time to women, often for different reasons: trials where the lawyers are women, fires in cities

governed by women, news related to ministries run by women, news items related to education, etc. Women therefore have more speaking time than men basically in those themes related to themselves and also in those where, due to the circumstances of the time, they are the main people involved.

The relationship between the percentage of women in the Catalan and Spanish governments and their media representation

To determine whether the real proportion of women in the Catalan and Spanish governments is reflected in the speaking time allocated to them on news broadcasts, a comparison has been made between the different legislatures within the period under study (January 2003 - December 2005): the 6th and 7th legislature of the government of Catalonia, with the presidents Jordi Pujol and Pasqual Maragall, and the 7th and 8th Spanish governments, presided over by José M. Aznar and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

We should clarify that the analysis includes only those members of the governments in a strict sense, i.e. the presidents and ministers, and that the variable used to evaluate this presence has always been the speaking time allocated and not the number of inserts.

Given the realisation that the monthly presence of government members, both Catalan and Spanish, is very low and often zero on Citytv and Localia, it was decided to exclude these two channels from the analysis.

Firstly, it should be noted that the percentage speaking time allocated to the women members of the different governments is, in general, slightly above average for the total agents. This is particularly significant if we take into account that the proportion of women given a voice within the world of politics is still lower than the overall figure: ranging from 11% on TV3 to 13.2% on BTV.

In order to help the comparison of trends in the presence of women on news broadcasts between the different legislatures of the period analysed, tables 9 and 10 were produced, corresponding to the Catalan and Spanish governments respectively. It should be noted that, in the kind of graph used, the percentage speaking times are not the figures for every month but the monthly mobile average, together with that of the previous two months.

Table 9. Percentage speaking time allocated to female members of the Catalan and Spanish government per channel and legislature

Channel	% female speaking time			
	Catalan government		Spanish government	
	6th legislature (Pujol)	7th legislature (Maragall)	7th legislature (Aznar)	8th legislature (Rodríguez Zapatero)
TV3	10.7	16.2	13.3	23.7
TVE in Catalonia	15.0	22.9	8.9	21.2
BTV	16.2	24.0	12.3	27.0

Source: in-house.

In addition to the data on speaking time, the graphs also show the percentage of women in the government in each legislature and any modifications in this respect caused by cabinet reshuffles.

The most notable aspect of tables 9 and 10 is that the percentage of women in the governments of both legislatures is always considerably higher than the percentage speaking time allocated by news broadcasts on the channels analysed. As with the general data on the gender variable, BTV is the channel that gives women most speaking time from the groups of the Catalan and Spanish government.

Both in the Catalan and Spanish legislatures, the trends in the three channels analysed always show a clear similarity: the peaks and troughs coincide and reveal their relationship with the news at that time, leading to more speaking time being allocated to a specific female member of the government during a specific period.

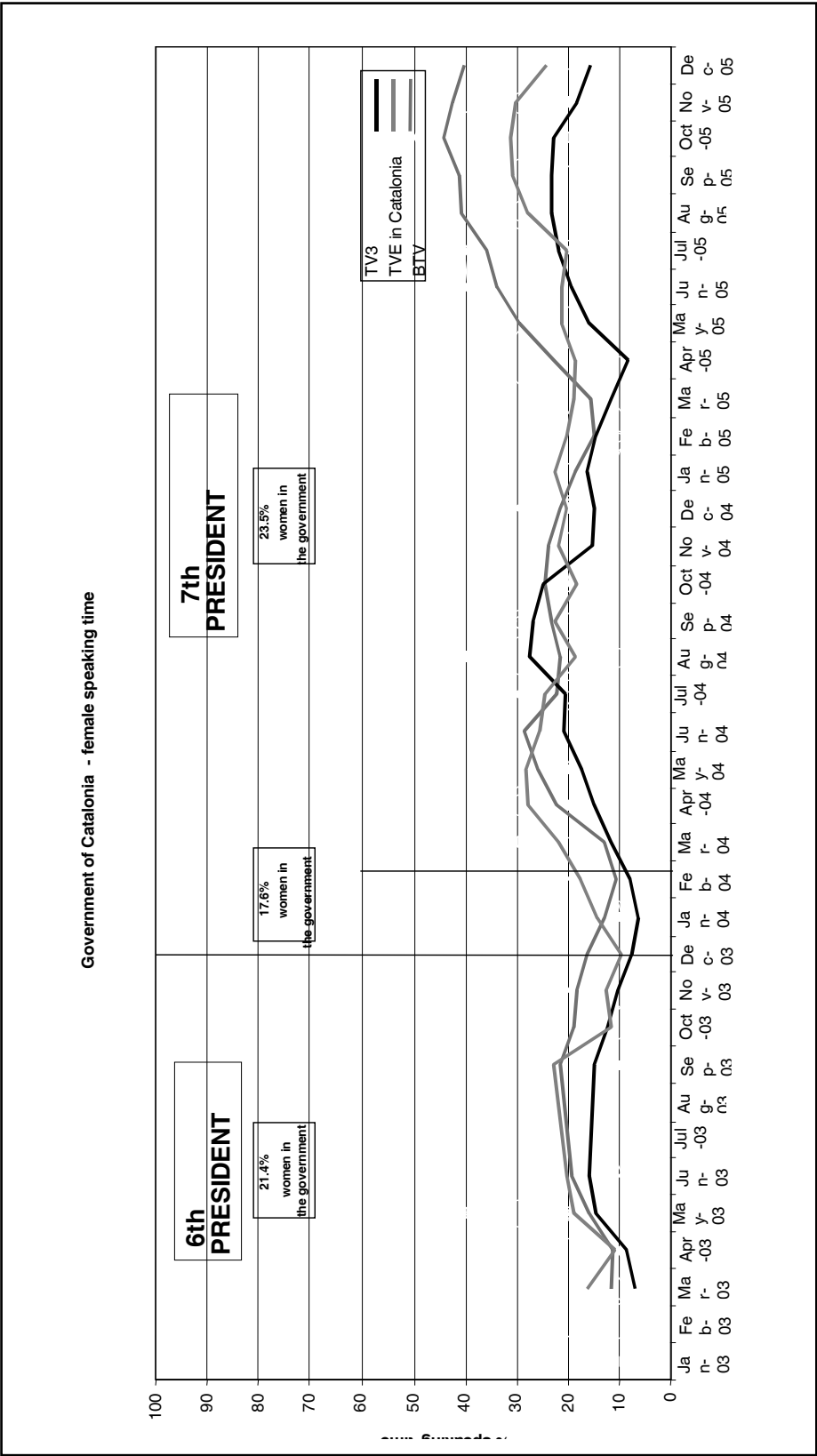
Analysing the graphs in more detail, table 9 shows how, during the last year of the 6th legislature, presided over by Jordi Pujol, there was no change in the government that affected the percentage of women, so the figure of 21.4% remained stable throughout the period. On the other hand, during the 7th Catalan legislature, on the 23 February 2004, Marta Cid replaced Josep Bargalló as minister for Education. At this time the percentage of women in the government went from 17.6% (a figure that actually only affects a period of two and a half months) to 23.5%, a percentage that was maintained until the end of 2005. Here we should note that, although during the 7th legislature the percentage of women in the Catalan government is only two points higher than the

Pujol period, the time allocated to the female members of Maragall's government by news broadcasts is considerably higher. This increase is particularly sharp during the second half of 2005.

With regard to table 10, the period analysed of the 7th Spanish legislature stands out for two changes in the government that gradually increase the percentage of women. The first happens on 28 February 2003, with the replacement of the minister for the Environment, Jaime Matas, by M. Elvira Rodríguez, leading to an increase in the percentage of women in the Spanish government from 18.8% to 25%. The second change takes place on 5 September 2003 with the replacement of Javier Arenas, who was the minister for Public Administration, by Julia García Valdecasas, once again increasing the number of women in the Spanish government, now accounting for 31.3% of the total. These two changes, however, are not reflected in the percentage female speaking time allocated by any of the channels.

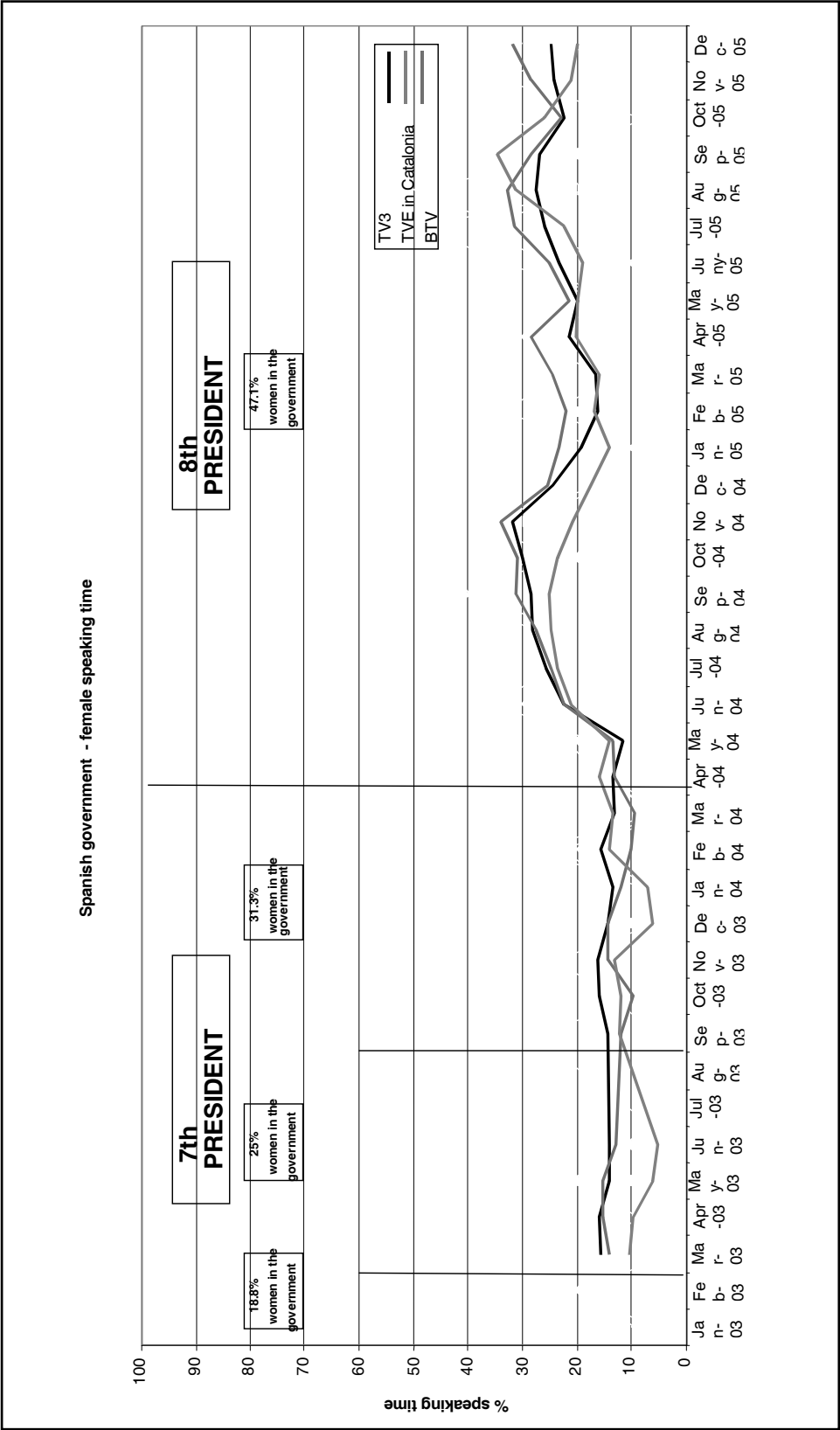
On the other hand, the government of the legislature presided over by Rodríguez Zapatero is characterised by being the first balanced government in the history of Spain, made up of 8 male and 8 female ministers, and there is no change in this respect during the period analysed. It should be noted that this analysis, in addition to the male and female ministers, also includes the presidents in the calculation of the governments, so that the percentage of women for the 8th legislature is 47.1%. During this legislature, and unlike the previous one, emphasis is placed on increasing the number of women in the Spanish government and on increasing

Table 10. Trends in female speaking time in the Catalan government



Source: in-house.

Table 11. Trends in female speaking time in the Spanish government



Source: in-house.

their speaking time on news broadcasts. Notwithstanding this, it should be made clear that this figure at no time approaches the real figure, given that it does not reach an average of 40% in any period, in spite of the media presence of the female spokesperson for the government, M. Teresa Fernández de la Vega.

In conclusion, we can say that the percentage of women in the Catalan and Spanish governments of all the legislatures analysed is always considerably higher than the speaking time allocated to them by the news broadcasts on the three channels in question. In spite of this, there are some differences between legislatures. Although, in the Maragall period analysed, the percentage of women in the Catalan government was only two percentage points greater than in the Pujol government, the time allocated to female members of Maragall's government by news broadcasts is considerably higher. During the legislature of Rodríguez Zapatero, on the other hand, and unlike the previous case, it is very evident that the increase in the number of women in the government affects the speaking time allocated by news broadcasts to this group. However, this speaking time at no point approaches the real figure, in spite of the government spokesperson, with a high media presence, being a woman, namely M. Teresa Fernández de la Vega. Finally, the fact that, on the three channels, the trends show a clear parallelism proves that there is a relationship between the speaking time allocated to women members of the government and news reporting in general.