

## Poli-entretenimiento: La utilización del humor en la comunicación política

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### Resumen

Este artículo introduce el concepto de poli-entretenimiento inspirado en un estudio empírico de la campaña *Vota Brasil*, promovida por el Tribunal Superior Electoral de Brasil durante el proceso electoral de 2008. La metodología empleada utiliza una encuesta bibliográfica, un estudio empírico con un análisis de la propaganda emitida en televisión y una lectura interpretativa de la campaña llevada a cabo por un *focus group* de votantes sin ninguna afiliación a los partidos. Durante este periodo de estudio, hubo elecciones municipales en Brasil en las que se presentaron 15,297 candidatos a la alcaldía y 348,793 para formar parte del consejo municipal. En 5,564 distritos, 128,806,592 ciudadanos pudieron votar. En Brasil, el voto es obligatorio y hay mucha desinformación sobre las funciones de la oficina pública, la compra de voto y otras formas de corrupción. Para impulsar la conciencia del votante, la Corte Superior Electoral emitió propaganda en la radio nacional abierta y en las cadenas de televisión. El humor fue una de las estrategias adoptadas para captar la atención pública. Por tanto este artículo reflexiona sobre la comunicación política, la televisión, las creativas estrategias de análisis y sobre el contexto y el entendimiento del focus group. Así pues, proponemos el concepto de poli-entretenimiento como una estrategia que capta la atención del público sobre el mensaje.

### Palabras clave

Comunicación política, poli-entretenimiento, propaganda, política de Brasil

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# Polintertainment: The use of humour in political communication

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## Abstract

The article presents the concepts of polintertainment inspired on an empirical study of *Vota Brasil* campaign promoted by the Superior Electoral Court, in Brazil, during the 2008 electoral process. The methodology adopted uses bibliographic survey, empirical study with analysis of propaganda broadcast on television and the interpretative reading of the campaign carried out by a focus group composed of voters with no party affiliation. It is emphasized that in Brazil, during the study period, there were municipal elections, in which 15,297 candidates have applied for mayors and 348,793 for city councils. In 5564 municipalities 128,806,592 citizens were able to vote. In Brazil, voting is mandatory and there is much misinformation about the functions of the public office, vote's purchase and other ways of corruption. To encourage the conscious vote, the Superior Electoral Court broadcasted propaganda on national open radio and television network. Among the strategies adopted to draw the public's attention, is the humour. The choice for the analysis of the campaigns is justified by the following reasons: social impact, originality and content of the messages. This paper is thus organized: firstly, reflects on political communication, television, creative strategies analysis and then the context and understanding by a focus group. So, we can propose the concept polintertainment because it is one of the strategies to make the public pay attention to the message.

## Key words

Political communication, polintertainment, propaganda, Brazil politics

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## 1. Introduction

All the interaction, information, persuasion and mobilization activities generated, first by the political actors, are perceived as political communication, whether emanating from social movements, State organs, parties or a non-institutionalized engagement.

Political involvement is consolidated with the help of communication instruments and strategies. However, the presence of communication is considered as essentially present throughout the process and not just instrumental. Matos (2007, 49) explained that, “the interactions between State and Society, mediated by interpersonal and institutional relationships and through social communication, will be considered political communication, when they influence the direction and meaning of decisions that contribute to the stability, instability or change in the political system”. In a representative democracy, meanwhile, the predominant vision that signifies a popular participation in politics is the election. The *Vota Brasil 2008* campaign’s aim was to warn the population about the importance of the choice of candidates and, with this, strengthen the individual role on the collective process of public management. “Media messages often stimulate interpersonal communication about a topic, with the interpersonal communication then leading to behaviour change in an intermedia process” (Rogers, 2004, 15).

Many times, in a representative democracy, the prevailing view of what it popular participation means in politics corresponds to the election. “The centre of State power seems to be occupied by the political sphere, whose core is the government, the civil sphere leaving only the function of episodic interventions in elections to choose from, depending on the client, one of the various configuration options of the State produced by the political and electoral offered at the counter” (Gomes, 2004, 87).

As much as political actions mean much more than the act of voting, this is still a prevailing attitude. Apparently, one of the functions of Brazil Vote campaign was to enhance the value of the vote and inform about rights and duties. The appropriated educational films, as will be discussed later, analogies and unusual situations.

When we propose the concept of polintertainment = politics + entertainment, we thought about the idea of joining politics to entertainment to stave off rejection of political activity. Politics is added to entertainment and addressed at producing emotions that highlight what is spectacular, unusual or scandalous. Thus, this strategy may be efficient to make the electors, at least, pay attention to the commercials.

## 2. Humour theory

Many researchers wrote about the humor, for example, the laughter as an expression of relief, generated by social pressure (Freud, 1969) and as standardization of social conduct (Bergson, 1993). Bergson (1993) argues that laughter has function of regulating social actions stimulating the fear of ridicule when the default standard is not adopted. "On the terror it inspires, represses the eccentricities, maintains constant contact with each other awake in certain activities ancillary order that ran the risk of becoming isolated and blur (...) The Laughter does not come from a pure aesthetic, but it has a useful purpose of general improvement" (Bergson, 1993:28). Both Freud and Bergson says that the aggression is a common element of the theory of laughter, linked directly to the fear of ridicule and is an purely social act, not physical.

In previous research, based on the work of Camilo (2008), humour in commercial advertising was categorized into four classes: phatic humour, commercial humour, emotive humour and inter-textual humour, whose concepts could be applied to political advertising, reinforcing the similarities between both. "Overall, the research inside this trend has been conducted in order to verify the humour potentialities among several items:

- Attention recall
- Comprehension
- Persuasion
- Adhesion

In what concerns attention recall, there is already enough empirical data about how humour plays a decisive role in nowadays precarious advertising communication contexts (with an audience increasingly detached and drawn away), when jokes, puns or wits and other humour practices seem to be crucial to create a sort of 'advertising agenda setting'". (Camilo, 2008, 3). What we have called "phatic humour" refers to the discursive competitiveness inherent in the messages conveyed during the program breaks in the mass media such as radio and television. "Usually, these practices aim to get the receiver attention by his recognition of an intentional incongruence towards the usual contexts of reception and comprehension" (Camilo, 2008, 6). Here, the humour is associated with simply entertaining the audience, apparently known in the trade as "free humour".

When a laugh influences consumers' habits, by alleviating some sort of pressure to buy - this is called "commercial humour"-. The humour is at the service of the sales discourse based on the product's characteristics, its competitive advantage and the eventual

benefits. "It may also be linked with a sort of 'advertising pedagogy' because, at its own way, it helps the consumer to understand the goods, to inculcate or to trivialize its specificities. In what concerns rhetorical strategies, (Aristotle, 1998), this class might be conceived as belonging to a sort of advertising *logos*, where jokes are connected with advertising pragmatic contexts of advice or of warning" (Camilo, 2008, 7).

"Emotive humour", meanwhile, is related to the choice of words, in how they are pronounced or complemented with other expressive materials such as mime, make-up, costumes and scenery (Camilo, 2008, 8), emphasize that "the guiding spirit of this class is playfulness and persuasion is engendered by the audience engagement with pleasant advertising characters". The exposition in the message results in its content as funny up becoming something unexpected or innovative. "This humour found, well, its foundation in a kind of *ethos* (comic). The actor (or the product / brand as an actor) is only worthy of belief (convince), on condition that it funny" (Camilo & Panke, 2008, 11).

Finally, "inter-textual humour" relates to pre-existing discourses and can be related with the existence of a reactive humour and a provocative one. Meaning will be contained in the relationship between these discourses and the new ones initially created by a re-elaboration. The word only becomes meaning in society, triggering two movements. The first refers to mediation between the social and individual. The second, between the individual (what you receive from previous generations and is incorporated) and the innovator, that characterizes the individual's ability to be subjected, to create, redesign. Because of these two aspects, there is a multiplicity of texts being incorporated into plans of speech expression. The diverse content, when appropriate, either can confirm, deny, or change direction, configuring the concept of inter-textuality.

Camilo (2008) explains that the reactive humour is "is a kind of a satiric comedy and must be conceived as a discursive behaviour towards other advertising messages or competitive contexts worth of censure" (Camilo, 2008, 9). The inter-textualized humour can expose misbehaviour through irony or emphasizing the role of ridicule. When the strategy is provocative, the author believes that "the satiric value remains, the dynamics change remarkably: jokes are not a reaction anymore but a kind of discursive provocation towards virtual pragmatic contexts worth of censure. (...) This type of inter-textual humour is connected with discourse strategies when the best resistance is the attack" (Camilo, 2008, 9). The subject of the message exposes behaviours that generate identification with the audience precisely because of misconduct related. The reaction is of denial with the practice exposed, as if it were applicable only to "others."

### 3. TV Laughter

As we have argued previously in the “phatic humour”, the laughter is like a strategy used to attract attention during television programming. Cut between fictional and informational content for commercial breaks, the display structure follows the logic of fragmented time. With this division, the period for the communication advertising is passed over, causing the production of this material to need to use different formats and content to “talk” to the viewer. Here, there is the technique domain, when the policy of appearances is emphasized in the election processes.

However, “(...) the dependence on the mass media makes it necessary that, considering the efficiency calculations, the dominant political discourses are organized according to the specific language media grammar, which should be distributed.”

(Gomes, 2004, 24)“(...). The dependence on mass media makes it necessary that, in terms of efficiency calculations, the predominant political speeches are organized according to specific language grammar, the means which they should move” (Gomes, 2004, 24).

As a multisensory and multidimensional vehicle, it facilitates the decoding of the message, creates meaning and, consequently, has cut-outs of reality. “The image promotes emotional relationship with the symbols (...). The television is the media that controls the experiment, the rate, the cadence of the steps images, experience length” (Ferres, 1996, 21). Thus, it becomes an effective means of conveying messages formatted for quick and easy assimilation. “Speed is essential because television news segments are short and fleeting, leaving no time for reflection, careful search for alternative meanings, or close scrutiny of pictures for hidden clues” (Graber, 2004, 58).

On television, the advertising script may be focused on the emotion or style. As for emotion, the script can be directed to the humour, the thriller, drama or eroticism (Barreto, 2004). According to the style, the performance can be directed to the history oriented on the individual, on the product or on the technique. In this paper, we show the propaganda used on fictional stories bordering on surrealism and formatted by analogies.

In other words, it was technically oriented and it showed great and humorous performance by the characters.

The intrinsic heterogeneity of the image moulded to create or enhance the senses.

Thus, the spectacle of politics, particularly about the way of ideas propagation can generate the discursive erasure of key issues. “The spectacle is ideology par excellence, because it exposes and manifests in its fullness the essence of all ideological systems: the

impoverishment, submission and denial of real life" (Debord, 1997, 161-162). The dissociation between form and content often found in political propaganda, calls into question how to be heard in a historical and social moment discredit the political class.

The esthetics and the politics are ways to organize the sensitive: to make it clear, to give to do, to build the visibility and readability of events. For me it is a permanent fact. It is different from Benjamin's idea that the exercise of power would be estheticized in a specific time. Benjamin is sensitive to the forms and manifestations of the Third Reich, but it must be said that the power has always worked with spectacular manifestations, whether in classical Greece, or in modern monarchies. (Rancière, 2010)

Therefore, it appears that is not necessarily pejorative the shelter of a well-designed esthetic in political activity, taking into consideration, including the historical aspects.

Esthetics could be an attractive way to attract those who have no interest in political affairs. The harmony between the elements of the television message (sound, moving image, angle, focus, picture, text, music) would be an alternative to the politics adapt to the vehicle's speed and fugacity.

It is fact that broadcasted television is a privileged means for delivering a message in large scale and, in Brazil, more than 90% of households have, at least, one unit. While a site presents in daily life, the power of television is undeniable as a source of information. "In addition to its importance in indirect communication, television assumes in many cases, the role of main repertoire of examples, providing explanations ready, built by people who have the understanding of the political world" (Aldé, 2004, 48).

As a narrative possible, television has options for delivering a message that can both promote the understanding as well as the alienation. TV can facilitate the reading by conciliating moving image, different sounds, spoken and written that could be allied to a politics' "pedagogy". In this sense, more proactive information could be explained with the help of many codes. This also means having to work with how it affects the audiences "Whereas cognitions refer to what people believe about some aspect of the world affects (discussed in more details subsequently) how one feels about it. Thus, the effects are necessarily evaluative and involve emotional responses to motive them. For example, "Most politicians are corrupt" is a belief, whereas "I dislike politicians is an effect" (Carpini, 2004, 406).

#### 4. The Brazilian context

If Brazilians are known for their good mood, the same does not happen to politics campaigns developed by the federal institutions. During the Lula's government, the propaganda adopted emotional strategies and, when the message is from the low institutions, it is serious by essence. However, in 2008, the pattern was broken with the exhibition of a humorous campaign for the first time.

The humour in politics is usually used to attack. The politic actors make ironies to the opposites or the situation, for example. But, the use of laugh in the in structure function in a politic process is still a new strategy. So, here, we will discuss the use of humour in political communication, beginning with the study of the *Vote Brazil campaign* promoted by the Superior Electoral Court, during the election process, last elections for mayor and city council, in 2008. The methodology adopted included drawing up a bibliographical survey, empirical studies analyzing the public advertising shown on television and the interpretative reading of the campaign given by a focus group, composed of voters without party affiliations.

During the last elections, the comic was used as a strategy by the Superior Electoral Court, regulator of the Electoral Process in Brazil (TSE). The way the TSE chose to talk about the responsibility in a vote moment is contradictory with the conservatories juridical institution. The Brazilian Electoral Justice has existed since 1932 and is composed by the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) and the Regional Electoral Courts (TRE). Its main function is to moderate and supervise the elections in Brazil and, also, in the background, stimulate the conscious vote to encourage educational activities.

It's important to say that the Brazilians are obligated to vote each two years.

Brazil has a population of 190 million, of which, approximately, 128 million are entitled to vote in the 5,564 Brazilian cities. A continental country like this shows many different realities. There are a lot poor people without formal instruction, but the same people are mass communication consumers. Also, there are huge social differences between geographic regions. In this situation, the Brazilians also found another question: between the ages of 18 to 65, voting is mandatory; from 16 and after 65, it is optional.

During the municipal elections in 2008, there were 15 thousand candidates running for mayor, and almost 349 thousand candidates for city councillor.



## 5. Campaign analysis

In the months that preceded the elections, between July and October 2008, the Superior Electoral Court launched the *Vote Brazil campaign* on nationally syndicated radio and television, in order to raise voter awareness. Humour was, for the first time in its history, one of the strategies employed to attract the public's attention. We justified the choice for this research by the analysis of the campaigns of the first phase for the following reasons: social impact, originality and messages content. The advertising campaign satirizing the consequences of a wrong choice of the representative generated political repercussions in society. A good example of this impact is the reaction to the campaign videos posted on *YouTube*. The commercial *The Tap Dancer* was seen by 45,000 people in 10 days. The campaign also won awards in advertising, in many events, including the *World Advertising Festival*, held in Gramado, Southern Brazil.

Television was chosen as the means to this research, owing to its huge presence throughout the nation and because images can reinforce the strategic use of humour. How we said before, the *Vote Brazil campaign* was composed of 12 one-minute commercials, of which the first six were humorous and the others were dramatic. The humorous films were divided into two phases. In the first phase, the main message was to help the voter reflect on the importance of choosing a candidate. In the second phase, four commercials showed the consequences of the bad choices taken.

The First Phase: In the film, *The Delay*<sup>3</sup>, a man is waiting at a railroad crossing for the train to pass. Whilst he is searching for some cds under his car seat - the crossing opens-. When he returns to take the driving wheel to move forward, the crossing gate has closed once again.

In the film "The Comet"<sup>4</sup>, a man is at a campsite, carrying a telescope to watch the passage of a comet. While waiting, the kerosene lamp is blown out, and he goes away to relight it. Just at that moment - the comet passes by.

The situations are told in one minute, and mainly, the scene unravels as an action of characters and soundtrack, which characterized the off-camera dramatization and the use of analogy as a technique. When they miss what they have been waiting for, the following text appears, "Losing an opportunity can also lose you a lot of time. If, in the coming

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<sup>3</sup><http://br.youtube.com/watch?v=KquMK01WqYo&eurl=http://coisasqueeuquerofalar.blogspot.com/2008/08/campanha-vota-brasil-2008.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://br.youtube.com/watch?v=KOwkIxAvogk&eurl=http://coisasqueeuquerofalar.blogspot.com/2008/08/campanha-vota-brasil-2008.html>

elections, you do not choose the best candidates, for example, your city will lose four more years. And, four years is a long time. Join: *Vote Brazil -2008 Elections*. To your city's future and your own. Electoral Justice-".

According to Perelman (1996), the combination of text and image is a redundant argument. The value of this unique opportunity is emphasized by the analogies, where all the humour lies. Both characters strongly want something but end up distracted. In this way, they lose what they want the most. The emotive humour, previously mentioned, is expressed in the actors' faces, the soundtrack and narration. The explanatory nature is in the playful/entertaining element. In order to explain the importance of a suitable political choice, an illustrative story is told.

However, it was in the second phase, that the humour touched on the surrealistic.

On the four film tracks, a fictional character explains the problems arising from bad choices.

The film *The Tap Dancer*<sup>5</sup> deals with the importance of choosing a good mayor.

A man appears and says that when he gets nervous he starts tap-dancing - therefore losing control of his own legs.

I'm Lúcio. For four years I've been living with a very uncomfortable mania. When I get nervous -I tap-dance-.

[Lettering: 4 years tap-dancing]. Without wanting to! I can't stop myself! This destroys a person's reputation. It's as if my legs have a life of their own. Imagine that you are in a situation where you need to be serious and you start dancing. Backwards and forward... repeatedly. Four years tapping backwards and forward. Four years is a long time. Especially, when things aren't going too well. So, have a good think before choosing your mayors. Because, they'll be running your city for the next four years.

In the commercial *The Mobile*<sup>6</sup> a man cries every time the cell phone rings and this happens in many kind of comics situations. The message emphasizes the importance of voting for city councillors, explaining their role in managing cities.

My name is João Paulo and four years ago, I bought this mobile phone.

[Lettering: 4 years of strong emotions]. Since then, I've been suffering from some type of reaction. The truth is that I get so emotional when it rings. Whenever someone calls - I start to cry-. I think I'm too emotional. And the music is so... so beautiful.

<sup>5</sup>[http://br.youtube.com/watch?v=h17ljd4lavg&eurl=http://coisasqueeuquerofalar.blogspot.com/2008/08/campa](http://br.youtube.com/watch?v=h17ljd4lavg&eurl=http://coisasqueeuquerofalar.blogspot.com/2008/08/campa%C3%91ha-vota-brasil-2008.html)  
anha-vota-brasil-2008.html

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ew6WuYymjSc>

Four years is a long time. Especially when things aren't going too well. So, have a good think before choosing your city councillors. They're responsible for making laws and supervising the mayor over the next four years.

In the film *The Circles*<sup>7</sup> a woman presents herself saying that when in a hurry, her feet begin to walk in circles, involuntarily. She tries to move, but always stops at the same location or cannot get where you want. The message was to alert the voter to corruption.

I'm Mariana. For the past 4 years I've lived with something inexplicable. Whenever I'm under pressure, late, etc. -I start walking in circles-.

[Lettering: 4 years walking in circles.] I've really tried to walk straight. But my feet simply prefer to go back to what they were doing. They don't listen to me (...) Standard narration: Four years is a long time. Especially, when things aren't going too well. So, don't sell your vote. It's priceless. It is the only way to remove bad politicians from four more years in power.

In the film *The Bee*<sup>8</sup>, a man relates the fact that for four years he has had a bee in his ear. The message is to encourage the voter to question the background of each candidate before deciding to vote.

My name is Mário. I have had a bee in my ear for four years.

[Lettering: 4 years with a bee in his ear]. One day I was walking in the park and it entered my ear. At the beginning, it drove me crazy. I tried everything. I almost flipped out. But now, you know, I've got used to it. I feed it. Imagine having a nervous bee inside your ear for four years. Quiet now, little friend... Four years is a long time. Especially when things aren't going too well. So, before voting, check out the candidates' past. Because they'll be taking care of your city for the next four years.

The four films had some characteristics in common. First, the productions starred a humorous character in fictitious settings. It could even be inferred that here there are examples of what is termed polintertainment = politics + entertainment. Politics is added to entertainment and addressed at producing emotions that highlight what is spectacular, uncommon or scandalous (...). The need to convert political speech according to the grammar of visual display and formulas own story and the world of entertainment. It

<sup>7</sup><http://br.youtube.com/watch?v=6M4BcP2RNxk&eurl=http://coisasqueeuquerofalar.blogspot.com/2008/08/campanha-vota-brasil-2008.html>

<sup>8</sup><http://br.youtube.com/watch?v=m0cyo->

dGaVU&eurl=http://coisasqueeuquerofalar.blogspot.com/2008/08/campanha-vota-brasil-2008.html

follows from this assumption the evidence of the centrality of strategies for the production and management of feelings and emotions, for the conversion of events and ideas in narrative and the highlight of what is spectacular, unusual or scandalous (Gomes, 2004, 24).

Second, the symbolic values of the situation shown are reinforced by the slogans displayed on the screen. "The symbolic is present in all social lives, the symbols effectively mobilize human actions and legitimize their actions" (Zwicker, 2005, 191). In Brazil, the word "tap-dancing", for example, means to insist on doing something without necessarily succeeding. The expression "walking in circles", used in the film *The Circles*, reminds one of situations in which the person tries many actions and does not achieve the results desired. In the film, *The Bee*, on the other hand, the symbolic value of the expression, "4 years with a bee in your ear" talks about things which are inconvenient but not yet resolved.

The meaning implied in these expressions gives the third point in common with the films. Due to the discredited politics, the commercial works with projection elements. The sensation of "no-change" generates the next convergent point in the campaign. The electoral propaganda, especially used the formula problem x solution for its argument. "(...) the speeches try to make connections between generally directed relations of cause and effect" (Gomes, 2004:25). The implicit problems in this campaign are the presence of incompetent managers and corruption. The solution is presented in the films' signatures when voters are alerted to choose their candidates well, whether by checking their past or for their refusal to be bribed.

The fourth point in common relates to the types of humour used. Of the categories previously mentioned, three can be applied to the *Vota Brasil campaign*. The first is the factual humour, for that 'free humour' that attracts the attention of an audience. The second is the emotive humour present in elements of the film, whether in the scenarios or scenic performances. The third category presents the inter-textual humour that is expressed in popular expressions, such as when a person says, "I tap-danced" for four years whenever he is nervous. The 'tap dancer' suggests dissatisfaction with the period cited, which in Brazil, could be seen as the time between elections.

The fifth point is the endings of the commercials with an apparent instructive proposal. "Pedagogical" publicity uses verbs in the imperative to determine the desired action. In the "tap-dancing" and "the mobile" films, besides the standard narration, the functions of mayor and city councillor are briefly explained.

The sixth point in common, is the most evident: the signalling of the importance of the time between one election and the next: every four years a mayor and city councillors are elected and this will be the only opportunity to change anything or show dissatisfaction during the term of the mandate.

We can infer that the structure allowed the campaign to draw attention, but on the other hand, covered relevant issues to show that political participation does not occur only in times of elections. That is quite disturbing, because the strategy of laughter can be effective in drawing attention, but is not well taken, it can distort the message. Thus, this leads to further reflection: if, in fact, it is important for the population spheres to participate at other times. It is a hypothesis that we cannot answer now, and neither is our goal, but that should be considered in other studies. Thus, we start now to the interpretation generated by a selected group during the campaign. We are aware that it is just a sampling, but it brings interesting indications on the use of humour in political message for the generation of political consciousness.

## 6. Focus group

With the proposal to analyze the voters' common position on political matters and the *Vota Brasil* campaign, a focus group was created at the Federal University of Paraná, before the elections. Basic procedures were taken into consideration in setting up this qualitative survey, with the presence of a minimum of 10 and maximum of 12 participants in a discussion on a specific theme. The survey lasted one hour and involved 11 electors without party affiliation, of both genders, and from different age groups and social-economic circumstances.

The film, shown to the group was *The Bee*, which showed the most absurd situation. The participants understood the alert message and the comparison suggested by the video. They realized the alert message and the comparison suggested on the video.

"We are the face and politicians are the bee, and he missed a long time after four years and realized it was not what I wanted" (WM,18). One participant observed that the character portrayed was typically Brazilian, which created an effect of identification.

Another one commented that the video emphasized the individual, when, "the character in the commercial didn't seek help. Alone, he could do nothing, which, sort of, contradicts the message that one vote can make a difference. Perhaps the man standing beside him

represented the possibility of change, but he didn't offer help, and the protagonist also didn't ask for it."

Another aspect of the survey participants' reading that particularly stood out was the feeling of living in a comfort zone. The moment in the film when the character fed the bee so that both could live well together, tacitly broadcasted the message that when one thing does not function as it is supposed to, it is often necessary to adopt a passive posture. Those interviewed agreed that the humour could grab the attention of the *tele*-spectator, but could also give rise to an equivocal interpretation. One participant admitted that he did not find the video humorous, but self-reflective. "At the same time it sends the message that we have to evaluate candidates for the next four years, we get used to it, as if it induced people to accommodate, because if the message was to raise awareness did not have to stretch this " (E.S., 28).

The use of humour was also discussed. The interviewed people agreed that it can draw attention, but can cause misinterpretations. One of the participants told that "the humour can give the wrong message. It's dangerous to work with humour because the receiver can interpret the wrong way, as in this video, when the people can interpret like accommodation. In general, the politics campaigns must be careful with the language" (VS, 22). Another participant didn't see humour on the video, but self-reflection.

According to Melo (2008), "one reason that makes the understanding difficult is exactly the fact that the commercials show unrealistic scenes, sometimes complicates to do analogies with the reality. For example, the Brazilian people, normally, don't cry every time the cell rings or dance without control when they are nervous. But the Brazilians can understand what it is to not have water in the house, to suffer a mugging because the cities don't have security or also stay without garbage collection service" (p.82).

A major aspect of the reading of the interviewees was the adoption of a language that facilitated the memorization of the campaigns. Be the technical quality of the films or the use of new argumentative strategies, the campaign provided an opportunity for self-reflection. "Key to whether attitudes and beliefs enhance or limit effective democratic engagement is the role of both cognition and affect". (Carpini, 2004, 406) It was evident, however, the controversy about the use of humour in educational campaigns of the TSE.

## 7. Conclusions

This study indicates ways for further research relating the persuasive strategy of humour in political campaigns. From the campaign, we were able to devise many indications about the concept of Polintertainment. If we take as a parameter the speeches made in the Greek agora, for example, we also see that there also were entertainment and politics together. When analyzing entertainment characteristics we can see that are contents explicitly moulded to rely in fiction. And, following Eco's reasoning, it is precisely the fiction that the truths are dramatized and publicized. The problem is when the entertainment exceeds the relevant issues and is distracting public attention.

After all, to what extents the question of conscientious vote was in fact presented in the campaign looked at?

What is incontestable is that the *Vota Brasil 2008 campaign* made an impact.

However, the focus group conducted indicated that the message could be easily misunderstood. On the other hand, the success was possible, among other reasons, because it was obvious that television favoured the broadcasting of messages using sound and moving imagery. It was also observed that the language of entertainment was presented in all films, exactly for their humour in the stories. However, if humour can help remember the message, it can also distract attention. In a campaign that emphasizes the humour in either commercial or political questions, there is always the chance that the campaign will be 'off message', that is, the message will be misunderstood.

The campaign was shown to be both unprecedented and very efficient in what is termed recall. In the first place, the humour was used as an element in raising social awareness through political advertising from a Federal regulatory organ. At the same time, some implicit messages were given to emphasize that the act of voting was a unique opportunity to participate in the political process. This idea is contrary to the widely held belief that people can and must be active in the running of civil society, the public arena.

On the other hand, the affirmation reinforces the notion of a comfort zone, when the voters must give "honey to the bees that are bothering them", until there is another opportunity for the insect to leave the ear. It is the same as saying that the voters should tolerate corruption or mismanagement from specific representatives, until the next occasion for change.

The situations depicted refer to the real absurdity that allows the presence of opportunistic and corrupt people in public office, also notes that the complaint of corruption without punishment and shows the sad reality that a third of the salary of the medium class is

diluting in taxes without the right of access to services health and quality education and gratuity. Humour, in this case, ends up being tragicomic, when the population is reminded that the absurd is closer than they would like to imagine. Humour must, therefore, not only raise voters' awareness and the importance of the time element, it must constantly reinforce the point that the well-known good mood of Brazilians should never be confused with passivity.

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