



THE USE OF THE TRIBUNE OF THE BRAZILIAN SENATE AS A STRATEGY FOR ACCUMULATING POLITICAL CAPITAL

Ronaldo Teixeira Martins *

1 Introduction

Among the countless instances of use of speech in the Federal Senate, the Tribune of the plenary is one of the most coveted spaces, whether by the public visibility that it confers the media of the House (TV Senate, Senate Radio, Senate agency, Senate newspaper), be By the internal importance that it consigned to the senators themselves. This is the stage, par excellence, of the political theater.

The contest for the space of the tribune is so fierce that its use is regulated by the Internal Regulation of the Federal Senate, whose Chapter V is all dedicated to the matter. They define the rules of verbal intervention of the senators in the sessions of the House. There are eight articles that establish, not only the nine modalities foreseen (pronouncements, speech of the president, speech of leader, order, communication without delay, point of order, referral of voting, discussion of propositions and personal explanation), but also when, for how long, in what order, and how the senator can speak. The Rules of Procedure also regulate asides (dependent on permission of the speaker, for up to 2 minutes); the order (the word will be given in the order in which it is requested, except registration); the fences (discourteous or insulting expressions, information of a secretive nature); and the posture of the speakers (standing, facing the table) (BRAZIL, 2015).

In the present work, I focus on the use of the plenary as a strategy for the formation and accumulation of political capital. My objective is to investigate the impact of parliamentary pronouncements on electoral reproduction and political career structure. For this, I try to compare the frequency of use of the rostrum with indicators related to reelectoral success and parliamentary prestige. The underlying hypothesis is that the use of the plenary, insofar as it would imply greater

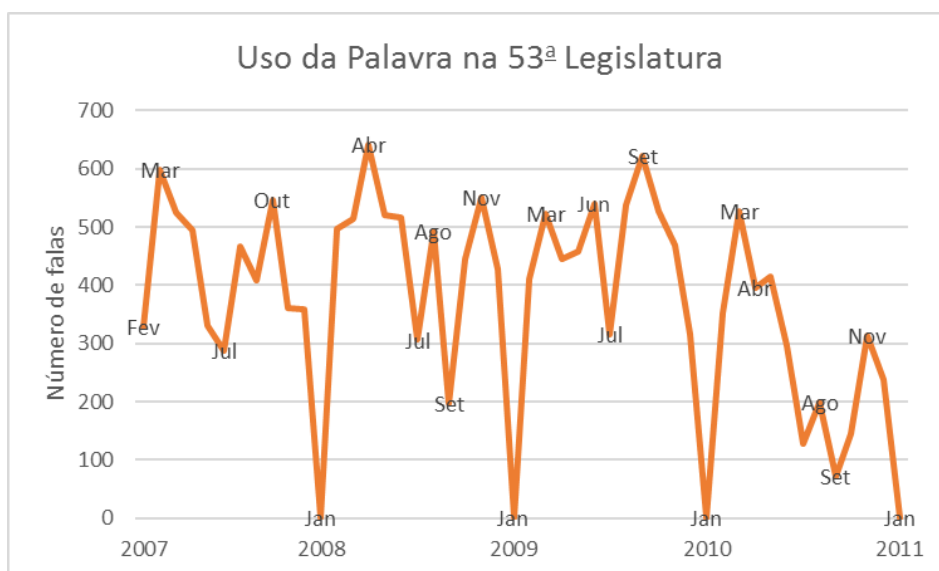
* Graduation in Letters (Portuguese and Latin) by the Federal University of Juiz de Fora, Specialization in Political Communication in the Legislative by the Center of Formation of the Chamber of Deputies, Master and Doctorate in Linguistics by the State University of Campinas. Legislative Consultant of the Federal Senate Pronouncements Nucleus) (ronaldotmartins@gmail.com).

public and intralegislative visibility, would be a strategy of accumulation and renewal of political capital, which could be measured by a relevant and positive correlation between the number of statements and other results of parliamentary activity.

In order to maintain comparability of data, this article examines only the use of speech in the Senate floor during the 53rd legislature, that is, from February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2011. The data of the analysis correspond to all the instances of use of the word in plenary that have been stuttered by the Secretariat of Registration and Parliamentary Drafting (Sererp) of the Federal Senate, and were later classified by the Secretariat of Information and Documentation Management (SGIDOC) also of the Federal Senate. There are two classifications available: cataloging and indexing, both performed by the Speech Indexing Service (SEDISSE) from the Thesaurus of the Federal Senate, a terminological repository organized by SGIDOC and available through the WebThes tool (<http://legis.senado.gov.br/webthes/>). From this corpus, it was possible to determine, not only the senators who came to the rostrum and how often they did it (section 2), but also on what themes were pronounced (section 3). These data were correlated with the results of the 2010 Electoral Process (BRASIL, 2010) provided by the Higher Electoral Court (section 4), and with the parliamentary prestige surveys conducted by the DIAP (section 5) to verify to what extent use of the tribune effectively operates as a strategy for the accumulation of political capital.

2 Frequency of Use of speech in the Federal Senate Tribune at the 53rd Legislature

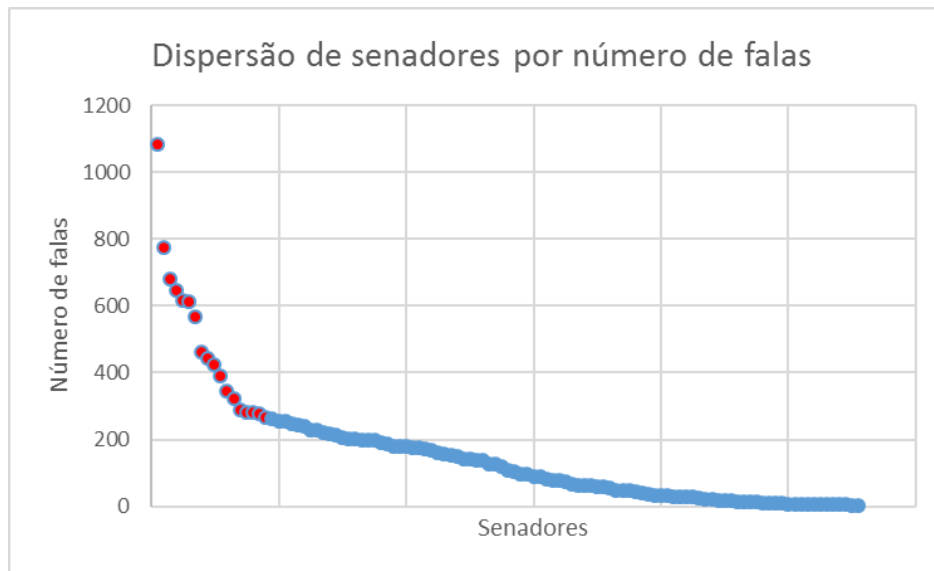
During the four years of the 53rd legislature, the Secretariat for Registration and Parliamentary Drafting of the Federal Senate (Sererp) carried out the shorthand pick-up of 18,055 instances of speech in the plenary sessions of the Federal Senate, the distribution of which is indicated in Chart 1 below:



Graph 1 - Use of speech in the 53rd legislature.
Source: the author (2017)

As you can see, the use of speech has been distributed quite irregularly throughout the legislative sessions. Rising in the first months of the year, mainly in March and April; descending, as he approached the parliamentary recess of July; again ascending, with peaks in September, October and November; and again downward, at the approach of the January parliamentary recess, in which there were practically no records. It should also be noted that in the second half of 2010, election year, the floor in the gallery was considerably lower than in previous periods.

In the plenary sessions of the Senate, of course, senators speak. The truism hides the fact that, especially in special sessions, other actors are also invited to talk about the rostrum, but this number is not very representative. In the period considered, 283 occurrences of speech were registered by non-senators, that is, only 1.57% of all verbal manifestations in plenary. The other 17,772 cases were filled by 111 senators, between incumbents and alternates, whose distribution of speech is, however, quite uneven: there are senators who talk a lot and there are senators who speak very little. Figure 2 shows the dispersion of senators to the set of pronouncements of the 53rd legislature, which have a mean of 160.11 registrations per senator, a median of 108, and a standard deviation of 183.84.



Graph 2 - Dispersion of senators by number of speeches during the 53rd term.
Source: the author (2017)

Graph 2 shows that 19 senators - 17.11% of the total, highlighted to the left in the curve - alone account for more than half (9,002, or 50.65%) of the records. On the other hand, 54 senators (48.64% of the total) totaled 1,853 records (10.42%). That is, the dispersion is really high and the concentration of many pronouncements on a few parliamentarians obviously compromises any generalization effort. The comparison in absolute terms, however, is problematic because the duration of the mandates also varies greatly. Only 48 senators exercised their mandate for 48 months.

For this reason, I will explore, above all, the average monthly performance of each parliamentarian, understood as the result of dividing the total number of registrations by the number of months of mandate. It matters to me to know, not how many times the senator came to the rostrum during his term, but how many times a month, on average, he made use of the right to the speech that was guaranteed to him by the Internal Regulation. Although the procedure does not annul - and could not overturn - the dispersion, which is characteristic of the sample, significantly reduces the risk of using the same rule to measure parliamentarians who spent 4 or 44 months in the Federal Senate (BRAZIL, 2015).

In addition, the senators were grouped in quartiles, so that the effect of very sparse data could be diluted. In this perspective, a preliminary grouping, based on the monthly averages, is presented in Table 1 below, constructed from quartiles 1,505, 3,63 and 5,5, which divide the 111 senators analyzed into four subsets of almost equal numbers of elements (27, 28, 28 and 28).

Table 1 - Distribution of senators in quartiles according to the monthly average of the floor.

FREQUENCY	Number of Senators.	Monthly average.	Total Records.	Percent of Speech
Intensive use of the word.	27	9,40	9.836	55,35%
Moderate use of the word.	28	4,52	4.644	26,13%
Infrequent use of the word	28	2,47	2.623	14,76%
Episodic use of the word.	28	0,89	669	3,76%
Total	111	4,28	17.772	100%

source: the author (2017).

The first quartile, composed of 27 senators, with a mean of 9.4 records per month, is responsible for 9,836 records, or 55.35% of the total. This is a group of parliamentarians who came to the rostrum more than twice a week and, therefore, will be considered as an intensive use of the plenary as a political communication strategy.

The second group, with 28 senators, corresponding to the second quartile, has an average of 4.52 registrations per month, and is responsible for 4,644 records, or 26.13% of the total. They are senators of moderate frequency of speaking, who take to the rostrum once a week.

The third group, of 28 senators, is below the median, has an average of 2.47 records per month, and accounts for 2,623 records, or 14.76% of the total. They are senators who come to the rostrum every two weeks and therefore will be considered low-speaking in the plenary when compared to the others.

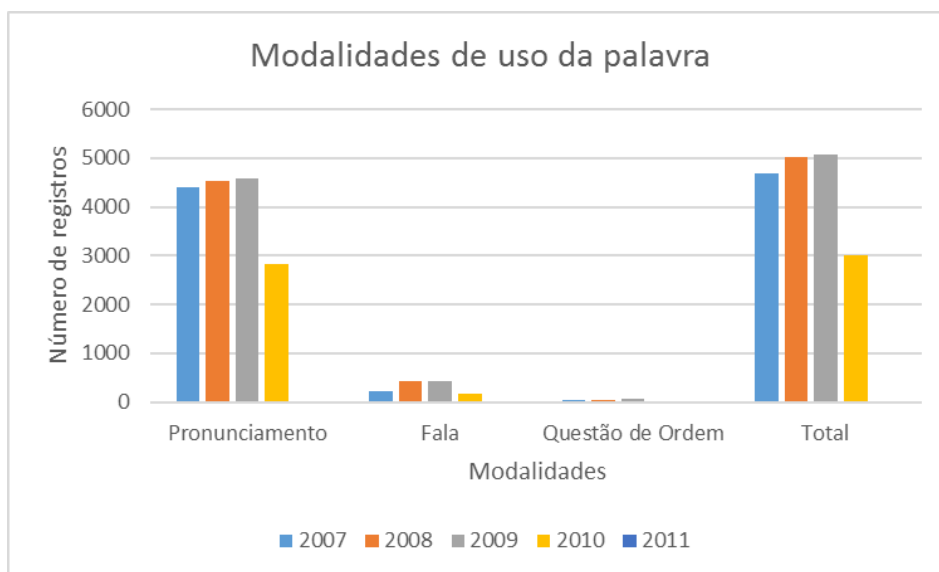
Finally, the last quartile includes senators whose records were below the 1,505 line, with an average of 0.89 occurrences per month, accounting for 669 records, or only 3.76% of the total. As they ascend to the rostrum less than once a month, they are considered here as senators of episodic use of the tribune as strategy of political communication.

As we can see, the interquartile range is considerable, which seems to indicate that there is significant divergence among senators regarding the use of the floor in the plenary as a necessary element for the exercise of parliamentary activity. As the principle of equality - that is, of the equality of the right of demonstration, as enshrined in the Senate Rules of Procedure - prevails in parliament, it will be important to try to understand why some parliamentarians have come to the rostrum more than twice a week, while others manifested, at most, only once a month (BRAZIL, 2015).

However, data analysis failed to clearly identify a set of attributes, whether personal or extra personal, that explained why some senators consistently use more words than others. The numerous tested variables - regional, political-party, social, thematic, structural - proved to be insufficient in isolation to explain the dispersion of data. The only categories that showed any systematic positive correlation with the monthly average of pronouncements in plenary were gender and tenure of office: the proportions were maintained, the senators occupied the rostrum more than the senators, and the incumbents spoke more than the substitutes. The variables age range, political experience and academic background also seem to interfere with the frequency of use of the rostrum, but the data are not conclusive and the correlation is not direct.

3 Modalities of Use of the speech in the Federal Senate Tribune at the 53rd Legislature

Although the Internal Rules of the Federal Senate (BRAZIL, 2015) foresee nine different modalities of use of the floor in the plenary, the shorthand pickup by the Registry and Parliamentary Drafting Secretariat (Sererp) registered only three modalities: statements, pronouncements and points of order, whose distribution, for the whole of the 53rd legislature, is depicted in Chart 3:

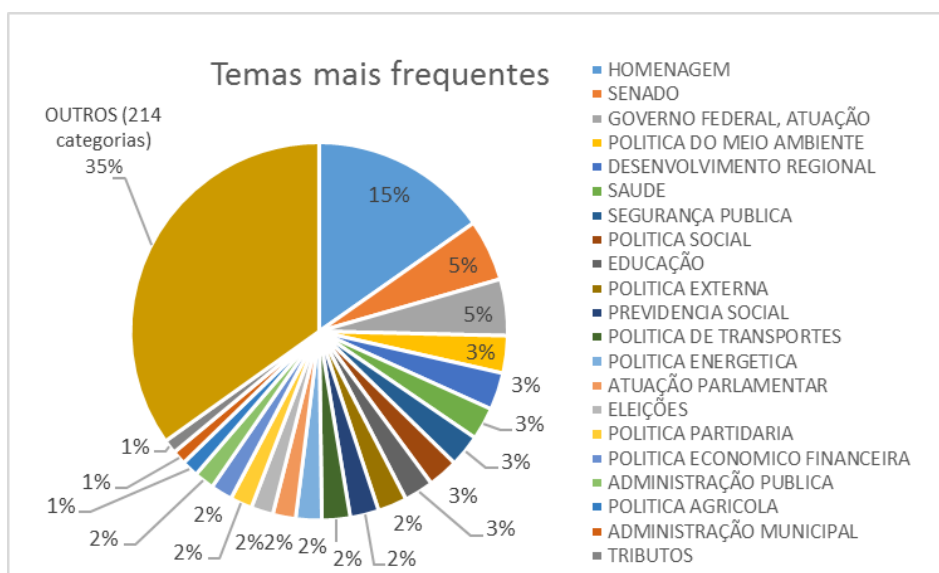


Graph 3 - Modalities for the use speech in the 53rd legislature.
Source: the author (2017).

It can be seen from Figure 3 that senators make, mainly, pronouncements, which correspond to 91.96% of total occurrences. Speeches that suffered stuttering were episodic (7.04%), and the questions of order represented only 1% of the collected material.

In order to analyze the content of these pronouncements, I relied on the classifications made available by the Secretariat for Information and Documentation Management (SGIDOC) of the Federal Senate. There are two classifications available: cataloging and indexing, both performed by the Speech Indexing Service (SEDISSE) from the Thesaurus of the Federal Senate, a terminological repository organized by SGIDOC and available through the WebThes tool.¹

In the cataloging process, SEDISSE identified 235 categories, but this thematic diversity is misleading: 65% of the statements were restricted to only 21 categories, as indicated in Figure 4 below. The "other" category includes the remaining 214 items, all of which occur less than 1%.



Graph 4 - Most frequent topics in the pronouncements made during the 53rd term. Source: the author (2017).

It should be noted that the categories are not mutually exclusive: there were 28,024 categorizations for 16,343 pronouncements, which indicates that there were many pluri-thematic discourses. It reproduces, therefore, behavior already observed for the Chamber of Deputies:

One of the hallmarks of parliamentary discourse in plenary - in contrast to the talk in committee - is its tendency to cover a multitude of issues in a short space of time. Variety takes precedence over depth, perhaps because the number of parliamentarians attending the rostrum at each session is restricted and each one wishes to "give his message" to a diversity of audiences (MIGUEL, FEBOSA, 2009, 207).

Graph 4 shows that the main theme of parliamentary pronouncements in the 53rd legislature were the homages (4,279 occurrences), which surpassed the sum of the second and third places: the Senate (1,475 occurrences) and the Federal Government's performance (1,355). Then followed the Environmental Policy (896), Regional Development (893), Health (777),

¹ <http://legis.senado.gov.br/webthes>

Public Security (770), Social Policy (728), Education (707), Politics External (700), Social Security (689), Transport Policy (678) and Energy Policy (625), which represent the only issues with more than 600 occurrences. This set of themes seems to have been at the heart of verbal manifestations in plenary, because together they total 14,572 occurrences, or 52% of all items in the catalog used to categorize pronouncements made during the 53rd term.

The whole is revealing not only by what it contains but also by what it hides. Although the main items on the Brazilian political agenda (Public Safety, Health, Education, Environment, Social Policy) are noted in the list, the number of honors stands out. It is also relevant, in the period considered - that is, the second term of Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, in which Brazil grew at an average rate of 4.6% per year -, the absence of a more economical agenda: Politics Economic-financial appears only in 17th place (with 524 occurrences), the Tax Policy in 21° (333 occurrences), the Fiscal Policy in 26° (246 occurrences) and the Budget in 37° (with 180 occurrences). Other absences help to indicate the issues why senators are not at all interested: Judicial Reform, Scientific and Technological Policy, Air Transport and Health in the Armed Forces have obtained, in four years of the legislature, only one quotation.

4 The Use of speech as an Electoral Reproduction Strategy

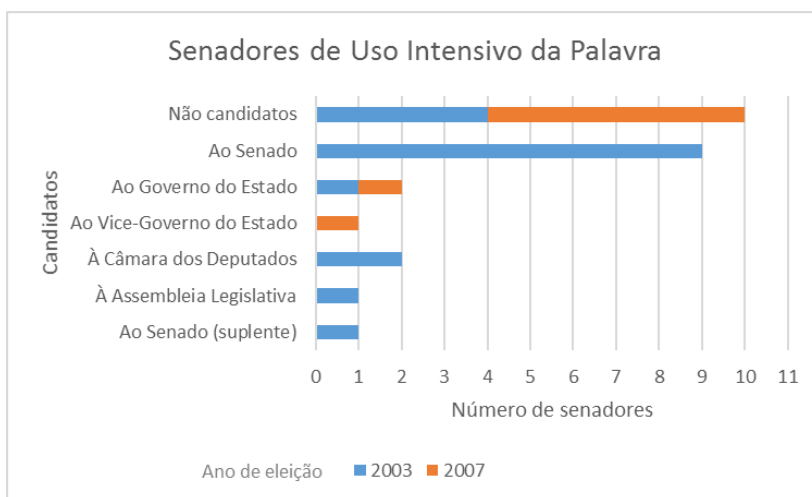
Mayhew (1974) seems to have been one of the first to insist on the relation between parliamentary performance and the need for electoral reproduction. Based on the premise that members of Congress, as a consequence of the professionalization of politics, were obsessed with re-election ("single-minded seekers of reelection"), the author emphasizes the precedence of electoral calculation over legislative activity. Its well-established model of two arenas - the legislative arena and the electoral arena - describes a candidate-centered policy whose legislative behavior would privilege egocentric political strategies to the detriment, for example, of party discipline. That is, the legislative arena would be colonized by the electoral arena. Symptoms of this colonization would be political marketing strategies, mobilized during the exercise of the mandate: the concern with self-promotion, that is, with being seen and known (through speeches, interviews, participation in ceremonies and social events, etc.) ; the claim of credit related to distributive measures (pork barrel and casework, among others); and the parliamentary behavior itself, more geared towards the positioning - that is, for the demarcation of an ideological territory - than for the formulation or alteration of public policies.

Although the model of two arenas has been relativized, in the Brazilian case, by studies that demonstrated "the centralized pattern of legislative work", mainly due to the "significant arsenal of resources through which [the leaders] control and circumscribe the performance of it is necessary to observe that this conclusion derives only from the analysis of empirical data concerning the origin, urgency and area of processing of legislative propositions in the two houses of the National Congress in the post-Constituent period (Figueiredo and Limong 2001, (1989-

1994). That is, they do not consider any more recent votes, nor do they include verbal statements in plenary. And there is no evidence that the electoral connection, if effectively weakened at the time of voting, would also be halted at the time of the plenary pronouncements.

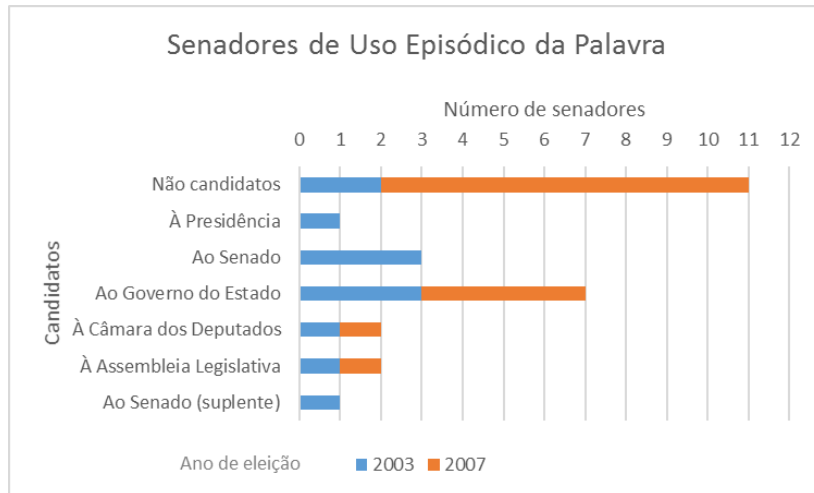
In any case, the issue here is not directly related to party loyalty, but to the frequency of self-promotional practices in the Senate floor, which seem to corroborate the strategies described by Mayhew. It seems evident that, in these cases, senators are driven mainly by the opportunity to create or reaffirm social bonds and public exposure and visibility. His primary interest would be the consolidation of his connection with the electorate, which is inevitably related to electoral reproduction strategies. It would thus be the expression of a desire for continuity.

However, the data found are contradictory. Figure 5 below shows the situation of the senators in the 2010 election competition. It can be seen that 18 of them (in blue) were at the end of their term of office - that is, they were elected in 2003 - and therefore would have an immediate re-election interest. Of these, 14 were candidates, most of whom were new term in the Senate. They were senators who, in order to continue as active political agents, needed to invest in the electoral arena, and it seems justifiable that their public disclosure and visibility efforts would increase during the second and last half of the mandate. In short: they talked more - more than twice a week - because they needed votes. It would therefore be possible to use the floor in the floor of the plenary as a re-election strategy.



Graph 5 - Electoral behavior of the speech-intensive senators in October 2010. Source: the author (2017).

The hypothesis of reelectoral interest is complicated, however, if we consider the quartile of the 27 senators who made only episodic use of speech, that is, that they rose to the rostrum less than once a month, illustrated in Graph 6.



Graph 6 - Electoral behavior of the senators of episodic use of speech in October 2010.
 Fonte: o autor (2017).

Chart 6 reveals that only 12 senators who made episodic use of speeches were at the end of their term. The difference would justify less frequent use of the word because, at least in theory, the number of senators concerned about their immediate electoral survival would be lower. It makes sense, therefore, to speak less.

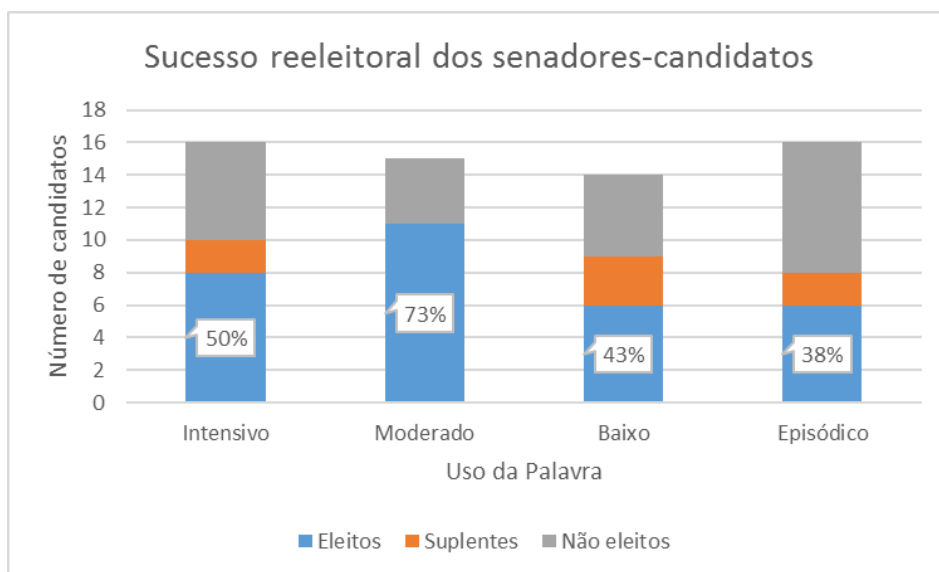
However, if we compare the two graphs we will see that the number of candidate senators in both quarters is strictly identical: in both cases, there are 16 senators involved in the electoral contest. How, then, is the difference in the frequency of use of the word justified? If the two groups had the same number of candidates, and if the plenary constituted an important strategy for electoral reproduction, why did the senators of the first group rise to the rostrum more than twice a week, while those of the second group, who also needed of votes, they did it less than once a month?

It should be added that the electoral objective of the second group - of senators of episodic use of the word - was, mainly, the state executive; and that this is the only quartile that counted with a candidate for the Presidency of the Republic (Marina Silva - PV / AC). That is, the senators of this group applied for jobs with a higher electoral density but used the rostrum less, which seems to represent, at first glance, a counter-claim: they needed more votes but they were less worthy of the strategies of visibility that the Senate itself offered. They were, yes, campaigning, but the campaign apparently took place elsewhere².

The apparent contradiction illuminates another side of the question: the effectiveness of the use of the floor in the tribune as an electoral marketing strategy, which will be associated with the success rate of the reelectoral project. In this regard, Figure 7 below points to a nebulous result: the most successful senators in their electoral projects - not only for Senate seats, but for

² One possible explanation is undoubtedly that candidacies for executive positions may require a greater presence of the candidate with the electorate and, consequently, outside the Federal Senate. But note that the numbers refer to all four years of the legislature, not just the election campaign.

all seats they have applied for - are among the quartiles of those who have only moderated use of the word, that is, those who used the rostrum on average once a week. Intensive use of the word is associated with higher re-election rates than low or episodic use, but the differences are not as expressive. The relationship between electoral success and frequency of speaking is therefore low, and seems to suggest that the rostrum is ineffective as a strategy for electoral reproduction.



Graph 7 - Reelection success of the senator-candidates in the elections of October 2010 according to the frequency of use of speech.

Source: the author (2017).

5 The Use of speech as Strategy for Structuring the Political Career

If we admit that every action that takes place in the plenary is inherently crossed by a political purpose, we are led to believe that the instances of speaking in the plenary can be conceived as a strategy of structuring the professional career through the formation and accumulation of political capital.

The notion of "political capital" assumes here the meaning proposed by Pierre Bourdieu (1998):

Political capital is a form of symbolic capital, credit based on belief and recognition, or more precisely, on the innumerable credit operations by which agents give a person - or an object - the very powers they recognize. ... This supremely labile capital can only be preserved by constant labor which is necessary not only to accumulate credit but also to avoid discrediting. [...] And the special attention that political men must give to everything that contributes to the representation of their sincerity or their disinterest is explained by imagining that these attitudes appear as the ultimate guarantee of the representation of the social world, which they strive to impose, of the 'ideals' and 'ideas' which they have the task of making them accept (p. 187-189, emphasis added).

The use speech would therefore be one of the instances of the "constant work" necessary to accumulate "credit", one of the "instruments of production of a social representation" through which the representatives obtain or renew the political prestige between the pairs.

One of the virtues of the model that divides the political field into two arenas - the electoral arena and the legislative arena - is that it allows us to perceive that, no matter how much

these symbolic spaces seem to be intertwined, the relations of forces that structure them are of a different nature . The main evidence of this difference is the fact that voting champions often have faded and peripheral roles in Parliament, that is, they are popular among their constituents, but not among the parliamentarians themselves.

Indeed, Bourdieu (1998a) argues that there are basically two kinds of political capital: the personal capital of notoriety and popularity; and the delegated capital of political authority. In the first case, it is a capital that "is often the product of the reconversion of a capital of notoriety accumulated in other domains" (191). This would be the situation of renowned artists, athletes, businessmen, journalists and intellectuals who decide to enter parliamentary life. According to Miguel (2003), the political field imposes an unfavorable conversion rate to symbolic capitals from other fields. Thus, non-professional politicians tend to have little prestige among peers and to occupy secondary positions in the political field even though they have obtained expressive votes.

A solution available to those with personal capital who wish to pursue the political career would be, according to Miguel (2003), to promote "a kind of 'cleaning' of the symbolic capital, with the exercise of other public functions and the gradual untying of the original source of notoriety "(132). In other words, it would be necessary to create and strengthen, not the bond with the electorate, but with the other active political agents, in order to dig up opportunities for more effective political action, such as by occupying positions of trust at the summit of state bureaucracy.

This accreditation inevitably involves the formation and accumulation of social capital among the parliamentarians themselves. For Bourdieu social capital:

[...] is the set of real or potential resources that are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relations of mutual inter-recognition and mutual recognition, or, in other words, to a group, as the set of agents that not only are they endowed with common properties (which can be perceived by the observer, by others and by themselves), but also that they are united by permanent and useful connections (1998b, p. 67).

Unlike what happens in the family sphere, social capital, although it may be "inherited", is not a natural or "socially constituted once and for all", but a product of permanent work. It is therefore an investment - time, effort and even economic capital - whose gains, material or symbolic, will be directly proportional to the extent and consistency of the network and the volume of capital (economic, cultural or social) accumulated by those who participate. The larger the network, the stronger its links, and the richer, well-formed and well-connected its members, the greater will be the accumulated social capital.

Thus much of parliamentary behavior can be seen as investment in this "durable network of relations" which, by permitting and reinforcing recognition of the parliamentarian's attachment to the group, would be converted into social capital and, by extension, into political capital. It would therefore be a strategy of cleansing personal capital to take the form of a delegated capital.

Delegated capital - which Bourdieu opposes to personal capital - is "the product of the limited and provisional transfer (although renewable, sometimes for life) of a capital held and controlled by the institution and only by it" (1998a, 191). It is the capital, for example, that unions, churches and class associations transfer to their representatives. Or that Parliament invests some parliamentarians.

According to Bourdieu, this investiture "can only be the counterpart of a long investment of time, work, dedication and devotion to the institution: ... the institution gives everything, beginning with power over the institution, to those who all gave to the institution" (1998a, p.192, emphasis added). Although this supposed reciprocity between institutions and members can be criticized - especially when it comes to party machines that often betray their most loyal militants - it is important to note that:

[...] as politics becomes 'professionalized' and parties become 'bureaucratic', the struggle for political power of mobilization tends more and more to become a two-tiered competition: it results from competition for power over apparatus, which takes place in the bosom of the apparatus only among professionals, which depends on the choice of those who can enter the struggle for the conquest of the simple laity (BOURDIEU, 1998a, p. 194).

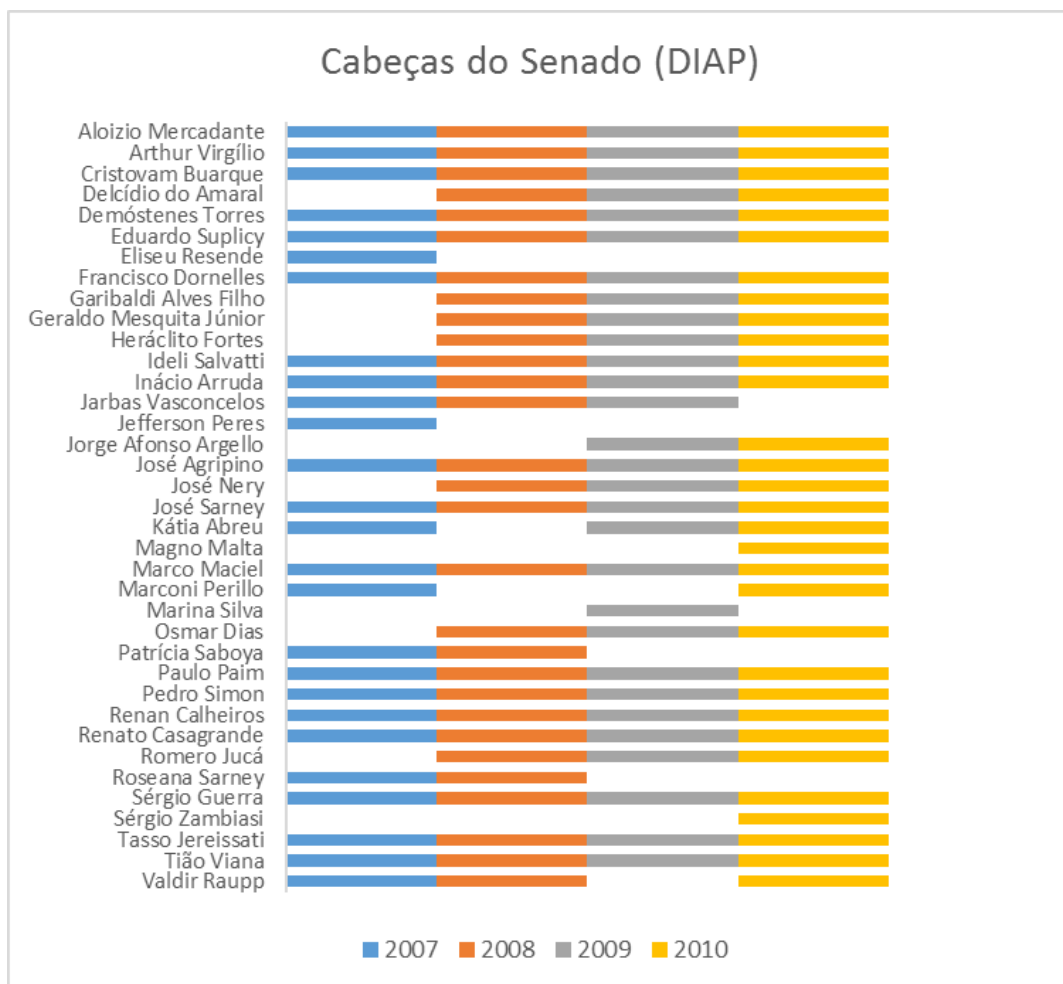
Thus, there is no strongly oligopolized political market, where the supply of political products is restricted and concentrated in professionals, a space for small independent producers that expand the "universe of what is politically thinkable". And to those with a personal political capital who have not yet been able to convert it into delegated political capital - that is, they have not yet been able to "institutionalize" their political capital - there would be no alternative but to invest in institutionalization strategies, of the floor in the floor of the plenary.

The pronouncements would thus serve the purpose of political continuity and longevity, not through the direct electoral route, not through the connection with the electorate, not as a strategy of electoral marketing, but through the inscription and admission of the parliamentarian in the restricted club of those who actually hold power, and that would ensure them, if not the electoral reproduction, because dependent on an electorate that can not always be controlled, at least stay in (non-elective) positions of authority, as positions in the Executive, which would also serve the project of perpetuation in power. In short: they would serve to structure the political career.

In this line of reasoning, an interesting comparison is presented in Figure 8 below, which shows the results of the annual survey conducted by the DIAP to determine the 100 most influential congressional parliamentarians (DIAP, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)³.

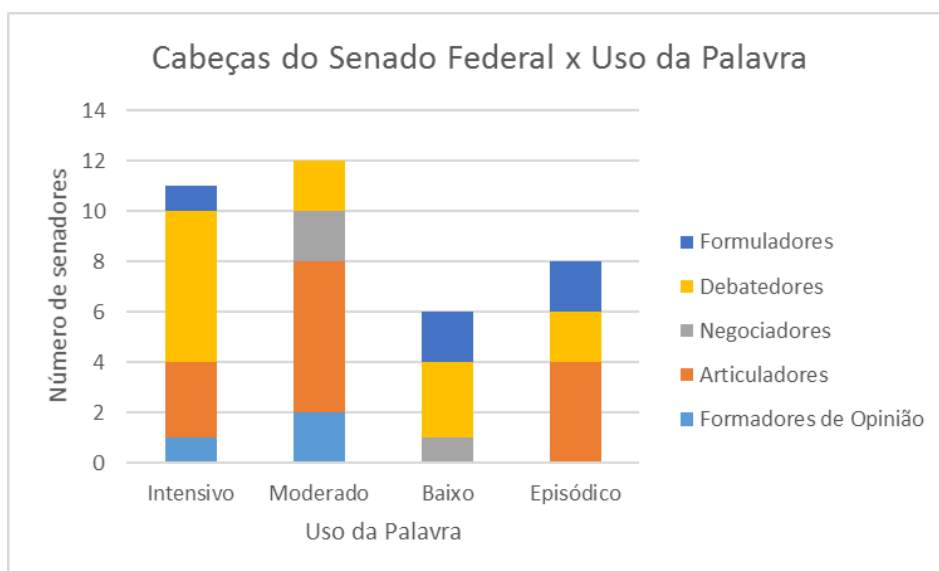
³ The research seeks to identify the "heads" of the National Congress, defined as "key operators of the Legislative Power, whose preferences, initiatives, decisions or vetoes - implemented through the methods of persuasion, negotiation, induction or non-decision - prevail in the decision-making process in the Chamber or in the Federal Senate" (DIAP, 2010, p.10).

In Graph 8, it can be seen that, during the 53rd legislature, 37 senators figured at least once among the 100 most influential parliamentarians of the National Congress. According to the DIAP, 13 stood out mainly for their ability as debaters ("active parliamentarians, attentive to the events and mainly with a great sense of opportunity and ability to pass on, either in the plenary or in the press, the political facts generated inside or outside the Congress "). Another large group, also with 13 senators, is the articulators / organizers ("with excellent transit in the diverse political currents [that] credence to order and create the conditions for the consensus"). Following are the five formulating senators ("parliamentarians who prepare texts with proposals for deliberation"), followed by the group of opinion formers ("called to arbitrate conflicts or conduct political negotiations of great relevance") and the negotiators ("Invested with authority to sign and honor commitments, sit at the negotiating table backed to take decisions"), both with 3 members each.



Graph 8 - Heads of the Senate (DIAP 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)
Source: the author (2017)

If we compare the results of the DIAP research with the frequency of use speech in the floor of the plenary, we will obtain the results indicated in Graph 9:



Graph 9 – The 'heads' of the Federal Senate according to the frequency of use of speech in the 53rd term. Source: the author (2017)

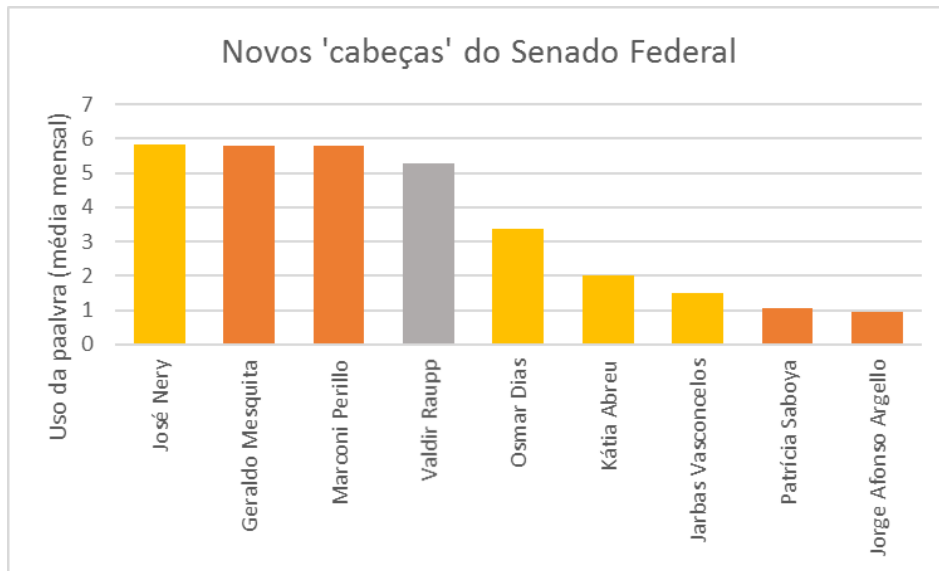
The analysis in Figure 9 leads to two seemingly contradictory conclusions: the most influential parliamentarians often come to the rostrum, but most of the parliamentarians who stand on the rostrum are not influential. Of the 27 senators who make up the first quartile, only 11 were among the most influential, that is, 16 senators failed to make the frequent use of the word translate into political prestige in the National Congress. On the other hand, more than half of the most influential parliamentarians used the grandstand more than the average, standing between the quartiles of intensive use or moderate use of the word. The main conclusion is that the tribune seems to be, in most cases, an important factor for influence in the National Congress, but it is not a necessary condition (37% of prestige senators make use of the word less than average), and (only 42% of the senators who used the word above average figured, at least once, in the list of the most influential).

There is, however, another telling fact: the use of the tribune seems to contribute little to the change of senator status. In fact, the prestige senators seem to be a relatively consolidated nucleus, made up of the same names, which are repeated every year, with very few variations. They are experienced politicians who seem to be invested with institutionalized political capital. As it is important to verify here the possibility of converting personal capital into delegated capital through the use of the word, it is important to isolate them from the group of emerging leaders who have gained prestige throughout the legislative session.

In 2007, these "new heads" in DIAP's terminology were Patricia Saboya (PSB / CE), Marconi Perillo (PSDB / GO), Jarbas Vasconcellos (PMDB / PE), Valdir Raupp (PMDB / RO) and Kátia Abreu DEM / TO), which appeared for the first time in the survey. In 2008, Geraldo Mesquita Júnior (PMDB / AC), José Nery (PSOL / PA) and Osmar Dias (PDT / PR) emerged in

the landscape of national parliamentary politics. In 2009, only Gim Argello (PTB / DF) emerged. And there was no new name in 2010.

It should be noted that, having taken the DIAP survey as a parameter, only these 9 senators were able to accumulate sufficient political capital to pass for the first time to be influential among their peers. The other 28 heads of the Senate either retained the capital they already held or repurchased part of the capital they lost because they had already participated in previous relationships.



Graph 10 - Monthly average of the use of speech by the new 'heads' of the Federal Senate in the 53rd legislature.

Source: the author (2017)

It should be noted, however, that part of the capital of these new heads is, in order to preserve the term used by Bourdieu, "labile", that is, unstable, impermanent, slippery: none of the newcomers remained in the relationship during the four years of the legislature. Their abilities are variable: 4 stood out as debaters (in yellow in Graph 10), 4 as articulators (in orange) and 1 as negotiator (in gray). And, especially: although 4 used the word frequently above average, 5 made infrequent or episodic use of the rostrum.

Consequently, a direct relationship between the use of the word and the formation of political capital can not be built, at least not in these cases⁴.

In short, it seems that the "domain of a certain language and of a certain political rhetoric, that of the tribune, indispensable in relations with the profane, or that of the debate, necessary in the relations between professionals" (p.169), that Bourdieu 1998a) identifies as part of the corpus of specific knowledge that characterizes the habitus of the politician, is only one of the

⁴ If we consider that this process of accumulation is a continuous, long-term work, it may be that a longitudinal analysis that considers a greater interval of time, beyond the short space of a legislature, reveals some more positive relation between speaking in the plenary and accumulation of political peer credit.

ingredients, not the magic act capable of consecrating a new personality in the political environment. In this way, the accumulation of political capital, as well as the electoral reproduction, is through the use of the word in the floor of the plenary, does it mainly accessory way. The main must be sought elsewhere. Or in several other places.

6 Conclusion

This work pursued two hypotheses: 1) the plenary would be, above all, an appropriate platform for senators as a strategy for electoral reproduction; and 2) the plenary would be a market in which individual political capital is formed, accumulated and renewed, and in which it is sought to convert it into delegated political capital. As we have seen, none of these hypotheses seems to explain fully the functioning of the plenary as a strategy of political communication, and rather reinforce the diagnosis that the use of the tribune would play a seemingly innocuous role from the point of view of structuring the political or electoral career.

In this sense, the external and ancillary role that parliamentary pronouncements seem to experience in the political practice of countless senators, who simply do not use the tribune - or use the tribune very little - throughout their mandates, without this having important implications on its legislative production, its projection in the mass media, the accumulation of political capital and its electoral vigor. And the discrediting of parliamentary rhetoric in political science would also be justified, since "a good part of the perception about parliamentary work judges that its principal, if not unique, product is the law" (MIGUEL, FEITOSA, 2009, p. 206).

To say, however, that the use of the Senate floor does not seem to play a relevant role in electoral reproduction does not, of course, deny the importance of discourse in politics. It should not be forgotten that the parliamentary pronouncement is only one of the modalities of political discourse, and that the plenary is only one of the places where such speeches are produced. There is no way of not recognizing that "discourse is the fundamental means of political doing" (MIGUEL, 2000, p.5) and, "although the word is not everything in politics, politics can not act without the word":

[...] the word intervenes in the space of discussion, so that the ideal of the ends and the means of political action are defined; the word intervenes in the space of action so that the distribution of tasks and the enactment of the laws, rules and decisions of all orders are organized and coordinated; the word intervenes in the space of persuasion so that the political body can convince the citizen body of the fundamentals of its program and the decisions that it makes when managing the conflicts of opinion to its advantage. (CHARAUDEAU, 2015, p. 21).

The central issue is that this use of the word - so essential when making political - does not occur, at least not as expected, in the plenary of the Federal Senate. It was hoped that the importance of the tribune as a strategy of political communication would lead senators to a more convergent, less heterogeneous behavior, with a more balanced dispute over the spaces of public visibility, and in which idiosyncrasies and personalities would be neutralized, as is the case, for

example , in the political-partisan programs of obligatory broadcasting in radio and TV. That is, the expectation was that the professionalization of politics - like all professionalization - would reduce, by the field of technique, shared by all professionals, the margin for singular and heterodox practices, which escaped the established common sense on the importance of the use of on the most prominent stage of the legislative arena.

However, heterogeneity is the hallmark, which seems to indicate that this work reveals less about the use of the word itself than about the meaning of the rostrum in parliamentary practice. In fact, the only alternative offered to us is to realize that the plenary assumes different senses for different senators with important and divergent repercussions on their discursive practice. The discourses continue to occur and constitute the fundamental means by which politics is done, but these practices do not occur convergingly - or simply do not occur - in the Federal Senate floor, perhaps because the plenary, for a not insignificant group of senators, already does not properly constitute neither a space of discussion nor a space of action nor a space of persuasion. For many parliamentarians, the real policy apparently occurs elsewhere.

However, in order to avoid the risks of self-deception, it must be acknowledged that the conclusions reached in this paper are, in principle, confined only to the interval of a legislature, and it may be premature to imagine that they may be generalized throughout the recent history of Parliament. It would be necessary to reconsider the data from a longer-term longitudinal perspective, which would include other sets of parliamentarians and other legislatures, so that one could infer, with a little more clarity, whether the behaviors that are described here must be in fact so interpreted.

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