The Meaning of Mandates

Party Competition and the Programme-to-Policy Linkage

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This thesis is the result of the author's original research. It has been composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination which has led to the award of a degree.

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For my granda Willie and in loving memory of Anne, Ian and Wee Aggie.

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Abstract

The connection between political parties' campaign promises and government actions - known as the programme-to-policy linkage - has been a topic of scholarly interest for nearly half a century. Indeed, the degree to which governments follow up on their campaign pledges represents an important question for representative democracies as political systems in which regular elections serve as the mechanism for the enactment of public priorities. Despite voter cynicism, it has become well-established that election winners tend to redeem a healthy share of their pledges in office. However, studies of this linkage focused overwhelmingly on straightforward empirical assessments. This research has primarily examined the extent to which specific manifesto promises are enacted across countries and the institutional constraints which explain variation. Yet, serious questions persist about the origins and format of manifesto documents, the conceptualisation and measurement of the linkage and its significance for democracy in theory and practice. My doctoral thesis contributes to the programme-to-policy literature by shedding light on these gaps in current scholarly understanding.

Through a series of sequential chapters, I address these questions. I first focus on the conceptualisation and measurement of linkage. In particular, I re-evaluate an influential alternative approach focused on the connection between issue emphasis and government spending by reassessing a canonical work in the literature and applying new tests. Having established the validity of an adapted version of this approach, finding that the party mandate extends to the government policy agenda in a UK context, I investigate the relationship between parties' issue emphasis and pledge-making strategies, introducing the concept of manifesto "composition" as distinct from policy content to examine its impact on pledge fulfilment. Finally, I turn to the idea of the responsible electorate, investigating the extent to which voters retrospectively reward parties for fulfilling pledges, identifying the first evidence that governments are punished for breaking their promises. By questioning established wisdom and innovating to offer a more comprehensive account of mandates, my thesis contributes greatly to the scholarly understanding of the meaning of the linkage and reaffirms the centrality of the oft-overlooked party manifesto to party competition, the policy agenda and public opinion.

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Chapter 1

Approaches to the Programme-to-Policy Linkage

Democracy is a system of social organisation in which "important public decisions on questions of law and policy depend, directly or indirectly, upon public opinion formally expressed by citizens of the community" (Weale, 2007, p.18). Given the practical obstacles to direct mass participation in decision-making, modern democracy is understood to be indirect, specifically *representative* (Pitkin, 1967; Mansbridge, 2003), involving the election of lawmakers who act on behalf of citizens. Some connection between citizen preferences and government policies, therefore, is a normative and descriptive minimal requirement for democracy (Arnold and Franklin, 2012). What mechanism, in theory, is in place to bring this about? As Huber and Powell state (1994, p.291), "the repeated processes of electoral competition and legislative bargaining are supposed to ensure that policymakers do what citizens want them to do". The system is designed so that representatives carry out the wishes of their voters. As Schedler writes, "elections without choice are without choice as well as elections without consequences would stop making sense" (1998, p.194).

Most representatives are organised into political parties, which can be described as "teams... seeking to maximize their electoral support for the purpose of controlling government" (Strøm, 1990, p.566). Parties tend to be proponents of a particular ideology, around which their members and candidates organise as a coalition. Only a handful of democratic systems, all tiny in terms of geography and population, operate largely without party systems (Dalton et al., 2011). Parties provide structure to government formation and electoral competition in large democracies, streamlining the process by offering voters predefined "policy packages" (Naurin, 2011, p.46), most commonly in the form of manifesto documents. The winning party or parties in turn interpret victory as granting a "moral right" (Budge, 1992, p.152) to enact their proposed policies, which is normally referred to as an electoral mandate. The mandate, in other words, "refers to the authority of a government to carry out its election promises" (Kavanagh, 1981, p.8). The act of carrying out the mandate is known as party responsibility (APSA, 1950; Downs, 1957; Arnold and

Franklin, 2012).

These concepts have been influential in the discipline of political science for the several decades since they were first elaborated at length by Downs in *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957). The idea of party responsibility has been dominant in the literature and is considered to be the classical theoretical model of how democracy works (Mansbridge, 2003; Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007). Though the theory has been superseded by a variety of alternate accounts of electoral competition and the relationship between representatives and the represented (e.g. Pitkin 1967; Mansbridge 2003; McDonald and Budge 2006; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007; Arnold and Franklin 2012), elements of this kind of representation and accountability relationship - the voter-as-principal representative-as-agent dynamic - remain central to most conceptions of democracy.

It is also the case that manifestos remain a fixture of representative democracy in real life. Rather than moving away from the practice of issuing campaign promises as institutional trust has declined, parties have produced an ever-increasing number of pledges across an expanding range of policy areas (Green-Pedersen, 2007; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016; van Heck, 2018). The seemingly-chaotic profusion of information produced during election campaigns has long engendered scepticism among scholars, voters, journalists and even legislators themselves (David, 1971). But, as Pomper (1967, p.348) stated half a century ago in reference to the production of policy platforms, "there are logical explanations for behaviour which outwardly resembles only a circus". Although it is widely acknowledged that few voters actually read party programmes (Harmel et al., 2018, p.230), parties rely upon the manifesto to provide cues to the mass media as well as their own activists and candidates to disseminate their policy priorities to the electorate (Budge et al., 1987; Eder et al., 2017). Even though voters are operating with incomplete information (Finer, 1975), their votes constitute formally recorded expressions of preferences regarding the policy packages on offer (Best et al., 2012, p.10).

Party responsibility is therefore an important link in the representative chain, theoretically enabling mass control of public policy outputs. Even among theories which recognise the multifaceted nature of representation (Mansbridge, 2003; Urbinati, 2006), the translation of party programmes into public policy is highly important to the proper functioning of democratic government. Curiously, though, political scientists previously shied away from empirically testing the strength of the connection between manifestos and government actions. On the rare occasions influential scholars addressed the matter, they only expressed scepticism that campaign pledges meant anything at all (Royed, 1996, p.50). This began to change in the 1980s, however, when researchers working outwith the idiosyncratic United States context turned their attention to the topic. Hofferbert and Klingemann (1990, p.297) first used the expression "programme $\rightarrow$ policy linkages" in a study of West Germany, and "programme-to-policy linkage" later became the widely accepted terminology for the connection between campaign pledges and government policy (Thomson, 2001).

Various ways to measure this linkage have been developed, two of which have dominated

the empirical literature (Pétry and Colette, 2009, p.68-70). One of these is the saliency approach (named after the saliency theory, an offshoot of mandate theory), which concerns the correspondence between issue priorities in party manifestos and concomitant changes in government expenditure in associated policy areas. The pledge approach, meanwhile, takes campaign promises at face value and checks each policy promised against the government record. Pledge studies in some form have been around since the late 1960s when a handful of Americanists thought to examine platforms (Pomper, 1968; Bradley, 1969; David, 1971), but it took several decades for the trickle of research to become a flood. Researchers using each approach have claimed to uncover evidence for a strong programme-to-policy linkage in a number of advanced democracies (Pétry and Colette, 2009).

However, both approaches have shortcomings (Louwerse, 2011a, p.23-27), and the relationship between the types of linkage they identify is poorly understood. When the topic began to attract serious attention in the 1990s, researchers using each approach suggested that the alternative was an insufficient test of mandate theory. Budge and Hofferbert (1990, p.114) developed the saliency approach in line with their theoretical assumption that the substantive content of manifesto pledges is inconsequential. In response, (Royed, 1996) expressed doubts that issue emphasis and budgets adequately operationalised the concept. Though the approaches appear designed to measure the same phenomenon - a notion taken for granted to some extent in the literature (Pétry and Colette, 2009) - their operational differences suggest an unidentified or poorly-specified conceptual one. This is exacerbated by a lack of research on the origins and content of manifesto documents themselves (Däubler, 2012), as well as the political and policy consequences of mandate fulfilment. The pledge approach examines linkage during single government terms using pledges as the unit of analysis, while the saliency approach is longitudinal and aggregative, employing issue themes instead. In other words, the former is highly specific to individual cases and election cycles, while the latter seeks to identify a general correspondence between manifestos and policy outputs over time (Budge, 1992, p.117).

Additionally, like the political parties they scrutinise, the two approaches talked past one another. Due to a decline in interest in the saliency approach, no systematic comparison of their conceptual details, operational definitions or empirical findings has been attempted. This is not unique to the subject area. Munck and Verkuilen (2002, p.6) point out that "problems of causal inference have overshadowed the equally important problems of conceptualisation and measurement" in the equally fundamental and much better established field of democracy studies. Similarly, in a meta-analysis of partisan theory research, Imbeau et al. observed some dysfunction surrounding the operational definition of policy outputs. This issue, which has parallels with the research problem identified in this chapter, had also resulted from a lack of theoretical consensus (2001, p.25).

The rush to make empirical inferences is common in many emergent fields of study. When researchers turn their attention to a fresh "universal" like the programme-to-policy linkage, early work understandably focuses on the empirical verification of the concept and

its immediate causal priors and implications (Pfeffer, 1993). Fields reach maturity when theory catches up and a "denser" set of relationships is identified (Bozeman and Su, 2015, p.707). The emerging research agenda around the programme-to-policy linkage currently stands at this juncture.

It is the duty of positivist social scientists to take stock of the normative implications of their findings once in a while. As Riker stated, "description and analysis are always subordinate to a greater issue, which is the determination of the moral significance of reality" (Riker, 1965, p.vii). This thesis aims to contribute to the scientific understanding of the democratic implications of the programme-to-policy linkage by investigating its operationalisation and measurement alongside a consideration of the political significance of party manifestos both before and after elections.

There is no gap in the literature as such concerning the programme-to-policy linkage, but rather a gap in the scholarly understanding of what it means when one is found. I refer not only to conceptualisation and measurement, but the position of programme-to-policy linkage in the democratic process. This thesis aims to close that gap and by doing so contribute to a wider understanding of the function of manifesto documents in party competition, a topic around which a new literature is currently emerging (Däubler, 2012; Däubler and Benoit, 2013; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016; Dolezal et al., 2016; Eder et al., 2017; Praprotnik, 2017a,b). The central research questions of this thesis correspond to its structure, with the chapters taking the comparison between the two approaches as a starting point and following a loose but logical sequence to address a wide range of important and fundamental questions for the research programme. They are as follows:

1. *To what extent are the pledge and saliency approaches to the study of the programme-to-policy linkage conceptually and empirically complementary?*

2. *To what extent are parties' pre-election issue priorities reflected in governments' post-election issue agendas?*

3. *What is the relationship between parties' issue emphasis and pledge-making strategies?*

4. *To what extent are pledge fulfilment rates endogenous to the structure of party manifestos?*

5. *Are parties rewarded by voters for mandate fulfilment?*

By answering these questions, the following chapters - written as a series of standalone academic papers - contribute to a better conceptual and empirical understanding of the

programme-to-policy linkage. The remainder of this chapter outlines the linkage's theoretical background, provides an overview of the development of literature on the topic and makes the argument that the two approaches to the measurement of the linkage conceptualise and operationalise different forms of linkage. The remainder of the thesis comprises three distinct parts.

The first of these considers the saliency approach in theory and practice. Chapter 2 applies the saliency method to modern data, partly-replicating and extending the an approach which has been mostly dormant for two decades. The chapter also makes a conceptual argument about what exactly the approach operationalises, proposing that it is not a valid way to test the programme-to-policy linkage as such. Chapter 3 develops this argument, presenting an alternative operationalisation of the saliency approach - replacing budgets as the policy output with throne speeches - and tests this relationship in the United Kingdom context.

Having established that this agenda-based adaptation of the saliency approach has explanatory value, the second part of the thesis attempts to bridge the gap between the approaches. Chapter 4 does this by testing the compatibility of pledge- and issue-based definitions of the "programme" using a combined pledge and saliency dataset. I investigate the determinants of party pledge-making and other aspects of what I define as "manifesto composition". This concept describes non-ideological, structural aspects of programmes which are typically not thought of as strategic.

The final portion of the thesis considers unanswered normative questions about the pledge approach. It is important for pledge scholars to understand how the operational definition of linkage fits into its wider context. With substantial descriptive variation in manifesto structure shown be the result of strategic choices by parties in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 considers the impact of these composition features on party pledge fulfilment rates. Chapter 6 follows on from the linkage itself to the final step of the mandate process, the actions of the "responsible electorate". For the first time, a fundamental assumption of mandate theory is tested: the relationship between the programme-to-policy linkage and election outcomes.

I conclude the thesis by evaluating the implications of the various chapter findings and suggesting avenues for further inquiry. To begin with, though, I provide a background on this increasingly crowded literature, elaborating on its conceptualisation, measurement and the empirical findings of researchers.

1.1 Representation and Public Policy Preferences

As stated above, the distinguishing feature of democratic regimes over non-democratic alternatives is the reliance of government policy upon public demands. The implication of this is that representative systems which cease to effectively respond to public demands are no longer democratic. As Weale (2007, p.18) puts it, "if we came across a system of

government in which there was no dependence at all in important public choices on public opinion, then we would withhold the name 'democracy' from that system". Although the idea of representation was not always thought to be a natural bedfellow of democracy, modern democratic systems rely heavily upon representative institutions in practice (Urbinati, 2006). The translation of public preferences into policy therefore depends upon informed citizens making choices between competing alternatives and the subsequent actions of the political surrogates elected to legislate on their behalf. It is important to note that representation is not merely a weak proxy for direct participation but a solution to problems inherent to ancient democratic models, which in practice relied on restrictive rights of citizenship to sustain the ideal of direct participation (Dalton, 1985, p.267).

The "dependence" specified by Weale is therefore the responsibility of the lawmakers chosen by citizens. As Stimson (1995, p.543) states, "representation exists when changing preferences lead to changing policy acts". The absence of this representative connection would prevent the regime from fulfilling its core normative purpose. In this scenario, the justification for the system over non-democratic alternatives becomes unclear, as there is little reason to assume that a benevolent dictator would do a worse job of interpreting and enacting the policy preferences of the governed (McDonald et al., 2004, p.3).

The academic concept of the programme-to-policy linkage derived from so-called mandate theory and the related idea of government responsiveness (APSA, 1950). The basic premise of mandate theory is that competing parties promise to carry out various policies if elected and that citizens vote on the basis of which package will deliver greater utility. The programme-to-policy linkage is, in the words of Thomson et al. (2017, p.528), "central to the mandate theory of democracy and the responsible party model" , referring as it does to the correspondence between what political parties say and what they do when they are elected to office (Budge and Hofferbert, 1990, p.111).

Since being introduced by Downs (1957), mandate theory has been widely used by scholars as a model of democratic representation (Naurin, 2014, p.1,048). Briefly, Downs specified the theoretical model as follows: office-seeking parties publish policy programmes distinctive enough to offer voters a nontrivial choice; voters compare the expected personal utility of each alternative; having won with these policies - and seeking to avoid retaliation for promise-breaking at subsequent elections - it is rational for parties to exercise "responsibility" by carrying out the programme (Downs, 1957, p.103). Parties who fail to stay true to their word are vulnerable to punishment by citizens at subsequent elections.

Downs' model is just that - a model - rather than a comprehensive account of democratic practices. It has long been acknowledged that different forms of representation coexist, whether in a complementary way or in competition. Long-established normative theories of representation, which originated centuries ago at the dawn of representative government, have remained influential in the political science literature (Andeweg and Thomassen, 2005, p.508). In the Burkean "trustee" conception of representation, elected officials act according to their own judgement in the interests of the state, while in a "delegate" conception they act

on behalf of their constituents as direct proxies, behaving "as if the principal himself were acting" (Pitkin, 1967, p.144). Eulau et al. (1959) viewed these conceptions as two extremes on a spectrum and referred to representatives sitting in the between as "politicos".

In her influential volume *The Concept of Representation* (1967), Pitkin criticised this "mandate-independence" dichotomy as incoherent because it is unrealistic to expect legislators to act *either* exactly as their voters would *or* entirely independently. Voters do not have perfect knowledge concerning current policy issues or the future actions available to representatives. The agents in this situation must therefore decide upon courses of action which their principals are not in a position to make judgements on. They must act in what they *perceive* to be the best interests of their constituents, even if those constituents would choose a different course of action in the specific context (1967, p.145).

Pitkin argued that a principal-agent conception of representation inevitably straddles the two poles of the delegate-trustee modes, claiming that these existing designations were of little empirical value as a result. She (1967, p.38) instead outlined five "views" from which to evaluate representation which she described as "each tempting because it is partly right, but each wrong because it takes a part of the concept for the whole". Somewhat counter-intuitively, the party mandate theory illustrates this well. Though citizens send representatives instructions, parties themselves define what these instructions will be in advance. As Louwerse states (2011a, p.11), "[parties] have complete freedom of what (not) to promise".

In terms of the real life correspondence between public preferences and public policy, existing political science research confirms that government outputs tend to be responsive to citizen demands (Page and Shapiro, 1983; Burstein, 2003). The system does what it is designed to do, albeit in a messy and compromised way. Though challenges to a classical principal-agent conception of representation have been made in recent times (Urbinati and Warren, 2008), it still reflects the *de jure* normative arrangement in nearly every modern democracy. Party politics and the representative process in democracies, in the words of Sartori (1976, p.16), "[have] not been designed by a theory but... determined by a concurrence of events".

The most important of these events are elections in which citizens choose between candidates espousing different prospective policy intentions. Though numerous other formal and informal mechanisms contribute to the expression of public preferences in enacted policy in free societies - such as the independent media, policy consultations, referendums, petitioning systems and rights to assembly and protest - the regular formal mechanism is the free and fair election of popular representatives. Though it is difficult to trace the implementation of citizens' precise public policy preferences from origins to enactment, the question of whether the pledges presented to voters are translated into policy is a genuine concern of citizens and lawmakers in real-world democracies. As Rose (1984, p.9) stated, "Elections are about what people want - but people cannot always have what they want". The question pledge scholars are concerned with is how effective the electoral mechanism

is at transferring these expressions of want into policy outputs and what this means for democracy in practice.

Despite moves away from purely Downsian conceptions of democracy, party responsibility is still integral to prominent theories, many of which confer importance on the mandate mechanism. Mansbridge refers to the programme-to-policy linkage as "promissory" representation (2003). Promissory representation is similar to the delegate model, with the only difference being that the agent creates the policy options in advance of the formal relationship with the principal (Rehfeld, 2009). Similarly, Andeweg and Thomassen designed a typology of representative modes with two dimensions in which representation "from above" happens when the representative plays this active role in creating the linkage (2005, p.512). When representation from above is combined with "ex ante" control - in this case prospective voting based on the principal's evaluation of the policy package - it results in the "authorization" mode of representation. In this typology, "accountability" representation occurs when voter evaluations of these entreaties from above are retrospective (i.e. assessing party responsibility), "delegation" representation happens when prospective evaluations are made "from below" and "responsiveness" representation occurs when retrospective evaluations are made from below (Andeweg and Thomassen, 2005). This latter mode, in which representatives respond to changing public demands between elections in anticipation of their reaction at the next contest is identical to what Stimson et al. (1995) called "rational anticipation", which they viewed as a complement to electoral responsiveness.

Despite the central normative role of linkage, however, the aggregate correspondence between public preferences and government policy, known as "issue congruence", has generated more scholarly interest in recent years (Blais and Bodet, 2006; Bingham Powell, 2009; Golder and Stramski, 2010; Rasmussen et al., 2018). Additionally, in parallel with the conceptual advances described, a substantial body of empirical work on the government policy agenda and its relationship with party competition has emerged, providing support for the view that representation is a dynamic process (see Green-Pedersen 2007; Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2015; Froio et al. 2016). Though these contributions are hugely valuable in allowing political scientists to ascertain the overall effectiveness of representative democracy and assess how the public agenda is formed, focusing exclusively on the outcome rather than the process is akin to judging a car to be roadworthy without looking under the hood to ensure its component parts are in working order.

To what extent, then, do elections contribute to the congruence of citizen desires and government policies? Other formal mechanisms like direct democracy are typically less common or consequential than regular legislative elections, while informal mechanisms like media pressure are not necessarily unique to democratic regimes. Hence it is important to consider the programme-to-policy linkage. Common to the pledge and saliency approaches is "a positive view of the policy-making role of parties" (Rose, 1984, p. 52). Assessing the institutional mechanism designed to account for the expression of public preferences ought to be a central priority for political science. Happily, in recent years, the programme-to-

policy linkage has attracted significant scholarly attention. The next section summarises this literature, examining its origins, development and growth in recent years while identifying areas in which this thesis can contribute to scholarly understandings.

1.2 Development of the Literature

Though the topic of the programme-to-policy linkage relates to fundamental democratic concepts and overlaps with several well-established political science research traditions, the literature on the phenomenon has been limited until recent years. Earlier reviews of work on linkage can be found in Pétry and Colette (2009) and Naurin (2011), but the literature has grown and evolved rapidly even since these were published. Now, with the research programme's universals well-established, the topic is gaining popularity and extending beyond the linkage itself to engage tangential research questions. Here I present a narrative review of a half century of the research area's development, which is designed to provide an overview of the topic for readers and clarify the contribution of this thesis. To this end, I have manually assembled a database of citations to obtain an overview of the literature, illustrate its growth and identify common topical focuses. A summary of this database is shown in Table A.1 in the Appendix.

It is not easy to strictly define the parameters of an academic field, particularly an emerging one which is evolving so rapidly. In addition to empirical studies of the programme-to-policy linkage itself, I have also included articles with slightly different focuses which relate closely to the topic or make complementary contributions. These include: methodological, conceptual and formal work specifically concerned with manifesto content, statements or pledges; empirical studies which incorporate some investigation of the development or characteristics of manifesto statements, rhetoric and/or pledges; citizen evaluations of/responses to manifesto statements or pledges; and representatives' or candidates' views of pledges and pledge-making. Of course, some studies like the thesis/book by Naurin (2009, 2011) cover multiple categories, but only the primary focus of each is coded in the database.

It is just as important to take not of what I have *not* included in the collection. I do not claim to have compiled a database of studies which *utilise* manifestos. Rather, I aim to identify work directly related or adjacent to the programme-to-policy linkage and the production and usage of manifesto documents. For this reason, the database necessarily excludes hundreds of studies on related topics which involve manifesto documents in one way or another. Several large empirical literatures in which manifestos are commonly used as a source of data as a means of operationalising other concepts are also left out. Here I refer to studies of the issue agenda, party positions, issue emphasis, issue congruence and party competition. Theoretical work on the concept of the party mandate in general (e.g. Downs) is excluded here. Individual studies grounded in these literatures and research traditions are included, however, if they explicitly involve election pledges, conduct tests of

mandate fulfilment/promissory representation or examine the specific role of manifestos in the process.

Not all of the selected works mention the particular term "programme-to-policy linkage" in the text; indeed, rather few of them do. But all of these studies, I argue, can be thought of as forming a coherent strand of literature which centres manifesto documents and their role in party competition and government policymaking which attracted little attention until the 1990s but is now of increasingly central importance to comparative politics as a whole.

Counting peer-reviewed journal articles, books/book sections, conference/working papers and available dissertations (undergraduate, master and doctoral) at the time of writing, well over 100 total research outputs which relate to the programme-to-policy linkage and closely related topics are available as of March 2019. 86 of these, more than two thirds of the total, are peer-reviewed journal articles. The remainder are a mixed bag: 17 are books or book chapters, 14 are student dissertations and 6 are unpublished conference or working papers. 63 of these studies mention either "pledges" or "promises" in their title. The collection of literature was not initially obtained using systematic or computational literature review methods. However, I am confident that it represents a near-complete record of publicly available research on the topic. To update the database and ensure no outputs were missed, I repeatedly searched Google Scholar and Web of Science databases for terms such as "election pledges", "campaign promises" and "party manifestos", checked citation records and consulted with others familiar with the literature.

Table 1.1 shows the number of studies to fit within each focus. The literature is dominated by pledge fulfilment research, with 70 of the 131 studies focusing on this topic. The next most prominent topic is citizen evaluations of campaign pledges or their fulfilment, which 19 studies centre upon. Papers about manifesto content and studies of the saliency approach are the next most prominent categories with 13 and 11 studies dedicated to these themes respectively. The other main topics identified - methods, Louwerse's spatial linkage approach, theoretical contributions specifically related to pledges and fulfilment, representatives' views of pledges, party ideology and review articles - all have fewer than 5 dedicated outputs.

The very first empirical study of manifesto pledges was conducted by Pomper (1967), who drew explicitly on Downs' theories (1957) and APSA's influential and contentious discussions on the responsiveness of the US government (APSA, 1950) in a content analysis of American party platforms from 1944 to 1964. Pomper developed sophisticated coding procedures (1967, p.349-52) to test Downs' assumption that party programmes offer voters substantive, actionable promises. These pledges were referred to as "rational statements", as opposed to "rhetorical" ones, and coded by both specificity of statement and policy area, allowing Pomper to examine the relative emphasis of party priorities. The primary finding was that the programmes examined contained a substantial number of "rational" statements, typically a higher proportion than rhetorical ones (Pomper, 1967, p.345). This

Table 1.1: Topics in Programme-to-Policy Linkage Literature

Focus of work	n
Pledge fulfilment	70
Citizen evaluations	19
Manifestos	13
Saliency linkage	11
Methodology	5
Spatial linkage	4
Theory	4
Representatives	3
Party ideology	1
Review	1
Total	131

constituted the first concrete evidence that campaign pledges had meaningful democratic consequences and that Downs' assumptions about party programmes had some basis in reality.

The same author published the first recognisable study of the programme-to-policy linkage the following year (Pomper, 1968), finding that 72% of the total pledges in the same sample (plus the 1966 platforms) had been carried out. This was followed shortly afterwards by a study of the American parties' social security pledges (Bradley, 1969) and a review paper of sorts, discussing the preparation of American party platforms and the implications of Pomper's findings (David, 1971). Bradley, like Pomper, expressed surprise that nobody had previously interrogated the discipline's conventional wisdom that party platforms were rhetorical devices of little consequence (1969). These papers are the earliest expressions of scholarly interest in the impact of campaign pledges, and their authors pushed back against others within and outwith the discipline who had dismissed party programmes as trivial. These were among the first researchers to dispel the idea that manifestos were purely rhetorical devices. However, interest in the topic faded. American researchers did not revisit the topic for some time, and it would take until the 1980s for non-American scholars to turn their attention to the programme-to-policy linkage.

The first to conduct a pledge study of a country other than the United States was Rose, who investigated pledge fulfilment in Britain in his influential book *Do Parties Make a Difference?* (1984). Like the American researchers, Rose found that a high rate of manifesto pledge fulfilment was the norm, reporting that the Conservative and Labour governments of the 1970s fulfilled 80% and 54% of their manifesto pledges respectively, with a further 10% and 19% subject to "ambiguous" action. Rose (1984, p.70) also provided a caveat, however, by emphasising that "the great bulk of governmental legislation is prepared independently of manifesto commitments". The question of how much of the government agenda is comprised of manifesto pledges is potentially a problem for the pledge approach

and the normative implications of the programme-to-policy linkage, but it has not yet been paid much attention because it is difficult to operationalise. Achieving a better understanding of how the mandate and the issue agenda interact with one another, as this thesis attempts to do, is perhaps a fruitful first step in this direction.

Further research emerged later in the decade, with studies on Canada (Rallings, 1987; Monière, 1988) and Greece (Kalogeropoulou, 1989) following Rose. The most notable of these is Rallings' comparison of Britain and Canada between 1945 and 1979, which like the others also identified a strong linkage between campaign promises (an average 64% in Britain and 72% in Canada). It was framed as a "strongest test" and "pilot study" of the impact of party manifestos on government policy (1987, p.2) in an edited volume primarily concerned with spatial analysis using Manifesto Project data on issue emphases. This study is of particular interest because it was erroneously cited as the basis for Budge and Hofferbert's (1992, p.153) later claim that "no specific commitments are made" by parties in important policy areas like the macroeconomy. No claim this strong is evident in the Rallings chapter, however. Indeed, his tables showing the distribution of pledges by issue area show that more pledges are made in relation to the economy than any other (1987, p.6-7), and he notes that his findings show parties maintain "a solid record of publishing and then implementing a fairly coherent and wide-ranging policy programme".

The saliency approach built on previous theoretical and empirical work by Budge, Hofferbert and their numerous collaborators, many of whom were heavily involved in the Manifesto Research Group[1] e.g. Budge and Farlie (1983); Budge et al. (1987); Budge (1987). The basic premise of saliency theory is that parties compete over the content of the public agenda rather than the substance of policy, and they do so by selectively emphasising and de-emphasising issue themes when they perceive it to be expedient. The purpose of the Manifesto Project is the content analysis of manifestos based on the assumptions of saliency theory, with coders breaking manifestos into quasi-sentences then assigning each to one of 54 issue codes (Budge et al., 1987). Party positions are extrapolated from the relative emphasis of issue areas by adding together the percentage of attention devoted to "left" and "right" categories (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.40), though this has proven contentious and numerous other aggregation techniques have been proposed (Franzmann and Kaiser, 2006; Volkens, 2007; Gemenis, 2013; Benoit and Däubler, 2014).

The early 1990s represented a lull for pledge research. This may simply be noise, but it is plausibly the result of real trends. First is the geographically and temporally inconsistent nature of work on the topic, which had resulted in an uncoordinated and piecemeal research programme even at this point in time. Even into the new century, important existing studies were overlooked by researchers who referred instead to much older works e.g. Sussman and Daynes (2000) failing to cite Royed's work. Another factor may have

[1]Later known as the Comparative Manifestos Project and then Manifesto Research on Political Representation. The project will be referred to as the Manifesto Project or MARPOR throughout this thesis. Any usage of MRG or CMP in quotations by other authors is considered synonymous.

been the increasing accessibility of computerised analysis in the social sciences. The pledge approach is qualitative and time-consuming and may have been seen as unfashionable as a result, while the saliency approach emerged to become the dominant way of conceptualising and measuring the programme-to-policy linkage. Several studies of the saliency linkage in European and North American countries were published (Pétry, 1988; Budge and Hofferbert, 1990; Pétry, 1991; Hofferbert and Budge, 1992) before Klingemann et al.'s influential comparative volume, *Parties, Policies and Democracy*, was released in 1994. Linking parties' thematic emphases to budgetary outputs, the authors claimed to find strong evidence of linkage between issue emphasis and budgetary changes in several of the ten countries using various statistical models of the process.

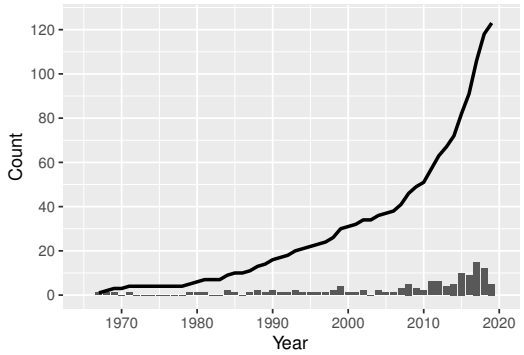
Little further work using the saliency approach would emerge, however, either because *Parties, Policies and Democracy* was considered the final word on the topic or because of contemporaneous methodological criticisms of the approach taken by Budge, Hofferbert and coauthors (King and Laver, 1993; Thome, 1999; King and Laver, 1999). The methodological question will be addressed at length in Chapters 2 and 3. The saliency approach, then, has lain mostly dormant for around two decades. However, an extensive body of research on government policy agendas and issue competition (Baumgartner et al., 2006; Green-Pedersen and Walgrave, 2014) has developed in the time since, while a handful of political economy-oriented papers have borrowed elements of the approach for investigations of spending in specific policy areas (e.g. Garritzmann and Seng 2016; Russo and Verzichelli 2016; Horn and Jensen 2017).

Despite the method's lack of uptake in the two decades since its publication, Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge's 1994 text is considered seminal in the discipline and remains by far the most cited piece of academic work on the programme-to-policy linkage. Although these authors later softened their causal claims about the party mandate in response to the criticism (McDonald et al., 1999), they went on to further refine their ideas into the descriptive and normative "median mandate" theory, which has itself become a topic of considerable debate within the literature (McDonald et al., 2004; McDonald and Budge, 2006; Warwick, 2010, 2012, 2016, 2018; Best et al., 2012, 2018; Powell, 2018). This fact, and the consolidation of the pledge approach, the issue agendas literature and the emergence of new work informed by Klingemann et al. suggest that a critical reassessment of the approach is overdue.

The pledge approach reemerged later the same decade with a comparative study of British and American government pledge fulfilment Royed (1996). Royed's paper was the first study on the topic to offer a full operational definition of a pledge (Pétry and Colette, 2009, p.71), and was presented by the author as something of a response to Budge and Hofferbert's studies of the US and Britain (1990; 1992) from which they made the bold claim that the US was as much of a "mandate" democracy as Britain. Royed dismissed this finding and hypothesised that the programme-to-policy linkage ought to be much stronger in Britain, which is what she confirmed by examining the fulfilment of specific election pledges

(1996, p.60). In the process she strongly criticised (1996, p.54) Budge and Hofferbert's approach to testing for linkage, ultimately stating that "the best way to 'test' the mandate theory of elections is to look only at firm pledges".

Figure 1.1: Programme-to-Policy Linkage Literature Growth Since 1967, Annual and Cumulative



This view did not need to be explicitly echoed by fellow researchers for it to dominate the literature in subsequent years. Several more studies of pledge fulfilment in the United States were published (Royed and Borrelli, 1997; Shaw, 1998; Royed and Borrelli, 1999; Sussman and Daynes, 2000), but the 2000s would see a large increase in interest in the topic from European scholars. The first study of pledge fulfilment in a consensus multiparty system, the Netherlands, was conducted by Thomson (2001). This was also the first paper to include the term "programme-to-policy linkage" in its title and the first to test opposition pledges and the conditions affecting fulfilment. The first such study of a sub-national governmental unit was published the following year (Pétry, 2002) and by the end of the decade studies on Ireland (Mansergh and Thomson, 2007; Costello and Thomson, 2008), Spain (Artés and Bustos, 2008), New Zealand (McCluskey, 2008) and Sweden (Naurin, 2011) had emerged, among others. Dozens more studies have been published on the topic since the first dedicated review article by Pétry and Colette (2009).

Figure 1.1 shows the growth in research outputs on the topic since Pomper (1967). The small bars at the bottom show counts of studies published (or dated if not peer-reviewed) in a given year. The line represents a cumulative count which shows slow but steady growth from around 1980. The slope becomes much steeper after around 2010. The bars tell the same story, with research interest reaching several new peaks in recent years. Interest is expected to continue to increase, given that 2017 saw more outputs published on the topic (15) than any of the previous 51 years. Nearly as many were published in 2018 (12) and several studies have already been published in 2019. Though the field is far from enormous it is certainly the case that, having long been overlooked, the programme-to-policy linkage is currently in receipt of serious scholarly attention. 56 of the studies in the database, nearly half of the total, have emerged since 2014 when this thesis was first proposed.

In addition to advances in the understanding of the causes and conditions contribut-

ing to pledge fulfilment (Praprotnik and Ennser-Jedenastik, 2012; Thomson and Costello, 2016; Thomson et al., 2017; Praprotnik, 2017a,b; Duval and Pétry, 2018), recent studies also represent an increasing geographical diversity. More work on the linkage in southern (Artés, 2013; Moury, 2011b; **?**; Natsika, 2018; Moury and Fernandes, 2018) and eastern (Kostadinova, 2013; Zubek and Klüver, 2015; Svačinová, 2016; Gregor, 2018) European states has emerged, as well as research on pledge fulfilment at the regional level in multi-level governance settings (Pétry, 2015; Duval and Pétry, 2018; Matthieb, 2019; McMillan, 2019).

The research programme is also diversifying, branching out from empirical studies of linkage to encompass purely theoretical discussions of pledges and linkage (Sebők, 2016; Bonilla, 2017; Körösényi and Sebők, 2018), the important question of citizen evaluations of pledge fulfilment (Thomson, 2011; Thomson and Brandenburg, 2018; Elinder et al., 2015; Pétry and Duval, 2017; Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017; Naurin et al., 2019), other features of manifestos relevant to linkage including the linguistic structure and definition of pledges (Däubler and Benoit, 2013; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016; Praprotnik, 2017a; Lindgren and Naurin, 2017; Eichorst and Lin, 2019), how these documents are put together by parties (Däubler, 2012) and how representatives respond to pledge-making (Naurin, 2012, 2016; Eder et al., 2017). Methodologically, a novel "spatial" approach to the topic has been introduced by Louwerse (2011a; 2011b; 2012). Linkage in these studies is operationalised as a question of whether parties "take similar policy stances before and after elections" (Louwerse, 2012, p.1,250), with the `Wordfish` computerised text analysis package used to measure parties' manifesto policy positions and their representatives' subsequent speeches in parliament.

The optimistic overview provided here paints a healthy picture of this field of study, which is now established enough that researchers feel comfortable extending its scope beyond important but one-dimensional tests of the strength of party mandates. An increasing number of scholars are interested in the topic, which bodes well for its continued growth and development in the coming years. The aim of the sequence of studies presented in this thesis is to contribute to a greater understanding of the role of the programme-to-policy linkage in party competition and vice versa, what it means when a linkage is found and whether a plurality of approaches to the question can complement one another in attaining this understanding. However, there are potentially many different ways to approach the conceptualisation and measurement of the "programme", government "policy" and even what constitutes a "linkage". As such, the first step this thesis makes towards the specified goal is a discussion of how programmes and linkage are - and ought to be - conceptualised and operationalised.

1.3 Party Programmes - What and Why?

What are Programmes?

Party manifestos have become a staple of election campaigns in most modern democracies, and similarly ubiquitous in academic research on parties, party positions and rhetoric, election campaigns, the nature of party competition and so on (Dolezal et al., 2016, p.1). This is for the simple reason that they are "a hinge turning generalized political values and ideas into statements of particular intentions to act" (Rose, 1984, p.52).

Manifestos are written documents containing a party's plans for government policy in the event of entering office, typically published in the weeks before an election. Manifestos are considered the definitive statement of a party's intentions at the time of the campaign. As a "standard accessory" of democratic elections (Däubler, 2012, p.51), they are a focal point for the transformation of ideologies into policy proposals for mass consumption and consideration. In theory they represent alternative templates for government upon which rational voters base their decisions; the model of responsible party government (Körösényi and Sebők, 2018, p.120-21).

All approaches to the programme-to-policy linkage use party manifestos to operationalise the party programme. Though the "party programme" could be considered more abstract than the "manifesto" - encompassing the totality of party policy outwith the electoral context - the two terms tend to be used synonymously. Though parties articulate policy using a variety of formal and informal means, manifestos are definitive and comprehensive, occupying "a unique position as the only fully authoritative statement of the party policy for an election" (Klingemann et al., 2006, p.xvi). Other policy statements may be confined to a single issue or express a general value orientation rather than policy-as-such. Additionally, candidates who privately disagree with their party's position on an issue are generally expected to publicly defer to the manifesto. Manifestos are usually presented by parties as a compendium of promises to act in a certain way if elected (Bonilla, 2017) and implicitly represent the party as a unitary actor; to this end they function as "representative statements for the whole party" (Klingemann et al., 2006, p.164).

Though parties clearly dedicate time and resources to the practice, both the perennially pessimistic general public and political scientists have historically expressed doubt about the value of manifestos Royed (1996). If manifestos are little more than an "electoral ritual" (Louwerse, 2012, p.1,255), could the academic reliance upon them be misplaced? This is doubtful, if for no other reason than their aforementioned ubiquity. Were party manifestos merely a "compulsory exercise" (Eder et al., 2017, p.77), it would make little sense for anyone to dedicate so much time and resources to their development. As David stated (1971, p.303-4),

"it is not possible to watch the amount of struggle that goes into any party platform, the thousands of manhours of toil, sweat and strain that are devoted... without concluding

that the platforms must be important to some people for some purpose".

It is worth asking, then, what purpose manifestos serve parties. And, furthermore, why they have continuously grown in size and scope. As Harmel et al. (2018, p.237) puts it, "why do parties bother with manifestos, given that most voters don't read them anyway?" After all, manifestos are not formally embedded in the electoral process. Parties make a conscious decision to create them, and researchers make a conscious decision to use them as sources of data. Political scientists have focused predominantly on manifestos as the source of party positions and issue priorities, as well as the high-profile methodological disagreements this has inspired (Eder et al., 2017). Yet as Dolezal et al. observe, their extensive use as tools of analysis has not been accompanied by a thorough consideration of "what manifestos actually are, how they emerge, what their precise role is in the campaign for which they are written, and what impact they have on post-election politics" (2012, p.869). What are manifestos actually *for*?

Why Do Parties Bother?

In their traditional "promissory" role, the purpose of manifestos is to communicate parties' positions to voters. The normative function of the documents is twofold in this view. Firstly, they embody an existential democratic demand for electoral competition, providing the electorate a choice between alternatives. And, secondly, they outline what those alternatives are in practice, presenting substantive visions for society which, if parties behave responsibly, will be implemented at the behest of the mass public. Schedler refers to these aspects respectively as the "meaningful" and "consequential" normative functions of manifestos (1998, p.194). Both of these functions are existential to the representative requirements of democracy, but complications arise when they meet reality.

Ideally, parties present distinctive and coherent alternative programmes which voters consume directly. Though manifestos are typically written as if addressed to members of the public, however, parties do not expect more than a handful of prospective voters to look at the documents (Harmel et al., 2018, p.230). In reality, manifestos must "aim for indirect effects" (Eder et al., 2017, p.76) rather than relying on voters to pay attention. Complicating matters further, the procedures for planning, writing and disseminating manifestos vary wildly depending on intra-party organisation, the personnel involved and extraneous factors (Rose, 1984; Däubler, 2012). The term "manifesto" is more to do with the context in which the documents are presented than their style *or* substance, given the amount of variation in their structure and content.

To political scientists, the creation of manifestos remains something of a black box (Däubler, 2012), along with the roles these documents play in electoral competition (Eder et al., 2017). Yet they have grown inexorably in size and scope since the first bullet-pointed campaign promises were issued in the Great Britain at the turn of the twentieth century.

Scholars in earlier times were vocally wary of such "manifestoitis" (Kavanagh, 1981).

The British political scientist Samuel Finer was among the first to notice and measure this trend, offering a scathing assessment of the practice - and the idea of a wide-ranging mandate - in a short commentary titled "Manifesto Moonshine" (1975). He made the counterintuitive argument (Finer, 1975, p.380) that the "longer and more detailed the manifestos, the less meaningful does the electoral choice between the rival parties become[s]", and bemoaned the increasing size of the documents in British elections.

Unlike Downs, who argued that programmes were useful to the voter in their attempt to make an informed electoral choice (1957), Finer thought manifestos muddied the waters of electoral competition and governance. This was attributed to three rational motives: that manifestos "concentrate minds" in the lead up to elections by forcing a rethink of unappealing policies among the rank and file; that they arm candidates with information and help maintain their discipline in parliament after the election; and that they provide ministers a "knock-down" response ("it's in the manifesto") to obdurate Whitehall mandarins and unfriendly journalists. Finer essentially argued that programmatic manifestos were useful to parties but not to voters, and advocated a reduction in concrete campaign pledges to no more than half a dozen marquee items. In practice, of course, parties do tend to emphasise and re-emphasise a small number of key pledges in their public appeals, even if the guts of these documents contain sprawling templates for government (Kavanagh, 1981).

Though Finer's observations were not based on systematic data collection or conceptualisation, they contain elements of truth. He appears to have been correct - as predicted by more sophisticated theories of electoral competition - that parties had an incentive to issue ever more detailed programmes. Having complained that manifestos were reaching more than 20 pages in the 1970s, Finer would be appalled by the sprawling programmes of the present day (Bara, 2005; Däubler, 2012; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016). Finer's uncharitable account, however, is not a complete or wholly accurate one, and the explanations he offered are myopic in hindsight. For example, while manifesto writers doubtless take the media reception and bureaucratic barriers into account when drafting the documents, they almost certainly think further than the need to have a stock response to deploy on television or around Whitehall when asked awkward policy questions. Though manifesto documents are partly intended to address parties' internal concerns, Finer did not seem to appreciate that they are highly fungible documents written with multiple audiences in mind (Kavanagh, 1981; Harmel et al., 2018; Harmel, 2018) including not only voters and the press but competitors, intra-party factions and bureaucrats.

Of course, a signal sent is not necessarily a signal received. Do manifesto pledges penetrate the public consciousness? Though citizens don't pay direct attention to the party programmes, parties can use their manifesto launch events to dominate the news cycle for a short period of time. They may use these "symbolic" events to draw attention to their key promises (Eder et al., 2017, p.77) and try to seize control of the campaign agenda by emphasising their owned issues (Harmel, 2018, p.231). There is evidence that a large proportion

of pledges are given an airing in the mass media, though this tends to be biased towards major parties who enjoy more extensive coverage of their policy proposals (Costello and Thomson, 2008). Recent research also shows that parties' issue emphases are mirrored by mass media reporting and, perhaps more importantly, that this reporting is not contingent upon the specific positions expressed (Merz, 2017). Interestingly, media coverage of pledges also works as a recursive accountability mechanism. Investigating the impact of media coverage on pledge fulfilment, Kostadinova (2018) shows that media coverage of specific pledges increases the likelihood of their fulfilment under certain conditions, especially those made by coalition parties entering ideologically divided cabinets. Among citizens, the best predictor of correct evaluations of pledge fulfilment is fulfilment status itself, which suggests that the general public does pay some attention to the performance of governing parties on their campaign pledges (Thomson, 2011; Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017; Thomson and Brandenburg, 2018). Rather importantly, representatives *perceive* changes in public preferences resulting from elections and adjust their behaviour in response (Grossback, 2005).

As well as being multifunctional, manifestos could be considered multi-speed documents. Parties can target different groups with the same manifesto (Naurin, 2011, p.31). Voters who are highly attentive or preoccupied with a single issue can base their choice on parties' detailed policy plans at relatively little cost. Dolezal et al. (2012, p.884) found that parties expect a small number of "elite voters" to read the material first hand but that journalists are expected to be the primary readership. They also found that quality newspapers tend to contain more coverage of manifesto content than tabloids (ibid, p.887-8). Less-attentive voters who care less about the specifics of party policy are free to ignore the manifesto and absorb its key messages via the mass media, while those who are more engaged can read the documents directly or access in-depth coverage. The process is uneven, but it does appear to be the case that voters receive indirect signals from election programmes via the mass media.

The question of whether this is true of other parties also arises. As Kavanagh (1981, p.24) observed, manifestos are bound to play a different role in multiparty democracies versus the two-party system mandate theory was built around. In these settings, manifestos can be used to send signals about policy intent to other parties in anticipation of coalition negotiations (Harmel, 2018, p.233). Pledges can then be used as bargaining chips during the negotiations. Potentially, strategically sophisticated parties could consciously make pledges which they have no intention of implementing and sacrifice them during bargaining to appear concessionary.

These expectations seem to receive support from the limited available evidence. A Scottish Liberal Democrat legislator who helped negotiate the party's second coalition agreement with Scottish Labour in 2003[2], described the process as a case of "merging the two manifestos" (Arter, 2004). This anecdote in instructive. Dolezal et al. (2012, p.889)

[2]The electoral system for Scottish devolved elections is Mixed-Member Proportional rather than First Past the Post.

found that Austrian politicians view manifestos as a "baseline" for coalition negotiations, while a similar sentiment was expressed by representatives of most Irish parties in semi-structured interviews conducted by Däubler (2012). Finally, in a study of the evolution of manifesto documents in the highly fragmented Slovenian system, Kropivnik and Lipicer (2018) inferred that they are "more relevant" to post-election coalition formation than the election itself.

Further to their purpose of signalling to voters, the media and other parties, manifestos have several ancillary functions. Further to these, Harmel highlights the ability to "arm" party activists with material, resolve intra-party disputes and alert bureaucrats to the party's intentions (2018). These overlap with some of the purposes identified by Kavanagh (1981) and Finer (1975), as well as Harmel and other coauthors' work on the internal and external "faces" of manifestos (Harmel et al., 2018). A set of overarching functions[3] is identified by Eder et al. (2017, p.76), who believe that manifestos "streamline the party's campaign, and [find] use as a campaign tool to directly inform voters". In recent times, then, scholars have begun to develop a better understanding of why parties still put effort into producing manifestos. The role manifestos play in party competition and the democratic process more generally is clearly not as one-dimensional as the mandate theory posits or as perfunctory as critics believed.

It is also evident that the fulfilment of programmes is relevant beyond the representative link. A party's ability and willingness to carry out its promises matters not only for the prospective and retrospective evaluations of voters (see Naurin 2011), but also for the party's credibility among other audiences. Consider a party with relatively horizontal internal organisation which produces a highly consensual document designed to placate all its factions. If the party leadership abandons this programme when they enter office, they might struggle to maintain parliamentary discipline and inter-factional unity in future. The media may take notice and produce negative reports. And other parties may be sceptical about entering future coalitions. At root, of course, the voters matter the most. But the reputation costs of promise-breaking or producing especially vague or unrealistic programmes in the first place may be more widespread and hamper a party's future prospects in other ways.

The interesting thing about these manifold functions, however, is that the format of manifestos remains stubbornly unchanged. Though it is possible to conceive of alternatives to traditional manifestos, parties have adapted to the format rather than vice-versa. Manifestos remain, primarily, a "compendium of valid party positions" addressed to the general public (Eder et al., 2017, p.76). When it comes to the linkage, how these positions are operationalised is crucial to determining whether the programme was implemented or not, and what that might mean for democracy.

[3]Most of which subsume the functions identified by other authors.

1.4 Operationalising the Programme-to-Policy Linkage

I have outlined various functions of party manifestos and established the importance of their link to policy outputs. How is the "programme" part of the "programme-to-policy linkage" operationalised? Operational indicators do not exist in a vacuum but depend upon the researcher's theoretical assumptions. In the case of the programme-to-policy linkage, how the programme is defined for the purpose of measurement is contingent on the researcher's background assumptions about how parties compete for votes. The approaches may be imparting different but complementary lessons about the nature and strength of democratic representation and political accountability. But for these lessons to be drawn, researchers must possess a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical implications of each approach. In this section I work backwards from the approaches' operational definitions to argue that, rather than being alternate tests of the same concept as they are framed in the existing literature, they operationalise mutually incompatible linkage concepts.

As noted above, party manifestos have two "faces" relating to normative "minimal requirements" for democracy (Schedler, 1998): that voters must be offered a choice between alternatives, and that those alternatives be of consequence. These faces correspond to "programmes" and "policy" respectively. The conceptual compatibility of the pledge and saliency approaches hinges on two questions. Firstly, how do competing parties differentiate themselves using their manifestos? And, secondly, what are the appropriate consequences of an election contested on these grounds?

Mandates and the Policy Space

It is important to acknowledge, briefly, that the conceptual foundations of both approaches to the programme-to-policy linkage are originally informed by spatial theories of party competition. The idea that political parties inhabit a policy "space" is widespread and typically understood by thinking of parties locating themselves at measurable "positions" along one or more issue dimensions. Manifestos are most commonly used by political scientists to measure these party positions. A spatial conception of party competition is considered so ubiquitous that it "is difficult to countenance to the possibility that political space may not actually exist" (Ray, 2007, p.13).

The traditional spatial model conceives of party competition happening along a single left-right dimension. The number of dimensions in any given party system is usually greater than just one in reality, depending on the number of social, cultural and economic cleavages in the polity (Dow, 2001, p.113). In Scotland, for instance, there is a centre-periphery cleavage around the constitutional question in addition to the traditional left/right economic cleavage (Lundberg, 2013). As such, any measure of Scottish party positions must account for this to achieve validity. Several factors constrain movement in the policy space (Dow, 2001, p.111), meaning parties cannot simply position themselves as closely as possible to the median voter (Downs, 1957, p.108-9). Rational voters are expected to attach themselves

to the party closest to their own preferences, with the "responsible electorate" rewarding or punishing these parties based on their performance in office (Thomson, 2011).

Downs, who advanced a form of spatial theory, argued that it is *rational* for parties to behave "responsibly" by carrying out their campaign promises in order to avoid this punishment at the next election. This is not only due to a norm against promise-breaking (Schedler, 1998) but because rational voting demands coherent choices, of which party responsibility is a guarantor (Naurin, 2011, p.21). The pledge approach is grounded in a traditional Downsian theory of party competition, while the saliency approach is derived from the saliency theory which built on Downs' concepts but challenged the idea that parties primarily compete by taking opposing positions on the same issues (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Budge et al., 1987).

Pledges and Party Competition

Although pledge studies draw heavily on Downs' mandate theory and the idea of party responsibility for a rationale (see Royed 1996; Thomson 2001), the approach is not wedded to a strong or distinctive conception of party competition. As Körösényi and Sebők (2018, p.117) note, the pledge fulfilment literature and work on mandate theory have "remained largely in their respective silos". In the pledge literature, mandate theory and the concept of responsible parties are little more than conceptual window dressing to justify the straightforward empirical question of whether campaign promises are enacted. That is not to say, however, that there is no perspective on party competition inherent to the pledge approach.

Pledge studies following Royed (1996, p.79) have more or less followed her definition of a pledge as "a commitment to carry out some action or produce some outcome, where an objective estimation can be made as to whether or not the action was indeed taken or the outcome produced". This has evolved over the years and efforts to standardise the definition have been successful, coalescing into a slightly more nuanced definition presented in Thomson et al. (2017, p.552): "a statement committing a party to one specific action or outcome that can be clearly determined to have occurred or not". In this view, the definition of pledges and fulfilment are partly dependent upon one another. As Thomson (2001, p.180) states, the fulfilment criteria "are in principle provided by the authors of the programme", i.e. within the wording of pledges themselves. While there are technical considerations to be made concerning the precise operational distinction between various categories of pledge and non-pledge statements, these studies adopt a direct operational definition of pledges and fulfilment by taking policy promises at face value.

This perspective on manifestos is in line with the "traditional view" of party competition (Budge and Farlie, 1983, p.269). Pledge researchers regard the manifesto as a compendium of conditional statements about the policies the party would enact if elected. Parties distinguish themselves by outlining explicit policy proposals which, together, rep-

resent distinctive policy packages. Pledges do not constitute positions in the traditional sense, however. They indicate an orientation towards a specified problem, rather than their dimensional placement (Praprotnik, 2017a, p.122). A party's position on a dimension or an issue is an aggregation of statements which indicate opinions about these issues or their proposed solutions. Pledges are a *subset* of these positional statements - those with an "expectation of action" attached to them (Bonilla, 2017, p.4). Pledge studies examine the extent to which the disaggregated substance of party positions is carried out to the extent that this is testable. The approach does not, however, make any assumptions about whether party competition is primarily positional or issue-based.

Selective Emphasis and Party Competition

The saliency approach, meanwhile, involves more abstract operational definitions. The approach derives its name and its assumptions about party competition from saliency theory[4], which has had "enormous impact in the discipline" due to its position as the conceptual foundation of the Manifesto Project dataset (Dolezal et al., 2014, p.58). Programmatic content is operationalised as the relative emphasis of different topics in party manifestos and measured using the Manifesto Project's long-established category codes.

Manifestos are viewed differently by the saliency theory compared to other spatial theories of party competition. This is because the theory posits that parties do not compete on the basis of directly opposing positions on the same set of policy proposals, but by varying their emphasis on different topics (Budge and Farlie, 1983). Parties are expected to promote their owned issues while deliberately ignoring those which they perceive to be their weaknesses. This is sustained by the assumption that there is a consensus on most issues among the voters and parties, the argument being that nobody is in favour of e.g. starving the health service of funding or polluting the air (Dolezal et al., 2014, p.59). Though the authors of the approach did not entirely discard the assumption that party appeals would overlap and directly contrast on certain issues - Budge and Farlie (1983, p.304) mentioned "macro-issues which neither party owns irrevocably" - they maintained that selective emphasis is the dominant party strategy and that voters are given "the task of deciding which issues are important rather than deciding precisely what to do about them" (Hofferbert and Budge, 1992, p.156). Parties benefit when their "associated" issues dominate the public agenda (Budge, 2015, p.767). The spontaneous association of parties with issues is an established dimension of issue ownership, the other being perceived competence (Walgrave and Nuytemans, 2009).

Rather than being bundles of policy positions to which specific prospective actions are attached, manifestos are viewed by saliency theorists as "bundles of issues" (Hofferbert and Budge, 1992). Budge and Hofferbert went so far as to regard manifesto pledges as uninformative, claiming that such statements comprise "only 1 per cent of all the sentences

[4]Party issue emphasis is sometimes referred to as "issue saliency". The latter term properly refers to the importance of an issue to the public, and this is what the saliency theory takes its name from.

in manifestos (usually much less)" (1992, p.154). So although the precise words parties use in their issue appeals are not important, the choice voters are given is meaningful because party competition offers distinctive sets of issue priorities.

Since the precise terms of fulfilment cannot be defined, how is party responsibility achieved in this view? The emphasis of any given theme is said to imply a commitment to apply "greater effort in the area if elected to government" (Budge and Hofferbert, 1990, p.114). The idea of "greater effort", however, is highly ambiguous. It could encompass anything from legislative actions and budgetary changes to behind-the-scenes calculations that outside observers could not hope to reliably measure. Government decision-making and its interaction with bureaucracy is also highly complex. Civil servants may resist sweeping changes in their areas of competence, while ministers compete with one another for scarce executive attention and resources. Unlike the self-evident linkage between pledges and their enactment, it is unclear how the connection between issue attention and government actions ought to manifest itself or what its observable implications might be.

The originators of the saliency approach chose to operationalise the linkage using government budgets. The methodological problems with the particular modelling procedures used by Budge and Hofferbert (1990), Budge (1992) and Klingemann et al. (1994) are addressed at length in Chapters 2 and 3. But there are also significant issues with the operational indicator itself. As Royed (1996) pointed out, it is not a valid for all issues. Though the indicator makes some amount of sense for policy areas like education or defence, social issues like abortion and minority rights have much more to do with legislative actions than expenditures. Budgets can also be an unreliable indicator of intent, even in ostensibly valid domains of spending. Some areas are less amenable to immediate government control because cost variation is exogenous and depends on social need. For example, welfare spending rose in the United Kingdom and the United States throughout the 1980s despite significant government efforts in both countries to reduce it (Allan, 2004).

In response to criticism, Budge and Hofferbert later walked back the notion that the saliency approach was intended to be a test of the party mandate, but designed to observe a "general correspondence" (McDonald et al., 1999) between programmes and policy outputs. This attempt to sidestep operational and methodological problems, however, undermines the earlier claim that the indicator is a proxy for (or representative of) the effort that governments devote to policy issues. The mere correlation between programme content and policy outputs does not necessarily constitute evidence of any meaningful programme-to-policy linkage. As King and Laver (1999, p.597) state, there is "little reason to be interested in non-causal associations in this area", or indeed any other. This speaks to the question of deliberate political action, a source of conceptual tension between the approaches. I now address this significant unreconciled normative difference between the approaches' linkage concepts.

Mandate Fulfilment and Government Action

If elections must offer meaningful and consequential choices to satisfy the normative demands of democratic party government, manifestos are a key piece in this puzzle by virtue of being the most definitive statement of party positions. Manifestos represent the meaningful choice on offer (or act as a proxy for it), and the party appeals in these documents carry expectations of the policy consequences. However, the pledge and saliency approaches differ on what the meaningful differences are and, accordingly, what those consequences should be. In the pledge approach, manifestos fulfil their meaningful normative role by providing different set-menus of positional options and their consequential role by specifying the particular policy actions to be taken. In the saliency approach, manifestos are meaningful because they allow voters to prioritise different sets of issues. On the other hand the expected policy consequences are not well defined, and this is where the normative contradiction arises.

The dependent variable in both pledge and saliency studies is supposed to be government action (Hofferbert and Klingemann, 1990, p.286). But without the predefined criteria provided by specific pledges it is not obvious which actions should satisfy the instructions of voters in the saliency approach. Though there are problems with the notion that parties can claim a mandate for each and every pledge presented in the manifesto (Finer, 1975), voters tacitly understand that the party's policy offer is a package deal and the terms of party responsibility are crystal clear. While it is true that parties do not typically specify the precise *type* of action that will be taken to carry out a proposal (e.g. legislative, budgetary or executive action), the means are immaterial as long as the end is met. But this is not the case if the programme is viewed as a package of issue priorities which are fulfilled using the vague conceptual mechanism of greater effort in the appropriate policy areas.

This has ramifications for the relationship between the approaches. Indeed, given variation in party behaviour with regard to issue avoidance/engagement and other strategic considerations like the ambiguity of their issue positions (Rovny, 2012), it seems obvious that the validity of the approaches depends upon the political context. If the trend towards similarity in the issues parties discuss continues, for example, the analytical utility of the saliency approach will decline. The approach is heavily reliant on the assumption that parties compete by focusing on different topics. If parties compete by adopting contrasting positions on an identical set of topics, that means there is no variation in the key independent variable. As such, the more similar parties' issue agendas are, the less valid the saliency approach becomes. The pledge approach could run into similar problems in systems where the idea of a party mandate is alien, or if obfuscation of policy intent becomes the norm and rhetoric predominates. It is even possible to imagine a world in which both are true at the same time i.e. parties take opposing positions on the same set of issues but do not make a large number of specific pledges. In that situation, neither approach would be informative and a positional approach like the one devised by (Louwerse, 2011a,b, 2012)

would be most appropriate. Rather than being different ways of approaching an identical research question, the pledge and saliency approaches operationalise highly distinct linkage concepts.

The role of government intent is the core normative difference between the two linkage concepts. This is not conceptually explicit, but implied by their contrasting operational definitions of linkage. The fulfilment of a manifesto pledge typically represents a conscious decision to act on the part of the government. Pledges to maintain the status quo are the only possible exception, and even then some of these pledges will require deliberate action rather than non action[5]. When pledge scholars look for evidence of fulfilment, they are searching for government statements, press releases, legislation, executive actions and other such measures. Generally speaking, then, specific pledges cannot be fulfilled passively. The programme-to-policy linkage, if operationalised using manifesto pledges, must be *purposeful* in nature and cannot occur spuriously.

A saliency linkage, on the other hand, could manifest itself without any deliberate government action. It may also fail to materialise *in spite* of such action. The concept of the party mandate in the saliency approach does not contain the normative provision that the policy outputs or outcomes be intentional, a peculiarity which was reinforced by McDonald, Hofferbert and Budge's denial (1999) that the method was intended to find causal relationships. They contrast the "causal" specification used by King and Laver (1993) with their own, which they frame as the manifesto "signalling" later spending priorities. Again, however, it is unclear why these "signals" - in effect correlations - should be considered important on their own. No scholars would contend that manifestos are the monolithic *cause* of government policy actions, but this does not preclude an explanatory test of their influence. This is especially true when budget shares are the dependent variable, given their scope for independent variation in the absolute and the dependence of the percentage shares on one another. This raises the question of whether this operational definition of linkage can satisfy the normative demand for consequential choices. Is it enough that the pieces of the democratic puzzle happen to fall correctly? Or must they be intentionally placed? In his criticism of the median mandate theory of policy congruence, Warwick (2012, p.59) argues that "a statistical tendency that is not the consequence of purposeful actions by any actors should not be taken as evidence of implementing a mandate", pointing out that voters are unlikely to be happy with the idea that their choices average out in the long-run. This weakens the normative justification for any individual electoral outcome.

Though saliency theory is about responsiveness rather than congruence, it is closely aligned with median mandate theory and the same logic applies to both in this regard. While the saliency approach is clearly concerned with some kind of "programme-to-policy linkage", it is not necessarily a test of the *mandate* but rather - assuming appropriate controls are introduced - the influence of party policy priorities on the government policy

[5]For example a pledge to extend a public transport contract or maintain annual state pension increases above inflation.

agenda.

As noted earlier, policy agendas of this sort are a topic of widespread scholarly interest. Since Klingemann et al. (1994) was published, a coordinated cross-national data collection effort known as the Comparative Agendas Project has been established and many of its key contributors have devoted attention to the idea of "issue competition" (Green-Pedersen, 2007). This view of party competition shares many similarities with aspects of saliency theory, concerning as it does the struggle of parties to control the campaign agenda by selectively emphasising and de-emphasising issue themes. However, the extent to which parties engage in this type of competition is treated as an empirical matter rather than a given, with acknowledgement in the literature is that parties compete both by what Sigelman and Buell (2004) described as "avoidance" of unfavourable issues and "engagement" with other parties on the same themes. Further research has shown that these strategies vary depending on the circumstances of the party system (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2015), while parties in government must reconcile their electoral mandate with changing public priorities or the unexpected intrusion of other issues (Froio et al., 2016).

While these dynamics of issue competition and government agendas have been investigated thoroughly, less is known about the extent to which manifesto emphasis influences government policy priorities. In view of this, there is clearly still a place for an approach grounded in the idea of the programme-to-policy linkage which attempts to tackle this question and complement the understanding of pledge scholars. The approaches may operationalise different aspects of the party programme, but there is little doubt that specific pledges and issue emphases are both of substantive importance to modern electoral competition. This thesis, therefore, seeks to improve the scholarly understanding of both of these types of linkage. In Chapters 2 and 3, I develop this argument further, drawing a distinction between different types of programmatic linkage.

1.5 Conclusions

This chapter has identified the key research questions for the thesis and outlined its contribution to the study of the programme-to-policy linkage. The development and composition of the literature on the topic was discussed in detail, with important theoretical and empirical gaps in understanding highlighted. Lastly, I compared how the concept is treated in the pledge and saliency literatures.

The gulf between the pledge and saliency approaches seems to travel beyond the operational definition of the campaign programme. Indeed, as long as the assumptions of saliency theory are relaxed, it is clear that both issue emphasis and specific policies are relevant to party competition and voter choices. The importance of each may vary depending on all sorts of factors - even between parties and issues - but the empirical literature demonstrates that there is no need to take an essentialist position on whether each is the foundation of party competition.

It is more difficult, however, to reconcile how the approaches deal with the linkage to policy. There is a difference in the normative implications of each type of linkage. What does it mean to state that these methods are approaches to the "linkage" between party manifestos and government policy? It may be more productive to think of the saliency approach in terms of the *policy agenda* rather than the party mandate. I make this case in the next two chapters of the thesis. I replicate the Budge-Hofferbert method using new data and perform a pooled comparative analysis to determine the usefulness of the approach as is in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 I reconcile the saliency approach with the policy agendas literature, reducing the scope of the method by using British Queen's Speech content as the dependent variable, finding that manifesto issue emphases significantly influence the party government agenda. In Chapter 4 I investigate the relationship between the distribution of issue attention and pledge-making, contributing also to the incipient literature on manifesto production and content. Following directly from this, in Chapter 5 I test the connection between composition and fulfilment rates, ensuring that the latter are not simply an artefact of how manifestos are presented by parties. Finally, in Chapter 6 I move beyond the linkage to its implications, reframing pledge fulfilment as an aspect of party performance, linking the literature to valence politics by testing the effects of fulfilment rates on electoral success.

Overall, this thesis makes a variety of contributions to the programme-to-policy linkage literature and other fields of study. These contributions together are greater than the sum of their parts, representing an appeal for a holistic approach to the idea of linkage and a greater appreciation for the role of manifestos. Ultimately, I aim to move the literature away from a narrow focus on party mandates and towards engagement with other research agendas within political science. I also formulate conclusions with substantive, practical implications for the democratic process in general and promissory representation specifically. This thesis makes the case for an enhanced appreciation, in both academic and political life, for the crucial role of manifestos and the mandate fulfilment process. By questioning received wisdom and innovating in equal measure, this thesis represents a significant step in the direction of a more nuanced understanding of the meaning of mandates.

Chapter 2

Government Budgets and the Party Mandate: Revisiting the Saliency Approach

As stated in the previous chapter, the question of whether or not political parties carry out their campaign promises in office is of central importance to theories of representative democracy as well as its real-life practice. To recap briefly, justification for representative democracy as a system of popular rule would be in jeopardy if the relationship between votes and policies was found to be incoherent or random (Weale, 2007, p.18). Though most commonly discussed in relation to the mandate thesis, the question is of substantial normative importance to any theory of party democracy.

There are two dominant approaches to the the programme-to-policy linkage which operationalise the concept in different ways. The pledge approach examines individual manifesto pledges and checks the public record for their fulfilment, while the saliency approach matches parties' issue priorities to lagged government expenditures in the corresponding policy areas. Both approaches have produced results favourable to the idea of party mandate fulfilment (Pétry and Colette, 2009).

The saliency theory originated with Budge and Farlie's observation that parties often choose to ignore certain issues while drawing attention to those viewed as beneficial to their own electoral performance (Budge and Farlie, 1983). Parties compete to control the content of the political agenda by emphasising their "owned" issues, rather than issuing competing proposals for the same set of social problems. The theory is prominent within political science, underpinning the coding method of the widely used MARPOR manifesto project dataset (Volkens et al., 2016). Until recently, however, its assumptions have escaped rigorous criticism (Dolezal et al., 2014, p.54).

Unlike the pledge approach, the saliency method conceptualises the programme-to-policy linkage not on a policy-by-policy basis, but as an aggregate, long-term concurrence using this specific conception of party competition. In this chapter I contend that this dis-

tinction has been overlooked in existing literature. Scholars have largely taken for granted the idea that the approaches operationalise the same concept.

Despite these differences, both approaches have been found to "support the claim that it is possible to predict parties' actions with the help of election manifestos" (Naurin, 2011, p.173). In this regard, the saliency method can offer a more holistic test of democratic linkage. It is less sensitive to government policy outputs which were not foreshadowed by manifesto pledges, because the operational definition of policy is not beholden to the content of the document itself (Louwerse, 2011a, p.24-5). It also incorporates aspects of the issue agenda, accounting for the relative importance of policy themes. This cannot be emulated at the level of individual policy statements, which in pledge studies must be treated identically for the purposes of analysis. And though pledge scholars have begun to coordinate efforts in recent years, the coding of pledges by issue area has been sporadic. Additionally, the basic theoretical expectation of saliency studies is intuitive. Parties *should* be expected to prioritise the policies they had previously emphasised the most. Whether budget outputs are an appropriate way of operationalising this expectation is another question. For this reason, careful consideration of how best to approach the study of a saliency linkage is warranted.

Beyond the theory, it is mostly unknown if the two approaches' findings demonstrate substantive compatibility (Mansergh and Thomson, 2007, p.324). It is plausible that a stronger saliency linkage would be found in countries which demonstrate a high average rate of pledge fulfilment. This scenario would permit the inference that the short-term linkages identified in pledge studies breed long-term ones, and that the two approaches test similar or colinear phenomena at different levels of abstraction. However, if the approaches are very weakly or not at all compatible, it would entail one or more of three possibilities: that immediate pledge fulfilment does not predict longer term convergence between programmes and policy; that one of the two approaches is not a valid measure of the programme-to-policy linkage; or that the two approaches operationalise such distinct linkage concepts that they do not complement one another.

Any such comparison requires a suitable empirical basis from which to draw. It is two and a half decades since the original saliency studies were produced (Budge and Hofferbert, 1990; Hofferbert and Budge, 1992; Klingemann et al., 1994), and the approach has not been explicitly addressed in the literature since the turn of the century, during which time the pledge approach has become the dominant way of studying the programme-to-policy linkage (Pétry and Colette, 2009, p.70). Given the influence of Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge's 1994 volume on the topic, the known limitations of the pledge approach and substantial advancements in the scholarly understanding of the political issue agenda, a re-evaluation of the saliency approach on its own terms - both conceptually and empirically - seems overdue.

As such, this chapter scrutinises the theory and method of the saliency approach, replicating the work of Budge, Hofferbert and their coauthors to test its modern-day validity.

Initially, I partly reproduce the models used by Klingemann et al. (1994) with more recent data. Then I develop a more appropriate revised model to test the saliency hypothesis, pooling six countries and policy areas in a series of analyses. Pledge scholars have so far given the claims of the saliency scholars the benefit of the doubt (Mansergh and Thomson, 2007) despite substantial existing criticism on theoretical, operational and methodological grounds (King and Laver, 1993; Royed, 1996; Thome, 1999; King and Laver, 1999; Gibbons, 2004). I fail to reproduce the evidence that Klingemann et al. (1994) claimed to find and conclude that, though the approach remains potentially valuable, the original theory, method, and selection of measures is flawed. I argue that the approach does not operationalise the programme-to-*policy* linkage as such, but that it can be informative if framed as a test of the programme-to-*agenda* linkage. I develop this point and test a revised approach in the next chapter.

Aims and Contribution

In *Parties, Policies and Democracy* (1994), Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge examined the saliency linkage in ten countries using data from 1945-1985. The authors claimed to find "a remarkably high congruence between the themes stressed in party election programmes and the subsequent policies enacted by the parties that get into government" (ibid, p.268). The volume built on Budge and Hofferbert's previous articles[1] on the United States and Great Britain in which the approach was first developed (1990; 1992). Pétry contributed to the literature with similar studies on Canada, producing more qualified results (1988; 1995).

After the emergence of Budge and Hofferbert (1990) and Hofferbert and Budge (1992), the approach received a trickle of criticism on conceptual (Royed, 1996) and methodological grounds (King and Laver, 1993; Thome, 1999; King and Laver, 1999; Gibbons, 2004). Since this time, the approach has been supplanted by pledge scholarship following in Royed's (1996) footsteps. While a handful of recent studies have applied aspects of the approach in specific policy areas (Garritzmann and Seng, 2016; Russo and Verzichelli, 2016; Horn and Jensen, 2017), research on the linkage has departed significantly from the assumptions, operational definitions and methods employed in the Budge-Hofferbert approach and coalesced around an increasingly organised pledge research agenda. Where Klingemann et al. (1994) or other Budge-Hofferbert research is mentioned in this literature, it is typically cited as a conceptual reference point alongside other work on responsible parties or more recent pledge literature [2]. Despite strong contemporary criticism and a lack of explicit uptake of the approach in recent years, Klingemann et al. (1994) enjoys recognition from scholars and continues to gather dozens of citations per year. Indeed, the text remains

[1]The "Budge-Hofferbert approach" hereafter refers to the specific methodology employed by these researchers and their coauthors, rather than the saliency approach more generally.

[2]Recent examples include Pétry and Duval (2015, p.303), Thomson et al. (2017, p.528), Kostadinova and Giurcanu (2018, p.365) and Naurin et al. (2019, p.4))

the most cited single piece of research ostensibly on the topic of the programme-to-policy linkage, with over 1,200 Google Scholar citations at the present time.

On this basis, it is fair to say that *Parties, Policies and Democracy* has a canonical status in the political science literature, and is one of the main reference points for researchers seeking a recognisable empirical touchstone related to the party mandate. Given the incongruous combination of high prominence in the literature and its harsh criticism by a select few contemporary scholars, it is worth interrogating whether or not the empirical findings of Klingemann et al. (1994) remain relevant today. It is particularly critical at the current moment when, as I stressed in Chapter 1, work on the programme-to-policy linkage is snowballing in popularity and tangential research agendas are taking shape. Of particular relevance here is the connection between the programme-to-policy linkage and the policy agenda, the research communities around which have demonstrated little mutual engagement.

More substantively, even if it becomes clear that the Budge-Hofferbert approach is a legitimate and informative one, in social science it is rarely the case that a single study resolves any empirical conundrum. In light of increasing enthusiasm for replication in the social sciences and re-emerging interest in the connection between the manifestos and budgets - whether or not this work is nominally grounded in a theory of the party mandate or the issue agenda or something else - it is important to reevaluate past canonical claims on the matter and provide a contemporary perspective.

In this spirit, the current chapter aims to answer two overarching questions. Firstly, I revisit the original hypothesis of the Budge-Hofferbert approach to investigate whether or not changes in party manifesto issue emphases lead to corresponding changes in government spending. To test this question, I replicate the original saliency approach using modern, cross-nationally comparable data, first by reproducing the models advanced by Klingemann et al. (1994) and then by performing a pooled comparative analysis using more robust methods which compensate for their many weaknesses. Though a handful of findings are in accordance with the expectations of the theory, the Budge-Hofferbert results cannot be replicated and additional analyses support the null hypothesis.

It is important to acknowledge here that the failure to identify statistically significant effects is not necessarily evidence that a theory is at fault. The same is true of any operational or methodological issues which may contribute to these results. On this note, in this chapter I also consider a more fundamental question: to what extent is the saliency approach of linking emphasis to expenditures a valid test of the programme-to-policy linkage?

Were I confident that the emphasis-expenditure approach represents a robust operationalisation of the connection between campaign pronouncements and eventual government policy, I would have no option but to contend that the null findings in the analysis below represent a powerful empirical rebuke to the consensus view of pledge researchers (Thomson et al., 2017). However, I do not advance this argument. Rather, I argue that

the approach is not a conceptually valid counterpart to pledge-based analyses of the linkage because budget outputs are a poor operational indicator of policy in relation to issue emphasis. It is notoriously difficult to isolate the impact of partisan politics on budgetary outputs (Epp et al., 2014), and the Budge-Hofferbert approach in its original form is not equal to the task. But the many methodological issues with the approach are only symptoms of a deeper problem, which I argue to be the disconnect between the concept of the programme-to-policy linkage and the operational indicators selected.

In sum, this chapter makes the case that neither the theory nor method as specified by Klingemann et al. (1994) is suited to investigations of the programme-to-*policy* linkage. I argue that by softening some theoretical assumptions and selecting a more appropriate operational indicator, the approach can be brought in line with the more realistic view of Dolezal et al. (2014, p.74) that "saliency logic" is an occasional rather than dominant characteristic of party competition.

To anticipate a criticism of the approach taken in this chapter, readers may wonder why it is necessary to replicate and re-formulate an approach I believe to be theoretically invalid. I would respond by reminding readers again about the status of the Klingemann et al. (1994) text in the literature. The relationship of the saliency approach to the programme-to-policy linkage is a complicated one, encompassing overlapping theoretical, operational and methodological concerns. A full understanding of what I argue to be the failings of the approach can only be achieved if all of these bases are covered and their connections understood. To put it differently, I aim to address both why the approach *cannot* answer the research question it was explicitly designed to address - that of the programme-to-policy linkage - and why it *does not* address the different research question it implicitly operationalises, which we could describe as the programme-to-spending linkage.

However, the criticism in this chapter should not be confused for a condemnation. Although the saliency theory itself lacks explanatory power, adaptations of the approach could be highly relevant to scholars of the linkage, issue agendas and political economy. It is just that this research question is matched with the wrong indicators, and the indicators are matched with the wrong method. The following chapter builds upon this by re-contextualising the approach with appreciation of work on agenda-setting and testing it using a different operational indicator of policy. In doing so, I move to provide the beginnings of an answer to the research question I believe a saliency-type approach to the linkage *should* be used to address, which is the relationship between manifesto documents and the government issue agenda.

By clarifying the distinction between these three types of linkage - programme-to-policy, -agenda and -spending - and highlighting the utility (or not) of the saliency approach in relation to each of these, this chapter synthesises and expands upon existing criticisms of the Budge-Hofferbert approach. Though I discuss the details of the methods in greater detail and with proper context below, it is important to outline the thrust of the existing critiques to clarify this chapter's contribution.

Responses offered by King and Laver (1993) Thome (1999) offered valuable methodological critiques and presented the replication results of models with various additional variables and technical adjustments for the United States data. The main criticisms in these papers centred around autocorrelation due to the structure of the data (with manifesto observations repeating over multiple years), the failure to account for secular trends in expenditure the overreliance on R-squared values to explain findings - the high values for which Klingemann at al. were "too much impressed" (Thome, 1999, p.583) - and conceptual issues with the idea of a "negative mandate", which Klingemann et al. (1994) used to explain away contradictory results. Though King and Laver (1993) and Thome (1999) do not outright reject the approach or the possibility that budgets are sensitive to party platforms, they find that the results of Budge et al. fall apart when the appropriate methodological adjustments are made and express a great deal of scepticism that the sought-after effects can be identified in principle. King and Laver (1993, p.747) conclude by stating that the hypothesised connection is likely to exist in some form, but that it "is far weaker and more subtle than could be perceived with these data and methods".

Gibbons (2004) later did the same for the United Kingdom, using what was by that point the only surviving Budge-Hofferbert data, and came to a more generous conclusion. Agreeing with previous criticisms, he successfully reproduced many of the original findings but found that inserting a lagged dependent variable undermined some - but not all - of the claims made by Budge and co. He also ran a pooled model specification including all available policy areas, concluding that the spending changes were driven mostly by the Conservative party, whose manifesto issue emphasis obtained statistically significant effects. Gibbons claims These articles comprise the full extent of existing work replicating or extending the Budge-Hofferbert approach. In this chapter's empirical analyses, I expand on Gibbons' work by performing an updated replication of the findings in several countries by finally answer Thome's call for a comprehensive, cross-national pooled analysis (Thome, 1999, p.585).

Additionally, though they advanced some conceptually-rooted critiques, these authors did not question the fundamental compatibility of the empirical approach with the underlying research question. Gibbons (2004, p.36), for example, claimed to have identified "strong empirical support for the relevance of mandate theories of responsible party government, and for the argument that 'politics matters' for policy outcomes". This is a very strong claim considering the limitations of the approach, and I dispute the idea that it is appropriate to make this generalisation pertaining to the idea of a party mandate using this method even in the event of robust empirical findings. Meanwhile, critiques of the assumptions, theory and data employed by Klingemann et al. are surprisingly uncommon and scattered across papers from various research traditions (e.g. Royed 1996; Benoit et al. 2009; Dolezal et al. 2014). The most important contribution of this chapter is to combine interrelated conceptual, operational and methodological criticisms to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the Budge-Hofferbert approach and use these to suggest a way in which it might be

employed usefully in the present day.

What motivates this chapter is the impression that researchers to this day take for granted either the conceptual or empirical validity of *Parties, Policies and Democracy*, and that the lack of studies developing or emulating the approach is a possible missed opportunity. I therefore begin the argument at the most fundamental level, by offering a detailed account of the saliency theory of party competition, its relationship with the idea of linkage and, eventually, the unambiguously causal character of the model conceived by Budge et al. I then provide a reproduction of the original model specifications using new data to explore in-detail their many problems. After this, informed by and iterating on previous methodological critiques, I design a definitive pooled cross-national time-series test of the approach. Finally, in the conclusion and I suggest a re-framing of the approach around a different - but closely related - research question, which I provide an initial test of in the next chapter.

2.1 Saliency Theory

Saliency theory is framed as an adjustment to Anthony Downs' original spatial model of party competition (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.23). The approach was developed based on the observation that political parties "talk past" one another (Budge and Farlie, 1983, p.274), a claim which also receives support in the pledge literature (Håkansson and Naurin, 2016). Defined in opposition to the view that political parties differentiate themselves by assuming contrasting substantive *positions* on the same set of issues, the theory holds that party competition takes place primarily via "selective emphasis" of issues (Budge and Farlie, 1983, p.270).

According to saliency theory, the purpose of manifestos is for parties to signal a set of issue priorities rather than commit to specific policy proposals (Mansergh and Thomson, 2007, p.323). When parties change position, they do so by paying more or less attention to policy themes rather than directly endorsing or confronting the positions of other parties. For example, a conservative party may moderate their policy stance by talking less about the military and more about welfare programmes. A socialist party may ignore law and order, while a liberal party will emphasise free trade. And so on.

In this view of party competition there is no universal policy agenda which parties address equally (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.25). Rather, parties compete to define the content and scope of the agenda by holding forth on the issues they "own" instead of fighting battles they feel bound to lose e.g. the Labour party on issues of law and order (Budge and Farlie, 1983, p.271). In this view, elections are primarily decided according to which party can control and emphasise the issues most salient to the electorate, hence its name. Meanwhile, party programmes are assumed to be light on policy detail (Budge and Hofferbert, 1990, p.112). The hypothesised mechanism for a programme-to-policy linkage in these conditions is straightforward. As Budge and Hofferbert put it, "topics emphasised

by party platforms constitute implicit commitments to greater effort in the area if elected to government" (1990, p.114).

What is the significance of this for the study of the programme-to-policy linkage? Laver and Garry point out that "position and emphasis are quite distinct parameters of party policy" (2000, p.620). The saliency approach defines emphasis rather than position as the operational indicator of party policy, which is the key explanatory variable for government outputs in any test of party mandates. This translates into a very different operational definition of "programme" compared to pledge studies, despite both approaches using party manifestos as source material. The concept of party responsibility as conceived by Downs (1957) is not changed in the saliency view. It just applies to this dimension of the programme instead of specific campaign promises.

The relevant question is, of course, whether the impact of emphasis on expenditure outcomes constitutes an adequate test of the mandate principle that "parties in control of government follow policies consistent with the policy option they placed before the electorate" (Budge et al., 2001, p.69). This certainly seems to be the objective of the saliency approach. *Parties, Policies and Democracies* describes the goal of the approach as assessing "the signalling capacity of parties' programmes" (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.53) in relation to public expenditures.

Budge and Hofferbert claim that "a full examination of the relationships between programmes and government actions cannot be based on analyses of specific pledges" (1992, p.154). This assertion rests on the assumption that specific pledges are rhetorical devices made in unimportant policy areas rather than serious and consequential policy proposals. This central claim of the saliency theory, however, is not an *a priori* truth but an empirical matter. If selective emphasis is *not* primarily how parties differentiate themselves, then, on the contrary, it is the saliency approach which does not constitute a complete test of linkage. Though Budge and Farlie concede that direct policy confrontation takes place, they argue that it is peripheral to selective emphasis (1983, p.270).

Recent literature, however, seems to support the opposite view: that selective emphasis takes a back seat to policy engagement (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2015; Sides, 2006; Wagner and Meyer, 2014). Presenting evidence of substantial issue convergence among parties in the United States, Sigelman and Buell state that theories which assume minimal inter-party issue engagement attempt to bridge "a wide gap between what they take to be the norm of little or no convergence and what we take to be the reliability of a great deal of convergence" (2004, p.659) in parties' issue agendas. It is difficult to maintain, as saliency theory does, that party competition is defined primarily by relative issue emphases. These studies have contributed to a growing consensus that selective emphasis is not a universal or governing feature of party competition (Dolezal et al., 2014, p.74).

A Mandate Mechanism?

As noted in Chapter 1, the original saliency theorists claimed that, in testing for their linkage, there was no need to identify a causal relationship between manifesto pronouncements and policy outcomes (Budge, 1992, p.157). McDonald, Budge and Hofferbert state that the test does not need to be causal because the deliberate fulfilment of pledges is not a necessary condition for a successful mandate (McDonald et al., 1999, p.588). This follows from their assumption that the purpose of manifestos is to "signal" intent to act on the prioritised issues, rather than outline a specific policy template (Budge, 1992; Budge et al., 2001). There are some problems with this position, related to causation and intent.

In contrast with saliency theory's basic assumptions about manifesto content, manifestos *do* tend to specify large numbers of specific policy pledges. Manifestos typically contain a substantial number of detailed policy prescriptions, and their number has grown over the decades (Bara, 2005; Mansergh and Thomson, 2007; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016). Additionally, the explanation for pledge fulfilment is straightforward: it is intentional. Non-fulfilment is primarily a function of institutional constraints (Praprotnik and Ennser-jedenastik, 2012) rather than a deliberate desire to renege on promises made. Though there is no existing evidence concerning the "cause" of pledge fulfilment or the role of particular pledges in party strategy, there is now little reason to believe as some political scientists did that pledges are meaningless filler. Though exceptions may exist, given the significant human and financial resources devoted to developing manifesto pledges (Däubler, 2012) it would make little sense for parties to make a large number of highly specific pledges they have no intention of carrying out.

Furthermore, McDonald et al. state that a necessary condition for mandate fulfilment is that governments "behave in accordance with their announced positions" (McDonald et al., 1999, p.589). A test of mandate theory need not be strictly causal, they argue, because this party behaviour does not need to be proven deliberate. Budge et al. (2001, p.72) state that "the mandate model... does not require causal relationships to be established between manifesto emphases and policy changes - only that government parties follow policies consistent with manifesto commitments".

These researchers seem to conflate the methodological question of causality with the normative question of deliberate action. The intent behind manifesto content or government action does not necessarily have anything to do with whether or not that content can be said to "cause" changes in policy. And neither does it mean that other factors cannot intervene in the statistical relationship between programmes and policy as operationalised. Methodologically, it is unclear what any correspondence between platforms and expenditures would mean without accounting for intervening factors. What use is a correlation? As King and Laver comment (1999, p.597), "we have no objection to the claim that there is a non-causal or chance association between any two variables". A causal mechanism can exist *without* the deliberate intent of the actors involved; indeed, that is how *most* causal

mechanisms in social science work. Hence, appropriate care should be taken to model the hypothesised relationship.

Separately, the idea that a "mere correspondence" between either end of the linkage satisfies the normative party mandate is itself problematic. This is not a novel claim. Warwick has been critical of policy representation being construed in this manner (Warwick, 2010, 2012). He argues that intentionality on the part of governing parties – a direct and deliberate relationship between pronouncements and actions – ought be apparent to satisfy the theoretical demands of a mandate (2012, p.59). A simple association is not sufficient, since the mandate relies upon the deliberate design of policy packages and deliberate voter choice. As stated, however, this is a different issue which, regardless of one's view, cannot obviate the need to use proper modelling procedures.

In any case, I argue that the theory *does* entail a cause and effect relationship between emphases and expenditures. The mechanism is implied by the theory's assumptions and various related statements made across several scholarly works by Budge, Hofferbert and various coauthors. To expand on this argument, I provide a sequential summary of the process implied by the theory.

Parties indicate their issue priorities by way of relative issue emphasis in their pre-election programmes.

The mass media interpret these issue priorities accurately and reliably convey them to the general public.

Voters make expected-utility calculations about the parties (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.23) based on the signalled priorities.

Bureaucrats adapt their priorities and actions in the direction of the party's priorities in response to these signals and/or as a result of "concurrent action" i.e. simultaneously identifying the same emerging salient problems (Budge et al., 2001, p.72).

Governments allocate time, effort and other resources to issues in accordance with the party or parties' stated priorities, without necessarily doing so consciously, creating a correspondence between public preferences and government policy over the course of several elections (Budge, Best and McDonald, 2012, p.7).

It is difficult to avoid implying a causal relationship when testing whether or not parties follow through on the policy options they offered voters, especially while claiming to test the concept of a mandate. After all, there is no such thing as a *deus ex mandate*. The very idea (and party government more generally) relies upon expressed public preferences as a cause and government policy outputs as an effect. The saliency linkage *is* a causal one. There is rather a complicated causal story which relies on strong - but in principle, testable - assumptions about party competition. Unfortunately, it does not seem feasible

to adequately test this mechanism by examining the first input and the last output. I elaborate on this later in the chapter.

Some of these assumptions, however, have been tested before. Helbling and Tresch, for example, found no relationship between a media-derived indicator of party issue saliency and the Manifesto Project estimates (2011, p.180), which undermines the idea that issue emphasis will trickle down to voters undiluted. Meanwhile, changes in parties' relative issue priorities over time have been investigated by examining "issue diversity". These studies show that mainstream parties have diversified their issue portfolios over time, almost to the point of saturation (Hobolt, 2008; Greene, 2014). If parties focus equally on all issues, the saliency theory of party competition is fatally undermined.

Nonetheless, party strategies likely involve some combination of differential emphasis and substantive differentiation (Sigelman and Buell, 2004) and it is still plausible that parties in government will dedicate more resources to the issues they emphasized during the campaign. Indeed, pre-election issue attention is one of several agendas which interact and compete with one another (Froio et al., 2016). Furthermore, Merz (2017) provides comparative evidence to suggest that the mass media *does* successfully link issues to parties during the relevant election campaign. Whether voters percieve these signals is another matter, but some stages of the linkage mechanism are at least feasible.

The Budge-Hofferbert method cannot on its own falsify saliency theory, but it can be considered useful as a test of the extent to which campaign agendas carry through into policy outputs. And its main advantage over the pledge approach remains valid. It allows scholars to test "whether what is enacted has been pledged" (Louwerse, 2011a, p.24) rather than the other way around. Unlike studies of individual pledges, the indicator for output is not qualitatively restricted by each observation of the dependent variable. As such, it is worth revisiting and iterating on the approach using contemporary data, even if it is only a partial test of linkage, or a particular type of linkage. The findings could provide insight into the conditions in which a link between party programmes and subsequent expenditures emerges, which is relevant not only to the linkage literature but also the extensive and increasingly popular literature on policy agendas.

This is performed in two stages. First, I reproduce the original models from (Klingemann et al., 1994) using updated budget data for the period 1994-2013. Though the methodological problems with the Budge-Hofferbert method are well-documented, a reproduction is valuable because it allows them to be explored in detail. I show precisely how and why the findings of the seminal *Parties, Policies and Democracy* are spurious. Having done so, I outline what the problems are and how to ameliorate them, and present a series of substantially revised, pooled models using the same data which represent a much stronger test of the theory.

2.2 Measurement and Data

Klingemann et al. (1994) tested the approach in ten countries using data ranging from the mid-1940s to the mid-1980s. They employed three different regression models[3], designed to capture the effects of the overall political agenda, the programmes of parties that went on to govern and the parties' overall priorities over time in individual policy areas. The expenditure data are annualised and led by two years to allow the policy priorities of the parties time to manifest themselves in spending. Because budget figures are measured annually while measurements of party policy priorities can only be taken at indeterminate intervals usually exceeding a 12 month time-frame, the manifesto estimates remain static for as many years as there are between elections. Observations are for this reason are not independent of one another, yet no procedure was undertaken to correct for this in the original studies (King and Laver, 1993, p.245).

I reproduce the agenda and mandate models for six countries, five of which featured in the book. Austria, Britain, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands all appeared in *Parties, Policies and Democracy*. Denmark, meanwhile, is a new case sharing strong similarities with others in the analysis which has featured heavily in the agendas literature. Non-European states are excluded for reasons of data availability. All of these cases (with the exception of Denmark) have been the subject of pledge studies, and were selected to facilitate cross-comparison in this regard. The cases also provide variation in the institutional conditions which might constrain government action (Klingemann et al., 1994, 18).

Manifesto Data

The key independent variable in the Budge-Hofferbert approach is the share of attention parties devote to different issue areas in their manifestos. It is measured as the percentage of quasi-sentences devoted to each of the issue categories identified by the MARPOR manifesto project (1990; 1992; 1994). The coding scheme was developed by Budge, Robertson and Hearl (1987) to document party policy emphases, and is underpinned by "the very distinctive theoretical assumptions" of saliency theory (Laver et al., 2003, p.312). To code the documents, sentences or quasi-sentences are placed into one of 54 substantive categories representing policy issue dimensions, which are themselves subdivisions of 7 broader policy domains. The specific categories have evolved slightly over time, and substantial numbers of sub-categories have been added, but the coding method remains identical (Volkens, 2007).

There are several advantages to using the MARPOR estimates. Firstly, the dataset reflects an immense effort to categorize manifesto emphases across dozens of countries over the course of several decades. No richer source of manifesto or party positional data exists (Gemenis, 2013). Secondly, it facilitates large-n comparison, something that other methods of measuring party policy cannot emulate. For the purposes of the present study, the use

[3]Referred to as "agenda", "mandate" and "ideology" respectively.

of this data allows the measure to be kept constant. The MARPOR data has also faced criticism, however.

Most notably, the coding categories reflect theoretical assumptions and a Cold War-era set of issues which may no longer match the realities of party competition (Gemenis, 2013, p.7). The universe of issue dimensions in 1950 or 2010 is unlikely to be identical to that of the 1980s when the technique was designed. As a result, the validity of the method is vulnerable to changes in the structure of party competition or manifesto documents over time. Green-Pedersen found that the number of quasi-sentences in party manifestos increased by an average of approx. 400 per cent in European democracies over four decades (2007, p.617). This suggests that, were the method designed now, the categories would likely be quite different (Benoit and Laver, 2007, p.130).

Additionally, despite the theory's rejection of positional competition, many of the MARPOR dimensions are split into "positive" and "negative" codes of the same issue. Taken together, these comprise 24 of the 56 categories (Gemenis, 2013, p.5). For current purposes is feasible that negative categories could entail commitments to *cut* expenditure (Royed, 1996, p.53). But, for the sake of simplicity and reliability, they are not included in this reproduction or replication. Firstly, for the sample of election manifestos and issue areas employed here, negative codes are rarely used. Secondly, previous research has suggested that the use of negative categories is inconsistent among MARPOR coders (Benoit et al., 2009; Mikhaylov et al., 2012), creating error in cross-national estimates[4].

Expenditure Data

The dependent variable in the saliency approach is "the percentage of total central government annual outlays devoted to particular functions" (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.39). The following replication uses a different source of data to Klingemann et al., who constructed the measure manually using government budget reports to compile the figures for each country. Klingemann et al. acknowledge this issue, and describe a procedure by which they attempted to attain reliable within-case estimates over time (1994, p.40).

However, because the reliability of estimates across countries was not assured, this approach rendered comparison problematic and precluded pooled analysis. This is firstly because of the very different ways in which governments compiled their budget data in the relevant period, and secondly because there are no standardized categories for the retrospective classification that Klingemann et al. carried out. This also means that, in the present day, the original studies' estimates would be impossible to entirely reproduce. McDonald et al. were aware of this, conceding that single country data is a roadblock to investigating "the full causal form of the mandate thesis" (1999, p.589).

The data used here was chosen to resolve these problems. The Classification of Functions of Government (COFOG) scheme was devised by the OECD to categorise data produced

[4]To ensure the exclusion of negative categories did not affect the findings, identical analyses were run using a positive minus negative measure of emphasis instead. The findings were not substantively different.

by member state governments using the UN's System of National Accounts (OECD, 2011). The measure consists of ten "first-level" functions subdivided into nine "second-level" functions. First-level data, which includes broad categories like "Defence" "Health" and "Social Protection" are available from 1995 until at least 2013 for all cases in this study except the United Kingdom, beginning 1997. This data is an improvement over the idiosyncratic measures constructed by Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge for several reasons; the estimates account for nearly 100 per cent of total government expenditure, the method is transparent and it facilitates comparison.

A disadvantage of the COFOG estimates is that they only exist from the mid-1990s onwards, providing just shy of twenty years of data. This is a time period half as long as the one studied in *Parties, Policies and Democracy*. Though this limits the number of observations compared to that study, it is more than enough time for any linkage between programmes and policy to become evident as each case contains between four and seven full election cycles. As such, the shorter time-frame is not cause for concern.

Though the expenditures were categorised differently, the measure is the same as Klingemann et al. 1994 in principle. This means it is affected by familiar problems. Because each issue area is measured as a percentage of total government expenditure, the estimates are not independent of one another. An increased proportion of spending on one function necessarily leads to a corresponding decrease across all of the others. The effects of this are negligible year to year but more pronounced over a longer time period.

In relation, and of greater concern, is that many areas of spending follow obvious trends unrelated to the actions of individual governments. "Social Protection", for instance, includes pensions and welfare. As the population ages, real spending in this category is likely to outpace increases elsewhere regardless of government intent. This is precisely what happened during the 1980s in the US and UK, despite sincere attempts to shrink the welfare state in both nations (Allan, 2004). This is also a well-known issue when modelling changes in budgets allocations, which tend to be non-stationary but incremental trends prone to occasional shocks, or "punctuations" (Breunig, 2006). The failure to account for long-term trends and unpredictable shifts in spending heightens the risk of Type I error i.e. false positives. King and Laver (1993, p.747) criticised Budge and Hofferbert for this reason, claiming that "the strong relationships reported... are to a large extent methodological artefacts" arising from this aspect of the analysis. As discussed in Chapter 1, McDonald et al. (1999) sidestepped the issue by stating that they did not seek to identify a causal relationship.

Category Selection and Matching

Expenditure categories and MARPOR issue areas need to be matched with one another for the purposes of analysis. Once again, the COFOG data allow for substantially more reliable comparisons between countries than idiosyncratic estimates. Budge and Hofferbert

(1990, p.115) state that they arrived at their designations "on the basis of face validity... and experimental computations". A similar procedure was followed in *Parties, Policies and Democracy*. In some circumstances, the same expenditure categories were related to entirely different sets of issue areas[5].

The government functions identified by Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge are similar to those specified by COFOG. Not all functions are of equal value to the analysis however, and the saliency percentages for many of the MARPOR categories are often either zero or close to it. When selecting functions to employ in the analysis it makes sense to concentrate only on those which a) are unambiguous and easily construed of in monetary terms in public discourse b) which parties are likely to view as important issues and most importantly c) which are a valid match for MARPOR categories.

Table 2.1: Matched Coding Categories

MARPOR	**COFOG**
Culture: Positive	Recreation, Culture and Religion
Military: Positive	Defence
Education Expansion	Education
Environmental Protection	Environmental Protection
Law and Order: Positive	Public Order and Safety
Welfare State Expansion	Social Protection + Health

The law and order, education and environmental protection categories are common sense matches. The defence category uses the most appropriate single category available, with the aim of facilitating the kind of comparison that was untenable in *Parties, Policies and Democracy*. Because the "Welfare State Expansion" MARPOR category also includes healthcare, the two separate COFOG categories have been combined. The matches used here avoid the counter-intuitive pairing of very general MARPOR codes and specific expenditure functions which occasionally featured in the volume e.g. "Social Justice" manifesto content was linked to multiple separate spending categories, such as "Social Security", "Health and Medicare" and "Income Security" (Budge and Hofferbert, 1990, p.116). These functions are likely to be collinear, so the relationship between *all* "Social Justice" oriented emphases and expenditures (which are only subsets of that manifesto content) could have resulted in unstable estimates.

[5]For example in France "Social Justice" was linked to both "Welfare" and "Education" expenditures. A compound foreign relations category called "Internationalism/Nationalism" was linked to both "Defence" and "Foreign Affairs" expenditures. In the United States, "Social Justice" was related to "Social Security" as well as "Health and Medicare", but not to "Education" which was matched with its MARPOR namesake. Meanwhile, "Defence" and "Foreign Affairs" were paired with "Special Foreign Relations (+)". Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge related several different categories/combinations of categories to defence spending, which itself was sometimes bundled with foreign affairs and related issue dimensions. These included "Foreign Special Relationships" alone (1994, p.58), the latter added to both "Military" and "Peace and Internationalism" (p.84), and also an "Internationalism/Nationalism" compound score (p.135)

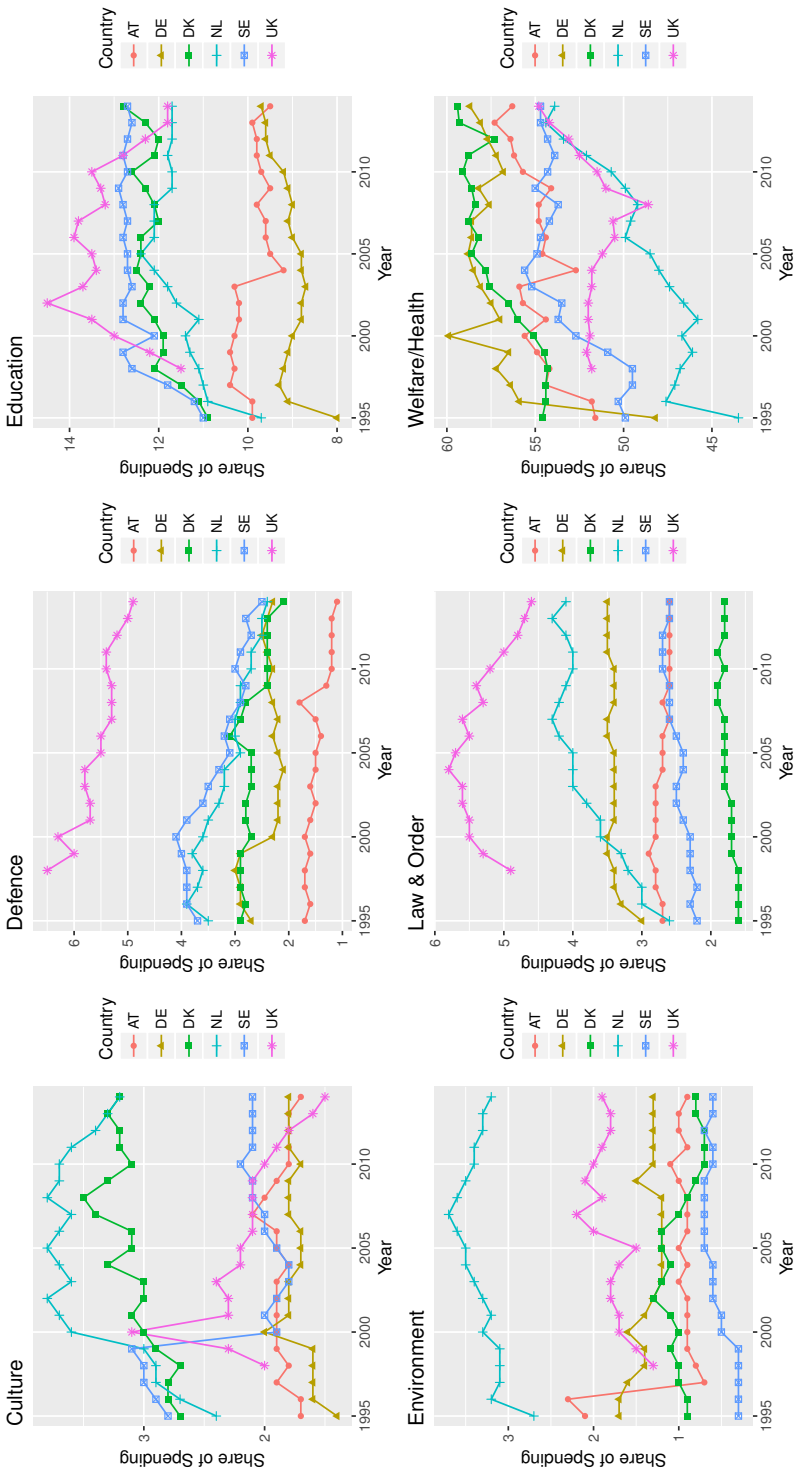


Figure 2.1: Line Graph: Government Spending Over Time

2.3 Replication Models and Findings

Two of the three models used by Klingemann et al. will be retested. The third model, which takes into account the "enduring ideological orientation" of parties (1994, p.54) exceeds the scope of the present analysis, which is concerned with mandates. For the sake of framing the argument, the hypothesis of this reproduction (and replication) is that the "mandate" connection between platforms and spending apparently found by Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge will be identified again, reformulated in explicitly *causal* language. It can be stated as follows.

Hypothesis 2.1. *Changes in the relative issue emphasis of campaign issues by political parties predict corresponding directional changes in government expenditure.*

In relation to the earlier discussion, note that this research question is only a test of the programme-to-policy linkage *per se* to the extent that budgets can be conceived of as policy outputs. I return to this below. Spending trends in these categories for each country are shown in Figure 2.1. Defence spending followed a clear downward trend in all cases through the period, the only uniform change. Health/Social Protection spending rose in most countries, but with some large punctuations. Spending in the other categories was relatively stable with stationary or mixed trends and occasional punctuations, especially in the culture category.

Agenda Models

The "agenda model" does not take account of which party is in government. It initially tested the hypothesis "that policy priorities will reflect the programmatic emphases of one or more of the major parties that competed in the previous election" (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.44). Though any attempt to identify an electoral mandate need not necessarily concern itself with the overall policy agenda, the model is tested to examine the differences between the effects of this agenda with individual party mandates. It was found by Klingemann et al. to explain a substantial amount of the variation in policy outcomes in most of the countries studied. The following formulas are reproduced from *Parties, Policies and Democracy* (p.44-48).

$$Spend_i = a + bEmph_i^A + bEmph_i^B + ...bEmph_i^n$$

Spend represents the percent of total expenditures in COFOG category i, led by two years. *Emph* represents the MARPOR category percentage for parties $A, B...$ until n, added to the constant a. COFOG spending data is available from 1995 in five of the cases, and 1997 in the UK. Because of the two year lead on spending, however, some observations were eliminated to avoid regressing party emphases from elections in the late 80s or early 90s on the 1995 or 1996 figures without entries for previous years. As such, five of the six

cases - all of which held an election in 1994 - contain 18 rows, with the MARPOR data from 1995-2012 matched to corresponding expenditures from 1997-2014. The UK contains 15 rows, with 1998-2012 manifesto data matched with 2000-2014 spending. The same cases and time points are used for both the agenda and mandate models (see below).

All agenda models in the relevant policy areas, six for each case, are reported in Table 2.3 in the appendix. Party selection is limited to the two or three largest parties in each political system in terms of vote percentage and influence, though some smaller governing parties were left out. In addition to the party coefficients and standard errors, the R^2 of each model is reported. According to the theory, positive coefficients demonstrate a relationship between party issue emphases and the direction of government spending over the years in the analysis. Negative coefficients mean that spending and emphasis varied in opposite directions. To this end the authors of *Parties, Policies and Democracy* leave room for the possibility of a "negative mandate", in which parties who enter office appear to "take their cue" from opponents on certain issues (1994, p.51).

The models returned mixed results. Table 2.2 provides a summary of the findings reported in Table 2.3. Only 36 of 87[6] party coefficients are found to be statistically significant at .05 level. A majority of these are negative despite most of the selected parties controlling the premiership for several years between 1995 and 2013. Just 15 of the 87 coefficients are both positive and significant across all policy areas and countries, substantially fewer than anticipated.

The adjusted R^2 values are polarised, with some reaching extraordinarily high levels for such a limited analysis. The models seem to fit exceptionally well for the UK and the Netherlands, but less consistently in other cases. Given these two countries are archetypal examples of majoritarian and consensus democracies, this is a highly counter-intuitive finding. Such high R^2 values in regressions with trending variables and a small number of observations are characteristic of "spurious regression" (King and Laver, 1993, p. 745), a possibility that is more likely than not in this case.

In none of the cases do expenditures consistently reflect the policy preferences of any single party. These alone, therefore, cannot be said to reliably anticipate the direction of government spending. Though this was never the claim of Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge, their findings using the agenda models demonstrated more consistent evidence of influence by individual parties in several countries (1994, p.287-299).

In the 1994 volume, Sweden, France[7] and the UK (but not the Netherlands) were characterised as "agenda countries" because those models consistently fit better than the mandate or ideology equations (1994, p.257, 261). In Sweden, this meant that these models generally obtained the highest R^2 values despite exhibiting relatively few significant individual party coefficients (1994, p.293).

[6]Neither of the Danish parties were coded to have mentioned the defence category at all. Additionally, Venstre's Culture emphasis was automatically dropped from the model due to multicollinearity.

[7]France was excluded from this replication because the creation of the UMP in 2002 constituted a major realignment of the party system in the middle of the period studied.

Table 2.2: Summary: Agenda Models

Policy	**S**	**S+**	**Tot.**
Culture	5	1	14
Defence	8	3	13
Education	4	1	15
Environment	6	3	15
Law and order	7	5	15
Welfare/health	6	2	15
Totals	41%	17%	87

S refers to the number of significant findings
S+ refers to the number of significant and positive coefficients

Only the manifestos of the two largest parties of recent history are included here. Hence, the manifestos of the Social Democrats (S) and Moderates (M) are included for years preceding 2006. From 2006 onward, the Moderate party did not release its own manifesto, instead collaborating on a joint manifesto with three other centre-right parties [8] as part of the Alliance (A). As such, the Alliance manifestos from 2006 and 2010 are entered as if they were regular Moderate manifestos [9]. The table shows five significant coefficients from the agenda model, a negative one on culture for both parties, positive ones on environmental protection and health and welfare for the Social Democrats, and a negative one on health and welfare for the Moderates/Alliance. The Social Democrats' attention to the environment increased three times in four elections as spending steadily increased, providing one of the clearest associations in the analysis.

Given the relatively low number of observations, however, it is unclear whether this pattern represents the influence of this emphasis on spending levels or it is coincidental to rising expenditures, particularly given that their peak attention of over 15 per cent of the manifesto - the second highest level for environmental protection of any party in the dataset - came in 2010 when they were consigned to opposition for the second term in a row. Though not statistically significant, the Moderate/Alliance coefficient in this category was positive as well. Could it be that environmental protection costs rose independent of political influence? Did the issue become more generally salient to Swedish politics over time? Did a minor party like the Greens succeed in forcing the issue onto the agenda? Or, indeed, given that these costs comprise less than one per cent of the total budget, are these

[8] Liberal/People's party, Centre party and Christian Democratic party

[9] To all intents and purposes this is the case, since the Moderates were the dominant partner in the Alliance who, unlike their partners, did not typically release a standalone manifesto to complement the joint one. Klingemann et al. also included the Liberal/Peoples' party, the Communist/Left party and the Centre party. These parties were excluded from the analysis because, like every other parliamentary party except S and M, they typically take no more than around 10% of the vote, and the Swedish party system has evolved in many ways since the early 1990s. Including all of the arguably relevant parties in the analysis - Left, Centre, Liberal, Green, Christian and Sweden Democrats - was untenable given the number of observations and the complications of the Alliance manifestos.

increases even "real" given the percentage figure is not independent of changes in other policy areas? The Budge-Hofferbert model is not sophisticated enough to provide answers to these questions.

It is also possible to compare the findings here to Klingemann et al.'s analysis of the UK. The agenda replication is successful in this case, given that 12 of 18 these coefficients are found to be statistically significant. Using the same three parties, Klingemann et al. tested the agenda model in nine different policy areas (1994, p.66). Five of the six policy areas tested above are included in this number in some fashion, though the operational categories used are not identical.[10]

Klingemann, Budge and Hofferbert do not report their standard errors, but place significant coefficients in brackets. They obtained a similar number of significant coefficients in these areas of spending (10/18, five of these in health and social security) and substantially smaller R^2 values than those evidenced in the agenda table (1994, p.66). In contrast to the findings of Klingemann et al., however, half of the significant UK party coefficients in the agenda table are negative - what they describe as "contradictions" (1994, p.76) - rather than positive. These findings conflict with the strong British pledge fulfilment trends identified by both Rose (1984) and Royed (1996).

The Conservative party was found by Klingemann et al. to be overwhelmingly influential, exhibiting positive and significant effects on almost all of the selected policy domains including those replicated here. In contrast, the agenda table shows that this remained true only for law and order. Of course, unlike previous decades, the Conservatives spent most of the period out of government, which would explain a relative decline in influence.

The Labour party's emphasis is here found to relate negatively with budgets, and four of these coefficients are statistically significant. The same results were obtained by Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge for Education and Health, but the coefficient signs for the other policy areas (including Social Security) were the reverse of those demonstrated here. Given Labour were in government for a much larger proportion of the years in the current analysis than the original one, this is also confounding. By the logic of the model, this would suggest that they are better at carrying out their manifesto while out of government.

This is in agreement with Klingemann, Budge and Hofferbert's conclusion, which was that Labour's lack of statistically significant coefficients versus the Conservatives exhibited "a pattern of Conservative ability to see their commitments enacted, in or out of office, and of Labour's inability to do so" (1994, p.71). It is worth noting here, once again, that the authors use causal language to describe their statistical findings. Perhaps it is the case that Labour's increased control in the years covered by the replication exaggerated the propensity for expenditures to go in the opposite direction implied by their issue attention.

[10]Klingemann et al.. match the "Social Justice" manifesto category to both health and social security (as well as education) and "Special Foreign Relations" to what they call "Defence and Foreign Affairs". "Law and order" is used, but matched to a spending category they call "Administration of Justice", which is presumably substantively similar to the relevant COFOG category "Public Order and Safety". Culture was not included in their analysis, while "Environmental Protection" was matched identically.

Table 2.3: Saliency Approach Replication: Agenda Models

Country	Party	Culture	Defence	Education	Environment	Law	Welfare
Austria	SPO	-.014 (.012)	-.030 (.043)	.016 (.026)	.024 (.057)	.067 (.031)*	.003 (.004)
	OVP	.022 (.007)*	048 (.028)*	.030 (.032)	-.025 (.038)	-.004 (.006)	.002 (.005)
	FPO	.003 (.015)	-.024 (.050)	-.059 (.040)	-.032 (.026)	.022 (.012)	-.033 (.005)*
	Adj. R-sq	0.254	0.041	-0.045	-0.026	0.203	0.766
Germany	SPD	.087 (.088)	.203 (.149)	.004 (.061)	.024 (.008)*	.006 (.018)	-.044 (.065)
	CDU/CSU	.029 (.021)	-.192 (.071)*	.130 (.095)	-.015 (.022)	-.002 (.003)	.174 (.162)
	Adj. R-sq	0.014	0.426	0.057	0.536	-0.117	-0.03
Denmark	SD	.052 (.037)	-	-.026 (.017)	.018 (.023)	.04 (.011)*	-.097 (.082)
	V	-	-	.040 (.020)	-.027 (.008)*	-.015 (.004)*	.242 (.074)*
	Adj. R-sq	0.05	-	0.133	0.369	0.457	0.433
Netherlands	PvdA	.07 (.063)	-.535 (.218)*	.031 (.048)	.096 (.018)*	-.295 (.080)*	.195 (1.207)
	CDA	.21 (.152)	-1.436 (.343)*	.161 (.072)*	-.097 (.015) *	-.006 (.05)	-0.288(1.163)
	VVD	-.082 (.120)	.526 (.117)*	.048 (.049)	-.112 (.034)*	.21 (.046)*	.934 (1.191)
	Adj. R-sq	0.221	0.736	0.539	0.745	0.8	-0.047
Sweden	S	-.079 (.027)*	-.436 (.305)	.027 (.014)	.051 (.016)*	.016 (.021)	.319 (.059)*
	M/A	-.054 (.019)*	-.117 (.161)	.058 (.037)	.013 (.011)	.027 (.027)	-.313 (.088)*
	Adj. R-sq	0.044	0.155	0.211	0.336	0.12	0.674
UK	Lab	-.222 (.042)*	-.585 (.128)*	-.207 (.087)*	-.805 (.794)	.036 (.026)	-.997 (.393)*
	Con	.033 (.095)	-.359 (.098)*	-1.487(.324)*	.461 (.426)	.064 (.028)*	.315 (.334)
	Lib	-.471 (.199)*	.514 (.129)*	-4.441 (.926)*	-.060 (.137)	.254 (.042)*	-.750 (.235)*
	Adj. R-sq	0.726	0.7	0.645	0.184	0.811	0.459

Standard errors in parentheses, statistically significant coefficients (<0.05) denoted with *

But if it was, the pattern would be expected to manifest itself in the same set of policy areas. Furthermore, given the operational and methodological issues identified, this is not a strong enough basis from which to declare that "what they [Labour] say before winning an election seems to bear little relationship to what actually gets done in government" (1994, p. 71). This is even truer of the present analysis, given that *no* party in any of the countries exhibits a consistent *positive* relationship to expenditures across a range of policy areas.

Only one of the other parties' coefficients was found by Klingemann et al. to be statistically significant in the relevant policy domains: the Lib Dems' positive association with changes in defence spending (1994, p. 66). Though the rest of the Lib Dems' coefficients are mixed in direction like the relationships identified by Klingemann et al., in five of six here are statistically significant (two of these positive). This is another unexpected finding. According to the saliency theory, this would make the party one of the most influential across all six cases despite spending only a handful of the observed years in government (as a junior coalition partner).

Returning to Table 2.3, it is telling that the strongest and most numerous relationships are found in the domain of defence. Half of the available coefficients are found to be significant at .05 level. In the Netherlands, the UK and Austria, the relationship is strongly significant and negative for most parties which spent a substantial amount of time in government. In every case, defence spending follows a steady downward trend between 1995/8 and 2013. This is probably attributable to a "peace dividend" following the end of the Cold War, and illustrates the problem with the spending measure. Secular trends (i.e. non-stationary) in spending shares (King and Laver, 1993, p.745) are likely to outstrip marginal differences parties can affect. In addition, the assumption of linearity in the regression model entered implies that a party's level of emphasis is equivalent to its desired budget allocation for the relevant policy dimensions. This is obviously unrealistic. Additionally, as suggested above, the problems are more than theoretical. The fact that spending data are entered annually while emphasis figures are repeated for as many years as there are between elections means that the observations are autocorrelated, equivalent to "tricking yourself into believing that you have more information than you really do" (King and Laver, 1993, p. 745).

To remedy these issues, King and Laver also replicated Budge and Hofferbert's models, changing the unit of analysis to four year US presidential terms. They found identical coefficients but much larger standard errors. They also added what they call a "partial adjustment" term to the regression equation to differentiate between desired (i.e. emphasis) and expected spending, rather than treating these identically. Expected spending is a weighted average of the manifesto emphasis and the previous year's budget percentage. Unsurprisingly, these models also failed to find much support for Budge and Hofferbert's claims (King and Laver, 1993, p.747). I elaborate on this point when developing the revised model later in the chapter.

This issue can be further illustrated by returning to the table to focus on a finding

clearly out of line with expectations. Two traditional third parties, the VVD and Liberal Democrats, who usually wield less power than their social democratic and conservative opponents, are the only ones other than the Austrian ÖVP to obtain significant *positive* coefficients in the policy area of defence.

Figure 2.2: Line Graph: UK Defence Spending vs. Party Emphasis

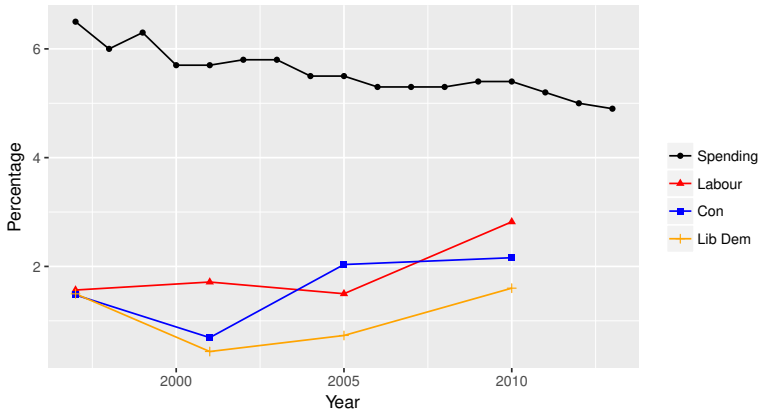
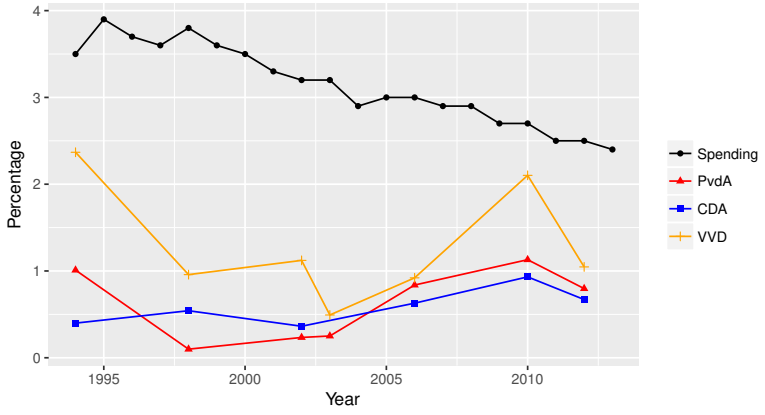


Fig. 2.2 shows that the Lib Dems sharply reduced their attention to defence between 1997 and 2001, increased it slightly in 2005 and again in 2010. Removing the other two parties from the model, the association completely disappears. The nature of the agenda model makes it highly sensitive to small numbers of observations.

The downward trend in Dutch defence spending is even more pronounced than in the UK. It declined in 10 of the 17 years in the analysis, rising only twice. Recall that, of the Dutch parties in the model, the VVD coefficients were positive and strongly significant, while the CDA and PvdA coefficients were strongly negative. Bearing in mind the dependent variable's clear downward trend and the fact that the VVD occupied the premiership for the shortest time of the three parties, this would still make intuitive sense if they had emphasised defence less than the other parties, as the Lib Dems did.

Figure 2.3: Line Graph: Dutch Defence Budget vs. Party Emphasis



In fact, the opposite is the case: the VVD emphasised defence by far the *most* of

any party (see Figure 2.3). They also, however, exhibited the most variation. The large downward spikes in VVD attention to defence, controlling for the more stable but steadily rising CDA and PvdA emphases, seem to have produced the incongruous result in this case. This is clearly a problem for a theory which stipulates that greater issue attention should result in increased expenditure and vice versa. Here, the model shows a strong positive association between higher issue emphases and a downward trend in expenditure, and a similarly strong negative association between consistently lower emphases and declining expenditure.

Summarising the agendas analysis as a whole, 41 per cent of the coefficients returned were found to be significant, while 17 per cent were both significant and positive. Of these coefficients, only a handful were evident in each policy area and in each country. The R^2 values are inconsistent across policy areas and countries, with the exception of the UK and the Netherlands where the emphases appear to explain an unrealistic proportion of expenditure change.

Though the claims of Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge have not found additional support, their agenda models also returned mixed results in several countries (1994, p. 287-299). The findings here are similarly mixed, but demonstrate few plausible patterns or similarities to the original research. Given the model's sensitivity, it is likely that many of the identified relationships are spurious. In sum, the agenda model is not particularly informative, and these findings speak more to issues with the method than any real-world dynamics.

Mandate Models

The mandate model purportedly tests the "policy consequence of [individual] elections" (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.48) on top of the agenda model. This is done by multiplying the party's emphasis by an in-out of office dummy variable in the regression equation, increasing the value of a party's programmatic statements when it is in office but without removing the influence of the all-party agenda from the model, i.e. "the increase in variance explained by this model over the agenda model... is the difference attributable to governance" (ibid, p.51). This model was found to be the strongest supported overall in *Parties, Policies and Democracy.*

In the equation, following Klingemann et al. (1994, p.48-9), a term is added which multiplies parties' issue emphases with the dummy variable *Gov*, which is 1 for the years the party spent in control of the premiership and 0 for the years it was not. Note that this is *not* a conventional interaction. Rather, per Klingemann et al. (1994, p.49-50), the emphasis value is simply multiplied by the dummy before the regression model is entered. Hence, the model contains no base effect for the government dummy, since it is not actually entered into the model. Combined with the agenda coefficient ($b(Emph_i^P)$), this has the effect of duplicating party issue attention in the model in the years a party occupied the

Table 2.4: Mandate Model Party Effect Pairs: Did Model Findings Conform to Theoretical Expectations?

Party	Exp.	Con.	Oth.	Tot.
SPÖ	1 (1)	4 (3)	1	6
ÖVP	0	0	0	0
FPÖ	3	1 (1)	2	6
SPD	1	2 (1)	3	6
CDU	3	1	2	6
SD	1	2	1	4
V	1 (1)	2 (1)	0	3
PvdA	1	2 (1)	1	4
CDA	2 (1)	2	0	4
VVD	3	0	1	4
S	3 (2)	0	2	5
M/A	3 (2)	2	1	6
Totals	22 (7)	18 (7)	14	54

highest elected office. The mandate coefficient ($b(Emph_i^P \times Gov)$) is supposed to represent the effect of party emphasis on budgets when the party is in power with the all-party agenda held constant. According to Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge, the model should show that a mandate linkage is apparent when a positive and significant coefficient is present for a party's mandate term and a negative or non-significant coefficient is present for the agenda term.

$$Spend_i = a + bEmph_i^A + b(Emph_i^A \times Gov) + bEmph_i^B + b(Emph_i^B \times Gov)...bEmph_i^n + b(Emph_i^n \times Gov)$$

Table 2.5 shows the results obtained from the *mandate* models. Most of the models dropped at least one independent variable as a result of collinearity. Those models which dropped more than one party coefficient have been excluded from the analysis. Consequently, the UK is excluded altogether, in addition to the Danish culture and defence models. This leaves five cases containing 62 party "mandate" coefficients, 54 of which are paired with the corresponding "agenda" coefficients across six policy areas. Tables 2.4[11] and 2.6 summarise the findings.

It is again difficult to identify telling patterns. The government term does appear to add explanatory power to the models almost across the board, with the adjusted R^2 values increasing over those found in the agenda models in 24 of 28 instances, with particularly pronounced changes observed for Austria and Sweden. Evidently, adding mandate effects

[11]The Exp. column contains pairs which conformed to expectations in some way. The Con. column contains "contradictory" pairs, which includes all pairs with a negative sign for agenda and a positive sign for mandate. Pairs with two significant coefficients are indicated with brackets.

does improve the model. The R^2 values observed in the mandate table are also generally higher than those shown in *Parties, Policies and Democracy* (1994, p.287-299), most of them far exceeding 0.5. The models in the Netherlands and Sweden in particular achieve very good fits.

In terms of the individual party coefficients, the models sometimes conform to the expectations of saliency theory. 24 of the 62 coefficients are *negative*, including 13 of the 31 significant coefficients. 18 of 62, just under 30 per cent, are both positive and statistically significant.

Out of 54 agenda/mandate pairs, 22 conform in some way to expectations. Meanwhile, there are 18 direct "contradictions". 20 of these are pairs with a negative sign for the "agenda" term and a positive sign for the "mandate" term. The other two are pairs with two positive signs where only the mandate coefficient is significant. Both party coefficients reach statistical significance in a total of 14 instances, seven each for the expected and contradictory pairs respectively. In Budge and Hofferbert's terms, this would mean that winning *doesn't* matter for party mandates just as often as it does, a statistical outcome which is indistinguishable from chance (Thome, 1999, p.572).

Relative to the agenda model, Sweden performs exceptionally well as a saliency approach case study. All of the significant positive coefficients are found for the government terms, and all of the significant negative coefficients save one are found for the agenda terms. Most of the coefficients are positive where expected, with both the Social Democrats and the Moderates seemingly able to translate their emphases into expenditures when they get into office. This is arguably the only case to conform to the expectations of saliency theory. It is also, strangely, a reversal of the few significant effects found by Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge (1994, p.166). The agenda models fit better in four of the seven policy areas in that analysis, this being attributed to the country's "broadly consensual policy process" (ibid., p.170). Here the government term adds substantial explanatory value in all six domains, completely contradicting expectations.

Klingemann, Budge and Hofferbert wrote of the mandate model that "occupancy of office frequently has a strong effect on the ability of parties to implement policies stressed in their programs" (1994, p.264). This finding is not reproduced here with the exception of that case. Sweden aside, effects in the expected direction were sparse, and matched nearly equally by apparently contradictory effects. These mixed findings are, in actual fact, not too different from those obtained in *Parties, Policies and Democracy*; negative mandate coefficients were nearly as prevalent as positive ones among the best fitting models identified by Klingemann et al. (1994, p.257) and the same outcome is seen here. The statistical results of the original study and this one are, however, at odds with the strong generalisations made by Klingemann et al. (1994). The tables here *and* those in the original volume must be interpreted generously to read as evidence of a mandate according to saliency theory.

It should be noted that the concept of a "negative mandate" was used by Klingemann et al. to explain negative coefficients for the government term. They found that "the incidence

Table 2.5: Saliency Approach Replication: Mandate Models

Country	Party	Culture	Defence	Education	Environment	Law	Welfare
Austria	SPO	.014 (.019)	-.596 (.211)*	6.390 (2.270)*	3.757 (1.059)*	.169 (.036)*	-.015 (.008)
	SPO gov	-.005 (.026)	.702 (.233)*	-6.872 (2.449)*	-3.915 (1.115)*	-.105 (.026)*	-.008 (.009)
	OVP	##	-.168 (.074)*	##	##	-.007 (.005)	.000 (.004)
	OVP gov	.008 (.010)	##	1.470 (.524)*	.154 (.058)*	##	##
	FPO	-.051 (.038)	.008 (.040)	-1.181 (.381)*	-.089 (.024)*	.087 (.019)*	-.032 (.005)*
	FPO gov	.036 (.044)	.347 (.101)*	-7.627 (2.750)*	-3.584 (1.010)*	-.071 (.018)*	.015 (.009)
	Adj. R-sq	0.436	0.436	0.784	0.453	0.604	0.819
Germany	SPD	.052 (.139)	.914 (.236)*	-.171 (.865)	.024 (.015)	.096 (.039)*	-.077 (.069)
	SPD gov	.009 (.079)	-.720 (.203)*	.170 (.077)*	-.009 (.075)	.024 (.027)	-.288 (.616)
	CDU	.011 (.031)	-1.846 (.993)	.107 (.065)	-.051 (.144)	-.032 (.016)	.266 (6.892)
	CDU gov	.020 (.075)	-2.824 (1.584)	.499 (.118)*	.021 (.042)	.026 (.016)	-.724 (8.767)
	Adj. R-sq	-0.127	0.62	0.797	0.492	0.289	0.005
Denmark	SD	.052 (.038)	##	.011 (.027)	.025 (.024)	-.701 (.327)	.024 (.082)
	SD gov	##	##	-.065 (.024)*	.013 (.014)	.731 (.326)*	-.602 (.142)*
	V	##	##	.060 (.018)*	-.022 (.010)*	-.016 (.003)*	.370 (.054)*
	V gov	##	##	-.087 (.054)	##	.207 (.089)*	-.398 (.137)*
	Adj. R-sq	0.05	0	0.4	0.364	0.767	0.813
Netherlands	PvdA	.362 (.087)*	##	-.080 (.069)	.087 (.031)*	-.551 (.205)*	6.791 (.886)*
	PvdA gov	-.278 (.072)*	.605 (.424)	.204 (.079)*	.775 (1.030)	##	-.227 (.251)
	CDA	.461 (.228)	.188 (.496)	##	-.731 (.846)	-.314 (.216)	-5.922 (.925)*
	CDA gov	-.312 (.134)*	-.796 (.205)*	.239 (.077)*	##	.039 (.025)	2.167 (.255)*
	VVD	##	-.721 (.711)	-.164 (.086)	-2.524 (3.206)	.344 (.115)*	##
	VVD gov	-.180 (.119)	.615 (.491)	.165 (.074)*	.570 (.775)	.049 (.035)	.822 (.421)
	Adj. R-sq	0.611	0.921	0.655	0.719	0.812	0.88
Sweden	S	-.463 (.172)*	.125 (.269)	.014 (.023)	-.088 (.025)*	-3.193 (1.105)*	.156 (.161)
	S gov	.365 (.164)*	##	.031 (.030)	.042 (.013)*	3.350 (1.140)*	.164 (.168)
	M/A	-.078 (.019)*	.283 (.159)	.093 (.108)	-.430 (.082)*	-.348 (.010)*	.502 (.525)
	M/A gov	1.834 (1.127)	-.591 (.158)*	.007 (.065)	.303 (.053)*	1.513 (.499)*	-.488 (.525)
	Adj. R-sq	0.53	0.55	0.267	0.815	0.832	0.731
UK	Lab	-.212 (.040)*	##	-.286 (.090)*	##	##	##
	Lab gov	.069 (.029)*	##	.276 (.058)*	##	.023 (.017)	-.286 (.113)*
	Con	-.135 (.061)*	-.269 (.101)*	-.079 (.054)	.256 (.228)	.055 (.029)	-.027 (.233)
	Con gov	##	-.369 (.082)*	##	##	##	##
	Lib	##	.529 (.130)*	##	.029 (.068)	.248 (.044)*	-.130 (.167)
	Lib gov	##	##	##	-.095 (.094)	##	##
	Adj. R-sq	0.652	0.7	0.645	-0.039	0.811	0.459

Standard errors in parentheses, statistically significant coefficients (<0.05) denoted with *

Table 2.6: Comparison of R^2 Values from Budge-Hofferbert Agenda and Mandate Models

Model	Culture	Defence	Educ.	Envt.	Law	Welfare	Increases
AT agenda	0.254	0.041	-0.045	-0.026	0.203	0.766	
AT mandate	0.436	0.436	0.784	0.453	0.604	0.819	6/6
DE agenda	0.014	0.426	0.057	0.536	-0.117	-0.03	
DE mandate	-0.127	0.62	0.797	0.492	0.289	0.005	4/6
DK agenda	-	-	0.133	0.369	0.457	0.433	
DK mandate	-	-	0.4	0.364	0.767	0.813	3/5
NL agenda	0.221	0.736	0.539	0.745	0.8	-0.047	
NL mandate	0.611	0.921	0.655	0.719	0.812	0.88	5/6
SE agenda	0.044	0.155	0.211	0.336	0.12	0.674	
SE mandate	0.53	0.55	0.267	0.815	0.832	0.731	6/6

of the negative mandate is about equal to that of the positive" (1994, p.264). Theoretically, this was said to occur when a party entering government acted against the policy priorities of the party leaving office. Though this is feasible, it is theoretically self-contradictory. To view a given party's negative coefficient as an act against the priorities of other parties is incoherent because it still suggests that expenditures went in the opposite direction to their own (Thome, 1999, p.573). Thome resolved this by adding a "convergence" dummy to the equation to indicate when parties' platforms moved in different directions from one another, though it is only practical for the analysis of two party systems (1999, p.574). The negative mandate concept introduces ambiguity rather than clarity to the interpretation of negative coefficients for parties in government.

This part-reproduction provides no firm basis from which to declare party programmes predictive of government outputs. Party issue emphases seem to be at best uninformative with regards to subsequent government expenditures and actively misleading at other times. The casual language sometimes employed by Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge to describe the linkage they identified is not warranted on this evidence. Whether or not this means that parties perform poorly in their attempts to implement their pledges is another matter, because the extent to which the saliency approach accurately reflects real life party competition and adequately operationalises linkage is debatable. The challenge, then, is to devise a robust test of the theory.

2.4 Revising the Approach

Based on the preceding analysis, a precisely reproduced Budge-Hofferbert approach does not yield results consistent with the generalisations originally made by these authors across

several works (Budge and Hofferbert, 1990; Hofferbert and Budge, 1992; Klingemann et al., 1994). This is perhaps not a surprise given previous criticism of the method. However, I hope readers see the value in applying the methods and exploring their limitations in detail here. Being a reproduction, no adjustments were made to the original models. And though the spending data employed in this study is more reliable and externally valid, the small number of observations available for each country-issue analysis is an inexorable problem. Thankfully, the COFOG data permits the pooling of both issue areas and countries, which was not possible in *Parties, Policies and Democracy* (1994) due to the creation of bespoke budgetary measures and category matches. Though the specific modelling procedures adopted by Budge et al. are also problematic, the theory itself may receive support if it is tested in a more refined way. Despite the normative complications introduced by the "causation" aspect discussed above, the question of whether there is any medium-to-long term connection between manifestos and budgets is still of significant scholarly interest.

Below, I replicate the approach with revised modelling procedures using a pooled, panel-style dataset, an approach cautiously suggested by Thome (1999). Though I do not claim that this analysis is definitive, the steps taken significantly ameliorate the Budge-Hofferbert method's substantial weaknesses to achieve a more valid modelling procedure. Overall, by iterating on previous criticism of the approach (King and Laver, 1993; Thome, 1999), this analysis represents a stronger test of the saliency linkage hypothesis than any previous study. In addition to the restructuring of the dataset - "stacking" and pooling observations - a number of other adjustments must be made to ensure robust modelling. I detail these before describing the findings and discussing their implications.

The unit of analysis is changed to government terms instead of individual years. Each observation thus corresponds to an election year. This goes some way to correcting the standard errors, which were understated by the autocorrelation inherent to the artificially high number of observations used in the original saliency approach studies (King and Laver, 1993; Gibbons, 2004). This reduces the number of observations for each country and policy area to however many elections there were between 1994 and 2013 minus one (see below). The total number of election-years in this dataset is 29[12]. Stacking this data so that the emphasis and expenditure figures are in one column - which enables pooled analysis - produces 174 observations overall.

Since expenditure shares are often non-stationary, long term trends must also be accounted for. The original saliency models do not control for the existing level and direction of government expenditure, which is highly problematic. Theoretically, this is tantamount to assuming that government budgets have as much freedom to vary as party manifesto content, and that the percentage emphasis a party places on a given topic represents its desired share of public spending in the equivalent policy area (King and Laver, 1993). This is obviously not a realistic assumption. Even with the best intentions, parties can only nudge

[12]Six for the Netherlands, five for Austria, Germany and Denmark and four for Sweden and the United Kingdom respectively.

budget allocations in their favoured direction, and their emphasis during the campaign will take into account status quo levels of expenditure.

As described above, King and Laver (King and Laver, 1993, p.746) attempted to resolve this problem using a so-called "partial adjusment" term in their model, which is a weighted average of party emphasis and the previous year's spending in the corresponding policy area. However, this still assumes that a party's emphasis on a given theme represents its *desired* level of expenditure, which remains an unrealistic assumption. Manifestos are not accounting books but advertising tools aimed at a number of different audiences (Ray, 2007; Harmel et al., 2018). They contain rhetorical embellishment as well as specific promises and statements about the party's record. Of course, it is true that parties often dedicate special attention to issues they perceive to be underfunded or neglected in some way. But that does not necessarily mean they wish to apportion state resources to these areas of policy precisely as they distribute attention in their campaign materials. For example, the combined health and welfare category typically accounts for around half of government spending. It is entirely unrealistic to assume that parties who dedicate less than half of their manifesto to this theme necessarily favour reductions in spending. It is worth reiterating that criticism of this assumption has been central to the development of the pledge approach (Royed, 1996).

Indeed the assumption is even contradicted by other aspects of saliency theory, since it predicts that parties will mostly avoid topics they do not own. If a conservative party dedicates only 5% of its programme to the social welfare/health category, nobody reasonably expects the party to reduce health and welfare spending to this meagre level. Nor even some weighted average of the two as assumed by the partial adjustment approach. Furthermore, the extent to which parties' percentage issue emphases reflect their desired shares of public spending could vary systematically across policy areas, party families and virtually any other relevant variable.

As such, I do not repeat the partial adjustment approach. Instead, I take the the first difference (Δ) of both the expenditure and emphasis variables. The difference is calculated based on the mean level of spending during each cabinet's term in office, from the year after the election until the next election year. By doing so, I compare each government to its predecessor and "bake in" control for the previous level of spending.

Essentially, this procedure is designed to capture a medium-term effect, one that smooths out stochastic short-term variation. Differencing the expenditure in specific years would be vulnerable to spurious findings for this reason. This approach *does* tacitly assume that the magnitude of the percentage point change in emphasis maps onto the desired percentage point change in spending. However, the values are much more alike in percentage point terms when the measures are changes rather than absolutes, as shown upon inspection of the axes in Figure 2.5 compared to Figure 2.4. Although this assumption is also arguably stretches credulity, it is much more feasible than the alternative. If the manifesto emphases of governing parties do predict directional adjustments in state spending, they ought to be

evident when modelled this way.

The key explanatory variable here, therefore, is change in government emphasis. No opposition parties are included in the analysis because - short of modelling an all-party issue agenda - it is unclear which and how many opposition parties would be worthy of inclusion and whether or not their emphasis ought to be aggregated or disaggregated and entered as separate variables. In any case, the purpose of the study of the programme-to-policy linkage is to identify a relationship between what parties say before they take power and what they do once it has been attained. The more complex dynamics of the overall party system agenda (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010) are relevant to this question, but they are not *a priori* essential to the identification of a saliency linkage.

Pooled analysis necessitates aggregating the emphases of parties governing in coalition with one another. Each governing party's emphasis is therefore weighted [13], Following the approach of Garritzmann and Seng (2016) in their study of party influence on education spending, each governing party's emphasis is weighted by their share of seats controlled by the coalition. This procedure assumes that each party's contribution to the importance of each issue for the government will be moderated by its seat share, capturing the government's preferential "centre of gravity" (Garritzmann and Seng, 2016, p.518).

The approach has limitations, however, mostly relating to the inaccessibility and unpredictability of coalition negotiations. Typically, larger parties have the upper hand in coalition negotiations (Thomson and Costello, 2016). However, if a small parliamentary group holds the balance of power it might be able to extract disproportionate policy concessions from larger partners. Parties sometimes sacrifice certain policies or policy areas in favour of others, or in exchange for cabinet positions. In other words, the centre of gravity can vary depending on the issue.

Though no single indicator is ideal, the chosen approach remains preferable to including all of the parties in the model with attendant government dummies, which cannot account for the relative power of the participating parties. A weighted average is the least methodologically complicated way of capturing the government's overall emphasis on each issue theme. All of the parties which participated in government during the period are included, with just two exceptions[14].

It is also important to take account of any institutional factors that could influence the degree to which parties can implement their manifesto priorities, as Thome (1999) suggested would be achievable in a pooled analysis. In this I challenge the approach of Gibbons (2004), whose pooled analysis for the UK data overlooked all extraneous factors. Returning again to coalition governments, parliamentary power is not the only possible

[13]Party A and Party B govern together and control a combined 100 seats, 40 and 60 respectively. Party A emphasises Issue X at a level of 10%, while Party B emphasises it at 20%. The weighted emphasis is 16%.

[14]Two minor parties who participated in government for a short time are excluded. The short-lived Austrian BZÖ, an offshoot of the FPÖ which participated in government for just one year at the end of a parliamentary cycle, is excluded. ChristenUnie, a small Dutch Christian democratic party which participated in government in the Netherlands between 2007 and 2009, is also left out of the analysis due to its very small proportion of seats compared to its major partners, the CDA and the PvdA.

imbalance. Studies often control for the ideological distance between the most extreme parties in the coalition to account for the power of veto players (Russo and Verzichelli, 2016). Here, it is possible to emulate this procedure at the level of individual issues. Hence I include a "range" variable in selected models to control for the size of the difference in party preferences. Weighted government issue emphasis should be less convergent with spending if the parties are divided on the importance of the given issue.

Studies of the programme-to-policy linkage have consistently found that government type is the most important determinant of pledge fulfilment. All else being equal, majority governments enact a greater proportion of pledges than minority governments (Thomson et al., 2017). As such, I include a "majority" dummy variable, coded 1 for governments with a parliamentary majority and 0 for minority governments. No control is added for single party governments, however. 28 of 34 governments in the dataset are coalition administrations, and single-party governments occurred in only two countries, the UK and Sweden. Furthermore, though previous studies have identified small discrepancies in pledge fulfilment between coalition and single-party administrations, Thomson et al. (2017) did not find any statistically significant difference in their large-n comparative analysis. In any case, the range variable effectively controls for this government type (i.e. a "party difference" of zero).

Another consideration is unobserved variance between countries and electoral terms. Election-period observations of issue emphasis/spending are not independent from one another because they are shares of the same pie (Thome, 1999). Hence, the standard errors are clustered by election year in all of the regression models, a procedure which makes sense due to the balanced panel structure of the dataset and the fact that a sufficiently high number of these clusters exist. This follows the approach of comparative pledge fulfilment research Thomson et al. (2017) and other researchers using panel-type datasets to capture change over time (Best, 2010).

Figure 2.4: Scatterplot: Emphasis vs. Expenditure (Absolute)

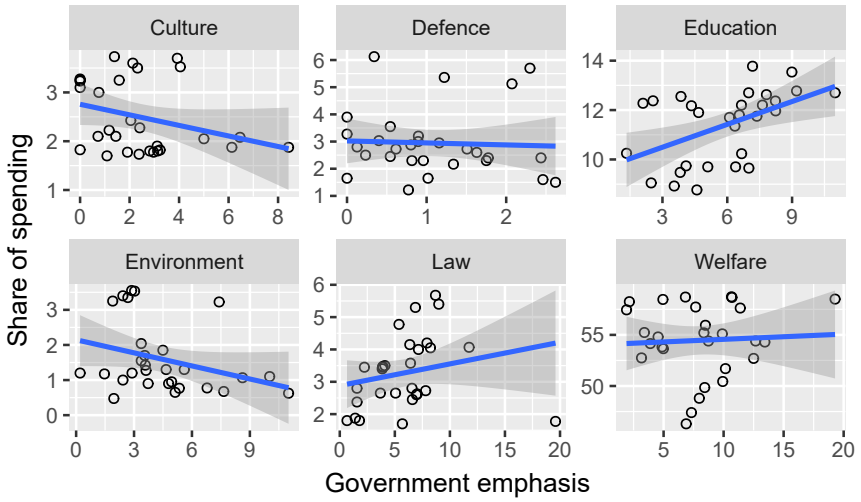
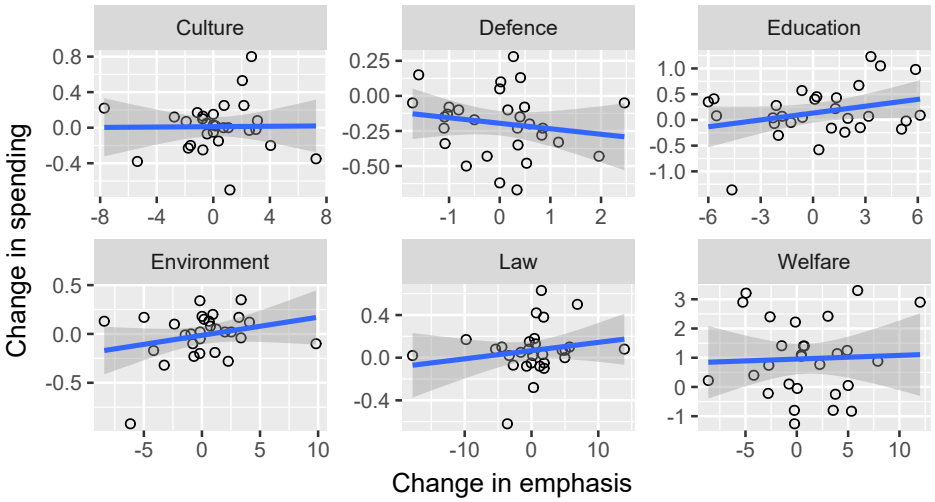


Figure 2.5: Scatterplot: Emphasis vs. Expenditure (First Difference)



Finally, I consider additional control variables. Two recent studies which test the effects of issue attention on emphasis Russo and Verzichelli (2016) and (Garritzmann and Seng, 2016) include versions of these variables in the relevant explanatory models, as do Thomson et al. (2017) when testing pledge fulfilment. There is an argument for excluding GDP growth in this analysis given the nature of the dependent variable; the spending variable comprises a share of a constant. Theroetically, the net effect of GDP growth would be a wash in a model of spending shares which accounted for 100% of the government budget. However, growth is likely to have differential effects on spending shares, with some areas receiving relatively more funding and others less in good economic times. Growth is also partly endogenous to government spending. State expenditure is known to increase short term economic growth (Lin, 1994). Hence it is important to control for the effects of growth on individual areas of expenditure, even though it is not expected to have a uniform linear effect. A variety of economic control variables are often included in models of first differences in spending, but these are typically specific to particular e.g. population age and female labour force participation in a study of education spending (Busemeyer 2009).

Ideology, on the other hand, is excluded from this analysis because the measure available for all of the observations - MARPOR's left/right rile variable - is calculated by adding issue emphases together and, as such, is partly endogenous to thematic emphasis (Russo and Verzichelli, 2016, p.277). It does not make sense to include a measure of parties' emphasis on other issues when examining the relationship between emphasis and spending in a specific issue area, especially when an issue-specific difference in emphasis is available.

Model Findings

Figures 2.4 and 2.5 show bivariate scatterplots of emphasis vs. spending in the six policy areas. Bivariate regression lines are displayed with 95% confidence intervals. Figure 2.4

shows absolute values, while Figure 2.5 shows change. The visual comparison between these sets of graphs is revealing. Several of the distributions are substantially different. In the case of the environment issue the direction of the association flips, a modest positive association replacing a clear negative one. This illustrates the importance of measuring adjustments to spending and government emphasis in place of absolute values. It is also important to note that the axes for these plots are adjusted to clearly show the association within each policy area. Examining the axes, spending in welfare is much more volatile in absolute terms than spending on defence, which seems to change very incrementally. The distributions shown look significantly different when plotted on the same axes as shown in Figures 2.6 and 2.7. These plots show the significantly greater variance on the y-axis for the differences versus absolute values.

I present five model specifications in Table 2.7. Model 1 is a simple bivariate specification which does not control for institutional variables, policy area differences. The coefficient is positive but very small. It does not achieve statistical significance. Were the effect significant, an increase in emphasis of one percentage point would have predicted a budgetary increase of less than one quarter of one tenth of a percentage point based on the coefficient. The R^2 of Model 1 is also very low, close to zero[15].

Model 2 adds the institutional variables and the growth control. The negative effect of the majority variable is of moderate size, but it does not come close to statistical significance. The range variable - which also effectively controls for the handful of single-party governments - has a tiny effect size and is also not significant. The coefficient and standard error for emphasis remain almost identical. The growth variable is statistically significant at .01 level. The R^2 also remains very low.

Model 3 adds policy area controls to Model 1, effectively applying fixed effects with law and order as the reference group. The variation between policy areas shown in Figure 2.5 is shown to be consequential. Tellingly, although the R^2 value remains relatively low, the policy area dummies add some explanatory power to the model. Two policy area coefficients are significant, and in predictable ways. The effect for defence is negative and of moderate size. This is clearly the result of the pronounced deterministic downward trend in defence spending across all cases shown in Figure 2.1. The effect for welfare is large and positive, accounting for positive trends in social spending which are to some extent outwith the control of central government. This model demonstrates that even when the differences between policy domains are held constant, emphasis has no discernible direction effect on spending. Indeed, the coefficient *reduces* in size compared to Model 1 and 2.

Model 4 reintroduces the institutional variables, essentially combining the previous two specifications. The explanatory power of the model increases slightly. Once again, the range variable is not significant and the growth is positive and moderately statistically significant.

[15]The model R^2 is much higher when using an absolute values with a lagged dependent variable, a mathematically similar approach. Indeed it it so strongly predictive that it constitutes a unit root and renders other estimates unstable. This further demonstrates the advantage of modelling differences rather than absolute values.

Counter-intuitively, the majority dummy is statistically significant but *negative*[16]. The policy area controls remain essentially unchanged compared to Model 3. The coefficient for the emphasis variable falls in magnitude again to virtually zero.

Finally, to account for secular spending trends in any category, lagged dependent and independent variables are added to this specification in Model 5. This type of approach is known as an "error-correction" model, "error" in this case referring to short-term deviations in non-stationary trends (Best, 2010). Theoretically, the lagged dependent variable controls for the long-term trend in the spending area (Thome, 1999). Meanwhile, the Δ-emphasis coefficient estimates short-term effects, while the lagged coefficient functions as a long-term estimator (Garritzmann and Seng, 2016).

Once again, although the explanatory power of the model increases, none of the key independent variables are statistically significant. No notable short- or long-term effects of emphasis on expenditure are detected. Even the lagged dependent variable does not quite reach conventional statistical significance (p=.053). The main difference between Model 5 and the others is within the policy area controls, which are all statistically significant with the exception of culture. This change results from the large absolute variance introduced by the the lagged dependent variable, which runs from a minimum of 0.3 to a maximum of 58.7. This is also clearly evident in the model constant compared to the others. The effect of growth is slightly weaker but remains positive and significant, while the negative majority effect strengthens slightly.

Two robustness checks are run, with the results shown in the appendix. The first is a jackknife test, shown in Table A.2, in which Model 5 is repeated six times with one country excluded at a time. The jackknife is a common robustness check in comparative research, frequently used in lieu of fixed effects (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010; Merz, 2017). The advantage in this case is that it allows cross-national difference to be held constant in some sense at the same time policy area fixed effects are applied and election-robust standard errors are estimated. The test demonstrates, with minor differences between the findings, that the results are not greatly affected by individual cases. The suspicion that the UK was the most influential is, however, confirmed. The R^2 is the highest of any model when the UK is excluded (.449) despite the fact that this is the only model in which *none* of the independent variables attains statistical significance. This is not a surprise given that all other countries in the analysis are to some extent consensus democracies, and perhaps speaks to the necessity of dealing with the UK separately from comparable western and central European democracies in the analysis of the programme-to-policy linkage.

In a second robustness check to ensure that the findings are not an artefact of differences in variance across policy areas, the analysis is repeated for all six policy subsets in Table

[16]Due to the lack of specific country controls in these models, this may be due to the coefficient absorbing unobserved variance between countries as the dummy is completely colinear with four of the six countries. Policy subset analysis with country fixed effects in Table A.3 shows that it has differential effects by policy area.

A.3. Standard errors are not clustered by election year, since each one corresponds to a single observation. Additionally, when the policy areas are not pooled, all observations of spending and emphasis are functionally independent. Country fixed effects are instead applied to control for national differences. Otherwise, the model is identical to Model 5 in Table 2.7, with lagged dependent and independent variables included.

The emphasis variable is found not to be significant for any subset. This includes education, where a strong bivariate association is shown in 2.5. This mirrors the findings of (Garritzmann and Seng, 2016), who found no effect of manifesto issue emphasis on education spending using more comprehensive models including domain-specific controls. Russo and Verzichelli (2016) also found no relationship in the domain of education in their study of Italy. Their null finding on law and order is also repeated here. However, they do identify a modest positive effect in the domain of defence and a robust positive effect in the domain of welfare. I do not claim to dispute their findings. It is fair to regard findings from a single country over a longer period of time more robust than the small-n comparative analysis I present here.

Only a handful of coefficients are significant for the control variables in A.3. Economic growth is found to be a moderately significant positive predictor of changes in defence defence spending. The plausible explanation for this is that, in the face of an overall negative trend, governments are willing to invest in defence spending in the short term if the economic circumstances are favourable. Otherwise, the majority coefficient is strongly positively significant for spending on culture, while it is moderately significant and negative in the welfare/health category.

We can obviously only make limited inferences from these results given the low number of observations in each model. This analysis does suggest, however, that it might be easier to disentangle any effects - especially those of institutional variables - if policy areas are examined separately from one another. By the time every conceivable explanatory factor is accounted for, though, one has moved away from the saliency theory and towards the general study of the political economy of a given policy area. From a theoretical perspective, there is a danger in controlling for *too many* factors and diluting the effects of government emphasis as a prior. However, despite some findings pointing to a relationship in specific contexts like as welfare and defence spending in Italy (Russo and Verzichelli, 2016) or in comparative partisan theory research on social welfare spending (Bräuninger, 2005), researchers have failed to identify consistent effects across a range of policy areas, despite prodding the saliency methodology from a variety of angles (King and Laver, 1993; Thome, 1999; Garritzmann and Seng, 2016). There is no "general pattern" as Klingemann et al. (1994) initially identified using highly questionable methods.

Table 2.7: Regression Models: Government Spending vs. Party Emphasis

	Dependent variable:				
	Δ-spending (percentage point)				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Δ-Emphasis	.021 (.02)	.014 (.02)	.012 (.02)	.004 (.02)	.000 (.01)
Growth	-	.093** (.03)	-	.083** (.03)	.066* (.03)
Range	-	.013 (.01)	-	-.010 (.01)	-.005 (.01)
Majority	-	-.139 (.08)	-	-.159* (.07)	-.192* (.07)
$\text{Spending}^{\text{t-1}}$	-	-	-	-	-.102 (.05)
$\text{Emphasis}^{\text{t-1}}$	-	-	-	-	-.012 (.01)
Culture †	-	-	-.052 (.05)	-.067 (.06)	-.126 (.07)
Defence	-	-	-.212** (.06)	-.24** (.07)	-.240** (.07)
Education	-	-	.063 (.07)	.070 (.07)	.884* (.40)
Environment	-	-	-.075 (.06)	-.084 (.07)	-.240* (.09)
Welfare	-	-	.910** (.27)	.921** (.27)	6.08* (2.68)
Constant	.144** (.04)	.046** (.09)	.040 (.04)	.045 (.08)	.457* (.20)
Observations	162	162	162	162	162
R^2	.012	.039	.287	.315	.379
d.f.	26	26	26	26	26

Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$
†Reference group = law and order

2.5 Conclusions

Though Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge squeezed some decisive findings from their agenda and mandate models, the contention that the saliency approach demonstrates "a remarkably high congruence between the themes stressed in party election programmes and the subsequent policies enacted by the parties that get into government" (1994, p. 268) finds little support in these reproductions and replications. Due to the methodological problems inherent to the reproduced models, it is challenging to sort false positives and spurious relationships from instances in which a valid linkage is identified. Even apparently straightforward findings, like the case of defence in the Netherlands, can prove anomalous upon further investigation.

Methodological considerations aside - and they are numerous (Thome, 1999) - the most parsimonious explanation for the null finding presented in this replication is that the Budge-Hofferbert theory of party mandates is an incorrect one. Taken together, pooled and separate analysis of six policy domains across six countries over nearly two decades does not show any evidence that thematic emphasis in election campaigns systematically predicts government spending. The pooling of cases and the variety of modelling approaches taken allow this judgement to be made with some confidence. Like King and Laver (1993), Thome (1999) and to some extent Gibbons (2004) before me, I find that the claims made in Budge-Hofferbert studies fall apart when simple methodological oversights are accounted for.

On this evidence it is at least fair to say that saliency theory cannot generally be viewed

as a "success" which explains "around 50 per cent of policy variance" (Klingemann et al., 1994, p.240). When proper care is taken to control for autocorrelation, extraneous factors and trends in the dependent variable, the theory does not scratch the surface of explaining budget allocations under any of the conditions tested. This is not a novel inference; King and Laver said as much two and a half decades ago. But the cross-national evidence presented here for a range of policy areas underlines noted shortcomings of the approach at a time when scholarly interest in the programme-to-policy linkage is booming.

Previous study of the relationship between attention and spending in specific policy areas and countries has been limited, and produced mixed at-best findings. Though it is plausible that more relationships between emphasis and spending can be identified in particular circumstances, the saliency linkage hypothesised by Budge and coauthors demonstrably cannot be considered a general or universal tendency. It may be the case, for instance, that environmental spending has risen in certain countries, and that a predictive effect of party manifesto attention can be identified if a large enough sample with a suite of control variables is used. This is essentially what (Bräuninger, 2005) demonstrated in the realms of social welfare and government services. I do not exclude the possibility of finding similar patterns elsewhere.

But at this level of abstraction, Warwick's "causal question" becomes even more difficult to answer; we are no longer talking about the mandate of a government as such, but large-scale shifts in the public agenda. Breunig (2011), for instance, found that budget punctuations are magnified when the attention of governing parties is more concentrated on the relevant issue. This suggests that there may be some kind of threshold effect, or a critical mass at which budgets shift (partly) in response to party priorities. So though issue attention *can* be a factor in budget shifts, this is evident only in certain policy domains under particular circumstances. Here again I come to a similar conclusion to King and Laver (1993); the underlying relationships may exist in some form, but they are likely contextual, subtle, and not easily amenable to the methods used.

In terms of the democratic mandate, the hypothesised general and direct linkage between manifesto issue attention and spending has not revealed itself despite significant scrutiny in this chapter, which I consider to be the most comprehensive treatment of the Budge-Hofferbert approach to date. Party programmes do not seem to have much, if any, influence on government spending. Whether this counts against the programme-to-policy linkage or not depends on whether emphases and expenditures are regarded as valid indicators of programmes and policy. Early in this chapter I pointed out that the Budge-Hofferbert approach may not even operationalise this research question, differentiating between the concept it *aims* to test and the one it does in practice. I contend, therefore, that the analysis presented here casts doubt on the programme-to-spending linkage, but has little to say about the programme-to-policy linkage - as many have presumed it did for some decades now.

The failure to identify a relationship between issue attention and spending likely does

reflect deficiencies in the theory. However, given the various advantages of the method over the pledge approach, it would not be prudent to disregard the saliency approach altogether. Budgets are notoriously complex outputs. Despite decades of research on the partisan theory of policy change, there is little consensus on whether and how government ideology or party family impacts spending. And even if there are effects, they are not immediate or obvious enough (Epp et al., 2014) to satisfy a reasonable definition of the party mandate. As such, budgets might not be the most appropriate place to look for an effect.

Klingemann et al. (1994, p.270) claimed to provide evidence that "links in the democratic chain are far stronger than heretofore believed". I argue that the null findings of this replication of that study arise, in part, because their approach is a questionable way of conceptualising the programme-to-policy linkage. Thinking about the "democratic chain", it is difficult to imagine two variables more causally remote from one another than manifesto issue attention and government budgets. This results in significant modelling difficulties and, as a knock on effect, uncertainty in any inferences made. Here we can see that the theoretical, operational and methodological questions are intractably entwined. Though the Budge-Hofferbert approach does not appear to identify evidence a strong programme-to-policy linkage as the authors claim, there is no reason to rule out the possibility that manifesto issue emphasis has an effect on governments in some other way. Can a relationship be identified between emphasis and an agenda-based indicator other than budget allocations? The following chapter aims to test this, looking at a more proximate stage of the democratic chain: the government's stated issue agenda.

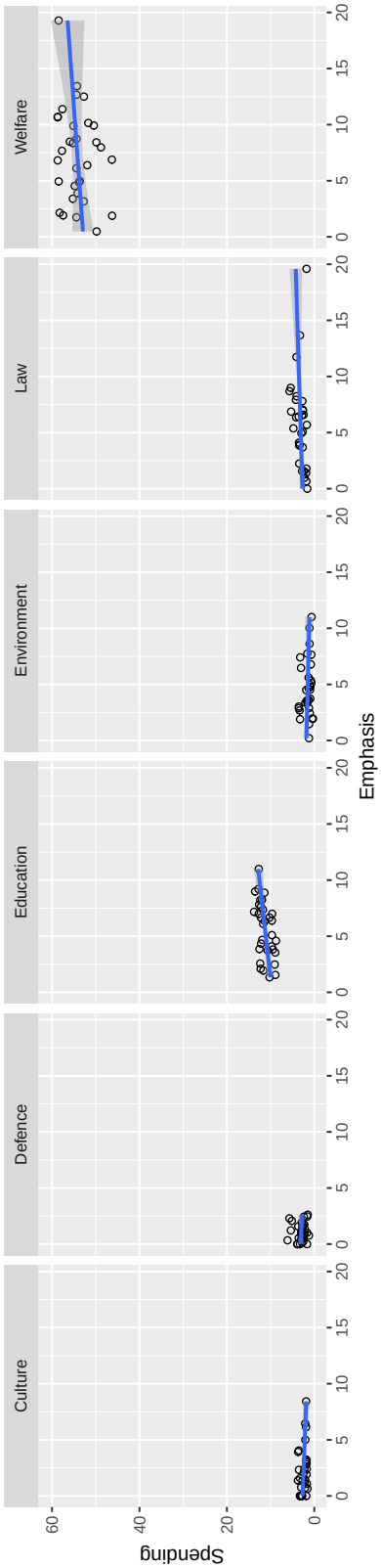


Figure 2.6: Scatterplot: Emphasis vs. Spending Scatterplots (Same Axes)

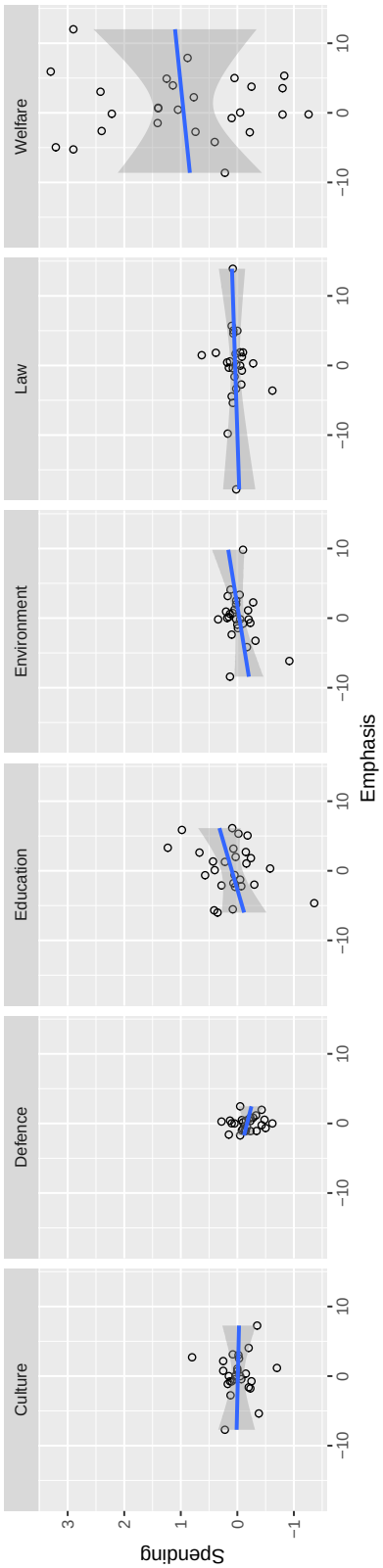


Figure 2.7: Scatterplot: Emphasis vs. Spending (Different Axes)

Chapter 3

The Programme-to-Agenda Linkage: Manifestos and Executive Speeches in the United Kingdom

Through various part-reproductions and replications, the previous chapter failed to find any evidence that the saliency linkage as operationalised by Klingemann et al. (1994) is a feature of modern party government. The chapter repeated and iterated on past criticisms of the theory and the methodological approach taken by those authors, providing the first comprehensive synthesis of conceptual and empirical criticism. The original model specifications were shown to be inadequate, and a series of revised, pooled, comparative models were estimated. The findings were shown to be robust to a series of common checks. The chapter's primary conclusion, contrary to that of Budge and Hofferbert (1990); Hofferbert and Budge (1992) and Klingemann et al. (1994) is that there is no general correspondence between the issue emphasis in party manifestos and subsequent government spending. Like King and Laver (1993) and Thome (1999), then, I found nothing to suggest a relationship between manifesto emphases and budget outputs. Perhaps more importantly, I argued that the approach was not a wholly adequate test of the programme-to-policy linkage. Instead, I drew a contrast between this and what can be thought of as the programme-to-spending linkage, arguing that this is the research question the saliency approach operationalises in practice.

The connection between emphasis and budgets is not only difficult to measure, but difficult to conceptualise, at least in the context of a party mandate. However, the idea that parties will dedicate more resources to prioritised themes it is not necessarily wrong. In the case of budgets, The problems outlined do not preclude the possibility that a linkage between issue emphasis and government action can be identified using other means. The issue could simply be that researchers are looking in the wrong place. As such, rather than throwing the baby out with the bathwater, I suggest that a direct predictive connection between campaign issues and government outputs might still be identifiable at an earlier

stage of the representative process or, as Klingemann et al. (1994) would put it, further down the chain of representation.

In this chapter I bridge the gap from research on the linkage to the well-established policy agendas literature. The type of linkage suited to a saliency-type approach, operationalising issue emphases as an element of the party mandate, is re-framed as a "programme-to-agenda linkage", since nonspecific issue attention does not clearly correspond to any particular policy output. I then test the relationship between party manifesto emphases and throne speeches in the United Kingdom, combining the Manifesto Project estimates with data from the Comparative Agendas Project in nine areas of government policy. This chapter effectively tests whether or not parties' campaign issue agendas translate to the agenda of government in the first instance. Rather than testing for an association between emphasis and a dissimilar, opaque output, this chapter tests for its association with a comparable and proximate output.

Controlling for opposition party emphasis, the issue emphasis of the governing party is found to be a statistically significant predictor of throne speech content. The effect disappears by the end of the government's third year in power, mirroring the recent finding that pledge fulfilment drops off after the first half of a five-year term in office (Duval and Pétry, 2018). This result suggests that the issue emphasis of winning parties is a factor in shaping government policy priorities. This is important not only from a democratic perspective but as a demonstration that there is value in testing for a saliency-type linkage between the campaign and government agendas which, at least in the case of the United Kingdom, is complementary to the programme-to-policy linkage identified in pledge studies.

3.1 Government Policy Outputs?

To reiterate, I advance multiple related critiques of the Budge-Hofferbert approach. In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that the specific modelling procedures employed by those authors are not methodologically appropriate to investigate whether the distribution of issue attention in manifesto documents influences government spending.

More fundamentally, though, I contend that the relationship between the issue attention in manifesto documents and government spending in associated policy domains does not operationalise the programme-to-policy linkage. The main reason for this objection to the Budge-Hofferbert approach is that budget allocations are a poor operational indicator of "policy" (Royed, 1996). It is important to note that I do not object to the use of government budgets as a dependent variable in any kind of analysis, nor take any issue with scholars identifying budgets as a component of the government issue agenda, broadly construed. What I dispute is that budgets in isolation are a appropriate way to operationalise the causal connection between campaign issue emphasis and whatever government actions might constitute fulfilment of an election mandate. Here I develop this argument in greater detail.

Budgets fluctuate for many different reasons, sometimes unpredictable ones. Demand for public services is inelastic; as such, government spending often changes in response to demands which themselves have complex independent causes (John et al., 2013, p.172). It is difficult to isolate the changes intentionally affected by governments from exogenous factors, and failing to take these into account can lead to an over- or under-estimation of the association between issue attention and government spending. The preceding chapter demonstrated that when previous levels of spending and long-term trends are accounted for, there is no apparent association between issue emphasis and spending. This suggests that marginal budget changes are explained by something other than attention to the relevant issue areas in party manifestos.

These difficulties arise largely because budgets are characterised by incremental - but non-stationary - trends, with notable changes typically occurring as punctuations (Jones and Baumgartner, 2005). Budgets are known to be "sticky and hard to change, where decisions are often made on the basis of spending in the previous time period" (John et al., 2013, p.170). John and Margetts demonstrated that, though large punctuations in British budget allocations do sometimes occur, the vast majority of changes are modest (2003, p.421). Breunig demonstrated similar patterns of "punctuated equilibrium" in Denmark, Germany, the UK and the US (2006). These patterns, and the dependence of budgets on factors often outside of direct government control, means that budget outputs are often "completely out of reach of parties and external pressure" (Walgrave et al., 2006, p.1,030).

Manifesto emphasis, in contrast, can vary significantly in a short period of time. A party may dedicate 10 per cent of its manifesto to a function at one election but entirely ignore it at the next contest. Though party factions undoubtedly compete with one another to get their priorities into the manifesto (Däubler, 2012), the content of a manifesto document is not subject to anywhere near the number of extraneous pressures exerted on government budgets. Indeed, the manifesto is often the responsibility of just a handful of individuals who can allocate the words on the page according to their preferences. As a result, issue attention in manifestos can be expected to shift dramatically on a regular basis and respond much more quickly and severely to exogenous political shocks.

To put it another way, manifesto content is subject to relatively little friction, while budgets are subject to a great deal. To illustrate this in the context of the current study, Table 3.1 shows descriptives of the British Labour and Conservative parties' attention to education (percentage of quasi-sentences from Manifesto Project data) in the five elections between 1997 and 2015 compared to the budget allocations (percentage of total budget) for every year between 1997-2014. Party attention to the issue varied substantially compared to the budget during this period, while the range of the budget allocation was only 3 percentage points compared to 7.5 and 5.1 for the parties. The same data is shown as a step chart in Figure 3.1. As noted in the previous chapter, the Budge-Hofferbert model treats the party emphases as their *preferred* level of spending (1999, p.746). This latent assumption is not sustainable, given the freedom with which parties allocate their manifesto

emphases in comparison to budgets. As discussed at length in Chapter 2, these variables behave in fundamentally different ways.

Table 3.1: Education Emphasis vs. Spending (%), 1997-2015

	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
Budget allocation	11.5	14.5	13	0.9
Conservative manifesto	2.7	10.2	5.0	3.1
Labour manifesto	3.9	8.9	6.3	2.1

This small sample of MARPOR data also suggests a more general conceptual difficulty for the saliency approach: emphasis does not necessarily reflect intent (Royed, 1996; Mortensen et al., 2011), even in policy areas more clearly related to spending. The 1997 Labour manifesto mentioned education proportionally less than the party's four others, with just 3.9 per cent of quasi-sentences dedicated to the issue. However, "education, education, education" was a cornerstone of the party's 1997 campaign as they promised spending increases. The budget allocation rose every year between 1998 and 2002 by an average 0.75 percentage points and peaked *before* Labour's attention did at 8.9 per cent in 2005. Increased emphasis could, in this manner, also imply a commitment to sustain spending after it has been increased. A peak in spending followed by a slight dip, alongside increased manifesto emphasis (as shown in the 2002-2010 period on Figure 3.1), would be treated by the Budge-Hofferbert model as a negative observation even with the two year lag. But this is plausibly a common occurrence. Dolezal et al. (2016) found that incumbents tend to spend a small share of their manifesto documents defending their record in government. If a party has already dedicated more resources to a prioritised policy area, it may see no reason to continue emphasising the theme outwith a statement on its record and a pledge to continue. The theoretical relationship between manifesto emphasis and changes in spending is not necessarily a linear one.

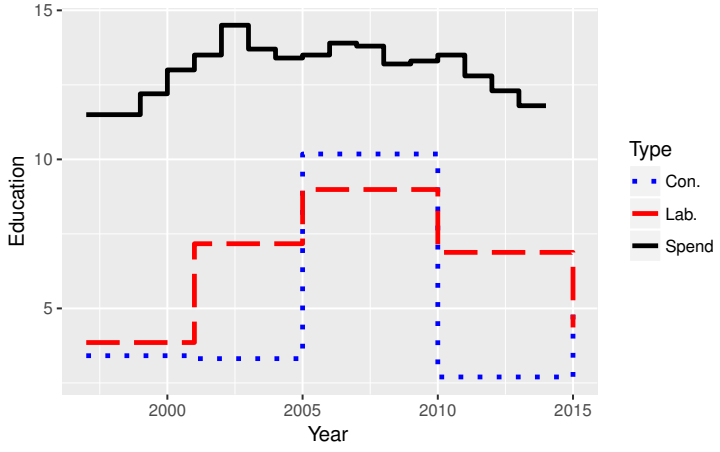


Figure 3.1: Line Graph: Percentage Education Emphasis vs. Spending, 1997-2015

Budgets tend to change slowly, and a party's stated priorities must jump through several structural, institutional and bureaucratic hoops before they are reflected in expenditures. As John et al. point out, budgets are several steps down the policy "implementation chain" (John et al., 2013, p.196) and subject to limitations which do not affect declarative or legislative priorities in the same way. Obvious punctuations aside, it is difficult to distinguish noise in the budget from the immediate priorities of the government. This is particularly the case when budgets are measured as a percentage of total spending. But the behaviour of parties once in office, in relation to their pre-election statements, is what tests of the programme-to-policy linkage investigate. In other words, even if a relationship between emphasis and budgets does exist, it will be very difficult to isolate from other factors. Hence we cannot be sure that the findings aren't subject to Type II error i.e. false negatives.

Testing the link between several different agendas, including party manifestos, government agreements, legislation, media topic attention and oral questions, (Walgrave et al., 2006, p.1027) found that "incrementalism seems to make the annual budget an agenda of its own, with hardly any relation to other agendas". A saliency approach to the connection between manifestos and government actions, complementary to direct qualitative investigations of the programme-to-policy linkage, may be more instructive if it is used to operationalise a government output lower down the "implementation chain" than budgets. It makes sense to begin at the bottom of the chain and work upwards, rather than vice versa, operationalising government policy using a more theoretically and methodologically suitable dependent variable. Preferably one which can account for all areas of government policy, not only those most closely related to expenditures, and which decouples the decision to discuss an issue from specific policy intentions like increases or decreases in spending. In other words, as a companion to the pledge approach, I argue that a saliency approach to linkage might be informative if it operationalises the connection between the issues discussed during the campaign and the issues addressed by government.

What might be considered the first link in the programme-to-policy chain? In consensus democracies it is typically the coalition agreement, a product of inter-party negotiations to form the government. However, this is well-trodden territory in literature on the programme-to-policy linkage. Typically, a substantial share of manifesto pledges by the relevant parties enter the coalition agreement (Mansergh and Thomson, 2007; Praprotnik and Ennser-Jedenastik, 2012). In turn, inclusion in the agreement is among the strongest predictors of eventual fulfilment (Thomson et al., 2017) because the presence of pledges in the coalition agreement effectively constrains cabinet decisions (Moury, 2011b). There is a great deal of evidence concerning the importance of the coalition agreement as a stepping stone from programme to policy.

Less attention has been paid to another one of these stepping stones, the "speech from the throne". The throne speech, also known as the "executive speech" and the "Queen's Speech" in specific countries, is one given by governments at the beginning of each par-

liamentary session - and usually each year thereafter - to outline their priorities for the coming session. These throne speeches are an important annual event in many democracies, and in systems where coalition administration is rare the throne speech following the election is typically the first official, public declaration of the government's intentions. Throne speeches have received some attention in the agendas literature (Breeman et al., 2009; Jennings and John, 2009; John and Jennings, 2010; Bevan et al., 2011; Jennings et al., 2011a; Mortensen et al., 2011; Bevan and Jennings, 2014; John et al., 2014) but have been largely neglected in the pledge literature[1]. If it could be shown that manifesto issue attention predicts the content of throne speeches, it would strengthen the case that there is utility in a methodological approach informed by Klingemann et al. (1994) and suggest that the concept of a mandate can extend to issues as well as specific policy proposals.

This chapter examines the relationship between party manifesto emphasis and throne speeches in the United Kingdom between 1945 and 2009[2]. Aside from rare instances of coalition government, Queen's Speeches are the "first step" (Bara, 2005, p.587) that British governments take to outline the executive agenda upon taking office. They are delivered by the monarch at the annual opening of Parliament, but written by a handful of people within the government.

The British case is selected for practical as well as substantive reasons. Only single-party governments were in power from 1945 until 2010. This sidesteps the need to aggregate party emphasis observations for coalition governments (which also complicates the relationship to Queen's Speech attention), a task that would have to be performed for other states where CAP throne speech data is available like Denmark and the Netherlands. There were also no large scale realignments in the party system other than the SDP split from Labour and their eventual merger with the Liberals in the 1980s, which had next to no impact on the parliamentary arithmetic.

Furthermore, British executives are typically in a strong position to implement their policy agendas. The Labour and Conservatives are either the party of government or the official opposition throughout the chosen time period, and in almost all cases have a parliamentary majority while in government. The UK is used here as a "most-likely" case study, one for which it is highly plausible that a linkage will be identified. As Froio, Bevan and Jennings note, Westminster is the "perfect test case for whether parties deliver on electoral mandates" (2016, p.5). If a saliency linkage is not identified in this case, it is unlikely to be found in other systems which are less amenable to the party mandate.

[1] Some pledge scholars have used throne speeches as part of the operational definition of pledge fulfilment e.g. Pétry and Duval (2015).

[2] Hereafter, speeches from the throne will be referred to as "throne speeches" in generic form, and "Queen's Speeches" in a UK context, where Elizabeth II has reigned since 1952. The first six years of speeches included in the analysis were delivered by the current monarch's father, George VI, and are referred to as "King's Speeches" where mentioned specifically.

3.2 Speeches from the Throne, Manifestos and the Policy Agenda

As John et al. (2013, p.1) put it, the issue agenda "is the range of salient issues that the government and other key decision-makers concentrate on at any one point in time". Policy agendas are the result of strategic choices by these actors concerning which contemporaneous problems deserve the attention of the state and the political system. Studies of this concept have historically sought to "follow the history and development of policy over long periods" (Baumgartner et al., 2006, p.959) and explain why attention to these topics waxes and wanes. Research on policy agendas is linked to the wider agenda-setting literature, itself rooted in communications studies. Manifestos, budgets and throne speeches can all be considered components of the public agenda, which can also encompass legislation, executive actions, parliamentary speeches, government agreements and any other policy-oriented form of political communication or decision-making (Walgrave et al., 2006). In recent years a large comparative literature on these topics has emerged, loosely coordinated by the Comparative Agendas Project.

Studies of the programme-to-policy linkage purport to operationalise concrete policy actions, rather than policy salience. This distinction may seem academic, but it is highly consequential. The broad concept of the policy agenda encompasses both, straddling political discourse, tangible state actions and everything in-between. Budgets and executive orders represent such tangible outputs, while manifestos, throne speeches and the like are declarative and have no legal force. This strengthens the argument for operationalising the issue agenda (broadly construed) rather than one particular policy output as the dependent variable in any study of issue mandates. The proportion of a manifesto dedicated to a policy theme cannot by definition signal intent to take specific actions. It may, however, signal government priorities.

Hence, the saliency approach to linkage can be thought of as a "programme-to-agenda" linkage, rather than a programme-to-policy linkage as such. This distinction usefully clarifies the conceptual difference between the pledge and saliency approaches to linkage. It also highlights the potential for complementary contributions to our knowledge about mandates. Whether or not pledge fulfilment ticks all the boxes of a true party mandate in theory, there is little doubt that, as a general rule, parties tend to carry out their campaign promises (Thomson et al., 2017). Whether parties carry the issues they campaigned on through to the agenda of government is a different question, but also a relevant one. In some ways, the research question becomes a case of whether the idea of a mandate extends to issues as well as specific policies. This is not to say the link between throne speeches and enacted policy is expected to be weak. On the contrary, there is strong empirical evidence that the Queen's Speech agenda is carried through into the legislative agenda in the UK context (Bevan et al., 2011). To operationalise the programme-to-agenda linkage, I examine the stage in the chain of representation preceding this one and test the (mandate) relationship

between the campaign agenda and the Queen's Speech.

The agenda-setting role of the Queen's Speech is well-established (John et al., 2013, p.19). It has been one of the most important regular events in the UK's political calendar for over a century, and its function is to address important policy concerns and summarise the government's intended legislative agenda for the coming year (Bevan et al., 2011). Like any other high-profile agenda item, the Queen's Speech is used strategically by governments. It is a boon to incumbents, allowing them to shape the public agenda at regular intervals in the eyes of a wide audience including lawmakers, party members, the media and voters (Jennings et al., 2011a, p.75).

There are several good reasons to anticipate a relationship between manifesto emphases and Queen's Speech content. The most obvious is party responsibility, the central idea of any mandate thesis. If governments receive mandates to enact their campaign agendas through the ballot box, the throne speech is one of the best tools available to demonstrate that they are behaving responsibly (Downs, 1957). Like manifestos, throne speeches are not "merely symbolic" (Mortensen et al., 2011, 979-80) but outline a programme of serious policy intentions. They are a "costly signal" (Jennings et al., 2011a, p.397), risking the government's credibility in the event of non-fulfilment. This ought to incentivise responsible public behaviour.

Previous studies have also suggested that manifesto content makes its way into Queen's Speeches. Though throne speeches have not featured prominently in the pledge literature, two existing studies traced British manifesto pledges through Queen's Speeches. In one of the first recognised pledge studies, Rallings observed that most campaign promises appeared in a Queen's Speech at some point during a government's term in office[3] in (Budge et al., 1987, p.9). He also showed that a high percentage of legislative measures mentioned in Queen's Speeches were eventually formally adopted as policy in both the UK and Canada. Examining pledge fulfilment in the UK, Bara observed that large number of "specific" pledges made between 1987 and 2001 made an appearance in the Queen's Speech, but again did not provide descriptive statistics (Bara, 2005, p.594-6). Though far from definitive, these studies suggest that British parties view the Queen's Speech as a venue for the enactment of electoral mandates. They also provide a useful parallel to this chapter's analysis. If parties carry both their pledges and issue emphases into the Queen's Speech, there are likely to be other venues where these linkages converge.

From a methodological perspective, confidence in the findings of this approach versus the Budge-Hofferbert method is enhanced due to the fact that speeches from the throne closely resemble the format of manifesto documents, much moreso than budget allocations, legislation or any other concrete policy output. As with party manifestos, governments are free to highlight whichever issues they desire in the throne speech (Mortensen et al., 2011, p.976). They are a statement of intent concerning policy "from the horse's mouth", rather than an output subject to many competing institutional pressures. Though Queen's

[3]Though he did not provide descriptive statistics.

Speeches do demonstrate patterns of incrementalism and punctuation (John and Jennings, 2010, p.573), they are subject to nowhere near as much friction as budgets and legislation. As Bevan and Jennings (2014) empirically demonstrated, executive speeches are much more responsive to public opinion than these stickier policy outputs as a result of this difference. Additionally, their content can be measured in the same way as manifestos, by categorising units of text. This makes throne speeches ideally suited to a conception of linkage which holds that the distribution of attention to different topics in manifesto documents conveys meaningful intent with regard to governance. Though the content of throne speeches is likely to evolve in response to exogenous events (John and Jennings, 2010, p.578), it is possible to observe the extent to which the manifesto's influence on their content changes over the government's tenure.

As noted, numerous previous agenda studies have investigated the dynamics of throne speeches, and there has been a great deal of research concerning how party ideology impacts government policy in the broader "politics matters" literature. This is summarised in Mortensen et al. (2011), a paper which examined the impact of partisanship on throne speeches in the UK, the Netherlands and Denmark. Using CAP data, those authors found the content of throne speeches to be stable through changes in the party composition of government. This is in line with the old claim by Rose (1984) that, while large numbers of manifesto pledges are carried out, they relate to just a small share of the total legislation passed. The notion that the UK governance is characterised primarily by stability and a powerful bureaucracy is a popular one.

Are British parties able to do little more than tinker at the margins? Though this could be the case, there is good reason to believe that manifestos play a consequential role in shaping the government agenda. Jennings et al. (2011a, p.94) investigated the dynamics of Queen's Speech content at Westminster specifically, observing medium-term stability in the issue content of the speech over time with longer term shifts reflecting "growth in both the function and capabilities of the modern British state". In a later work, these authors characterise the agenda process as one of "issue intrusion" (John et al., 2014, p.34) where shifts in government and legislative attention occur "irrespective of the partisan cycle". However, they maintain that partisan differences are evident, particularly in the topics favoured by the parties. Labour and Liberal governments were found to prioritise legislation over executive actions, focusing more on "civil and minority issues, health, law, crime and family issues, welfare and government operations" while emphasising foreign affairs less than the Conservatives (Jennings et al., 2011a, p.84). This follows a pattern one would anticipate from an issue ownership perspective.

The question I hope to answer in the analysis below is whether or not these differences are foreshadowed by party platforms. Given recent evidence from Austria that parties emphasise owned issues in their manifestos (Dolezal et al., 2014), it makes sense to anticipate that these patterns link back to the campaign as parties translate their emphasised issues into items on the government agenda. Even if party issue attention is more a product of

an evolving party system agenda and longstanding partisan differences than spontaneous political choices or policy entrepreneurship, the normative idea of the mandate is that voters get what they asked for. This is why the specific connection between programmes and Queen's Speeches is so important. It provides the link in the chain relating to public consent.

The existence of a statistically significant relationship between emphasis and Queen's Speech content for governing parties would add some credence to a basic assumption of saliency theory, the idea that elections are won and lost depending on the public saliency of parties' owned issues. Although it would ostensibly contrast with both Jennings et al. (2011a) and Mortensen et al. (2011) overall finding of stability in the Queen's Speech through changes in party control, it may be the case governments add partisan flavour to a stable or slowly evolving British government agenda. As Green-Pedersen states, "the party political agenda is both shaped by and shapes the issue emphasis of political parties" (2007). If issue prioritisation is a dynamic process, meaningful party differences and stability in the overall government agenda are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

In this sense, this chapter aims to contribute to the agendas literature associated with several of the cited authors. Though the effects of elections on government agendas are thought to be limited (Bevan and Jennings, 2014), no published study has explicitly approached the question from a pledge research perspective. Mandates have, however, been explicitly discussed by the agenda researchers who have investigated Queen's Speeches. Bevan et al. (2011, p.414) concluded that "the annual statement of executive priorities is both a statistically significant and substantial predictor of legislative outputs", but noted that the identified linkage was weaker than a conventional view of British politics would suggest.

This line of research was further developed by some of the same authors in more recent studies concerning the relationship between party manifestos and the legislative agenda in the UK, France and Italy respectively (Froio et al., 2016; Brouard et al., 2018; Carammia et al., 2018). In some ways, these studies constitute exactly what I call for in terms of a saliency-type approach to the programme-to-policy linkage, since they examine the impact of manifesto issue emphasis on the policy agenda at an earlier and more relevant stage than budgetary outputs. This is particularly true of the first portion of the analysis in the Froio et al. (2016) study of the British legislative agenda between 1983 and 2008, which demonstrates that governing party manifesto attention is weakly but significantly predictive of the share of legislative outputs dedicated to each corresponding issue dimension (Froio et al., 2016, p.7). However, when the authors control for the effects of other issue agendas - the Queen's Speech, media attention and public opinion - the influence of manifestos weakens significantly or disappears (Froio et al., 2016, p.8).

It is of course important to understand how party platforms influence the overall legislative agenda in the context of a wider ecosystem of competing policy agendas. However, when searching for evidence for the transmission of campaign issues into government agendas *as a function of a party mandate*, there is a danger in controlling for too many other

variables. This is especially true of variables like party ideology (Carammia et al., 2018) and other influential issue agendas like public opinion, since are baked in to the manifesto and the election outcome ahead of time. To put it another way, what matters for the purpose of mandate fulfilment is whether the party carries into government the issues endorsed by the voters, not their reasons for adopting those issues.

Furthermore, the legislative agenda in those studies is operationalised as the count of laws made in particular issue areas (Jennings et al., 2011a; Froio et al., 2016) which, unlike Queen's Speeches, does not mirror the composition of manifesto documents. Though the issue distribution of legislation produced by Parliament is certainly reflective of government intent to some extent - it could perhaps be thought of as implying "greater effort" as Klingemann et al. (1994) would have it - a count of bills dilutes one of the advantages of the saliency approach to linkage, which is its ability in theory to account for a wide range of government actions. The advantage of the Queen's Speech is that it reflects the intent of the government without being restricted to one particular type of policy output. In principle, a party talking a lot about a certain issue doesn't necessarily imply that it intends to produce a lot of individual pieces of legislation pertaining to that issue. It stands to reason, however, that the airtime given to an issue in the manifesto will be reflected in the Queen's Speech if the government is serious about implementing its campaign agenda. Hence, I suggest there is value in deploying the Queen's Speech as a dependent variable - rather than an independent or intervening one - and examining the correspondence between manifestos and shifts that particular agenda in isolation from other issue agendas as a way to operationalise the programme-to-agenda linkage in the first instance. Though Froio et al. (2016); Brouard et al. (2018); Carammia et al. (2018) are robust and highly valuable contributions of the kind I explicitly advocate for in this chapter, their focus on the issue distribution of legislative outputs skips an important step in the fulfilment of a mandate which scrutiny of Queen's Speeches at different points in a government's term can help to illuminate.

In this sense, the primary research question of this chapter is straightforward. Beyond saliency theory and agenda setting, it links to broader debates on whether parties matter (see Mortensen et al. 2011), and whether the ideological convergence of mainstream parties is taking/has taken place (e.g. Hobolt 2008; Greene 2014). How manifesto documents relate to the executive agenda is an important question which has so far received limited scholarly attention, and the attention it has received has taken place in the context of research on the wider policy agenda. If it could be shown that differences in manifesto emphasis do predict the content of the government's declared agenda, it would provide some vindication for the saliency approach, suggesting that mandates can apply to the agenda as well as specific pledges. The question can be stated as follows:

"To what extent are parties' pre-election issue priorities reflected in governments' stated post-election issue agendas?"

3.3 Hypotheses

I present two expectations surrounding the relationship between manifesto issue attention and Queen's Speech content. Firstly, the idea of a party mandate relies on the enactment of the elected party or parties' programme at the expense of the opposition. Several pledge studies have investigated the fulfilment of opposition parties' pledges and found that government parties do indeed see more of their pledges enacted (see Costello and Thomson 2008, p.252 for a partial overview), a finding of normative importance. The available evidence supports the view that the dynamic is less pronounced in consensus systems than majoritarian ones, suggesting that institutions are an intervening factor. Artés found that opposition parties in Spain obtained a substantially higher level of pledge fulfilment (52% vs 35%) when the government was a parliamentary minority (2013, p.11). In a UK context, Royed found that the governing Conservatives fulfilled 81% and 89% of their pledges following the 1979 and 1983 elections, in contrast to the Labour opposition's 33% and 15% (1996). Given these findings, I expect similar patterns to be evident in the context of the Westminster system. This would, more than anything else, reveal that issue attention also reflects the implementation of a mandate.

Hypothesis 3.1. *The governing party's pre-election priorities are more strongly associated with the content of the Queen's Speech than those of opposition parties.*

Political decision-making happens in fits and starts in the context of institutional cycles, punctuated by various public "decision points" (Bevan et al., 2011). As such, manifesto implementation is not likely to be constant over the course of a government's tenure. Incoming governments are expected to implement much of their agenda shortly after entering office while their legislative capital is high and they have ample opportunity to publicly demonstrate their responsibility. Additionally, the issue agenda is likely to drift away from the themes that were salient during the campaign as time passes. Manifestos are a product of their age, and events intervene to alter political priorities over the course of a government's term (Bevan et al., 2011). Some issues evolve and new ones are identified, meaning that the priorities in the manifesto become less relevant to the the job of governance. As a result, throne speeches can "drift considerably from electoral mandates at different points in the electoral cycle" (Froio et al., 2016, p.6). Indeed, major punctuations in the Queen's Speech agenda frequently take place outside of election years and in response to exogenous shocks (John and Jennings, 2010).

In relation to the programme-to-policy linkage, pledge researchers have started to turn their attention to how mandate fulfilment unfolds over time. Previous studies of pledge fulfilment have controlled for the effects of time, assuming that it has a positive, linear effect on the overall rate of fulfilment (Thomson et al., 2017). However, in a study of pledge fulfilment in Canada (and Quebec), Duval and Pétry (2018) find that the fulfilment of government manifesto pledges slows dramatically around two years after the relevant

election. Roughly half of the fulfilled pledges are enacted in the first year, but the rate of redemption slows to a trickle just twelve months later. As such, assuming that this dynamic is mirrored by the policy agenda, the first throne speech following a party's election is expected to more strongly reflect its manifesto than those in subsequent years.

Hypothesis 3.2. *The association between parties' pre-election policy priorities and annual throne speeches is strongest immediately following an election and weakens over their time in government.*

3.4 Data

Like the Budge-Hofferbert works and the previous chapter, this analysis employs the MARPOR manifesto project estimates for the party manifestos. Data on Queen's Speeches comes from the Comparative Agendas Project (CAP) and comprises quasi-sentences categorised into 21 "major" issue codes, subdivided into a further 255 "minor" topics. Only the major topic codes are used here. Like the Manifesto Project scheme, CAP procedures stipulate that each quasi-sentence is assigned to a single topic code i.e. multiple categories cannot be assigned to the same quasi-sentence. The British Queen's Speech CAP dataset was put together by Jennings et al. (2011b) using a UK adapted version of the CAP's United States coding scheme (originally developed by Baumgartner and Jones). Though some British party manifestos have been coded according to the CAP scheme, these only stretch back to the 1980s (Froio et al., 2016) and the data is not yet publicly available. Hence the MARPOR data is used for the manifestos.

Just as the MARPOR coding scheme was matched with COFOG categories in the previous chapter, it needs to be matched with the CAP categories here. Categories were chosen only where the substantive crossover between the codebooks was clear. The matching itself was a simple case of face-validity judgements. The macroeconomy, civil rights, agriculture, education, the environment, law and order, welfare, defence and science/technology/communications are the policy areas used in the analysis.

Table A.4 in the appendix displays the matched codes. These account for 50.12% and 51.85% of Labour and Conservative manifesto content respectively, but just 39.01% of Queen's Speech content. This disparity is likely explained by the convention that the Queen's Speech be divided into two parts, one focusing on broadly executive responsibilities like foreign affairs and defence, and the other on the domestic legislative agenda (Jennings et al., 2011a, p.403). Manifesto documents are more oriented towards this legislative agenda, which the chosen policy areas correspond to more closely.

Though the exclusion of around half of manifesto content and nearly two thirds of Queen's Speech content limits the scope of possible empirical analyses and complicates the interpretation of findings here in comparison to those works, it has been done for two reasons. Firstly, this work is an extension of the saliency approach, which models linear

relationships between manifesto content and outputs in specific policy areas. Although the approach was refined in the previous chapter, the research design is essentially retained. Rather than developing a full explanatory model of government policy outputs, the goal of the saliency approach is to observe how well manifesto content feeds into the representative system. Examining individual policy areas, especially important ones, allows for a more fine-grained approach.

Additionally, when working across different codebooks it is difficult to reliably match every coding category. The policy areas here were chosen not only for substantive reasons, but due to good cross-validity in the generally dissimilar MARPOR and CAP schemes. As shown in Table A.4 in the appendix, six of the nine policy areas match a single CAP code with a single MARPOR issue dimension (inclusive of positive and negative mentions for relevant categories, see below). The "double counting" of MARPOR codes has been avoided. Multiple MARPOR codes are grouped together for the macroeconomic and civil rights CAP codes. Meanwhile, because health and welfare are grouped under the "Social Welfare" MARPOR code, the two separate CAP categories have been combined here, the only category for which CAP codes are combined rather than the reverse.

The years 1945-2009 are included in the analysis, encompassing 17 elections and 65 Queen's Speeches. The first Queen's Speech of a government's term always follows an election, in most cases by only one or two months. There are a handful of exceptions. More than one Queen's Speech took place in two of the 65 years in the analysis. In 1950, there was one Queen's Speech after the February election and another in October, but none the previous year. Hence, 1949 is treated as the first year of a new government, using the 1950 manifesto emphases and February Queen's Speech data. In 1974 there were two elections, each preceding a Speech. There was no Queen's Speech in 1975, so the second 1974 election and speech are used in this row, which like 1949 is treated as the first year of a new government.

To create the new dataset, the percentage of total quasi-sentences[4] dedicated to each major CAP code in each speech was calculated. As Queen's Speeches are held annually at the beginning of each parliamentary session, the observations in the dataset are yearly and stacked by issue code. The pitfalls of comparing annual output data to manifesto data, which changes only in election years, were outlined in Chapter 2. To avoid autocorrelation, each "term year" is analysed separately and these observations are never pooled together. The overall number of observations is 576. The number of observations for each term year is the number of elections which lasted the relevant amount of time multiplied by nine, the number of issues. Hence there are 144 observations for years one and two, 126 for years three and four and just 32 for year five, since only three governments in the dataset served an entire five year term.

Finally, recall that the MARPOR dataset contains both positive and negative mentions

[4]The total refers to every quasi-sentence in each speech, including the issue areas which were not selected for the analysis i.e. I measure the share of overall attention dedicated to each issue within each speech.

of some topics. In a break with the previous chapter, which left out negative codes altogether, on this occasion I have chosen to add them to the positive codes in the relevant categories. This is for a good substantive reason. Where budgeting is concerned, negative emphasis could potentially imply reductions in expenditure, but their inconsistent usage meant that the least ambiguous option was to simply ignore them. But there is no reason to believe that negative mentions of a topic should imply a reduction in throne speech content. Indeed, one of the advantages of using throne speeches over budgets is that executives are free to discuss both the "positive" and "negative" aspects of existing government policy. Hence, even though the categories are used sparsely, it therefore makes sense to consider the total share of mentions of a topic. This also resolves an inconsistency between the Budge-Hofferbert approach - which tends to conflate emphasis *ipso facto* with positive emphasis - and their own dataset which does not reflect the same assumptions.

3.5 Findings

Topic Attention

One stipulation of saliency theory and mandate theory more generally is that voters can choose between distinct alternatives. Do the Labour and Conservative parties offer voters these alternatives? This is Figure 3.2 shows a boxplot of Queen's Speech attention to each included CAP issue code alongside the parties' manifesto emphases. Examining these averages, it appears that the Labour and Conservative parties did not differ greatly in their attention to each topic on average. There is evidence, however, that there are some consistent differences of priority on "owned" issues. Labour concentrate substantially more on health and welfare than the Conservatives, while the reverse is the case for issues of law and order. Independent samples t-tests confirm that these differences are statistically significant at .1 level (p=.028 and .099 respectively, n=17). Other issue areas approaching significance are agriculture (p=.097) and technology (p=.105).

In the aggregate, the main impression is of similarity in issue attention. However, as suggested by the large amount of variance suggested in Figure 3.2, examining the average smooths out substantial short-term differences. Figure 3.4 shows the percentage-point differences between the parties' manifesto emphases, with positive values meaning the Labour party emphasised the issue more. Meanwhile, Figure 3.3 shows each party's emphasis plotted against Queen's Speech attention. Inspecting these figures, it is clear that, from election-to-election, there are large differences between Labour and Conservative attention to particular topics. Within some topics, like welfare, law and order and technology, it is evident that one party has paid consistently more attention than the other. However, in most other topics, the parties have regularly traded places as the agenda-setter. The areas of the macroeconomy, civil rights and education especially demonstrate this pattern. In some areas there seems to be long-term consensus. In the agriculture category, this simply

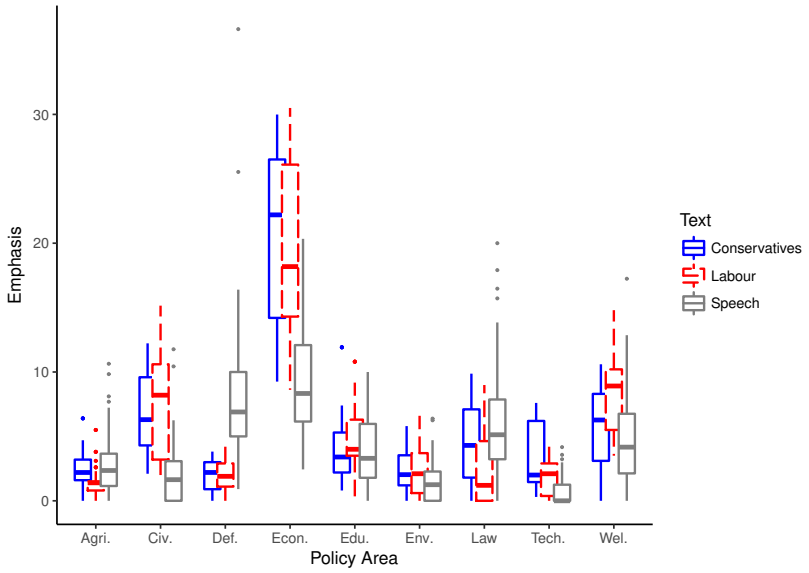


Figure 3.2: Boxplot: Queen's Speech and Party Emphases by Issue Area

reflects its decline from the public agenda in general as shown in Figure 3.3. Meanwhile, both parties appear to apply a small but consistent amount of attention to environmental matters.

These graphics also show systematic differences in manifesto issue attention and Queen's Speech issue attention, notwithstanding the fact that around 25% more of the total manifesto content is included here. Both parties dedicated approximately one fifth of their total manifesto content to the macroeconomy, while this issue took up less than 10% of government attention in Queen's Speeches. A similar pattern is true for the civil rights category, while the reverse is the case for law and order and defence. The contrast between the macroeconomy and defence is particularly stark. Both occupy a similar proportion of the government agenda, but both parties use around ten times as much manifesto content focusing on macroeconomic issues as they do on defence, albeit with substantial variance. This suggests that parties prioritise issues differently while campaigning than they do when burdened with the responsibilities of office.[5]

Table 3.2 shows descriptive statistics of differences in issue attention between Queen's Speeches and governing party manifestos. These differences were calculated by subtracting the percentage of government party manifesto emphasis on a topic from the percentage of attention devoted to that topic in the Queen's Speech for each year in the dataset. The closer the mean is to zero, the more similar the manifestos and Queen's Speeches are. The macroeconomy is mentioned an average of 11.1 percentage points less in Queen's Speeches than the manifestos, while defence is mentioned an average of 6.2 percentage points more. Both have a similarly high standard deviation, and are clearly the most volatile issue areas

[5]The mismatch in terms of macroeconomics could be partially attributable to differences in the coding schemes, given that 13 separate MARPOR categories correspond to one in the CAP codebook.

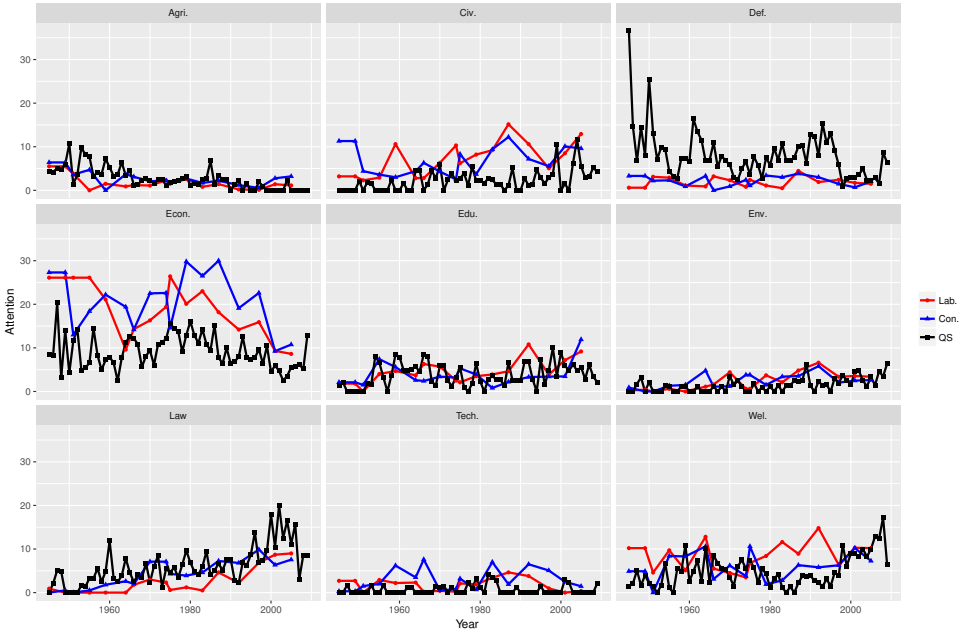


Figure 3.3: Line Graph: Party Emphasis vs. Queen's Speech

included. This is likely simply a function of their greater importance overall.

Defence seems to be an area of consensus between the parties, and as such less relevant to electoral politics. As Green and Hobolt state, "raising the salience of an issue will only increase the utility to a party on that issue if they are optimally located in proximity to public opinion" (2008, p.466). It stands to reason that defence is an issue the parties feel they have little to gain by emphasising. However, the macroeconomy is highly prevalent in both parties' manifestos throughout the postwar decades despite being a "positional" issue, one on which there is little substantive consensus. This contradicts Budge and Hofferbert's assumption that parties will shy away from discussing issues of substantive policy difference. The structure of Queen's Speeches, however, may also be a factor.

Again, given that agenda setting is dynamic, it could be the case that the winning party sets the agenda and that opposition parties follow its lead in subsequent years. This would be more compatible with the assumptions of saliency theory. The basic normative stipulation behind McDonald and Budge's "median mandate" theory (McDonald et al., 2004) is that election winners ought to be those most in tune with aggregate public preferences. If parties act as issue entrepreneurs, we would still expect to find that they implement their manifesto issue priorities in the Queen's Speech despite modest differences in attention and a lack of persistent issue (self-) ownership over the whole period examined.

The dynamics of the British Queen's Speech agenda have previously been investigated in detail (Jennings and John, 2009; John and Jennings, 2010; Jennings et al., 2011a; Bevan et al., 2011; Mortensen et al., 2011; Froio et al., 2016) and it is not the goal of this paper to do so. However, it is at least necessary to examine trends in the selected policy areas.

Table 3.2: Descriptives: Percentage-Point Difference Between Queen's Speech and Manifesto Issue Attention in Selected Areas

Issue	n	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.
Econ.	65	-23.6	4.2	-11.1	7.0
Civ.	65	-12.2	5.4	-3.9	3.7
Agr.	65	-2.2	7.5	0.7	2.4
Edu.	65	-7.4	6.6	-0.3	3.0
Env.	65	-5.8	3.0	-0.7	1.7
Law	65	-5.9	11.3	2.0	3.6
Def.	65	-1.5	36.0	6.2	6.3
Tech.	65	-7.0	3.5	-1.7	2.6
Wel.	65	-10.5	7.0	-1.8	3.6

Figure 3.5 shows line graphs of the percentage attention to each policy area between 1946 and 2009. Locally weighted "Loess" regression curves have been estimated to show overall patterns through the noisy annual changes.

Most of the policy areas display non-stationary trends in Queen's Speech attention. Some policy areas demonstrate roughly deterministic increases or decreases in attention. A gradual decline in attention is shown for agriculture, while a sharp and continuous rise is visible for law and order. The environment emerged as an issue with a modest punctuation in the 1989 Queen's Speech, held just two weeks after Prime Minister Thatcher had issued a grave warning about the dangers of climate change in an address at the UN. It very gradually crept up the agenda after that point. Civil rights is another area which rose over the course of the entire period, except for a slight dip in the 1980s.

Other policy areas demonstrate non-deterministic trends, with no visible pattern emerging from the time series. Technology barely appears on the agenda, save for a spike in interest in the late 1970s to early 1980s. After an early increase, attention to education has been quite steady over time. The position of defence on the agenda clearly varies depending on international events, with early punctuations coinciding with the founding of NATO and the beginning of the Korean War in 1949/50 and the Cuban Missile Crisis and the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961/62. Defence rose on the agenda again in the early-to-mid 1990s, likely in response to the end of the Cold War and the surrounding uncertainties such as the violent breakup of Yugoslavia.

The economy trend is especially noisy, but the issue is an ever-present in Queen's Speeches, receiving peak attention between roughly 1975 and 1985 but rarely dipping below a 5% overall share of attention. Finally, the share of Queen's Speech content dedicated to the combined health and welfare codes increased consistently from the mid 1990s. Peaks in attention to this topic roughly correspond with the tenure of Labour governments. Based on the findings of John and Jennings (2010), it would seem that this topic's reemergence under the New Labour government is mostly attributable to healthcare rather than welfare

Figure 3.4: Line Graph: Percentage-Point Labour and Conservative Manifesto Emphasis Difference in Selected Issue Areas

itself. Evidently, the chosen policy areas demonstrate a variety of patterns in terms of their share of the Queen's Speech agenda over time. Meanwhile, though party topic attention appears to be similar in the aggregate, this masks substantial differences at cross-sections for those topics with no consistent owner.

Manifesto Emphasis and the Queen's Speech Agenda

Before introducing the inferential models, I present a visual illustration of the difference between party manifesto emphasis and Queen's Speech content. Figure 3.6 shows a series of density plots of the percentage point difference between government and opposition manifesto emphasis and Queen's Speech attention for each of the selected policy areas. All of the years are included here. Density plots are essentially histograms smoothed out for the purpose of comparison. Observations were considered missing if *either* the Queen's Speech or manifesto emphasis was zero in order to avoid false positives in "empirically redundant" topics (John and Jennings, 2010, p.572). This resulted in the omission of 287 of 1,170 rows from the analysis. The more leptokurtic a distribution is, the closer the values are for manifesto and Queen's Speech emphasis. In other words, if government emphasis is more closely matched with Queen's Speech emphasis, the peak will be higher and closer to zero.

Figure 3.6 demonstrates, descriptively, that Queen's Speeches are indeed more similar to the government campaign agenda than the opposition in the areas of agriculture, civil rights, the environment, health and welfare and law and order. In these policy areas,

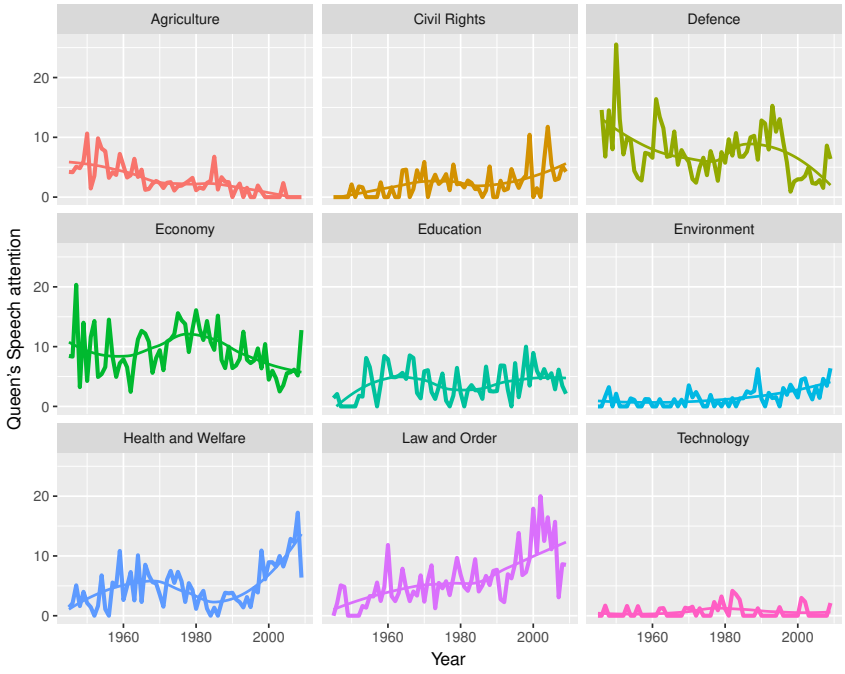


Figure 3.5: Line Graph: Queen's Speech Trends by Policy Area, 1946-2009

the government distribution has a median closer to zero, is more leptokurtic and in most cases has shorter tails. The area of technology shows the opposite, but it is the issue with by far the most zero values for manifesto and Queen's Speech share (91 out of 130 are counted as missing here, hence the distribution is not particularly meaningful). The party distributions are near-identical for defence and education, while for the macroeconomy, opposition manifestos seem to better reflect Queen's Speech content. The reason for this could be that election winners tend to emphasise the economy more than election losers, but that this does not result in increased emphasis in the speech. On the whole, it should be noted, there is substantial overlap in the distributions, suggesting that differences in party agendas are marginal. However, the graph does provide some initial descriptive evidence in favour of H3.1.

Figures 3.7 and 3.8 provide further descriptive support for the expectations of this chapter. Like Figure 3.6, the percentage point difference between Queen's Speech and manifesto attention was calculated for each observation. In this case, negative values were converted to absolutes. Summary statistics were calculated by term year for these differences, with policy areas remaining aggregated. Higher values indicate larger differences, in either direction, between Queen's Speech attention and party issue emphasis across all included policy areas.

Figure 3.7 plots the mean absolute difference (with confidence intervals) between government and opposition manifesto emphasis and Queen's Speech content by term year. The plot demonstrates that the content of Queen's Speeches is slightly closer to government than

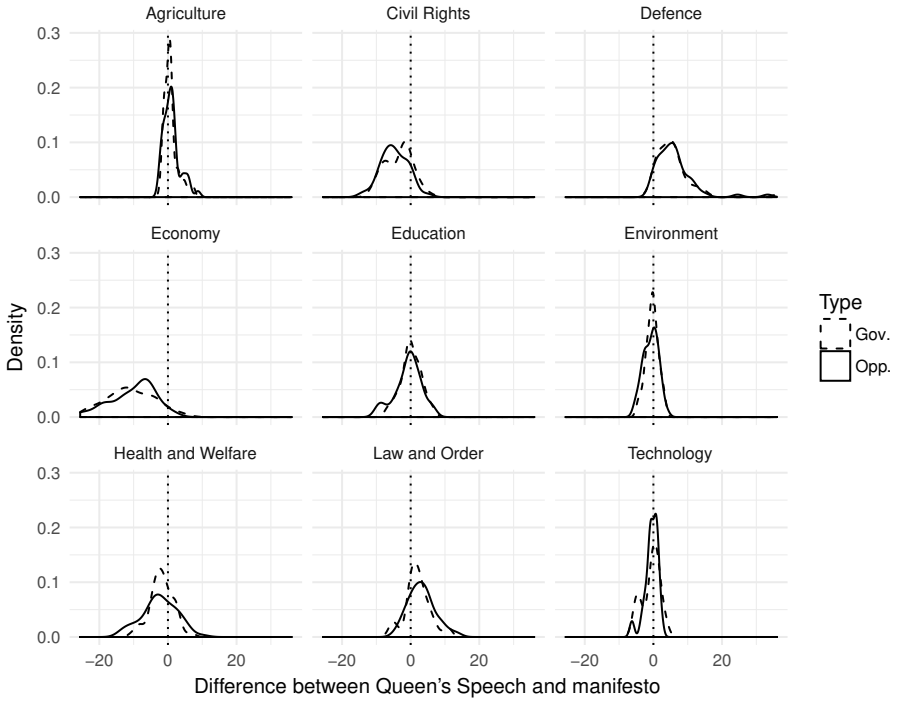


Figure 3.6: Density Plot: Distribution of Differences Between Manifestos and Queen's Speeches

opposition priorities on average in the first four years of a term, with much larger error for the fifth year due to the smaller number of observations. Somewhat contrary to expectations, the association appears to be the strongest in the third year of the government's term. Interestingly, the opposition party's figures also demonstrate slightly more similarity to the Queen's Speech in the third year than the second. This suggests commonalities in the campaign agenda of the parties, which is effectively lagged by two years for these observations.

A similar procedure was followed to create Figure 3.8, which excludes opposition parties and instead compares new governments with those entering a second, third or fourth term in office. The fifth term year was omitted because no non-incumbent governments served a full term. Figure 3.8 shows that new governments tend to be better at translating their manifesto content into Queen's Speeches than returning incumbents, but only *after* the first year. When government changes hands, the absolute difference in emphasis gets smaller in the second and third years. This suggests that it takes governments a couple of years in office to steer the agenda towards their partisan priorities, to the extent that this is possible.

To test if these aggregated, descriptive associations translate into explanatory ones, I now present the findings of a number of regression analyses. A series of models have been estimated. Following Bevan et al. (2011) and Jennings et al. (2011a), all the policy areas are pooled to create a panelled time-series. They note that this approach "allows for the

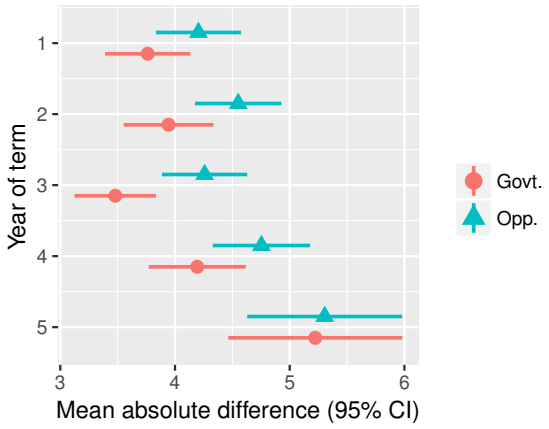


Figure 3.7: Plot: Manifesto Emphasis vs. Queen's Speech (Mean)

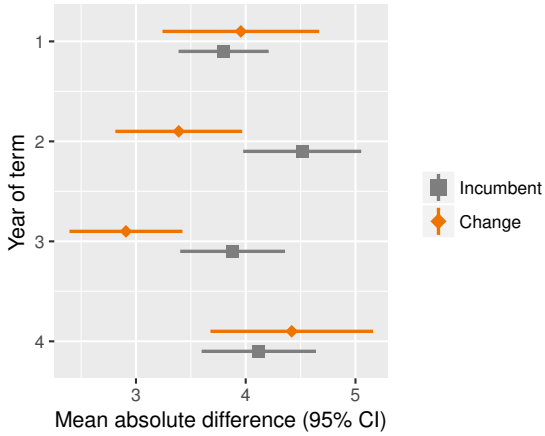


Figure 3.8: Plot: Manifesto Emphasis vs. Queen's Speech (Mean)

estimation of how well governments keep their commitments in general" (Jennings et al., 2011a, p.402). Although the issue categories used in this chapter are necessarily selectively chosen, the aim of the analysis remains the same. Two main model specifications are employed: a minimal specification using logged absolute values and a more advanced error correction approach which models change and controls for various confounding factors. The substantive findings of the two modelling approaches are, however, very similar. Because the Queen's Speech observations are annual and manifesto observations are not, all models are run separately for each "term year" of government. This avoids the problem of autocorrelated errors evident in the original Budge-Hofferbert model (King and Laver, 1993), discussed at length in the previous chapter.

The minimal model is a straightforward OLS specification. The dependent variable is the total percentage of Queen's Speech quasi-sentences dedicated to the CAP issue codes in a given term year between 1 and 5 ($SPEECH_t$). The independent variables are the governing and opposition parties' manifesto emphases relating to each code at the most recent election (GOV_e and OPP_e). A lagged dependent variable is entered to account for the previous year's level of Queen's Speech attention ($SPEECH_{t-1}$). Though this is not strictly necessary, given that Queen's Speech content is much less "sticky" than budgets, it effectively controls for the agenda status quo and helps the emphasis variable capture directional shifts. Lagged independent variables are *not* included in this specification, because, in a model which uses absolute values for the dependent variable, the emphasis applied to a topic as much as nine years ago is not expected to be of substantive significance to the government. All variables have been logged (to base 10) to deal with the strong positive skew in the distributions of manifesto and Queen's speech attention and the large differences between policy areas. The model is specified as follows.

$$log10(SPEECH_t+1) = a+b(log10(GOV_e+1))+b(log10(OPP_e+1))+b(log10(SPEECH_{t-1}+1))$$

Table 3.3 presents the model findings. The strongest predictor of Queen's Speech content in all models is the lagged dependent variable, decisively demonstrating that the governing party's manifesto emphases are carried through into Queen's Speeches in the first, second and third years of a parliamentary term. The coefficient is positive and strongly significant in all of these years. In the fourth year, though the standard error does not change much, the effect size plummets and loses all significance. The same is true of the fifth year, for which it should be reiterated there are far fewer observations. Although the effect size is not especially meaningful by itself due to the logged dependent and independent variables, its change between year three and year four is pronounced. Interestingly, of the first three years, the coefficient is the largest in the third year rather than the first or second. Table 3.3 provides support for H3.1 by suggesting that, to the extent that they differ from the governing party's emphases, the opposition party's priorities are not carried through into Queen's Speeches. However, though the analysis generally supports H3.2, it is not without caveats. The effect of the manifesto on the Queen's Speech does not gradually ebb away. Rather, it appears to strengthen slightly in the early years of a government's term before falling off a cliff-edge in the third year.

To isolate the effects of short- and long-term changes in manifesto emphasis on Queen's Speeches and control for various potentially confounding factors - including policy area differences crudely accounted for in Table 3.3 - I present a more refined model specification using the error correction approach described and deployed in Chapter 2. Hence, the dependent variable is the first difference in Queen's Speech attention i.e. annual percentage point change for the given category ($\Delta - SPEECH$). The advantage of using change in this case is that differences in the baseline values within each policy area are accounted for, and the effect of short- and long-term emphasis changes can be observed easily. In accordance with the conventional error correction approach, a lagged (absolute) dependent variable ($SPEECH_{t-1}$) is included in the model (Best, 2010). This variable is particularly relevant in the current analysis as previous adjustments to Queen's Speech attention are "baked in" for each subsequent year a party remains in power. The main independent variables are change in government and opposition emphasis. Again, in accordance with the error correction modelling approach, lagged versions of these variables are included to estimate the long-term effect of issue emphasis. Run repeatedly over the term years, this series of models essentially tests which year of the government's term sees the strongest shift towards the government's manifesto agenda relative to the previous year's Queen's Speech.

Three further controls are included to isolate the main effects as much as possible. The previous year's economic growth is entered into the model to account for any differences arising from growth (GDP_{t-1}). This is especially relevant for the macroeconomy, which

Table 3.3: OLS Regression Models: Predicting Queen's Speech Content, Minimal Specification

	Dependent variable				
	Queen's Speech Attention %				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Gov. Emph.	.278** (.087)	.170* (.080)	.317** (.104)	−.015 (.113)	−.002 (.217)
Opp. Emph.	−.010 (.083)	−.096 (.074)	−.103 (.089)	.065 (.096)	.108 (.201)
Speech $^{t-1}$	.612*** (.064)	.744*** (.056)	.520*** (.073)	.625*** (.081)	.669*** (.122)
Constant	.072 (.051)	.082 (.044)	.138* (.055)	.196** (.060)	.137 (.122)
Observations	144	144	126	126	36
R^2	0.556	0.649	0.492	0.412	0.530
Adjusted R^2	0.546	0.642	0.479	0.397	0.486

Note: all variables logged to base 10 * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

likely tends to attract more attention at the upper and lower ranges of growth. To control for general differences in party ideology and issue ownership I include a dummy which equals 1 for the years Labour held power (LAB). Given the differences between returning incumbents and new government shown in Figure 3.8, a dummy for incumbency is also added (INC). This equals 1 if the governing party is on a second, third or fourth term in office.

Standard errors are not clustered on this occasion due to an insufficient number of panels. However, policy area fixed effects ($POLICY_i$) are inserted to account for additional differences in variance between each area and absorb the impact of any unobserved effects idiosyncratic to each issue. Finally, the number of observations is slightly reduced in this specification due to the necessity of calculating change for the party manifestos. Hence, the observations for election years 1945 and 1949 (1950) are dropped, and the analysis includes all elections from 1951 onwards. Due to the small number of observations and the large number of variables in the model, it is not run for the fifth term year. The model can be specified as follows.

$$\Delta SPEECH_t = a + b(\Delta GOV_e) + b(GOV_{t-1}) + b(\Delta OPP_e) + b(OPP_{t-1}) + b(SPEECH_{t-1}) + b(GDP_{t-1}) + b(LAB) + b(INC) + b(POLICY_i) + ...(POLICY_j^n)$$

The findings are reported in Table 3.4. The strongly significant negative coefficient for the previous years Queen's Speech in all models indicates that the policy agenda reverts to a longer-term equilibrium in spite of short term shifts (Bevan and Jennings, 2014). With regard to the key independent variable, they echo those in Table 3.3. The Δ-Government Emphasis variable is statistically significant in years one and three. The effect is once again strongest in the third year. H3.1 therefore receives further support in this analysis. However, the picture for H3.2 is muddied further, since the coefficient is not significant at all in the second year. What this suggests is that an adjustment in the government agenda is made in the immediate aftermath of an election, followed by an additional shift two years later.

The substantive implications of this finding are unclear. It could be the case that governments emphasise continuity a year after entering office before shifting the agenda closer to their stated priorities in the subsequent speech. Additional study is be required to ascertain the reason for this. For instance, it could be the case that the second year's Queen's Speech agenda is oriented more to defence of the party's first year record. The third year's speech might be the most aligned with the party's manifesto simply because it tends to be the furthest away from an election, and the party can pursue its priorities without a strong retrospective or anticipatory incentive. However, it is outwith the scope of this chapter to test whether or not these explanations are the case, and until researchers broach these topics the campaign agenda's lack of explanatory power in the second Queen's

Speech compared to the third will remain a curiosity.

It is, however, clear from both Table 3.3 and 3.4 that the campaign agenda loses its effects on the government agenda in the latter years of a government's term. This is entirely in line with expectations, and accords well with the findings of Duval and Pétry (2018) concerning the drop-off in pledge fulfilment after two years.

Several factors could contribute to this dynamic. In the first case, the party's agenda may simply have become "baked in" after three Queen's Speeches. The change in emphasis is no longer significant because the Speech has already adjusted to an equilibrium level favoured by that party. It may also be due to drift in the overall party system agenda as exogenous factors intervene and attention is drawn to new priorities (Joly et al., 2015). Additionally, most of the governments in the dataset lasted for four years before fighting another general election. It is reasonable to assume that, a year or less before the next election, the government uses the Queen's Speech agenda in anticipatory fashion (Mansbridge, 2003). Hence, it is likely that both "push" and "pull" factors, in addition to inertia, explain the manifesto's loss of relevance after year three.

Table 3.4: Error Correction Models: Manifesto Emphasis and Queen's Speech Content

	Dependent variable:			
	Δ-Queen's Speech Attention			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Δ-Gov. Emph.	.174* (.069)	.012 (.100)	.304*** (.079)	.150 (.099)
Gov. Emph. $^{t-1}$	.195* (.091)	.001 (.134)	.203 (.106)	.044 (.125)
Δ-Opp. Emph.	−.013 (.067)	.077 (.099)	−.059 (.077)	.067 (.090)
Opp. Emph. $^{t-1}$	−.036 (.093)	.098 (.136)	.028 (.107)	.152 (.124)
Speech $^{t-1}$	−.692*** (.065)	−.360** (.118)	−.708*** (.079)	−.496*** (.108)
Growth $^{t-1}$	.003 (.103)	.015 (.173)	.169 (.126)	.008 (.168)
Incumbent $^{t-1}$	−.147 (.467)	.681 (.644)	−.934 (.546)	−.281 (.591)
Labour	.367 (.392)	.725 (.582)	.352 (.476)	.754 (.550)
Constant	1.260 (.827)	−.340 (1.296)	2.002* (.844)	.426 (1.114)
Observations	135	135	117	117
R^2	0.565	0.166	0.550	0.258
Adjusted R^2	0.506	0.053	0.478	0.139

Note: Issue fixed effects omitted * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

To ensure these findings are robust, a jackknife test has been performed for the error correction model in term year three where the effect is the most pronounced. This checks that the findings are not attributable to a single outlying policy area (Merz, 2017). As such, nine versions of the model are run. The government emphasis variable remains strongly statistically significant in all of them except the model without the economy observations. This suggests that the model is primarily capturing the effects of changes in the agenda importance of this single policy area. Given attention to the economy has a much larger standard deviation than any other category, this is perhaps not a surprise. That said,

the coefficient for the government emphasis change variable in this model is very close to conventional statistical significance, at p=.056. Given the similarity of the effect size to the other models and the fact that the standard error is only slightly larger, it seems that the economy is not the only policy area driving the overall effect. Rather, in this model, it is the one which puts the effect "over the top" into conventional statistical significance. Given these considerations, it is likely that H3.1 would survive the jackknife test if a slightly higher number of observations were available.

Interestingly, performing the same jackknife test for the first term year (not shown), a very different pattern is evident. In this series of tests, the government emphasis change variable is statistically significant for every model except the one excluding the health and welfare category. In this case, the coefficient is not even close to conventional statistical significance (p=.243), which suggests that the health and welfare category is largely responsible for the finding. This adds an interesting wrinkle to the analysis. Between the two jackknife tests, it suggests some kind of variation in *which* mandate issues the governing parties choose to address at different times during their tenure. Could it be the case that health and/or welfare are viewed as a more urgent concern in the immediate aftermath of an election? This is a ripe avenue for further study. Given recent considerations about the role of time in the implementation of party agendas and government manifestos, an investigation of this dynamic would be highly relevant. A temporal pledge study following Duval and Pétry (2018) could check this, for instance, by examining which policy areas parties fulfil their pledges on first. This also speaks to the latent difference between *emphasis* on the one hand and *priority* on the other, suggesting that they are indeed not precisely analogous.

3.6 Conclusions

This chapter set out to test the strength of the relationship between the content of party manifestos and throne speeches as part of a re-examination of the so-called "saliency approach" to the programme-to-policy linkage. Due to the way the approach conceptualises and operationalises the linkage, I argued that it is more productively construed as a test of a "programme-to-agenda linkage". The United Kingdom and its annual Queen's Speeches were chosen as a "most likely" test case for both practical and theoretical reasons. The findings demonstrate that elections have consequences for the content of Queen's Speeches in line with the expectation that the winning party interprets a "mandate" to enact their manifesto. The issue priorities of parties in office were shown to have more bearing on Queen's Speech issue attention than those of their counterparts in opposition in several key policy areas.

Substantively, this corresponds with the available evidence from the pledge literature, which shows high rates of government pledge fulfilment and very low rates of opposition pledge fulfilment in the UK (Thomson et al., 2017). This finding built on previous studies

of the case which reported much the same thing (Rose, 1984; Rallings, 1987; Royed, 1996). Here I offer the some of the first clear empirical evidence that an issue-based programme-to-agenda linkage is colinear with a policy-based programme-to-policy linkage. This complements more equivocal evidence of a programmatic linkage to the legislative agenda (Froio et al., 2016). This analysis demonstrates that it matters greatly which party assumes office after an election: winners carry the issues they emphasised during the campaign into government with them, while the losers' issues are sidelined. This echoes the finding that Budge and Hofferbert (1993, p.749) claimed to have identified. But it does so using a more careful approach and a more suitable dependent variable.

The findings reported in this chapter also add nuance to the interpretation of earlier research on throne speech content, party ideology and issue agendas. These studies convey a mixed picture of partisan effects (Bevan et al., 2011; Mortensen et al., 2011; Jennings et al., 2011a; John et al., 2014). This chapter demonstrates the value in looking beyond party colour to think about issue-level dynamics in terms of election winners and losers. Partisan differences may wash out in the aggregate (Epp et al., 2014), but since the political issue agenda is a dynamic system, that may simply be a function of history being written by the victors. The programme-to-agenda linkage is only one small piece of the overall picture. Nonetheless, it is an essential one of great normative import. Though the issue agenda is undoubtedly a complex system, this chapter provides the most compelling evidence available for the operation of party mandate effects within that system. Both specific policy pledges and campaign issues writ large are subject to the dynamics of the party mandate.

Indeed, given the predictive power the Queen's Speech exerts on the legislative agenda (Bevan et al., 2011; Froio et al., 2016), it might even be the case that issue and policy-based linkages are to some extent endogenous to one another. This question has potentially important implications for the research area. A close correspondence between these linkages could allow researchers to adopt a primarily agenda-based approach to the study of mandates, potentially obviating the need to painstakingly collect pledge fulfilment data. There are several angles from which this question might be addressed.

One angle concerns the connection between campaign promises and throne speeches. The extent to which the latter are composed of content related to specific pledges is a question which might hold the key to understanding the substantive overlap between programme-to-agenda and programme-to-policy linkages. However, pledge researchers have so far largely overlooked the Queen's Speech as a venue for policy appeals rooted in specific manifesto commitments. Yet there is good reason to believe that governments will place special priority on those pledges or issue areas they highlight in public pronouncements after the election. It is widely known that pledges which appear in coalition partnership agreements are much more likely to be fulfilled (Mansergh and Thomson, 2007; Praprotnik and Ennser-Jedenastik, 2015; McMillan, 2019). Whether this reflects the party elite's revealed preferences or the normative force of a second public commitment to a particular promise, it would be something of a surprise if a similar dynamic was not observed for

pledges entering the throne speech.

In addition to the relationship between pledges and throne speeches, another logical next-step is to investigate whether or not these parallel linkages are present in other national contexts and under what conditions either may be stronger or weaker than the other. Though it is not currently possible to test this directly, in the next chapter I build on this by exploring the association between parties' pledge-making and issue emphasis strategies. In other words, I test the aggregate relationship between the operational definitions of the programme employed by each approach.

To sum up, by investigating the programme-to-agenda linkage at the first hurdle, rather than as a component of the wider political issue agenda, I provide direct evidence of party mandate effects extending beyond specific pledges but without restricting the dependent variable to particular policy outputs. As stated above, the Queen's Speech is not a policy output but an expression of government intent, much like a manifesto is an expression of party intent. Whether or not the linkage shown in this chapter generalises to other cases with less favourable institutional settings is an open question. The next step, in addition to testing the programme-to-agenda linkage in other countries which have been subject to pledge studies, is to integrate issue- and pledge-based approaches. I elaborate on this in later chapters. Of particular interest here, given the findings of the robustness tests, is the relationship between issue ownership and the programme-to-agenda linkage.

Chapter 4

Defining the Programme: Dimensions of Manifesto Composition

The first half of this thesis focused on reassessing the saliency approach. The second half aims to build upon these findings to address more fundamental questions about party manifestos and the programme-to-policy linkage, both conceptually and empirically. The previous chapter presented modest empirical support for a "saliency" type programme-to-policy linkage in the two-party Westminster context, which I reframed as the "programme-to-agenda linakge". The distribution of attention to different policy areas in government party manifestos was found to significantly influence the content of subsequent Queen's Speeches for incumbent parties, with the effects wearing off in the middle of a government's time in office. This complements the strong "pledge" linkage previously identified in the same country (Thomson et al., 2017).

This thesis has established that the pledge and saliency approaches conceptualise the linkage in different ways, but their empirical compatibility is more difficult to assess. This raises some questions which are difficult to definitively answer. The most obvious of these is whether parties which fulfil their pledges also tend to implement their issue priorities. To put it another way, are the linkages identified by the pledge and saliency approaches collinear? And if so, is the effect universal?

Though some existing literature identifies the saliency and pledge approaches as different ways of measuring the same basic concept (Naurin, 2011; Pétry and Colette, 2009), the collinearity of pledge and saliency linkages is in principle open to empirical scrutiny (Thomson, 2001). Yet no systematic comparison of these approaches' findings has been conducted so far. This is understandable given it is not possible to test both as competing explanations in a single empirical model, nor is it advisable to compare the outputs of explanatory models with different specifications. The previous chapter identified a general correspondence between the conclusions of previous pledge studies and the programme-to-

agenda linkage for one case, but could not provide a more specific comparison than that. In the absence of reliable saliency findings for multiple countries, what we can do is compare how each approach measures the programme in the first place to attain an understanding of contexts in which they might be complementary.

It is plausible that certain political circumstances, issue areas or institutional settings are more amenable to one type of linkage than the other. Imagine, for example, a party whose manifesto emphasises defence and includes a large number of concomitant policy promises. When the party wins power it continues to prioritise defence in terms of attention and expenditure, but finds that many of the specific pledges impossible to fulfil due to unforeseen constrains on budgets and government actions, or some newly arising crisis. In this situation, a strong "saliency" linkage accompanies a weak "pledge" linkage.

Attempts to compare the different types of linkage are also vulnerable to measurement artefacts resulting from the operational differences discussed in previous chapters. Consider the same example, except the party makes just a handful of specific defence pledges and fulfils them all. Though both linkages are manifest in this scenario, one is obtained with little effort on the part of the government. Parties could potentially "game" pledge fulfilment by deliberately avoiding specific commitments to give off the appearance of responsibility in government. As others have highlighted, the main weakness of the pledge approach is that scholars cannot account for what parties *don't* promise (Louwerse, 2011b).

It has long been acknowledged that parties have the option to "fudge" their stated policy intentions (Rose, 1984). In line with this, Rovny (2012) demonstrated that parties sometimes face incentives to "blur" their issue positions. Meanwhile, Praprotnik (2017a) showed that ideologically extreme parties and those in opposition tend to communicate with greater "issue clarity". This is defined as the proportion of "objective" versus "subjective" pledges about a given policy theme. A tonal distinction between "hard" and "soft" pledges was sometimes made in previous pledge research (Royed, 1996, p.79-80), while a four-point scale of pledge specificity was proposed by Bara (2005). A more straightforward way to tap parties' pledge-making strategies is to examine the total number made.

Political scientists have argued that party competition in Western democracies has moved away from direct confrontation over policy positions, with voter assessments of governing competence ("valence politics", see Green 2007) and the battle for the issue agenda increasing in importance (Green-Pedersen, 2007). In an apparently contradictory trend, however, the number of specific campaign pledges has grown precipitously over time (Håkansson and Naurin, 2016). Despite long-term changes in the structure of electoral competition, parties still typically express their policy intentions in the form of conditional commitments to take certain actions or behave in a certain way if elected to government. It stands to reason that parties make strategic choices not just about the positions they take, but the attachment of expectations of action to positional statements (Bonilla, 2017). Given the profusion of election pledges and their apparent consequences for public policy, it is important to understand why parties make specific commitments (or not) in the first

place, and how this might be influenced by issue emphasis strategies.

In this chapter I test the determinants of pledge-making, with a particular focus on how parties spread their attention among issue themes. I introduce the concept of "manifesto composition" to describe the *structure* of these documents in contrast to their substantive written content. Three main dimensions of composition are identified: the length of documents, issue diversity[1] and the number of specific pledges made. Although I am interested in all of these dimensions, I assume that a party's attention to a particular issue is causally prior to the development of specific policy proposals on the matter. Length, meanwhile, is assumed to be the dimension least affected by deliberate strategic decisions. Hence, pledge-making is the primary focus of the analysis and the dependent variable in the explanatory models, while issue diversity is regarded as the key independent variable and length a control variable. I acknowledge, however, that these dimensions are not wholly independent of one another.

I derive expectations about the causes and conditions of pledge-making from the literatures on election pledges, manifesto content and issue agendas. Existing Comparative Party Pledge Group and Manifesto Project data are combined to produce a dataset of 111 party manifestos from 9 Western democracies. Controlling for document length, I find that ideologically extreme parties make a greater number of pledges while in opposition, while incumbents tend to make fewer pledges under favourable economic conditions. Meanwhile, contrary to expectations, a modest but positive relationship between issue diversity and the number of pledges is also identified. These findings have important implications for research on the nature of party competition as well as the emerging scholarly understanding of manifesto documents and their production.

4.1 Approaches to the Programme

As outlined in Chapter 1, neither the pledge nor saliency operational definitions of party programmes are complete on their own. Something they have in common, however, is their vulnerability to variation in how manifestos are written, within and between countries as well as over time. This is because parties can use pledge-making and issue attention strategically.

The direct operationalisation of the pledge approach is doubtless part of its appeal to researchers, but it also has limitations. The approach relies on parties making their specific policy intentions explicit, while they may face incentives to do the opposite (Rovny, 2012). Somer-Topcu (2015) found that parties which follow a "broad appeal" strategy, achieved partly by the obfuscation of policy intentions, are more electorally successful under certain conditions. Furthermore, as discussed previously, the relative importance of pledges is difficult to measure. A party which strategically fudges its intentions by producing a small number of "testable" pledges could easily attain a high rate of pledge fulfilment by carrying

[1] The overall distribution of issue attention.

out this limited number of promises. Coalition-seeking parties, meanwhile, may face the opposite incentive and create detailed policy proposals they are not interested in fulfilling to use as bargaining chips during government formation negotiations. In sum, pledge fulfilment rates cannot necessarily be taken at face value.

The saliency approach, meanwhile, becomes less instructive the more similar parties' issue emphases become. If all parties devote the same amount of attention to the same set of themes, then there is no meaningful difference between the manifestos as far as saliency theory is concerned. This is not a farfetched hypothetical, since such convergence seems to be a long-term - if incremental - structural trend in party competition (Green-Pedersen, 2007). Other research has shown that, even in two party systems, parties tend to converge upon the same set of issues (Sigelman and Buell, 2004). Meanwhile, direct tests of saliency theory's observable implications have shown that so-called "direct confrontation" on positional issues remains an important aspect of party competition (Dolezal et al., 2014). The issue competition literature has demonstrated that parties in Western democracies emphasise similar sets of issues (summarised in Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2015), while truly "proprietal" issues monopolised by one party are uncommon (Guinaudeau and Persico, 2014). As discussed earlier in this thesis, the preponderance of evidence suggests that issue emphasis is not the foundation of party competition. Rather, it is one strategic front among many.

It is evident that identification of the linkage depends upon how "programme" is defined as much as anything else. As such, a comparison of the pledge and saliency methods must consider how each approaches this task. As stated in Chapter 1, the primary research question in this chapter is *what is the relationship between parties' issue emphasis and pledge-making strategies?*

Saliency and pledge conceptualisations of the party programme can be mapped onto different dimensions of manifesto variation for this purpose. Parties may spread their attention between many different topics, or concentrate on a few. They may also issue a large number of specific pledges, or obscure their intentions by making vague commitments. Parties' pledge and emphasis strategies, as well as the overall length of their manifesto documents, are likely to depend on their circumstances. Hence, it makes sense to think about pledge-making and the distribution of issue attention as independent characteristics of manifestos. To this end, parties face many strategic choices about the development of their manifestos and, clearly, these include the level of detail with which they present their policy positions and the scope of their issue attention.

In the existing literature the distinction between the saliency and pledge approaches has been discussed as a methodological one (Pétry and Colette, 2009). So far, this thesis has instead argued it is rooted in different conceptions of linkage, with the saliency approach in its original form operationalising a programme-to-spending linkage, and in the form I advocate a programme-to-agenda linkage. They address separate research problems, but the evidence presented in the previous chapter suggested that the two linkages could be

interrelated. Though this more fundamental distinction hasn't been addressed in detail by scholars, the substantial difference in the pledge and saliency methods has been widely discussed in the pledge literature and beyond as a matter of operationalisation (Thomson, 2001; Royed, 1996; Pétry and Colette, 2009; Louwerse, 2011a; Naurin, 2011; Praprotnik, 2017b). Indeed, in one of the earliest systematic pledge studies, Royed alluded to the chasm in operational approaches to the programme to justify her return to the pledge-based approach, claiming that "the percentage of sentences... devoted to a particular policy area can be a very imprecise indicator of party intentions" (1996, p.52). Because of how they operationalise programmes, pledge studies deal with the fulfilment of policies which together constitute party positions, whereas the saliency approach relates to the fulfilment of party agendas, represented by relative emphasis of issue themes.

The distinction between the characteristics of position and emphasis in party manifestos has sometimes been blurred in the wider literature, however. As Laver and Garry state, "while the analytical distinction between substantive position on a policy dimension and the emphasis given to this might seem clear cut, the situation is more complicated in practice" (2000, p.620). This complication is the result of constraints on data availability and conceptual heterogeneity in the party competition literature (see Dolezal et al. 2016) rather than any theoretical necessity. Though Laver and Garry's point does not relate to studies of linkage, it is obvious that the pledge approach operationalises these "substantive positions" versus the saliency approach and emphasis. As such, the compatibility of the approaches is open to empirical evaluation. They are not mutually exclusive nor, necessarily, perfectly complementary.

Because position and emphasis are "distinct dimensions of manifesto variability" (Harmel et al., 2018, p.8), there is scope to integrate both approaches into a coherent understanding of pledge-making, issue competition and the role of manifesto documents in the democratic process. Yet only a handful of researchers have explicitly discussed this and investigated party positions and issue emphases simultaneously[2].

The most notable study of the relationship between position and emphasis to date was conducted by Harmel et al. (2018), who test the research question by correlating Manifesto Project estimates with their own Party Change Project data comprising human-coded estimates of left/right party positions on 19 issue dimensions based on manifesto statements. Using both total and net emphasis scores from the MARPOR dataset, the authors find only a modest correlation, providing firm empirical support for the idea that position and emphasis are empirically distinct characteristics[3]. By conceptualising this

[2]Exceptions include Rovny (2012) and Dolezal et al. (2014). Praprotnik (2017a) adds "issue clarity", i.e. specificity, to position and emphasis as dimensions of manifesto content, while Dolezal et al. (2016) recognise the distinction but move beyond these elements to develop a sophisticated conceptual scheme considering positive and negative messaging, references to leaders and a temporal dimension.

[3]Harmel et al. argue that position comprises "party identity" and emphasis "party image" (2018). They claim that identity addresses party insiders and activists, while image concerns how prospective voters view the party. These assumptions about the profile of parties, however, are peripheral to the key conceptual distinction between position and emphasis in manifestos.

distinction, it is possible to reconcile the pledge and saliency approaches within a single theoretical account of party competition - without undermining the contributions of the extant literature. This requires incorporating an understanding of manifesto composition into contemporary theories of party competition. Despite the widespread adoption of party manifestos as sources of data, however, relatively little is known about how and why these documents are produced in the first place (Däubler, 2012), much less how party competition might influence this process. Research on the purpose of manifestos and their contents beyond party positions has started to emerge in recent years, alongside efforts to more thoroughly conceptualise the documents. Harmel (2018) offers a detailed breakdown of the "how", "why" and "what" of manifestos, outlining their many functions and features at length. Recent empirical studies have emerged on the manifesto writing process (Däubler, 2012), manifesto length (Däubler and Benoit, 2013; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016), the positive vs. negative and prospective vs. retrospective aspects of manifesto content (Dolezal et al., 2016), party candidates' views of manifestos (Eder et al., 2017) and the clarity of parties' issue appeals (Praprotnik, 2017a). But so far this is a disparate literature and few researchers have attempted to test the empirical determinants of manifesto structure, even as these documents have increased greatly in length and complexity (Green-Pedersen, 2007).

Although nominally and stylistically addressed to voters, manifestos are written with multiple audiences in mind (Harmel et al., 2018; Harmel, 2018). Because few private citizens are expected to consult the documents directly, however, parties rely heavily on journalists to screen their manifestos and disseminate their contents (Däubler, 2012). Parties typically hold manifesto launch events during which they can attract high-profile coverage and control the news agenda (Eder et al., 2017). Most parties invest a great deal of effort in the development of their manifestos (David, 1971; Däubler, 2012). Manifestos are clearly more than a compulsory triviality (Louwerse, 2012; Eder et al., 2017); they are firmly embedded in intra- and inter-party competition and, therefore, the public policy process. To this end, parties face many strategic choices about the style and substance of their manifestos (Harmel et al., 2018). To help conceptualise this, I introduce a distinction between groups of document features.

4.2 Manifesto Composition and Party Strategy

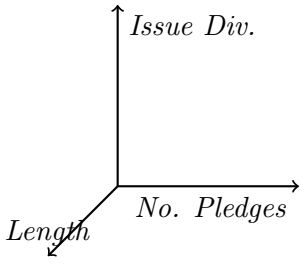
Given the reliance of the discipline upon manifestos, it is a surprise that the manifesto itself has been somewhat overlooked. Decades ago, scholars warned about the dangers of the changing nature and growing importance of party manifestos to both campaigns and democratic theory. The British political scientist Samuel Finer noticed this trend, arguing that the increased size and complexity of manifestos had diluted the meaning of party competition, making claims to a programmatic mandate "more nebulous" than before (Finer, 1975). His chief bugbear at the time was the Conservative party manifesto of 1974,

which was just 26 pages in length. In the present day it is not unusual for parties to produce manifestos which run into several dozen pages and contain hundreds of substantive policy pledges. It is fair to say that Finer would have been unimpressed by this development. What democratic purpose does all of this information serve?

Party manifestos are normative documents at two levels. Firstly, they embody an existential democratic demand for electoral competition, providing the electorate a choice between alternatives. And, secondly, they outline what those alternatives are in practice, presenting parties' substantive visions for society. Schedler refers to these aspects respectively as the "meaningful" and "consequential" normative functions of manifestos (1998, p.194). Both of these functions are existential to the representative requirements of democracy. But the policy substance of the "consequences" is not directly relevant to these functions. The positions expressed by a party - either via specific pledges or the themes emphasised - do not matter from a normative point of view, as long as they correspond to the meaningful choice offered.

In view of this, it is possible to differentiate between two corresponding *descriptive* faces of manifestos, which I term "composition" and "content". I use content to encompass the specific policy positions expressed or the set of issues emphasised, what Dolezal et al. call parties' "generic issue profiles" (2016, p.3). Composition, meanwhile, relates to how these dimensions are structured without regard to the detail of the promises or topics emphasised. This conception has some precedent in the literature. The term "composition" has not previously been used to refer to the structure of manifestos, but Dolezal et al. (2016, p.1) use "policy content" to refer to particular positions and emphases, implying a similar definition. Harmel et al. (2016) also use "content" to refer to policy positions, but instead elect to use "image" to refer to issue emphasis. Because positions and emphases are *both* commonly used to infer party policy intent, I believe it makes sense to place both under the umbrella of substantive content. A third dimension of composition is the absolute length of the documents, which is known to have increased over time but also varies by country and party circumstances (Däubler and Benoit, 2013). These three dimensions essentially correspond to length, breadth and depth.

Figure 4.1: Dimensions of Manifesto Composition



The choices parties make in relation to position and emphasis during the creation of

their policy programmes can, like the linkage itself, be understood non-substantively. Composition is best thought of as the "meta" of content, referring to the *number* of pledges and the *distribution* of attention, neither of which are inherently ideological features of party programmes. That said, I do not intend to suggest that manifesto content or ideology more broadly do not interact with composition or impact fulfilment. Both Dolezal et al. (2016) and Praprotnik (2017a) find that ideologically extreme parties produce manifestos with a higher share of objective pledges, and these findings inform the development of hypotheses in this chapter[4].

As Praprotnik outlines, parties face numerous strategic decisions concerning their manifesto documents, and must settle on "their policy positions over a broad range of issue areas, on the saliency attributed to these issue areas and finally, on the clarity of their words" (2017a, p.122). The first two of these comprise content, while the "clarity" of words - and, I would add, the range of issue areas discussed and the absolute length of the document - is a dimension of composition. Parties of course face many other potentially strategic choices when writing manifestos, such as tonal and temporal considerations (Dolezal et al., 2016), the use of persuasive or emotive language (Lindgren and Naurin, 2017; Crabtree et al., 2016) and readability (Eder et al., 2017). These features straddle the categories of content and composition, and are certainly worthy of scholarly attention. But the question of how positional statements and issue emphasis are used at the meta-level is key to understanding how manifestos are linked to party strategy. This relates to a much wider literature on the evolving nature of party competition in modern democracies (see Odmalm 2014).

The primary theoretical contribution of this thesis so far is the recognition that the pledge and saliency approaches operationalise significantly different versions of both the "programme" and "linkage". The following analysis addresses the first of these, reconciling the contrasting operational definitions of party programmes used by each approach by conceptualising them as strategic dimensions of party manifesto composition. The next section further conceptualises pledge-making, deriving expectations about how parties use this compositional feature strategically.

Pledge-Making (and Specificity)

The dependent variable in this chapter is pledge-making, measured as the number of specific manifesto pledges made in a party manifesto. Recall that manifesto pledges are positional statements with expectations of future action[5] attached (Bonilla, 2017). Party manifestos also typically contain non-pledge statements which are either purely rhetorical/functional

[4]Relationships between content and composition could also spill over into pledge fulfilment. This was tacitly acknowledged by Royed (1996), who coded pledges by type of action (e.g. change vs. status quo) and found variation in fulfilment rates between categories (ibid, p.61-2). A similar procedure was repeated in several subsequent pledge studies e.g. Thomson (2001); Praprotnik and Ennser-Jedenastik (2012); Naurin (2014). A limited number of pledge studies, including Royed (1996), have also categorised pledges by issue area, though no consistent approach has been adopted.

[5]Or non-action in the case of status quo pledges.

or express positions without any "if elected, we will"-type statement or measurable outcome attached. Parties therefore have a choice about how to present their ideas in manifestos, and are forced to decide between elaborating specific proposals and being impressionistic about their policy intentions.

The level of detail in party programmes was discussed as early as Downs (1957), who believed it was rational for parties to make specific policy commitments and carry them out if elected. Hofferbert and Budge built on his theory to develop the saliency approach partly because of their scepticism that the meaning of manifestos was to be found in the specific policy pledges made (1992). Rose (1984, p.62), in the first recognisable study of pledge fulfilment, wrote that:

> "The line between a vague statement and a verifiable pledge... is a constant concern of manifesto authors, who always have the option of 'fudging' the party's intentions rather than giving a specific pledge".

This statement describes the strategic consideration party elites face on an issue-by-issue basis when developing election platforms. Parties may choose to make detailed policy on certain issues and to obscure their intent on others. Assuming party organisations are rational, vote-maximising actors (Downs, 1957), they will pursue what they view to be the least costly strategy in terms of the policy detail they add to documents. This calculus could change depending on issue ownership, the party's public profile, expected election results, prospective coalition partners, its internal unity, its financial and human resources and so on.

The difference between pledges and rhetorical statements was also discussed at length by Royed (1996) and elaborated on in subsequent pledge literature, with researchers developing more sophisticated and uniform definitions in recent years (see e.g. Thomson 2001, Naurin 2011, Thomson et al. 2017). The accepted definition of a pledge among CPPG scholars now centres around the "testability" of the promise. Thomson et al. (2017, p.552) formulate this as "a statement committing a party to one specific action or outcome that can be clearly determined to have occurred or not". All of the pledge studies after Royed (1996) adopted a similar definition to hers, from which the testability criterion evolved, and efforts have been made to standardise coding of pledges as being "narrow" or "broad". Yet few pledge researchers have investigated the dynamics of narrow and broad or detailed and vague pledges.

There are a few exceptions, mostly descriptive in nature. Håkansson and Naurin (2016), for example, found that the ratio of specific to vague pledges made by Swedish parties had increased in recent years. Dolezal et al. (2016) presented descriptive data on subjective *and* objective pledges for five Austrian parties. Another exception is Bara (2005) who introduced a four-point ordinal scale for specificity - from "vague" to "detailed" - for the qualitative categorisation of pledges. The scheme was not operationalised in a systematic way, however, and it failed to gain traction in subsequent literature. The only exception to

this is McMillan (2019), who coded Scottish pledges according to a more developed version of this scheme, and found that more detailed pledges were significantly less likely to be fulfilled.

Praprotnik's recent study of "issue clarity" in Austrian manifestos (2017a) is the first to attempt to causally explain of the specificity of party issue appeals. Issue clarity is defined as "the level of specificity with which parties present the content of an issue" (Praprotnik, 2017a, p.121) and measured as the percentage of total statements classified as objective pledges in a given issue area. This is enabled by the use of detailed Austrian National Election Study data in which each natural statement in a manifesto is categorised as "no pledge", "subjective" or "objective" (Praprotnik, 2017a, p.125). The advantage of this operationalisation is that it requires fewer fine-grained qualitative judgements than the approach taken by Bara. This paper further simplifies the calculation of pledge detail - with manifestos rather than issue areas as the unit of analysis - by using the total number of pledges as the dependent variable while holding document length constant.

Outside the pledge literature, a similar topic was investigated by Rovny (2012). Building on a US-centric literature on "obfuscation" to conceptualise and test the strategic use of "position blurring", Rovny found support for the idea that parties with extreme positions on a small number of dimensions are more likely to emphasise these issues *and* make their positions clear while blurring and de-emphasising others (Rovny, 2012, p.275). As he states, taking "ambiguous positions can be advantageous because it tends to attract... broader political coalitions" (2012, p.289). Though position blurring and specificity are not identical concepts (Praprotnik, 2017a, p.122), it stands to reason that they will be correlated if it is assumed that a higher proportion of detailed pledges on a topic make a party's position less ambiguous.

Due to the limitations of the comparative dataset used in this chapter and because the unit of analysis is the manifesto, I effectively investigate the "clarity" of documents as a whole by using the number of pledges as the dependent variable while holding length constant. The concepts of "issue clarity" and "specificity" apply to different levels of analysis (issue areas and individual pledges respectively). It is possible to anticipate a criticism here, which is the conflation of the number of pledge statements made with their detail. Though the number of pledges made and the detail or specificity of pledge statements are distinct in theory (Harmel, 2018), they are virtually interchangeable in practice due to the difficulties involved in creating fine-grained measures of specificity and the necessity of accounting for document length in any test of pledge-making's determinants. There is unlikely to be much difference between a measure of specificity which operationalises hard vs. soft pledges and a measure of pledge-making which operationalises hard pledges vs. total statements. As such, I believe it is fair to anticipate that similar dynamics apply to both.

Finally, it is worth noting that it is still not possible to measure how realistic or important pledges are. This is a major weakness of the pledge approach. Ray (2007) assumes

that parties will only make pledges which are achievable in office, because a failure to do so could open the party up to opposition criticism if they are elected. However, it is possible to imagine several reasons why parties may promise unrealistic policies. Expectation management by parties in government may partly explain why Praprotnik found that ideological extremism and opposition status predict issue clarity (2017). Parties which do not expect to enter government do not have an incentive to make realistic commitments because they are unlikely to be exposed. Parties which have no recent experience in office may be unable to comprehend how the constraints faced by government could undermine their policy goals. Unfortunately, it is unclear how pledge "realism" could be reliably operationalised short of an exhaustive qualitative coding effort.

Issue Diversity and Length

A further dimension of manifesto composition is the scope of issue attention. An emerging literature on this concept, known as "issue diversity", demonstrates that there is significant variation in not just the particular issues parties emphasise, but how that attention is distributed. Though the idea has long been a component of the policy agendas literature (McCombs and Zhu, 1995), the specific concept was introduced by Hobolt (2008) and work on the topic is closely related to the issue competition literature. Issue diversity is defined as the range of political issue themes addressed by a party or party system (Hobolt, 2008, p.4). Issue diversity, generally speaking, is thought to have increased over time as the democratic political agenda has expanded beyond "traditional" or "left-right" economic competition (Green-Pedersen, 2007, p.619) to encompass social issues like minority rights, the European Union and the environment. As noted above, such developments in party competition have implications for the validity of the saliency approach.

There are various ways to measure issue attention diversity. The most popular is the Shannon's H "diversity index", a measure of population diversity - or "entropy" - originating in the field of ecology [6]. Shannon's H takes into account the number and distribution of types (typically species) within a given population of units. Greene (2016) used the index and coined the term "Effective Number of Manifesto Issues" (ENMI) to refer to the exponential function of the measure, mimicking the well-known "Effective Number of Parties" measure of party-system fractionalisation (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979). To calculate the ENMI Greene applied the calculation to the Manifesto Project dataset - which has 42 possible issue themes - to obtain the Shannon's H entropy score for party manifestos, which was then multiplied by the exponential function. Here, each document is a "population", each MARPOR code is a "type" and each quasi-sentence is a "unit". As Greene outlines, a document equally split between two topics would have an ENMI of 2. The ENMI gets lower the more dominant one of these topics is, while continuing to take into account the presence of the other topic. So the ENMI for a document with two topics

[6] The formula for Shannon's H is as follows, where i is the issue and M is the proportion of the manifesto dedicated to it: $H = -\sum_{i=42} M_i \, log \, M_i$

split 9/1 is 1.4. Boydstun et al. (2014) compared Shannon's H to several other measures of entropy in a series of empirical tests, concluding that it is the better measure due to its greater sensitivity and reduced vulnerability to one particularly large category.

Substantively, Greene (2016) found that governing parties tend to expound on a more diverse set of issues than opposition parties in defence of their record in office. Governing parties presiding over good economic conditions tend to focus on economic issues to the exclusion of others, while growth has no effect on the diversity of opposition manifesto documents. These dynamics are considered in the development of hypotheses below.

The third composition dimension is the self-explanatory characteristic of manifesto length. As noted above, the size of manifestos has increased significantly in recent decades. Däubler and Benoit (2013) investigate the empirical determinants of manifesto length and find that party presence in parliament and seat share positively predict manifesto length, while manifestos are shorter if produced in young democracies or for early elections.

4.3 Hypotheses

The first hypothesis links the two identified axes of manifesto composition to test the primary research question. Mainstream parties tend to have more diverse issue portfolios (Greene and Haber, 2015) but lower issue clarity (Praprotnik, 2017a). It therefore stands to reason that these features co-occur, and for related reasons.

However, the relationship between these features could be complicated by variation at the level of individual issue areas, which it is not possible to account for. Because manifesto authors possess limited financial, temporal and cognitive resources (Walgrave and Nuytemans, 2009, p.192) and face idiosyncratic incentives to fudge or not depending on the problem context, parties will develop detailed policy prescriptions for some issue areas but not others. Decisions about issue emphasis have their own incentives and take place in parallel (Praprotnik, 2017a, p.123). But it ought to be the case that the costs of policy development increase alongside the number of issues a party decides to address, meaning that the more issue areas a party addresses, the more challenging it should be to develop detailed policy.

It is conceivable that issue diversity reflects the known responsiveness of office-seeking parties. Conversely, unresponsive parties with limited issue portfolios tend to ignore changing political winds. If office-seekers parties frequently change their priorities and positions when external pressures force new issues onto the agenda (Walgrave et al., 2006), they might be doing little more than paying "lip-service" to these emergent problems. Jennings et al. (2011b) demonstrated that government's "core functions" generally dominate parties' issue emphasis strategies, and the same dynamic is likely to be the case for policy development. Jennings et al. (2011b) also found that peripheral policy areas receive attention when these primary concerns dip in salience. Parties who extend their attention to secondary areas at such times are unlikely to have well-developed "off the shelf" policies ready to present

to the public. Parties which concentrate on the same set of issue themes, however, are expected to advertise highly specific policy prescriptions.

Furthermore, parties closer to the centre on a given dimension tend to "blur" their positions, which can be an advantageous strategy in certain electoral circumstances (Rovny, 2012). Parties which follow a "broad appeal" strategy by addressing a wide variety of topics (Somer-Topcu, 2015) should be less likely to develop highly distinctive ideological positions - and therefore policy prescriptions - all of these issues. For these reasons, I anticipate that pledges will be more sparse in documents which touch on a diverse range of issues.

Hypothesis 4.1. *Parties with broader issue portfolios tend to make fewer concrete pledges.*

Do other factors condition party pledge-making? The value of the combined dataset introduced here is that this can be easily tested for a reasonably-sized sample of manifesto documents, allowing this question to be answered cross-nationally for the first time. As a starting point, I adapt two of Praprotnik's (2017a) issue clarity hypotheses concerning party extremism and opposition status. The dataset used for this paper, having been constructed from multiple sources, is of unavoidably lower quality than the bespoke AUTNES data available for the Austrian case. However, a successful replication of Praprotnik's findings would validate the measures used here add support to the generalisability of her results. Unfortunately, it is not possible to test her issue ownership hypotheses because of data constraints.

Party extremism is expected to result in a higher proportion of testable pledges because, unlike mainstream parties, niche parties located at spatial extremes are unresponsive to public opinion and face electoral punishment for moderating their platforms (Ezrow, 2008; Adams et al., 2009). To do so is viewed by their electorates as "a sign of selling out" (Praprotnik, 2017a, p.123), because their appeal to voters lies in ideological purity and outsider status. Indeed, the more competitive and election is, the more extreme non-mainstream parties become (Abou-Chadi and Orlowski, 2016). Hence, party extremism is expected to predict pledge-making because it removes the incentive to fudge policy proposals.

Furthermore, because extreme parties typically have low expectations of entering office, they do not need to be concerned about the possibility of retrospective punishment for failing to live up to expectations. As such, they can make a higher number of "pie in the sky" commitments which appeal to voters but would be difficult or impossible to fulfil in practice. Although it is not currently feasible to systematically measure "pledge realism", this dynamic is expected to result in a greater proportion of pledge content. Praprotnik found support for the extremism hypothesis in relation to issue clarity (2017a, p.127) and I expect to repeat that result using this slightly different dependent variable.

Hypothesis 4.2. *Ideologically extreme parties produce manifestos containing a greater number of individual pledges.*

Praprotnik's second hypothesis concerns opposition versus incumbent status and its interaction with extremism. Incumbent parties might be expected to produce less detailed policy programmes for reasons relating to both retrospective and prospective voter evaluations. Retrospectively, incumbents have a record of policy delivery in office (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010, see p.262-3) which they feel obliged to defend during the campaign (Greene and Haber, 2016, p.810). Praprotnik links this to what Downs' concept of party "reliability" (1957), arguing that low levels of pledge fulfilment could have a negative impact on voters' prospective evaluations of a party's promises. As such, detailed programmes are a bigger risk for incumbent parties (2017a, p.124).

Ideologically extreme parties who have entered government, meanwhile, might be expected to "tone down" and behave like other parties when confronted with the day-to-day realities and constraints of governance, even if they do not moderate their underlying issue positions (Akkerman and Rooduijn, 2015). Akkerman and De Lange (2012) examined several examples of European radical right party participation in government and found that that those which adapted to office maintained or increased their vote shares, while those riven with internal conflict and instability were electorally punished. Radical parties are not forced to confront their internal contradictions while in opposition, which means their programmes should contain more pledges.

Hypothesis 4.3. *The effect of party extremism on the number of pledges is conditioned by government or opposition status, with extreme parties pledging more while in opposition.*

Finally, though there is no theoretical constraint on the size and scope of party policy appeals, manifesto authors are likely to impose conscious and unconscious limitations on the documents themselves. As noted, incumbent parties have a record to defend, and I propose that they will dedicate some of the limited available "oxygen" in the manifesto to this task *in favour of other types of content.* The better a party's record, the greater an incentive it has to amplify its achievements. As such, in addition to the risk-aversion motive outlined by Praprotnik, incumbents may face this positive incentive to limit the number of pledges made.

The literature on "valence politics" (Green, 2007; Green and Hobolt, 2008) demonstrates that government performance and voter evaluations of competence are important determinants of vote choice (Clark, 2009). I propose here that parties will adopt different pledge-making strategies to convey images of competence to the electorate depending on their status and electoral context. Incumbent parties confident of winning reelection have an incentive to emphasise continuity rather than change, and are therefore expected to limit their specific policy appeals while "talking up" their achievements if presiding over strong economic growth. Incumbents operating under more challenging economic conditions, on the other hand, might perceive greater benefit from portraying their administration as a "work-in-progress" and communicating seriousness by outlining a detailed programme. Hence government parties are expected to make fewer pledges under positive economic

conditions.

Hypothesis 4.4. *Incumbent parties make fewer pledges under favourable economic conditions.*

4.4 Data

The dataset used here contains information on 111 party manifestos from 34 elections in nine Western democracies. Though the election years range from 1974 (UK) to 2011 (Canada) it is not a genuine time-series, in practice comprising a pooled collection of asymmetric cross-sections. For reasons of data availability and quality control, the party composition within countries varies from election-to-election. The findings presented below should be interpreted in view of these unavoidable limitations.

The dataset was obtained with a novel approach, combining Manifesto Project and Comparative Party Pledge datasets[7]. In the MARPOR dataset each *document* is equal to one observation, while in the CPP dataset each *pledge* is equal to one observation. Hence, it was necessary to aggregate the CPP dataset at document-level prior to merging the data. This process presented difficulties due to the lack of common country and party variables. The relevant scripts are available via my website[8].

The CPP dataset used here[9] includes 20,000 pledge-level observations from 12 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. Once aggregated it dataset contains 213 manifestos. 199 of these have corresponding entries in the MARPOR dataset. Because most of the CPP data was collected at different times and places by independent researchers working without a standardised codebook, the party and election coverage is not consistent across (and occasionally within) cases. Matching with the MARPOR data, which has its own inconsistencies, exacerbates these issues.

In some circumstances, the judgement has been made to exclude certain countries, parties or elections altogether. Three countries, Italy, Bulgaria and the United States, are excluded entirely. The Italian case is excluded because, regrettably, it does not contain observations for individual party manifestos, instead aggregating them by electoral coalition bloc. These observations cannot be matched with MARPOR. The aggregation of multiple parties' issue emphases would not be a suitable solution for this study.

[7] Hereafter referred to as the "MARPOR" and "CPP" datasets respectively. Data from Parlgov and the World Bank was also used to calculate some additional variables.

[8] `fraser-mcmillan.com`, link to GitHub repository.

[9] The version of the CPP dataset used in Chapters 4 and 5 predates the latest version, which was publicly release alongside the Thomson et al. (2017) AJPS article. These datasets are broadly very similar, with some differences in variables and observations. The primary difference is that the older version of the dataset contains 15 Swedish manifestos for which fulfilment data has not been collected, while the newest version contains 13 additional observations from Austrian, German and Irish elections in 2008, 2009 and 2011. The remaining manifestos are common to each version of the dataset.

The Bulgarian case has also been excluded. It is the only new democracy and former Eastern Bloc country in the pledge dataset. Though the party and election coverage is excellent (Kostadinova, 2013), the country's volatile party system means that a majority of included manifestos were produced by short-lived minor parties. This results in a disproportionately high number of outliers relative to other cases and complicates the inclusion of independent variables like vote share at the previous election. Furthermore, the many party mergers and splits to have taken place in Bulgaria, as well as similarities in party names, presented significant difficulties for a non-expert compiling data from multiple sources with their own party naming conventions. Because of the idiosyncrasies of the case and these potential reliability issues, the decision was made to drop it altogether.

Finally, the United States has also been left out of the analysis. Party programmes in the United States are written in "platform" format, reflecting differences in party organisation compared to European parliamentary systems. The main issue with the US case, though, is that the several observations in the combined dataset are *incongruent*, i.e. the original documents used for the MARPOR and CPP datasets don't appear match up[10]. In the US case this issue was compounded by the age of the observations and the different manifesto format, so the decision was made to drop these observations including the handful of US platforms which were not *prima facie* incongruent. Hence, only comparable Western parliamentary systems with similar practices surrounding party manifestos are included in this analysis.

With these cases removed entirely, the number of manifestos in the CPP sample drops to 160. Given the variety of documents issued by parties at election time and the large number of pre-digital era election years included, obvious outliers for the remaining cases were examined for incongruence on an individual basis.[11]

In some instances it is immediately obvious that different documents were used for each dataset. For example, the 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2011 Bloc Quebec manifestos are among the longest in the dataset as measured in MARPOR quasi-sentences, and run into hundreds of pages. However, the CPP dataset identifies 50 or fewer pledges for each of these documents. A visual inspection of the original manifestos, which are available on the MARPOR website, suggests that these documents each contain dozens or even hundreds more pledges than reported. Further investigations using the POLTEXT website, which contains comprehensive records of campaign texts released by Canadian parties, reveal that BQ released summary documents alongside their unusually long manifestos in all of these election years. It seems that these documents, rather than the complete manifestos, were coded for inclusion in the CPP dataset.

The same issue in reverse is evident in the case of the Canadian Progressive Conservative

[10]In this instance, the number of quasi-sentences coded by MARPOR is implausibly small. Only 100 quasi-sentences are counted for both parties' 1984 platforms, compared to over 1,000 each four years earlier

[11]The main criteria for investigating documents were as follows. Those with: a) low (under 0.1) or high (over 0.5) ratio of pledges to quasi-sentences b) fewer than 50 pledges c) fewer than 100 quasi-sentences. These criteria frequently overlapped in practice.

Party's 2002 manifesto. MARPOR appear to have coded a summary document while the CPP contains pledges from the full manifesto, resulting in the observation showing more than twice as many pledges as quasi-sentences. These observations have been removed from the combined dataset.

Identifying document incongruence is not typically this straightforward, however. Firstly, the data alone can only provide clues, and some qualitative judgements have been made with incomplete information. Distinguishing legitimate outliers from cases of dataset incongruence requires careful consideration of the available documentation and data. There is a risk of removing genuine outliers as well as erroneously including incongruent observations which are congruent at face value if sufficient care is not taken.

Secondly, it is not possible to easily cross-reference most of the manifestos used for the CPP data because there is no centralised database of original documents used for any case except Canada. Additionally, the MARPOR document corpus is piecemeal and inconsistent for years prior to the mid-2000s. Though some manifesto text is available for most of the documents in the database, many of the records are not originals but spreadsheets containing imputed text, some of which is incomplete or virtually unintelligible due to encoding issues.

Thirdly, these two datasets were compiled by dozens of different coders over the course of decades. Tracking down confirmation of which documents were coded for each project is onerous. For many older observations it is impossible to know if the same documents were coded. A handful of observations were removed for other reasons[12].

The final aggregated and combined dataset contains 111 observations spanning 34 elections in 9 countries between 1974 and 2011. Table 4.1 summarises the cases, showing the number of manifestos, parties and elections for each country, as well as the average number of observations per party and election. Table A.7 in the appendix shows a list of all the individual manifestos included in this chapter.

Sweden contributes the largest number of observations, with 23 manifesto documents from four elections included. Canada contributes the next most observations, spanning seven elections. The average number of manifestos per election in Canada is relatively small, though the loss of most Bloc Quebec observations due to incongruent documents contributes to this. Fewer than 10 observations are available for Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and the UK. The smallest number of elections covered is two, for Portugal and Germany, but in these cases no fewer than four parties are included for each year. Though the UK data spans five elections, this case has by far the smallest number of parties per election at just 1.4. This is because the Labour and Conservative party manifestos have been coded for 1979 and 1983, while only the election winners' documents are included for the years 1974, 1987 and 1992.

[12]These include apparently congruent documents in election years with several documents confirmed to be incongruent, observations from years with multiple elections which contained identical information and two cases of new minor parties for which previous vote share could not be obtained.

Table 4.1: Summary of Cases

Country	Documents	Parties	Elections	Docs/Part.	Docs/Elec.
Austria	6	3	3	2	2
Canada	19	6	7	3.2	2.7
Germany	8	4	2	2	4
Ireland	18	7	4	2.6	4.5
Netherlands	9	3	3	3	3
Portugal	9	5	2	1.8	4.5
Spain	12	3	4	4	3
Sweden	23	7	4	3.3	5.8
UK	7	2	5	3.5	1.4
Total	40	111	34	2.8	3.3

4.5 Measures and Models

A series of OLS models have been estimated to test the hypotheses. To recap, each observation is one manifesto document. The dependent variable is the number of pledges contained in each. The key independent variable is issue diversity, while manifesto length is included as a control variable. The following section describes these composition measures and other independent variables before elaborating on the specifics of the model.

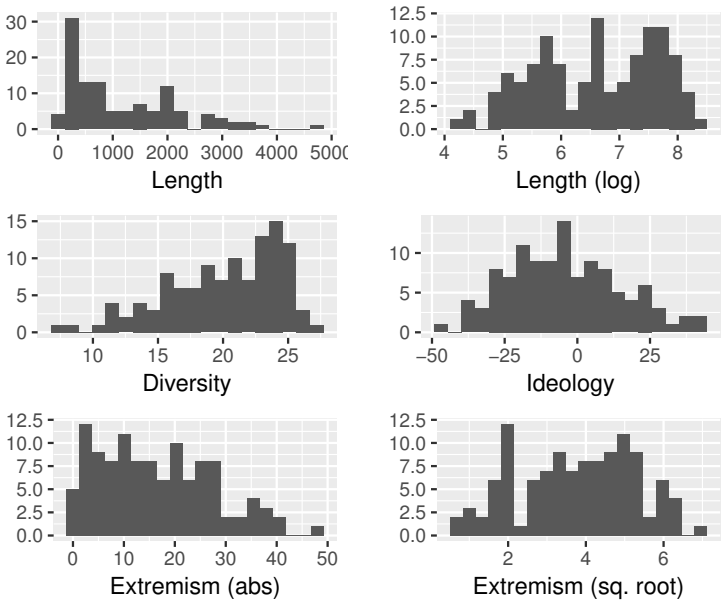
Composition Measures

Document length can be calculated using different units e.g. pages, quasi-sentences, sentences, words. Given substantial variation in visual design and layout, the number of pages would be a highly unreliable measure of length, while the precise number of words would make sense if digitised raw text were available for observations. Here, however, the count of quasi-sentences identified in the MARPOR coding is used to measure length. There is some precedent in the literature as the same measure was employed by Green-Pedersen (2007), though it is worth discussing potential issues.

The first of these is linguistic or cross-national variation in writing style. Differences in verbosity and syntax could result in systemic differences in the baseline length of the syntactic units coded as quasi-sentences. Conventional national political communication styles may also affect this number. However, both of these factors would be *exacerbated* by raw word or sentence counts. The use of quasi-sentences of variable length, in theory, absorbs any potential bias from these differences (Däubler and Benoit, 2013). This can, in addition, be further controlled for using country-level fixed effects.

The second, less-avoidable concern is that of consistency in the identification of quasi-sentences by MARPOR coders given the project's lack of consistent inter-coder checks. In an experiment coding a sample of manifestos using the MARPOR scheme, Mikhaylov et al. (2012) demonstrated low rates of inter-coder agreement concerning the categories assigned

Figure 4.2: Histograms: Numeric Independent Variables



to specific quasi-sentences. This showed that the scheme was less reliable than aggregate associative measures of inter-coder reliability suggested. This issue, however, is unavoidable for any user of the dataset, and the *identification* of quasi-sentences is expected to be more reliable than their *categorisation*.

The reason the length measure requires such consideration it that it is strongly correlated with the dependent variable, which is measured using the total number of pledges per document (npledges) considered "testable" in the CPP dataset. Indeed, adding a measure of manifesto length to the pledge data was the primary motivation for combining the datasets. Because the bespoke AUTNES data splits manifestos into quasi-sentences prior to pledge coding, Praprotnik (2017a) and Dolezal et al. (2016) were able to simply calculate the share of statements in each manifesto comprising "objective pledges" versus subjective pledges or non-pledge statements. Here, however, the MARPOR quasi-sentences and CPP pledges were coded according to entirely different schemes, and no direct measure of pledge specificity is available in the CPP data.

Obviously, one would expect to find a very strong relationship between overall length and number of pledges. Using number of pledges while controlling for length is preferable to calculating the proportion of pledges to quasi-sentences. In the first place, the CPP and MARPOR coding procedures do not necessarily tap comparable quasi-sentence units. Pledges may straddle multiple quasi-sentences and vice versa. The method used here also sidesteps omitted variable and endogeneity issues. If the proportion of pledges to quasi-sentences is used as the dependent variable, the use of one of these measures on its own as a predictor is untenable. Yet the exclusion of any length variable would result in an overestimation of npledges' relationship with other variables, particularly issue diversity.

Finally, the measure for issue diversity, which is the key independent variable, is the ENMI introduced by Greene (2016). Of the measures of manifesto composition, this measure is the least problematic. The measure was calculated using the `manifestoR` package for `R`, which includes access to the MARPOR API and a function to calculate ENMI across the dataset.

Other Variables

1. Party extremism is calculated using the MARPOR dataset's left-right ideology scale (known as "RILE"). This variable relies on various MARPOR categories being grouped together as "left" and "right" and added together. The RILE score is the sum of right categories minus the sum of left categories (Volkens et al., 2013). This measure has been the source of considerable controversy in the literature, with questions about its reliability frequently discussed and, to that end, various alternative scaling methods proposed. To obtain estimates of extremism the variable has been square rooted, which simultaneously provides absolute values and reduces the skewness of the resulting distribution. In two of the models I substitute this variable for the untransformed RILE score to ensure any effects are not obscured or exaggerated by left-right ideology itself.

2. The percentage change in GDP in the year prior to the election is used to measure economic conditions. Though changes in election-year growth may be more informative in some situations (especially if there are big shifts in the run-up to an election), even in the best case scenario that measure is not entirely prior to the election itself and risks being endogenous to election outcomes. As such, the previous year's growth has been selected instead. The variable is not available in the MARPOR or CPP datasets, so figures were taken from the World Bank. Because none of the observations are in the immediate aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, there is no need to take extra steps to control for the effects of that shock.

3. A dummy for opposition (1) and incumbency (0) is included. It is important to note that this variable refers to the party's status *before* the election, unlike the CPP dataset variable which identifies party status in the aftermath of the campaign. As such, this variable was also imputed manually, this time using the ParlGov resource.

4. Because mainstream parties have been found to issue manifestos with both greater issue diversity and fewer pledges, party size ought to be controlled for in the analysis. I follow Schumacher and Giger (2017) in using the party's existing seat share to capture this, though there was no substantive difference between the analyses below and otherwise identical models using a measure of vote share instead.

5. Finally, given changes in manifesto length and content over decades previously identified in the literature (Green-Pedersen, 2007; Walgrave and Nuytemans, 2009; Naurin,

2014), it is important to account for time in the analysis even though this dataset is not a genuine time-series. A count of years from 1950 onwards has been included instead to retain the same unit change while eliminating the extremely large constants associated with the use of calendar years as numeric variables.

Modelling Procedures

Four linear models have been estimated. The dependent variable in each is the logged number of pledges per manifesto. Taking the log instead accounts for the handful of documents in the sample exceeding 2,000 quasi-sentences in length. This is justified because, as explained above, the relationship between manifesto length and number of pledges is expected to be a situation of diminishing returns. Figure 4.3 shows two scatterplots of these alternatives and their correlation with length. Figure 4.2 shows histograms for the two measures of length as well as the diversity, RILE and extremism measures.

Figure 4.3: Scatterplot: Pledges vs. Length Bivariate Association

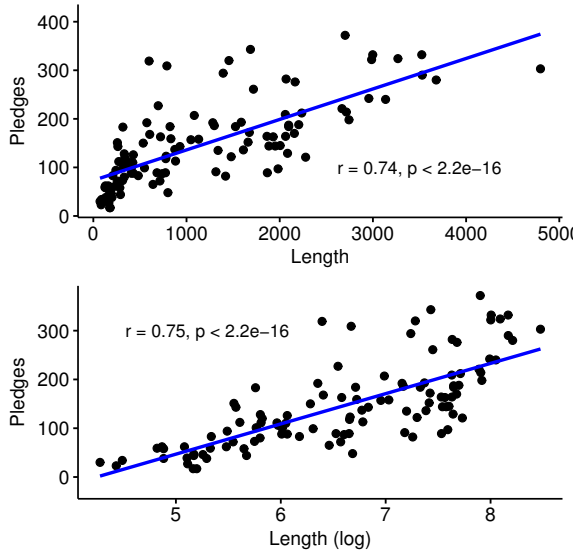


Figure 4.2 shows that the sample of manifestos is roughly normally distributed on the RILE measure, with a minor right skew and the mode lying slightly to the left of the dimension's centre. This means that average party in the sample is slightly left of centre. The absolute RILE score is shown for the purposes of comparison with the square rooted measure of extremism, which displays significantly less clustering around zero. This variable is used to test H4.2. H4.3 is tested by interacting this measure with the opposition dummy. H4.4 is tested in the same way, using the previous year's growth variable.

The diversity measure included to test H4.1 has a left skewed distribution. Only a small number of documents in the sample contain fewer than 15 effective manifesto issues, and most cluster at the higher end of values. There is not so little variation, however, as to merit transformation of this variable.

Model 1 estimates the relationship between npledges and the two other composition variables. Model 2 introduces party extremism as the only other manifesto-based measure. Model 3 adds previous year's growth, opposition status, previous vote share and the year count. Model 4 adds the interactions of extremism and growth with opposition status.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

Table 4.2 shows the results of the analysis. I will discuss the hypotheses and related findings in turn, then move on to the implications for studies of the programme-to-policy linkage and scholarship on manifestos more generally.

Unsurprisingly, there is a very strong relationship between the length of manifestos and the number of pledges they contain. The correlations shown in Figure 4.3 hold in the causal analysis, which demonstrates a strong positive relationship across the board. To pre-empt some potential criticism, I am not arguing here that length "causes" pledges to be made. The variable is in the models to enable a test of the determinants of pledge-making and its relationship with issue diversity. Because manifesto authors structure the documents around policy proposals, a party's existing policy stock (Däubler, 2012) probably affects the way the manifesto writing process is approached. In this sense, the length of the documents and the number of pledges included is mutually causal.

In relation to H4.1, the results reveal that the relationship between pledge-making and issue diversity is weakly significant but positive, the opposite of the one anticipated. Parties which spread their attention around many issues seemingly tend to produce *more* detailed manifestos. From a critical perspective, we must consider the possibility that the diversity variable is simply picking up additional variance in length which is unaccounted for by the measures used. However, it is clear that the coefficient *increases* relative to the standard error as more variables are added to the equation from models 1-4, with the p-value sneaking into the conventional 0.05 significance level in Model 4.

This finding suggests, as discussed above, that a "broad appeal" strategy does not necessarily entail a less detailed policy programme. All else being equal, parties which devote attention to many different policy areas tend to make those programmes more detailed than parties which focus on a handful of policy areas. This seems counter-intuitive at first glance, especially in light of previous findings. However, party policy formation tends to be a continuous process which occurs *between* election campaigns. Parties tend to take manifesto pledges from a ready-made supply of positions (Däubler and Benoit, 2013). It could be the case that parties which intend to address a broad range of issues invest more in policy development, resulting in detailed policy prescriptions across the whole spectrum of themes. Parties with limited issue portfolios, meanwhile, may develop detailed policy on their biggest priorities but deliberately obfuscate on other areas they are obliged to address, as Rovny (2013) found in the case of European radical right parties.

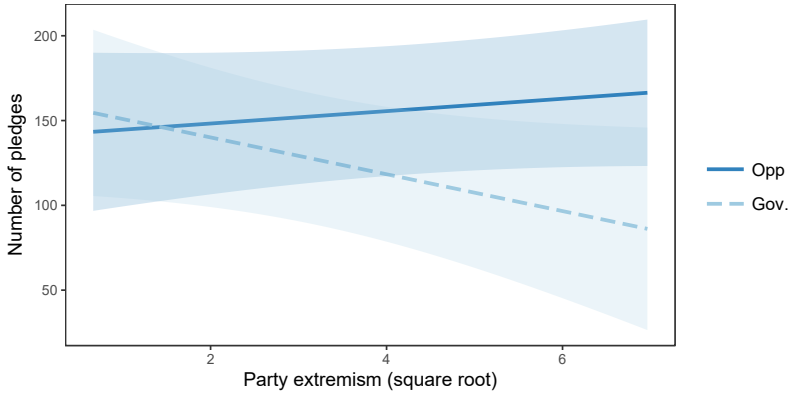
In terms of the implications for programme-to-policy linkage research, this represents

Table 4.2: OLS Regression Models: Explaining Manifesto Pledge-Making

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Length (log)	64.865*** (8.326)	64.995*** (8.360)	61.897*** (9.220)	63.962*** (8.905)
Issue Diversity	3.035 (1.797)	3.219 (1.837)	3.361 (1.856)	3.816* (1.789)
Extremism	-	1.917 (3.649)	.079 (3.607)	−12.387 (6.416)
Growth $^{t-1}$	-	-	−1.818 (2.963)	−11.551** (4.346)
Opposition	-	-	25.013* (11.053)	−60.542 (31.895)
Vote Share $^{e-1}$	-	-	−.280 (.393)	−.286 (.387)
Year (from 1950)	-	-	1.058 (1.118)	1.109 (1.074)
Extremism x Opposition	-	-	-	15.914* (7.263)
Growth x Opposition	-	-	-	13.414* (5.180)
Constant	−344.002*** (60.340)	−355.707*** (64.530)	−380.530*** (66.226)	−350.367*** (65.884)
Observations	111	111	111	111
R^2	0.714	0.715	0.742	0.767
Adjusted R^2	0.686	0.683	0.701	0.724

Note: Country-level fixed-effects omitted *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Figure 4.4: Interaction Plot: Party Extremism x Government Status



the first empirical evidence of crossover in the operational definitions of the programme used by the pledge and saliency approaches. Parties which adopt a pledge strategy also tend to address a wider range of issues. In light of the Chapter 3 findings, where a programme-to-agenda linkage was identified in a system with a strong programme-to-policy linkage, these results further suggest that there is colinearity between issue- and pledge-based electoral appeals. It is likely, in my view, that the policy and agenda linkages are partly endogenous to one another. The extent to which, however, is a big question for which this chapter cannot provide a definitive answer. The next logical step for this research is to collect better quality comparative data, categorising pledges into a consistent scheme of issue themes and examining the distribution of pledges by issue area following the approach of Praprotnik (2017a). It also remains to be seen what the implications of this are for pledge fulfilment.

Table 4.2 demonstrates no support for H4.2. The effect in Model 2 is positive but not close to significance. The relationship between party extremism and pledge-making is, on this evidence, either non-existent or indeed slightly negative. This contradicts the conclusions of both Praprotnik (2017a), as well as Rovny (2013), to the extent that position/issue clarity and pledge-making are comparable concepts. The expected effect of extremism is perhaps cancelled out by the relative professionalism of mainstream parties, which have greater resources to dedicate to the development of policy platforms. Another possible explanation is that mainstream parties tend to release longer[13] and more diverse manifestos (Greene and Haber, 2016) and that pledge making is complementary to these strategic decisions. Although the models control for both of these factors, a "broad appeal" mainstream strategy may not preclude the development of detailed pledges.

Examining the interaction of extremism with opposition status, meanwhile, we find stronger support for H4.3. The effect is positive and significant at 0.05 level. Figure 4.4 shows the interaction's predicted margins. The plot shows that opposition status predicts a greater number of pledges the more extreme a party is, while the interaction with govern-

[13]The bivariate correlation coefficient between the extremism variable and logged length is -0.33 (P=0.00)

ment status appears to a modest effect in the opposite direction. This analysis supports the conclusion that ideologically extreme parties in opposition outline detailed policy platforms because they have less incentive to fudge than mainstream parties. This suggests that, even though extremism does not appear to have any impact on npledges in the aggregate, it has the expected effects under the hood.

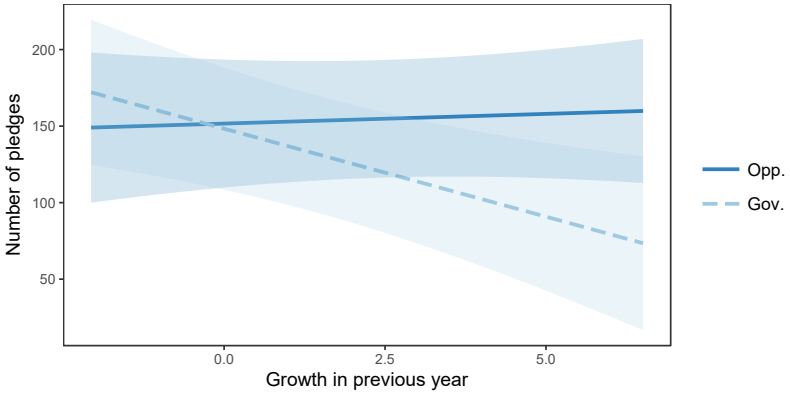
According to this finding, the more ideologically extreme an incumbent party is the *less* detailed its manifesto tends to be. If this is the case, it may be that the experience of executive power and its limitations encourages extremist parties to fudge in service of expectation management. One caveat here, however, is that relatively few ideologically extreme parties participate in government, and this effect may be an artefact of the low number of such cases in the dataset. The findings pertaining to H4.3 must also be qualified overall because the confidence intervals in Figure 4.4 are large and overlap substantially. Additionally, no clear patterns are apparent upon visual inspection of individual plotted values. These findings are suggestive, but require further confirmation.

On balance, this analysis provides some comparative support for the generalisability of Praprotnik's (2017a) conclusions about Austrian party manifestos, to the extent that there are similarities in the measures used. This highlights the need for more systematic data collection efforts on the part of comparative pledge researchers. Though these findings are not by any means conclusive, there is enough evidence here to anticipate that a larger sample of manifestos, with bespoke measures designed specifically to test these hypotheses, would provide stronger support for the idea that ideologically extreme parties tend to produce more detailed manifestos.

H4.4 finds a similar level of tentative support in this analysis. The interaction between previous year's growth and the opposition/incumbent dummy is positive and significant. Figure 4.5 shows the interaction's predicted effects. As anticipated, positive economic conditions do not appear to affect the number of pledges issued by opposition parties, but have a significant negative impact on the number of pledges issued by incumbent parties. This finding suggests that incumbents confident of reelection do feel less pressure to outline detailed policy proposals. They can concentrate on emphasising the record in office without shackling themselves to a detailed programme. Pledge-making strategies, therefore, may well be linked to valence politics, with parties who are confident of their perceived competence experiencing less pressure to outline detailed policy intentions. It is worth pointing out that this result should also be interpreted with caution due to the overlapping confidence intervals in Figure 4.5. It is also worth noting that opposition status has a positive and significant association with pledge-making in Model 3, which disappears when the interactions are introduced.

Finally, in relation to the rest of the control variables, time has no effect in Models 3 and 4, suggesting its impact is subsumed by the stricter measure of length. Meanwhile, vote share at the previous election has no apparent effect in any of the models, indicating that pledge-making strategies are more anticipatory than retrospective. This is perhaps

Figure 4.5: Interaction Plot: Growth x Government Status



not a surprise given that opposition parties have an incentive to repudiate their previous programmes shortly after losing the election, while governing parties' strategies will be conditioned by their experience in office. Combined with the rest of the findings here, parties appear to vary pledge-making in response to prospective rather than retrospective considerations.

4.7 Conclusions

This chapter presented the first comparative test of manifesto pledge-making, contributing to an emerging literature on the features of these widely-used but poorly understood documents. Pledge-making is conceptualised as a strategic dimension of manifesto composition, alongside length and issue diversity. To test the impact of issue diversity and other factors on pledge-making, I aggregated CPP data and combined it with MARPOR, producing a final dataset of 111 manifestos from 9 Western democracies after a thorough investigation of document congruence.

As expected, manifesto length is by far the strongest predictor of the number of pledges. Issue diversity was also found to positively predict pledge-making, a finding which contradicted expectations and carries implications for the programme-to-policy linkage. In relation to the trends in party competition discussed previously, increased issue diversity weakens the validity of the saliency approach because it means greater similarity in the policy areas parties discuss. Counter-intuitively, parties with less distinct issue portfolios tend to produce a greater number of specific manifesto pledges. For these parties, their mandate is better assessed by examining the fulfilment of these promises.

With regard to the secondary analyses concerning party competition, the status of parties in government or opposition is found to influence pledge-making on its own and in combination with other factors. There is a positive relationship between opposition status and pledge-making, which is enhanced for ideologically extreme parties. Meanwhile, governing parties operating in positive economic conditions - and therefore likely confident

of reelection - are found to make relatively fewer pledges.

These findings suggest that pledge-making is a tool for parties which are on the back foot, and that incumbents with favourable electoral prospects see less incentive to develop detailed policy programmes. This explanation neatly complements the recent finding by (Greene, 2016) that incumbent parties increase the diversity of their issue appeals in response to poor economic conditions. Packing a manifesto with specific pledges may be an attempt to communicate serious intent and readiness for government to voters. This strategy may be misguided, given that parties which are in a better position to rely upon valence politics tend to produce fewer pledges. Meanwhile, for well-performing incumbents, a decreased focus on pledge-making could reflect either prospective strategic judgements or simple intertia. A government campaigning for a second or third term in office is already engaged in implementing real-life policies, and has perhaps not only less incentive but less *capacity* to propose a slate of brand-new measures.

This also has implications for studies of the programme-to-policy linkage. It may be easier for returning incumbents to fulfil their pledges than brand new governments because there are fewer of them to redeem, and a higher share presumably relate to continuity and the status quo. It is certainly worth considering how dynamics like this might artificially bias estimates of pledge fulfilment. These considerations provide further rationale for the analysis in the next chapter.

The primary and secondary findings are ostensibly contradictory, given that mainstream parties tend to release longer and more diverse manifestos. An investigation which is able to take account of pledge-making in different issue areas would likely shed some light on this, given that using whole documents as observations masks underlying issue-by-issue dynamics. This again highlights the need for pledge data collection which categorises pledges by issues in a consistent way.

Chapter 5

A Shortcut to Party Responsibility? Manifesto Composition and Pledge Fulfilment

As stated in previous chapters, the second half of this thesis primarily concerns the pledge approach. This began with an investigation of the operational indicator of the "programme" aspect of the programme-to-policy linkage. I introduced the concept of manifesto composition and investigated the number of manifesto pledges as a dependent variable for the first time, finding a consistent positive relationship between the scope of parties' issue appeals and the number of pledges made while controlling for overall manifesto length. I also offered tentative evidence that incumbent and opposition status condition the effects of party extremism and economic growth on parties' pledge-making strategies.

This analysis underlines a growing recognition that the manifesto writing process is sensitive to strategic considerations, and that the structure and intent of the resulting documents can influence post-election party conduct (Ray, 2007; Dolezal et al., 2012; Clark and Bennie, 2018; Harmel, 2018). As Louwerse (2011b, p.432) states "manifestos are strategic documents... any analysis of these documents needs to take this into account". I would broaden this assertion to include any analysis *using* manifesto documents. Manifestos have long been viewed as wishlists communicating sets of "priorities". But they are tactically calibrated documents, a recurring feature of party competition deeply integrated into the institutional structure of political life in most democracies.

The classical theory of the party mandate expects electorally victorious parties to enact the contents of out their programmes via the mechanism of party responsibility. Pledge studies are designed to measure the congruence of campaign promises with policy outputs. However, since programmes are not uniform in nature and vary greatly depending upon the party, the year and the electoral context, the share of pledges enacted could be partly endogenous to the manifesto's form and function. Were this shown to be the case it would greatly complicate our understanding of the programme-to-policy linkage, undermining the

ability of researchers to make valid comparisons between parties and countries. Having pointed out substantial variation in manifesto composition, is important to verify that pledge fulfilment rates are independent of how programmes are written.

Accordingly, in this chapter I test the impact of manifesto composition features on fulfilment. This is achieved by adding the composition variables to standard models of pledge fulfilment to check if document structure impacts governing parties' pledge fulfilment rates, using both aggregated and disaggregated pledge data. Though aspects of manifesto composition appear to have some impact on pledge fulfilment, the effects are marginal compared to other statistically significant factors. Crucially, the number of pledges made by parties has little bearing on the rate of pledge fulfilment. This suggests that parties fully commit to their defined policy packages regardless of their size and scope. From a normative perspective, this finding establishes that pledge fulfilment rates are meaningful at least insofar as they reflect a party's self-defined targets. For this reason, I argue that pledge fulfilment can be thought of as an aspect of government performance.

5.1 Manifesto Composition and Pledge Fulfilment

The previous chapter demonstrated that there is structural variation in party manifestos along three dimensions: their length, their thematic scope and the number of specific pledges they contain. These dimensions were also shown to be related to one another, with manifesto length and issue diversity both predicting a greater number of pledges. These structural features do not exist in a vacuum, and it is reasonable to anticipate that the manner in which a party writes its manifesto will have some knock-on effect on its ability to carry out its stated policy intentions. Here I link the pre-campaign and post-election stages of the manifesto "life cycle" elucidated by Dolezal et al. (2012), who acknowledged the possibility that the manifesto writing process could have ripple effects in post-election politics.

The validity of the pledge approach is predicated on an understanding that an intelligible comparison can be made between rates of manifesto pledge fulfilment within and between countries, as long as consistent coding procedures are used (Thomson et al., 2017). But not all pledges or manifestos are created equal, as demonstrated by existing qualitative and quantitative studies on the process of manifesto production and parties' attitudes to the documents (Däubler, 2012; Dolezal et al., 2012). It is undoubtedly true that manifestos are designed with many different audiences in mind (Kavanagh, 1981; Naurin, 2014). Hence we can anticipate that a number of internal and external pressures exert themselves during the manifesto drafting process. This drafting process also takes place in view of anticipated election results, with aspects of manifesto composition varying based on the party's expected post-election role. Dolezal et al. (2012, p.890) observed that parties which expect to enter government tend to write a "contract with the voters", while also-ran parties tend to use their manifestos "for advertising purposes", designations first introduced by Ray (2007).

These dynamics complicate the normative meaning of linkages identified using the approach and speak to its main weaknesses, particularly its inability to consider the government agenda beyond what was specified in the manifesto (Louwerse, 2011a). The pledge approach has been portrayed as a "positive perspective" on party government (Pétry and Colette, 2009), in the sense that generally high rates of pledge fulfilment contradict the pessimistic received wisdom of both voters and - until recent years - the academic community. However, given the multifaceted strategic utility of manifestos, as well as their textual complexity (Dolezal et al., 2012; Bischof, 2017; Eder et al., 2017), it sometimes seems that they are aimed at everybody *except* voters. In this sense there may be some justification for citizens' well-documented cynicism about campaign promises (Naurin, 2011; Thomson et al., 2017). It is important, therefore, to ensure that pledge fulfilment rates are not subject to variation in manifesto structure. It would pose a conundrum for the pledge approach if it could be shown that fulfilment rates systematically differ as a function of the number of pledges. Nonetheless, there are strategic and practical reasons to believe this might be the case, and I develop straightforward expectations to this end.

The central strategic choice manifesto authors face is how explicit to make the party's policy intentions. There are several distinct methods parties can use to obfuscate: via position blurring (Rovny, 2013), limiting the detail of individual promises (Bara, 2005) or, indeed, by making fewer of them in the first place. Pledge-making (or not) has so far been overlooked by scholars. Yet, as Louwerse (2011b, p.432) points out, post-election scrutiny of government should be an incentive to limit the number of specific pledges made. This may not be the case for all parties at all times; a party anticipating involvement in coalition negotiations might make more pledges in an attempt to strengthen its bargaining position. And, as Finer (1975) suggested, the existence of pre-specified manifesto pledges may be advantageous in overcoming bureaucratic hurdles. But it is safe to assume that, most of the time, office-seeking parties with strong central control of the drafting process (Harmel, 2018, p.236) will be averse to constraining their freedom of action in government ahead of time.

Although non-binding, pledges carry with them a "normative force"; if governments behave at odds with their promises they expose themselves to accusations of being untrustworthy and, at worst, undermining democracy (Schedler, 1998, p.195). To avoid this pitfall, parties can broaden the scope of permissible post-election behaviour by making ambiguous statements and avoiding specific commitments. In this sense, governments might "hack" their way to responsibility by limiting the specificity of their policy intentions in the manifesto[1].

The previous chapter's analysis suggests there is something to this notion, since it was found that incumbents confident of returning to government tend to restrict their pledge-

[1]It is worth pointing out that the fulfilment of limited programmes is not automatically negative. Finer (1975) expressed support for restricting the number of pledges to a handful of core commitments to restore the coherence of mandates.

making. Whether or not the creation of a large number of pledges is wise is probably also contingent on the anticipated election result. If parties tend to make fewer pledges when they anticipate a good result - assuming they are generally correct in their assessments - one would expect these parties to have an easier time fulfilling their pledges. Furthermore, if a pledge-heavy strategy is used as a Hail Mary by desperate opposition parties, one would anticipate that they find it more difficult to fulfil their pledges on the occasions they do unexpectedly enter government.

Despite these clear disincentives to commit to a large number of manifesto pledges, however, their number has increased substantially over time (Finer, 1975; Bara, 2005; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016). This is almost certainly due to the pressures of party competition (Louwerse, 2011b), which has also resulted in increases along the other dimensions of composition (McCombs and Zhu, 1995; Green-Pedersen, 2007). Manifesto authors seem to contend with a strategic tension between the politics of campaigns and the politics of governing. The empirical trends suggest that the more immediate incentive tends to win out. Western political parties have repeatedly discounted the possible post-election drawbacks of long and complicated manifestos in favour of maximising electoral competitiveness. To outside observers it appears that parties have been engaged in a kind of decades-long manifesto arms race, increasing the specificity and scope of their appeals simultaneously. The analogy is especially appropriate because it would be irrational for a party to do so voluntarily. Håkansson and Naurin (2016) attribute these increases to three trends: electoral dealignment, the professionalisation of campaigns and the mediatisation of the campaign environment. Whether or not this assessment is correct, the underlying descriptive facts cannot be disputed.

Moving away from foreshadowing election results and party competition, there are more straightforward reasons to expect a negative relationship between the number of pledges and the rate of their fulfilment. Common sense dictates that parties which make a large number of specific promises find it more challenging to redeem a substantial proportion of them (Thomson and Costello, 2016). Recent evidence suggests that pledge specificity does impact fulfilment - McMillan (2019) demonstrates in the Scottish context that more detailed pledges are significantly less likely to be implemented. It would be unsurprising to find that the number of pledges has the same effect. Although governments have tremendous resources at their disposal, their capacity is limited in other ways, particularly regarding the executive's attention and other human resources. A higher number of pledges to enact will demand more sustained attention and effort, which one would naturally expect to lead to a reduction in the proportion - but not absolute number - successfully redeemed. Furthermore, fewer pledges are fulfilled when economic growth is weak (Thomson and Costello, 2016; Praprotnik, 2017b). This suggests that financial resources are also important to pledge-fulfilment, and that pledge fulfilment will be lower when these resources are spread more thinly. We would also expect this to be accentuated by other factors like a lack of governing experience.

The effect of the number of pledges on fulfilment has previously been tested in two studies. Thomson and Costello (2016) investigated the impact of economic conditions on pledge fulfilment in Ireland and used a log of the number of pledges as a control variable. The authors of Thomson et al. (2017), the large comparative study, also included the variable in their models, this time divided by 10. The dependent variable in both studies was the likelihood of pledge fulfilment using the individual pledge as the unit of analysis. Neither study found any effect of the number of pledges on the likelihood of fulfilment. However, these models did not account for other composition variables, as is the case here. Furthermore, the appropriate unit of analysis for testing the effects of these variables is the manifesto as a whole. Below I test the effects of these variables using this strategy - manifestos as observations in a linear model - in addition to the conventional approach with pledges as observations in logistic models. I anticipate the following.

Hypothesis 5.1. *A greater number of manifesto pledges predicts a lower rate of pledge fulfilment.*

A similar expectation can be advanced for issue diversity, and for many of the same reasons. When parties devote attention to many different areas, it suggests that they do not have strong preferences about the priority assigned to different issues. Indeed, although "priority" and "emphasis" are separable concepts in theory[2], they have at times been used interchangeably (e.g. Budge 1992).

Although I did previously demonstrate that issue diversity is positively associated with the number of pledges made, there is reason to believe that parties with highly diffuse issue attention place a lower premium on the fulfilment of any given pledge than a party which restricts its attention to a handful of dimensions. Even with the resources of government, it should be more difficult to coordinate the fulfilment of pledges which are spread among (or between) many different departments which compete for executive time and resources due to limitations on attention and capacity. Meanwhile, parties whose pledges are concentrated in a small number of issue areas should find it easier to surmount these obstacles. Additionally, narrow issue attention is more likely to reflect a policy-orientation and a party's underlying preferences, which will presumably carry through into greater resources and attention being devoted to these areas in government.

Hypothesis 5.2. *Greater manifesto issue diversity predicts a lower rate of pledge fulfilment.*

Finally, I do not formulate any specific expectation about the effect of manifesto length on fulfilment. Dolezal et al. (2012) demonstrated that variation in absolute manifesto length - aside from a secular increase over time - is explained by party size and government status.

[2]These terms are distinguishable in two ways. Firstly, priority refers to a ranking of importance, while emphasis refers to the precise extent a topic is discussed. Secondly, it is theoretically possible for parties to publicly emphasise topics which are not their private priority.

Larger parties and parties of government have more resources at their disposal, and hence produce more extensive documents. I would expect any association between length and fulfilment to be a function of npledges and issue diversity to the extent that these variables are correlated. There is no reason to anticipate that the total length of a manifesto has any independent relationship with the proportion of pledges fulfilled.

5.2 Data and Measures

Datasets

All data used to test these hypotheses is drawn from the same Comparative Party Pledge Group dataset used in the previous chapter, with additional variables added using World Bank and Parlgov data. The three cases dropped for methodological reasons in the previous chapter - Bulgaria, Italy and the United States - are still excluded here across all analyses. The included countries remain Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Two different modelling strategies (described below) are employed to test H5.1 and H2, necessitating the use of the same data structured in different ways. Firstly, the aggregated CPP dataset created for Chapter 4 is used, minus 15 Swedish manifestos (of 23 in total) for which no fulfilment data has been collected. This leaves 96 manifesto-level observations with the same unbalanced asymmetric panel structure, 44 of which belong to parties which subsequently entered government. The complete list of observations is shown in Table A.8 in the appendix.

Secondly, a non-aggregated pledge dataset structure is created for further analyses, with individual pledges as observations. The same 96 manifestos are included in this dataset, their combined pledges comprising 12,714 observations. This dataset is similar to the original, non-aggregated format of the CPP dataset with pledges as observations, the main difference being the inclusion of several variables calculated using the MARPOR data which necessitates the reduced number of observations. To obtain the dataset in this form, relevant variables from the aggregated dataset were merged into the original pledge dataset using a manifesto identifier variable. Inclusive of missing data, including the Swedish manifestos left out here, the complete dataset includes 25,838 observations i.e. slightly fewer than half of the pledges contained in the original dataset are used in this subsample, and the same is true of the number of manifestos.

All of the models used below more or less follow the approach of Thomson et al. (2017). In the aggregated analysis, the dependent variable is the proportion of pledges fulfilled in each manifesto. I use a binomial generalised linear model (GLM) with a logit link for these analyses, an approach commonly employed when the dependent variable is a proportion with a high degree of variance. The standard errors are clustered by country. This mimics models run as robustness checks by (Thomson et al., 2017) which also employed the man-

ifesto as the unit of analysis. The pledge-level analysis is conducted using a conventional model of pledge fulfilment similar to those employed in the previous literature. The dependent variable is a pledge fulfilment dummy and a logistic regression model is estimated. In this case, the standard errors are clustered by manifesto.

To estimate the effect of the manifesto composition variables on pledge fulfilment, a variety of other explanatory factors must be taken into account. Many of the causes and conditions of pledge fulfilment are well established in the literature, and here I briefly summarise them. The primary determinant of party pledge fulfilment is the extent to which a party has control of the levers of power. Hence, parties of government fulfil a greater share of pledges than parties in opposition, parties governing alone fulfil more than parties in coalition, parties which control the chief executive tend to fulfil more than those which don't and parties with parliamentary majorities tend to fulfil more than parties with parliamentary minorities (see e.g. Thomson 2001; Artés 2013; Naurin 2014; Thomson et al. 2017).

There is mixed evidence for the impact of other institutional and circumstantial factors on pledge fulfilment. Pledges which enter a coalition agreement are much more likely to be fulfilled than those which don't (Praprotnik and Ennser-Jedenastik, 2015), while control of the relevant ministerial portfolio has been found to increase the likelihood of fulfilment in some cases (Thomson, 2001; Praprotnik and Ennser-Jedenastik, 2015) but exert limited impact in others (e.g. Thomson and Costello 2016), most notably in comparative analysis (Thomson et al., 2017). Pledges are more likely to be fulfilled the longer a party is in power (Thomson et al., 2017). However, recent evidence suggests this relationship is not linear, with the rate of government pledge fulfilment shown to drop off after around two years in Canada and Quebec (Duval and Pétry, 2018). There is also a strong relationship between economic growth and pledge fulfilment, which is even more pronounced for pledges which imply increased government spending (Praprotnik, 2017b; Thomson et al., 2017). Finally, previous experience in government has also been found to improve rates of pledge fulfilment (Thomson et al., 2017).

I control for these various explanations in the analysis below. Six GLM models and five logistic models are estimated. Because the dynamics of pledge fulfilment are so different for election winners and losers, both of the datasets are split into government and opposition subsets for all of the analyses. Limited models using only manifesto composition to predict pledge fulfilment are estimated alongside comprehensive models for both sets of analyses. The complete models here account for most of the important determinants identified above, but are somewhat streamlined compared to those estimated by Thomson et al. (2017).

All models include dummies for control of the chief executive and the type of government[3]. A relevant ministry dummy is included for the logistic models but excluded from

[3]Coalition majorities, single-party minorities are included using single-party majorities as the reference group. No control is included for minority coalitions because this status does not apply to any of the parties contained in this subset of the CPP dataset.

the GLM models due to the difficulties involved in aggregating this measure intelligibly. I also control for each party's percentage of seats in the legislature, party extremism, the government's time in office until the next election (in months) and average economic growth in the years covering the same period of time. I control for participation in government and/or incumbency before the relevant election in the government models, while in the opposition models the variable is exchanged for a government experience dummy indicating if the party has ever participated in government or not.

The key independent variables in each analysis are the three manifesto composition indicators introduced in Chapter 4: absolute length, issue diversity and the number of pledges. These are measured in the same way, with MARPOR quasi-sentence counts used for length and the expected number of manifesto issues representing issue diversity. Like the previous chapter's analysis, length is logged in the OLS models. Meanwhile, again following Thomson et al. (2017), the length and number of pledges are divided by 10 in the logistic models to increase the size of the coefficients. This minor transformation does not effect calculations of statistical significance.

5.3 Analysis

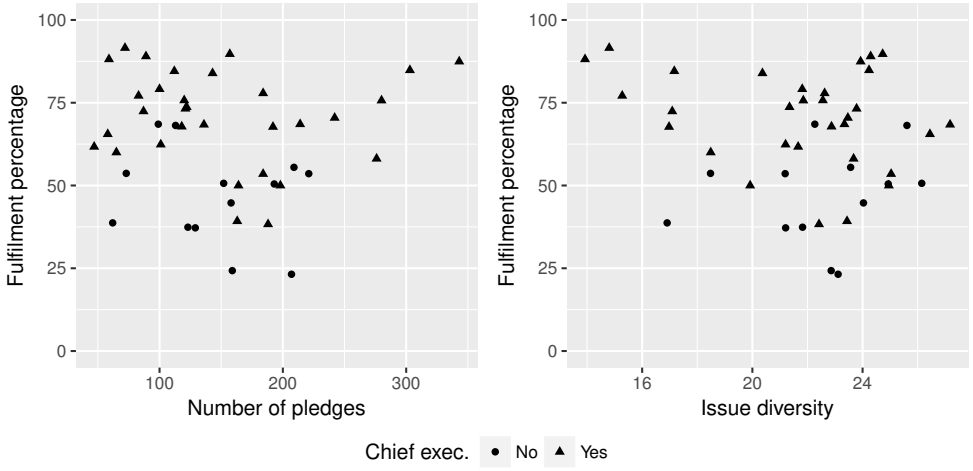


Figure 5.1: Scatterplots: Governing Party Manifesto Composition vs. Pledge Fulfilment

To begin with I examine the bivariate relationship between the relevant manifesto composition features and pledge fulfilment. Figure 5.1 shows scatterplots of governing party pledge fulfilment vs. the number of pledges and issue diversity. Parties which controlled the chief executive after the relevant election are represented by triangles rather than circles. Interestingly, at a basic level, making a large number of pledges doesn't seem to preclude parties from achieving high rates of fulfilment. The three manifestos containing the most pledges were all fulfilled at >75%. Most parties exceeding this cut-off, however, seem to cluster in the range of 50-150 pledges. Overall, however, there is no obvious linear pat-

tern in the bivariate association between pledge-making and fulfilment percentage, which is illustrated further by the near-zero correlation coefficient (r=−0.049).

The correlation between issue diversity and fulfilment is not much stronger (r=−0.195). However, visual inspection of the plot reveals that values are dispersed in a pattern resembling a heteroscedastic distribution. Just like pledge-making, parties with very diverse manifestos are shown to fulfil their pledges at a high rate. However, many of them seem to attain lower fulfilment rates, while the bottom left quadrant is empty save for one observation. Though the sample here is very small it suggests that parties with low ENMI tend to obtain high rates of fulfilment but that the association weakens as ENMI increases. Whether this weak tendency is endogenous to some other variable like manifesto length might be answered by turning to the regression analysis.

Table 5.1: GLM Models: Composition and **Governing Party** Pledge Fulfilment

	Dependent variable:		
	Pledge fulfilment rate		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Length (log)	-.165 (.216)	.006 (.189)	-.060 (.164)
Diversity	-.040 (.050)	.015 (.048)	-.005 (.044)
No. Pledges	.002 (.002)	-.001 (.002)	-.001 (.001)
Chief Exec.	-	.374** (.138)	.096 (.088)
Single-Party Min.†	-	-.141 (.258)	.295 (.204)
Coalition Maj.†	-	-1.094*** (.223)	-.559 (.337)
Seats %	-	-	.011 (.007)
Extremism	-	-	.058 (.076)
Duration (months)	-	-	.025*** (.007)
Incumbent $^{t-1}$	-	-	.440** (.148)
Average growth	-	-	.079 (.051)
Constant	2.301 (1.211)	.715 (1.050)	-.655 (.951)
Observations	44	44	44
Log Psuedolikelihood	-20.173	-18.469	-18.041

Cluster-robust std. errors in parentheses *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
†Reference category: single party majority

Table 5.1 shows the GLM regression models of manifesto pledge fulfilment for parties of government, while 5.2 shows the same for parties of opposition. In both tables, the first model limits the predictor variables to the manifesto composition features (Model 1 & 4). The second model adds government type variables (Model 2 & 5), typically the strongest predictors of pledge fulfilment. The third model is the most comprehensive (Model 3 & 6), adding the additional control variables to the equation. The logistic regression models using manifesto pledges are shown in Table 5.3. A similar procedure is followed here, with composition-only models shown alongside near-complete explanatory models of pledge fulfilment for both the government subsample (Model 7 & 8) and the opposition subsample (Model 9 & 10).

Table 5.2: GLM Models: Composition and **Opposition Party** Pledge Fulfilment

	Dependent variable:		
	Pledge fulfilment rate		
	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Length (log)	.235 (.172)	.235 (.138)	.051 (.088)
Diversity	.003 (.028)	-.003 (.032)	.023 (.015)
No. Pledges	-.002 (.002)	-.002 (.002)	-.002 (.001)
Single-Party Min.†	-	.473 (.271)	.738*** (.098)
Coalition Maj.†	-	.231 (.304)	.497 (.342)
Seats %	-	-	.013* (.006)
Extremism	-	-	-.061 (.078)
Duration (months)	-	-	.029* (.012)
Never in Govt.	-	-	.266 (.245)
Average growth	-	-	.079* (.030)
Constant	-2.013** (.724)	-2.133*** (.518)	-3.080*** (.956)
Observations	52	52	52
Log Psuedolikelihood	-22.870	-22.656	-22.201

Cluster-robust std. errors in parentheses *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
†Reference category: single party majority

The government models in Tables 5.1 and 5.3 tell a similar story. Manifesto composition features - as a proxy for party strategy - have little effect on the ability of governing parties to enact their campaign promises. None of the composition features achieve statistical significance in any of the models shown in Table 5.1. With regard to other variables, Model 2 is as expected, with control of the chief executive being a positive and statistically significant predictor of fulfilment. Meanwhile, coalition is found to be strongly negatively significant relative to the reference group, single-party majorities. Somewhat surprisingly, participation in the previous government and duration in months are found to be strongly significant in Model 3, where the effects of the government type variables disappear. Though I do not doubt these effects are genuine, that they seem to absorb the effects of the institutional variables should not be taken too seriously due to the relatively small number of observations.

The GLM opposition models in Table 5.2 tell a similar story. None of the composition variables achieve statistical significance in any of the models. Model 6 is the only one in Table 5.2 to show any statistically significant effects. Unsurprisingly, the findings show that opposition parties fulfil more pledges under (single-party) minority governments compared to single- and multi-party majorities. This has previously been demonstrated in the pledge literature, and is presumably because such governments must rely on parliamentary bargaining to pass legislation (Artés, 2013; Moury and Fernandes, 2018). Additionally, seat share, government duration and economic growth are all statistically significant positive predictors of opposition pledge fulfilment. The latter is especially notable. If governing parties are indeed less likely to fulfil their rivals' pledges in bad economic times, does this

suggest that they are more amenable to a consensual agenda when they feel less at risk of electoral defeat? Though opposition promises have been included in numerous pledge studies, researchers have not yet paid much attention to their dynamics. The findings here suggest that this aspect of the linkage is ripe for further study.

In 5.3, issue diversity and npledges are both moderately-to-strongly statistically significant in Model 7, but the coefficients (respectively negative and positive) are comparatively small. When the remaining variables are added the effect of length disappears. However, the negative effect size for diversity is strengthened and it becomes even more strongly statistically significant. This may simply be an artefact of the large number of observations - especially in the composition-only model - but it should not be dismissed out of hand. It would not be a great surprise to learn that governments with divided attention have a harder time following through on specific campaign commitments. Model 8 suggests, just like the GLM analysis, that previous incumbency is a very strong predictor of pledge fulfilment.

The opposition models in 5.3 demonstrate a similar pattern. All three composition variables have small coefficients, and length and diversity are both negative and significant. The apparent effect of length weakens, but does not entirely disappear, in the more complete Model 10. The effect size is, however, vanishingly small. Once again, as in the government models, the coefficient for diversity becomes larger and more strongly significant in the complete model. Given that the effect applies to both government and opposition parties and *gains* strength when controls are introduced to the model, it is safe to assume the effect reflects a real phenomenon. Time and economic growth are also positive and significant predictors of pledge fulfilment in this model, adding to the impression given in Table 5.2.

On the basis of this analysis, then, H5.1 is definitively rejected. There does not seem to be any relationship between the number of pledges made and the ability of parties to fulfil these pledges. Similarly, although no expectations were formulated about the influence of manifesto length, there is no evidence that it affects pledge fulfilment in either direction. This is a surprise given the extent to which pledge-making strategies vary. Intuitively it does not seem plausible that, all else being equal, a government is just as likely to fulfil several hundred pledges as it is several dozen. It is perhaps the case that campaign strategies are endogenous to policy commitment. In other words, a party which pursues a pledge-oriented strategy - releasing a long and detailed manifesto - possesses greater intrinsic motivation to carry the programme out. In some ways, this is the essence of party responsibility. The null finding for H5.1 lends added credibility to the pledge approach. What parties run on is indeed what they intend to do.

It is worth applying the caveat, however, that the reported findings do not preclude the possibility that the number of pledges impacts the fulfilment rate in more specific circumstances. But it does suggest that any effect would be nonlinear and/or conditional. An opposition party with low electoral expectations could release a long and detailed wishlist of pledges but overperform and end up in government. There is no question that such a party

Table 5.3: Logit Models: Manifesto Composition and Pledge Fulfilment Likelihood

	Dependent variable:			
	Government Pledge Fulfilment		Opposition Pledge Fulfilment	
	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Length	0.002*** (0.001)	−0.0003 (0.001)	−0.002*** (0.001)	−0.001* (0.001)
Diversity	−0.047** (0.018)	−0.071*** (0.020)	−0.029** (0.010)	−0.053*** (0.014)
No. Pledges	−0.014 (0.008)	0.002 (0.009)	0.007 (0.005)	−0.002 (0.006)
Chief Exec.	-	0.085 (0.121)	-	-
Coalition Maj.†	-	0.113 (0.307)	-	0.623** (0.205)
Single Min.†	-	0.382* (0.155)	-	0.876*** (0.098)
Ministry	-	0.140 (0.086)	-	-
Seats	-	0.006 (0.005)	-	0.005 (0.003)
Extremism	-	0.034 (0.040)	-	0.008 (0.025)
Months	-	0.004 (0.005)	-	0.025*** (0.006)
Incumbent $^{t-1}$	-	0.585*** (0.100)		
Never in Govt.	-	-	-	−0.093 (0.099)
Growth Avg.	-	0.136*** (0.027)	-	0.075*** (0.021)
Constant	0.813* (0.403)	0.088 (0.550)	−0.716*** (0.191)	−1.711*** (0.388)
Observations	5,544	5,401	7,170	6,835
Log Likelihood	−3,308.008	−3,184.223	−4,372.725	−4,086.185

Cluster-robust std. errors in parentheses *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

†Reference category: single party majority

would have difficulty carrying out a large proportion of its promises. Although unrelated to the number of pledges made *per se*, the experience of the British Liberal Democrats in their 2010-2015 coalition with the Conservatives demonstrated the problems small parties can encounter if they overreach in the manifesto and unexpectedly enter government. Of course, any effect of pledge-making on fulfilment rate could also depend upon the constraints on governing parties, including their relative strength in parliament. It may simply be the case that these examples are rare, in which case the effects are subsumed by other variables like seat share and government type. Or, alternatively, that the conditions are too contextually specific to measure adequately at present. In future it is worth addressing the question qualitatively, in addition to revisiting this analysis as more comparative pledge fulfilment data becomes available.

Though issue diversity did not demonstrate any predictive effects in the GLM models, the evidence presented in Table 5.3 suggests that H5.2 could be tentatively accepted. At the level of individual pledges, for both government and opposition parties, it seems that a diverse manifesto is a statistically significant negative predictor of fulfilment. To test the robustness of this finding, a model inclusive of all control variables is run for all parties in the dataset, combining opposition and government observations. Though in this model all of the composition variables are statistically significant, issue diversity is the only one with a notable effect size. Although other factors dwarf its effect, it is far from perfunctory. The large number of observations makes this analysis sensitive to small effects, so it would be

Table 5.4: Logit Model: **All Party** Manifesto Composition and Pledge Fulfilment Likelihood

	Dependent variable:
	Pledge Fulfilment
Length	0.001* (0.0004)
Diversity	−0.063*** (0.010)
No. Pledges	−0.012** (0.004)
Chief Exec.	0.308*** (0.090)
Coalition Maj.†	0.587*** (0.162)
Single Min.†	0.709*** (0.073)
Ministry	0.373*** (0.079)
Seats	0.006** (0.002)
Extremism	−0.008 (0.019)
Months	0.015*** (0.003)
Govt.	0.690*** (0.084)
Incumbent $^{t-1}$	0.238*** (0.055)
Never in Govt.	0.006 (0.080)
Growth Avg.	0.114*** (0.015)
Constant	−1.419*** (0.310)
Observations	12,236
Log Likelihood	−7,374.106

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
†Reference category: single party majority

unwise to assume that this finding can be generalised until more manifesto-level observations are available.

The analysis at least provides enough suggestive evidence to support further enquiry on the matter. There are straightforward theoretical reasons to believe that parties which focus their campaign appeals on a smaller number of issues are more likely not only to release more densely packed programmes (Praprotnik, 2017a), but also to fulfil their pledges. As discussed above, these parties presumably neglect issues which they regard as low-priority during the campaign while others dedicate public attention to issues the party leadership, membership and core voters have little interest in. This speaks yet again to the conceptual distinction between priority and emphasis. Parties which only emphasise issues they internally prioritise are likely to be policy-seekers who are more committed to the pledges they make and hence fulfil more of them when they enter government. Additionally, that extremism is not a significant predictor of pledge fulfilment in any model indicates that the negative effect of issue diversity on fulfilment likelihood is not simply an artefact of party nicheness.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter presented an exploratory analysis concerning the link between pledge-making and issue strategies and the programme-to-policy linkage. I did not find any connection between the total number of pledges made and the rate of pledge fulfilment. The absolute number of promises a party makes during the campaign has no bearing on the likelihood that those pledges will be fulfilled. This is a highly counterintuitive conclusion, but given what this thesis has established so far and what previous literature has reported, it is perhaps not such a surprise. Manifestos, it seems, are credible commitments.

As discussed at length in the previous chapter, parties must decide upon a strategy for their manifestos, and these calculations - aimed at several different audiences - are made on the basis of anticipated electoral performance and post-election considerations. Given the findings here, we can infer that parties generally do not make many pledges they intend to break. If they do, these at least do not comprise a significant share of the total promises made, and are likely developed in highly specific situations and strategic contexts. They may also reflect a niche party's unexpected entry into a governing coalition, having made "wishful thinking" pledges they did not expect to be tested in reality. These findings ultimately bode well for the pledge fulfilment research programme and the idea of party mandates, demonstrating as it does that a party's pledge fulfilment rate is not simply a function of the extent to which it makes promises. Regardless of the pledge-making strategy a party pursues, the proportion of individual promises enacted is an intelligible and comparable measure of the programme-to-policy linkage. In this sense, the measure can be construed as an aspect of party performance.

The findings in relation to issue diversity, on the other hand, suggest that parties with more focused campaign strategies are more effective at carrying out their pledges regardless of opposition or government status. Though support for this hypothesis was not unequivocal, it is plausible that policy-seeking parties limiting the scope of their appeals and demonstrate high commitment to their pledges. On top of the findings presented in Chapters 3 & 4, this provides further evidence that the linkage is connected to the issue agenda and parties' issue attention strategies. It seems that, in parties' campaign appeals, pledges and issues are a package deal. Pledge scholars would be well advised to consider parties' issue attention strategies in future studies of pledge-making and fulfilment.

It is worth pointing out that the dynamics proposed here in relation to diversity and pledge-making are, in some sense, ostensibly contradictory. Office-seeking mainstream parties tend to release more detailed and diverse manifestos (Dolezal et al., 2012; Håkansson and Naurin, 2016) and, once elected, fulfil a greater proportion of their pledges (Thomson et al., 2017). In the previous chapter I identified a positive relationship between issue diversity and the number of pledges. In this chapter I find no link between the number of pledges and the rate at which they are fulfilled. Yet, in addition, I find support for the notion that parties with less diverse issue appeals are more likely to fulfil their pledges,

which complements the relationship between opposition party extremism and issue clarity identified by Praprotnik (2017a)

It is fair to state, on this basis, that the relationship between party strategy, manifesto composition and pledge fulfilment is multi-layered. It is difficult to talk in generalities concerning how, for example, "mainstream" and "niche" parties differ in these areas. A larger sample of manifesto documents would enable investigation of the conditions in which there might be a relationship between diversity and fulfilment and allow stronger inferences to be made. Given the MARPOR project's extensive coverage and the ease by which the measure can be calculated, this question can be revisited as quickly as new pledge data becomes available.

In the meantime, building on the first step taken by Praprotnik (2017a), researchers can explore the micro-dynamics of issue attention and its relationship to pledge-making and fulfilment. Of particular relevance to the primary concern of this thesis - the compatibility of the pledge and saliency approaches - is the question of whether governing parties are more likely to fulfil pledges in issue areas they assign greater emphasis. The findings here, combined with those in the previous chapter, provide a semblance of empirical credibility to this notion.

Chapter 6

The Responsible Electorate? The Linkage and Election Outcomes

In the last chapter I examined how manifesto composition features impact the strength of the programme-to-policy linkage. While the number of pledges and the length of the manifesto was found to be unimportant, I presented some evidence that parties with a narrow issue focus are more likely to fulfil their pledges. The analysis questioned fundamental assumptions of the pledge approach and found them to be robust. The final empirical portion of the thesis continues this theme, investigating for the first time whether or not parties are rewarded for faithfully carrying out their campaign promises.

In the view of traditional mandate theory, the final stage in the linkage process occurs when citizens cast judgement on the government's fealty to its campaign platform at the ballot box. The concept of responsible parties (Downs, 1957) is ideally complemented and maintained by the existence of a "responsible electorate" (Key, 1966) who act on this basis. In theory, having endorsed a set of promises for reasons of utility maximisation, voters ought to penalise parties which fail to enact the policy programme on which they were originally elected. Despite the influence of Downs' theory on the pledge fulfilment literature, however, the effects of mandate fulfilment on subsequent electoral performance are unknown.

In this chapter, I connect the programme-to-policy linkage to an established literature on government performance, voting behaviour and valence politics by testing the effects of pledge fulfilment on changes in vote share. Another version of the aggregated CPPG pledge dataset is used to investigate this relationship for the first time. Incumbent/opposition status is found to condition the effect of pledge fulfilment on electoral performance, with governing parties rewarded and opposition parties punished for higher levels of pledge fulfilment. Though the analysis is limited for reasons of data availability, the most plausible explanation is that governments neutralise electoral threats by fulfilling opposition party pledges. This is consistent with the previous chapter's incidental finding that opposition party pledges are fulfilled at higher rates during good economic times. This in turn suggests that pledge fulfilment has meaningful implications for party competition and governance.

To complete this thesis, then, I continue along the established chain of promissory representation to its natural end-point. Having examined the origins of manifestos, their structure and its effect on the pledge fulfilment rate, I examine the electoral effects of the linkage for the first time. Though the analysis presented here is exploratory in nature and represents only a first step towards understanding the real-world meaning of the programme-to-policy linkage, the results are highly suggestive and have substantive implications for the role of campaign pledges in party competition.

6.1 Mandates, Government Performance and Electoral Outcomes

According to mandate theory, party responsibility is central to the proper functioning of democracy as the mechanism by which the public's desired policies are enacted (Downs, 1957). Party responsibility is the rational course of action for parties in a Downsian model because there is purportedly a severe reputational cost associated with "cheap talk... for the sake of a few votes" (Bonilla, 2017, p.7). Equally important, however, is the ability of informed citizens to hold parties accountable if their actions fail to meet expectations.

This is because campaign promises are not self-enforcing, and parties are not formally obliged to follow through on their programmes. Pledges can come a cropper despite a government's best intentions and efforts. This is why there is typically no formal or legal recourse for voters who were "mis-sold" a party (Louwerse, 2011a, p.11). Indeed, this was tested in the British courts when a member of the public attempted to bring forward a judicial review of the Labour government's unilateral decision to ratify the Lisbon Treaty despite the the party's manifesto pledge to hold a referendum on its predecessor, the Constitutional Treaty (Wheeler, R v Office of the Prime Minister & Anor [2008] EWHC 1409). The decision against the claimant effectively ruled that manifesto pledges are not legally binding in the United Kingdom. The only accountability mechanism voters have is the ability to "throw the bastards out" at the next election (Hibbing and Alford, 1981, p.427).

Elections are not only designed to give voters a choice between future policy alternatives, then, but to pass judgement on the past performance of incumbents. Whether voting decisions are made prospectively or retrospectively has long been a point of contention in the discipline. Early proponents of economic voting argued that these retrospective judgements dominate public decisions, with citizens casting votes based on "actual performance in office rather than on hypothetical promises they might make during a campaign" (Ferejohn, 1986, p.6). Theories of promissory representation, on the other hand, are typically characterised as mostly prospective, since citizens are supposed to base their decisions on set menus of future government policy.

This chapter does not advance or support any specific theory of individual vote choice, nor are its empirical determinants an overriding concern. Retrospective evaluations of per-

formance are bound to collide with future expectations when it comes to choosing between candidates (Lockerbie, 1992). Prospective policy preferences are obviously not insulated from retrospective evaluations of incumbent performance (Praprotnik, 2017b, p.849), which are themselves dependent on the institutional context and attributions of responsibility (Johns, 2011; Hobolt et al., 2013).

However, the ability of voters to sanction candidates or parties at Time 2 for reneging on promises made at Time 1 is fundamental to any formulation of mandate, promissory or authorisation representation (Rehfeld, 2009, p.220). As Pétry and Duval (2017, p.126) put it, "the traditional conception of accountability at the centre of the theory of promissory representation assumes that citizens vote to reward politicians who keep their promises and to punish those who don't". Despite the abundance of formal and empirical literature on vote choice, the question of whether voters uphold their end of the mandate bargain by voting on the basis of programmatic fulfilment has received little attention. Though I do not test the extent to which voters base their decisions on evaluations of the programme-to-policy linkage as suggested by Pétry and Duval (2017), the analysis below assesses the impact of real-world fulfilment on parties' electoral fortunes. Although the focus of this chapter's analysis is on retrospective accountability, I assume that vote choice has both prospective and retrospective elements. I also assume for this reason that voting decisions straddle the associated "mandate" and "accountability" forms of representation (Naurin, 2011).

Before developing specific expectations, I outline reasons to believe that pledge fulfilment rates will have some impact on election outcomes. Below, I draw on established literature to establish that a) citizens perceive real-world pledge fulfilment to some extent and b) government performance contributes to election outcomes.

Vote Choice and Government Performance

Firstly, in the handful of direct tests of citizens' mandate fulfilment perceptions, the fulfilment status of individual pledges has been shown to penetrate the public consciousness to some extent. Although citizens' individual assessments of pledge fulfilment are predictably biased by cognitive heuristics (Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017; Pétry and Duval, 2017), the best predictor of an accurate assessment is the real-world fulfilment status of the pledge (Thomson, 2011). And though citizens are sceptical of pledge-making and fulfilment in the abstract, as Thomson and Brandenburg (2018, p.15) state, "people hold far more nuanced and accurate views on promise keeping and breaking than suggested by their responses to general questions". This dynamic parallels the oft-observed and similarly contradictory discrepancy between citizens' specific and diffuse support for democratic institutions and actors (Citrin, 1974; Easton, 1975; Hetherington, 1998).

Secondly, it is well-established that voters respond to real-world government performance. The connection between economic performance and votes is one of the few "canon-

ical causal claims" in the discipline (Hansford and Gomez, 2015, p.15). It is certainly the only one to enter the popular imagination, thanks to the phrase "it's the economy stupid", which emerged from Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign (Greene, 2016, p.818). The topic has been studied extensively in the United States and select European countries, with studies repeatedly confirming the importance of the link between the macroeconomy and election outcomes (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000). In a comparative context, researchers have found that the relationship is conditioned by institutions because of how they influence citizen attributions of performance responsibility (Whitten and Powell, 1993; Hobolt et al., 2013).

The relationship has proven robust with regard to both real-world conditions and voter perceptions (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000). Some studies have identified a close relationship between these variables (Nadeau et al., 2013), supporting the "sociotropic" hypothesis that voters look beyond their "pocketbook" or "egocentric" circumstances to consider the overall health of the economy in their evaluations (Ferejohn, 1986). This consensus is challenged to some extent by work on the political origins of individual economic evaluations. Researchers have demonstrated, for instance, that the relationship between sociotropic economic perceptions and vote choice is conditioned by prior attitudes to the incumbent government (Evans and Andersen, 2006; Hansford and Gomez, 2015). Nonetheless, the existence of some connection between the economy and elections is irrefutable given the wealth of evidence available.

The economy is not the only grounds on which voters judge government performance. Originally introduced by Stokes (1963) and revived in an acclaimed account of British voting behaviour by Clarke et al. (2004), "valence politics" refers to a model of elections in which vote choice is made on the basis of perceived competence and performance. Valence issues, in the words of Green (2007, p.620), are those "on which there is agreement on the ends of politics, such as lower crime or economic growth". These are defined in contrast to "positional" or spatial issues on which there is widespread disagreement (Dolezal et al., 2014, p.59). In Great Britain, scholars argued, the twin trends of party ideological convergence and partisan dealignment catalysed a shift away from positional competition to the politics of competence (Denver, 2005). It goes without saying that there is some conceptual overlap between valence politics and theories of issue competition, which stipulate a similar shift but put more stock in the specific content of the agenda (Green-Pedersen, 2007).

The term "valence" is understood in several different ways, and its meaning differs depending on the context (Green, 2007). Generally speaking, though, valence refers to the "non-policy charateristics" (Warwick, 2016, p.447) of political candidates, parties and campaigns[1]. Scholars have repeatedly demonstrated that these traits - such as trustworthiness, integrity and policy competence - are influential determinants of vote choice in Europe and North America (e.g. Clark 2009; Johns et al. 2009; Clarke et al. 2011b,a). As one would

[1]This literature partly subsumes work on economic voting, since evaluations of economic performance and competence are often used to partly operationalise valence (Johnson, 2011).

anticipate, incumbents and opposition parties are assessed differently, with assessments of opposition party competence contingent on perceived government performance (Green and Jennings, 2012).

However, little else is known about the origins of competence assessments (Green and Jennings, 2012, p.472), and the tangled web of causality is also a concern for the validity of the valence model. Evans and Chzhen (2016) demonstrated that, while latent party preferences and competence evaluations are reciprocally causal between elections, the influence of the former predominates as an election looms. Like economic assessments, then, it is not easy to disentangle competence evaluations from party identification. Nonetheless, as Green and Jennings (2012, p.469) state, there is no reason to reject the general scholarly consensus that "political leaders are evaluated on their performance or that this has important implications for voting". I now discuss the programme-to-policy linkage as an aspect of government performance and develop expectations about its relationship with election outcomes.

Programmatic Performance and Elections

Although it is unrealistic to expect voters to keep a running tally of election pledge fulfilment (Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017), it is easy to conceive of ways in which the programme-to-policy linkage could contribute to or complement assessments of government performance. There is obviously some presumed correspondence between the concepts. Researchers have variously referred to pledge fulfilment as "government performance" (Kalogeropoulou, 1989; Royed and Borrelli, 1999), "democratic performance" (Moury, 2011a; Kostadinova, 2013) and "policy performance" (Kropivnik and Kustec Lipicer, 2011; Thomson, 2011; Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017; Praprotnik, 2017b; Thomson and Brandenburg, 2018). Yet to political scientists working outside this area, the idea of pledge fulfilment being synonymous with any of these terms would provoke confusion. The concept of democratic performance normally refers to regime success, while government performance can refer to either that or the more transient definition discussed in relation to the economic voting and valence. Policy performance, meanwhile, is typically the preserve of public policy subfields, referring to the extent to which enacted policy measures meet particular targets. This chapter introduces the term *programmatic performance* distinguish pledge fulfilment from these various other concepts.

Whether or not the programme-to-policy linkage constitutes a type of "performance", though, relies on the normative assumption that party responsibility is a good thing. Even before *An Economic Theory of Democracy* was published, the APSA committee (1950) considered a strong party mandate important because of its apparent "effectiveness" in translating public desires into public policies. This is easy to take for granted, but it is important to note that there is a case against programmatic party government rooted in Finer (1975) and Kavanagh's (1981) complaints about "manifestoitis". The argument is

that extensive pledge-making renders voter choice less rather than more coherent. This speaks to the more general notion that a true mandate is impossible because we cannot in practice divine what election outcomes actually mean (Dahl, 1990), especially when it comes to the small print of the victor's manifesto (Naurin, 2011, p.18). In this view, a party suffusing its policy appeals with dozens of distinct policy items is not demonstrating transparency but behaving sinisterly, hiding its agenda in plain sight. Finer and others would argue that the enactment of these pledges is antithetical to the performance of government and democracy.

For those less sceptical of pledge-making, the issue can be resolved by thinking of the mandate as "something representatives *request* rather than *receive*... [placing] the demands on the parties instead of the electorate" (Naurin, 2011, p.19). This shift in perspective opens the door to programmatic fidelity as a form of performance, in the sense that this means the extent to which a task is completed successfully or a benchmark is met. The party requests permission to enact its predetermined package of policies and, once elected, responsibility is achieved to the extent that these self-defined goals are met. Chapter 4 provides partial support for this notion by demonstrating that pledge fulfilment rates are largely unaffected by manifesto composition.

Manifestos may not constitute "authoritative commands from the voters" (Naurin, 2011, p.19), yet in some sense this is beside the point. Parties often behave as if they are, and voters place normative value on programmatic performance. The extent to which the general public endorses each item in the programme is not relevant to evaluations of their enactment. Even citizens who did not vote for a party can assess its responsibility and, all else being equal, should be more likely to vote for them in future if they keep their word (Downs, 1957, p.108).

However, previous studies have demonstrated that voters punish poor incumbent performance but do not reward good performance (Boyne et al., 2009). This is a form of negativity bias, a psychological phenomenon by which negative information makes a stronger impact on people's perceptions than positive information. The most common explanation for the underlying mechanism is that people's baseline expectations tend to be positive, so negative information is weighed more heavily. As Soroka (2006, p.373) puts it, "-4 looks much worse from an expectation of +4 than it does from an expectation of 0". In a political science context, this kind of asymmetry bias in information processing has been shown to influence economic voting, presidential approval, reactions to news reports and so on (see Soroka and McAdams 2015 for a summary).

I propose here that the same dynamic applies to evaluations of programmatic performance, despite public pessimism about pledge fulfilment as a diffuse concept. I argue that voters have a baseline expectation that the victorious party will enact policies consistent with its existing reputation - which issue ownership research has shown is not easily dislodged in the minds of citizens (Tresch et al., 2015) - if not its campaign promises *per se*.

Due to negativity bias, broken pledges should make a stronger impression on citizens than those which are kept. This assumption has received some empirical support at the level of individual pledges. Testing voter evaluations of six pledges from the 2010 British general election campaign, Thomson and Brandenburg (2018) found that voters were much more likely to offer accurate assessments of unfulfilled pledges than those which were partially or fully fulfilled. This pattern was not evident in a study of the same phenomenon using Swedish National Election Study data Naurin and Oscarsson (2017). However, the two (of seven) unfulfilled pledges tested in that study were coded as low salience and were somewhat more likely to be assessed correctly on average anyway (Naurin and Oscarsson, 2017).

A more recent study by Naurin et al. (2019) presents a straightforward test of negativity bias in voter performance evaluations via a survey experiment. They presented respondents with a variety of fulfilled and unfulfilled pledges, and found that perceived promise breaking is indeed more important to evaluations. They also demonstrated, interestingly, that governments are to some extent "damned if they do, damned if they don't", since the enactment of the promised policies inevitably decreases support among less committed supporters. Naurin et al. (2019) suggest that these dynamics explain the "cost of ruling", the long-pondered general tendency for governing parties to gradually lose public backing.

In sum, all of the currently available evidence suggests that voters pay more attention to broken pledges. Extending this logic to election outcomes, rather than responsible parties being rewarded and irresponsible parties being punished (Downs, 1957) I expect only the latter to be true. This is not because voters pay close attention to campaign promises and government actions, but because lower rates of pledge fulfilment will expose voters to unfulfilled pledges more frequently and leave a lasting impression of the government as promise breaker. Indeed, the dynamics of negativity bias may be the ultimate explanation for the so-called "pledge paradox", the gap between citizens' overwhelmingly negative views of pledge fulfilment and relatively programme-to-policy linkage identified by political scientists (Naurin, 2002). If voters only pay attention to promises when they are broken, it should come as no surprise that popular beliefs about election pledges are so pessimistic. The only hypothesis of this chapter is as follows.

Hypothesis 6.1. *Incumbent parties with low rates of pledge fulfilment tend to lose vote share at the subsequent election.*

6.2 Data and Measures

The latest version of the Comparative Party Pledge Group dataset used in the previous chapters is employed here. This is the dataset released as supplementary to the Thomson et al. (2017) piece. The countries used are the same as previous chapters, with Bulgaria, Italy and the United States still excluded from the analysis. A number of observations

which did not match those in the MARPOR data can be reintroduced here, allowing for a larger number of observations. Additionally, the dataset contains 13 newer observations not present in the slightly older pledge datasets employed in previous chapters[2]. In total, the dataset contains 139 manifesto-level observations from nine countries. 60 of these observations represent parties which entered government following the election^{t1}, while the remaining 79 represent parties which entered opposition. Election^{t1} refers to the national election for which the relevant manifesto document was produced. Election^{t2} refers to the next national election. Manifestos produced during the second election campaign are not taken into consideration in this analysis. Table A.9 in the appendix lists all of the observations used in this chapter.

The dependent variable in this part of the analysis is a party's electoral success at *t2*. There are multiple ways to operationalise this outcome. If individual level survey data are available, party success can be modelled as a binary response i.e. a dummy variable indicating vote intention (Johnson, 2011) or vote choice (Johns et al., 2009). Aggregate-level data offers researchers several additional options including vote share, seat share, government participation and survival in office. Seat share might be appropriate in the context of single-country studies, but here it would introduce greater unobserved variance resulting from differences in electoral rules. A government participation dummy, meanwhile, introduces the same issue whilst also sacrificing information since a party can lose seats and still participate in government.

Hence, vote share is used for the purposes of this analysis, since it best reflects the aggregated wishes of the electorate. A lagged dependent variable is used to avoid auto-correlation i.e. the dependent variable is vote share at time^2, controlling for vote share at time^1. This is a common strategy when modelling party vote share with panel data (Tavits, 2007; Adams et al., 2009; Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Schleiter and Tavits, 2016).

The key independent variable in all analyses is the percentage of party manifesto pledges fulfilled between the two elections. Following the first part of the analysis I control for the length of time between elections and a country's economic growth in the year before election^{t2}. A variety of economic indicators - typically growth, inflation and unemployment - are used to predict party electoral performance and vote choice in the economic voting literature. Nadeau et al. (2013) find that, of these indicators, economic growth is the most closely associated with citizen perceptions as well as election outcomes. Additionally, it is highly correlated with other indicators of economic performance.

Separate models are run for the subsamples of 60 parties of government and 79 opposition parties. Other models use all 139 parties, necessitating a government/opposition dummy which is interacted with both fulfilment rate and economic growth. The first interaction is to test the hypothesis, while the second is to control for the expected differential effects of economic growth on government and opposition election performance. In relation

[2]These encompass three manifestos from Austria, 2008; five manifestos from Germany, 2009; the Swedish joint centre-right Alliance manifesto from 2010; and four manifestos from Ireland, 2011.

to the hypothesis, I expect that fulfilment rate has no effect on vote share for opposition parties but a positive slope - from a baseline vote share loss - for government parties.

Four models are estimated, two with the whole sample and one each using government and opposition subsamples. The first three use absolute vote share values with the lagged dependent variable. In the final model I instead use change (Δ) in party vote share - without any control for previous vote share - which should result in near-identical coefficients from the remaining independent variables but a much smaller R^2. This model is estimated for the sole purpose of visualising predicted election performance at time[2] which are relative to zero rather than the absolute share.

Finally, because vote shares aren't independent of one another for each election year it is necessary to take additional steps appropriate for comparative analysis. Hence, following the example of Bawn and Somer-Topcu (2012, p.437) and Hix and Marsh (2007), standard errors are clustered by country election year and, as already noted, separate analyses are run for government and opposition subsamples. I also apply country fixed effects to account for general national-level variance. I now present the findings of each part of the analysis in turn before a general discussion of their implications.

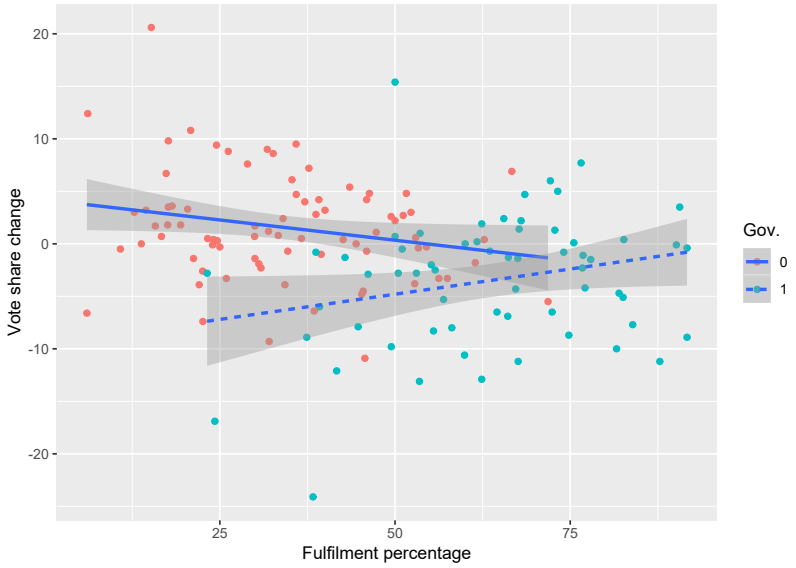
6.3 Analysis

Figure 6.1 presents a scatterplot of pledge fulfilment and change in vote share at the subsequent election, with separate regression lines drawn for incumbent and opposition parties. There appears to be a weak positive association between these two variables for government parties and, interestingly, a weak negative association for opposition parties. Examining the y-axis only, this plot demonstrates that, in this sample, government parties tend to lose vote share at the next election while opposition parties tend to gain. Opposition vote share changes have a higher baseline than governing party vote share changes. It is unclear whether this is a universal pattern or a systematic bias in either the general CPP dataset or the subset generated for this analysis.

Based on the remainder of the analysis, this bivariate pattern is also manifest when other variables are held constant. Table 6.1 shows the results of the linear regression models used to test the hypothesis. Models 1, 2 and 3 use vote share[t2] as the dependent variable, while Model 4 uses change in vote share. Model 3 and 4 include all parties, while Model 1 and 2 are run on government and opposition subsamples. As discussed above, country fixed effects are applied to deal with between-country heterogeneity while robust standard errors clustered by country election year are produced to compensate for the interdependence of errors when using vote shares. This ensures that, despite the relatively small number of observations, the analysis here represents the strongest possible test of the hypothesis.

As expected, by far the the strongest predictor of vote share[t2] in the first three models is the lagged dependent variable. Somewhat surprisingly, the economic growth variable coefficient varies in direction and magnitude but is non-significant in every model. The

Figure 6.1: Scatterplot: Fulfilment Rate vs. Change in Vote Share



duration variable has variable signs and effect sizes but is not statistically significant in any of the models. The effects of fulfilment, meanwhile, are statistically significant in the expected direction across all four models. This has significant substantive implications; a four percentage point increase in the pledge fulfilment rate predicts a one percentage point increase in vote share for incumbent parties.

For opposition parties, meanwhile, the effect of fulfilment is *negative* in Model 2. Although somewhat weaker in magnitude and only statistically significant at 0.05 level, it seems that the fulfilment of opposition parties' pledges augurs poorly for their electoral prospects. These dynamics are also evident in the all-party models. The interaction between government status and fulfilment is also moderately statistically significant in Model 3 and 4. All of these findings are consistent with the bivarate association shown above and the persistence of the effects across all models suggest that the finding is highly robust.

Before proceeding further, there is one major caveat to consider here: the possibility that these findings are endogenous or spurious. The fact that the fulfilment rate is such an emphatic predictor of vote shares in these models while the economic conditions have no or negative effects is potentially a red flag, given that both should factor into the calculations of voters making valence or performance-based choices. Most government parties, obviously, will have higher vote shares than opposition parties. And most governing parties also fulfil a greater proportion of their campaign promises than opposition parties. It may be the case that incumbents tend to lose vote share in consecutive elections, or that there is a bias towards this in the sample for whatever reason. This would result in an endogenous relationship between fulfilment rate and changes in vote share. There may also be some omitted variable, for example a specific economic indicator, which accounts for the weak associations identified. However, it is unclear how these possible biases could be accounted

Table 6.1: OLS Models: Pledge Fulfilment and Electoral Performance

	Dependent variable:			
	Vote share ^{t2}			Vote share Δ
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Vote Share^{t1}	0.771^{***} (0.079)	0.985^{***} (0.060)	0.891^{***} (0.047)	-
Fulfilment	0.277^{**} (0.079)	-0.141^{**} (0.048)	-0.094 (0.049)	-0.116^{*} (0.049)
Incumbent	-	-	-18.769^{***} (4.142)	-19.269^{***} (4.209)
Growth	-0.327 (0.197)	0.161 (0.165)	0.086 (0.170)	0.110 (0.173)
Duration (months)	-1.353 (0.984)	0.793 (0.677)	-0.000 (0.560)	0.192 (0.563)
Fulfilment x Incumbent	-	-	0.300^{***} (0.074)	0.288^{***} (0.075)
Growth x Incumbent	-	-	-0.338 (0.221)	-0.344 (0.225)
Constant	-5.603 (5.110)	10.661 (6.104)	9.487^{**} (3.393)	7.821^{*} (3.374)
Observations	60	79	139	139
R^2	0.840	0.819	0.853	0.276
Adjusted R^2	0.799	0.786	0.835	0.194
Residual Std. Error	6.049 (df=47)	5.022 (df=66)	5.466 (df=123)	5.575 (df=124)

Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Country fixed-effects not shown

for beyond the steps taken here, which include country fixed effects, election-clustered standard errors and separate subsample analyses. Theoretically these strategies, along with the incumbency variable in the full models, provide the strongest possible test of the research question at this moment in time.

Figure 6.2: Interaction Plot: Pledge Fulfilment Rate x Government Status

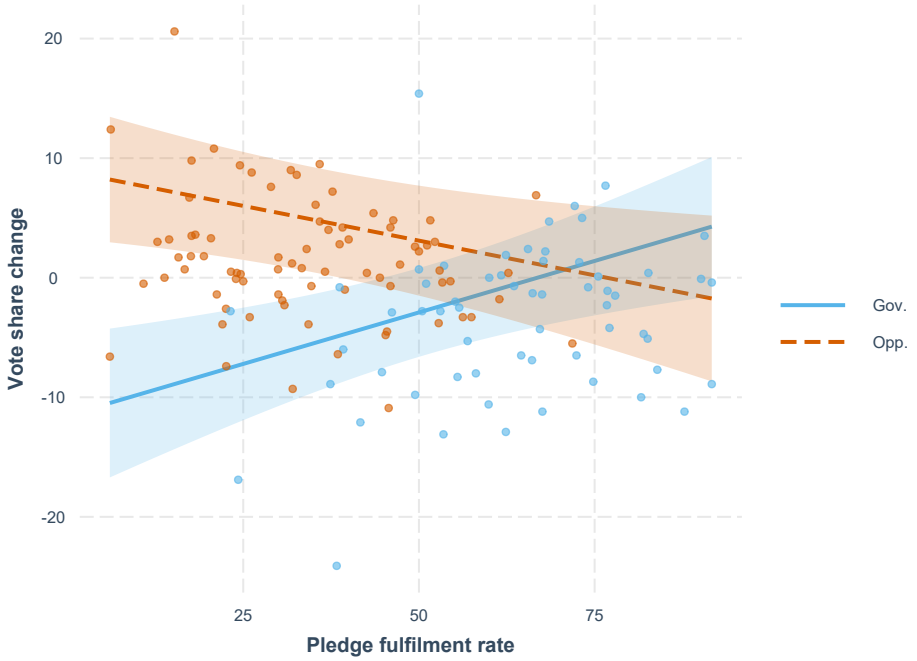


Figure 6.2 shows the predicted margins of this interaction between fulfilment and government status for Model 4. Although the R^2 shown in Table 6.1 for this model is much smaller than the others, this is is not unexpected due to the lack of a control for previous vote share. It does not affect the interpretation of the model coefficients, however, because the use of change in vote share is mathematically identical to absolute values with a lagged dependent variable.

The model predicts that governing parties will gain vote share the more pledges they fulfil, while opposition parties experience the opposite, though the confidence intervals are large and overlapping. Figure 6.2 demonstrates that the predicted percentage point gain for governing parties who fulfil the greatest number of pledges is a little over zero, while the predicted loss for parties with low pledge fulfilment is in single digits. On the basis of these tests, it is possible to tentatively state that pledge fulfilment has a relationship with governing parties' future electoral success, but that its purpose is largely to avoid punishment rather than gain votes. This strongly complements the individual-level finding of Naurin et al. (2019) that broken pledges are weighted more heavily by citizens in government performance evaluations. The hypothesis is therefore accepted, with the obvious caveat that this is the first step in investigating this relationship rather than the last. I refer especially to the dynamics surrounding the relationship. Pledge fulfilment was not

expected to exert any influence on opposition parties' vote shares. Yet it is clearly evident in Models 2, 3 and 4 and Figure 6.2.

Further investigation of these findings is clearly warranted. Again, a larger sample would facilitate stronger and more generalisable inferences about government pledge fulfilment and election performance. It is easy to make a theoretical case for such a relationship. As discussed above, there is evidence that real-world fulfilment status is one of the best predictors of a correct pledge fulfilment evaluation by survey respondents (Thomson and Brandenburg, 2018; Naurin et al., 2019). Additionally, although citizens don't possess perfect knowledge, echoes of actual performance on the economy and other factors are clearly evident in voting decisions (Boyne et al., 2009; Nadeau et al., 2013). Whether assessments of pledge fulfilment correlate with other indicators of performance is a question for future survey research on citizen perceptions of the programme-to-policy linkage, though the economic growth indicator's lack of explanatory power in Table 6.1 suggest the connection may not be straightforward.

The interaction effect identified here, however, appears to be largely a function of the negative relationship between fulfilment and electoral success for opposition parties. Why might pledge fulfilment for parties out of government result in vote share losses? Although I have attached several caveats to this unintuitive finding, there is a plausible substantive explanation. There are four paths by which an opposition party's pledge can be redeemed in a democracy. Three of these require purposeful action on behalf of the opposition party.

1. Government defeat. Opposition parties vote with each other and/or government rebels to pass or defeat legislation.

2. Confidence and supply. Opposition party votes with government in exchange for concessions.

3. Consensus. Opposition pledges are incidentally fulfilled by the government due to an overlapping agenda or shift in government priorities.

4. Policy stealing. Government deliberately fulfils rival parties' policies.

I will elaborate on each item in turn. Firstly, government legislation may be defeated in parliament and/or opposition parties may pass legislation without government support. The latter situation is rare, but the former is a significant risk for minority governments. Secondly, parties may enter into informal coalitions or ad-hoc "confidence and supply" agreements with governments whose parliamentary position is weak (see e.g. Lundberg 2013). These dynamics may be of relevance here because, of the elections included in the dataset, 12/42 resulted in minority governments (10 single-party, two coalition) vs. 13 single-party majorities and 16 coalition majorities. Previous studies have found that opposition pledges are much more likely to be fulfilled under minority and/or coalition

governments versus single-party and/or minority governments (Thomson et al., 2017), suggesting that this kind of legislative competition and bargaining are what cause opposition pledges to be fulfilled.

Could this explain the association between opposition pledge fulfilment rates and vote share losses? Perhaps it is the case that opposition parties which fulfil a large number of pledges legislatively are viewed as disruptive to government stability and are punished by voters. Or that incumbents successfully claim credit for the fruits of ad-hoc cooperation. To tentatively test these possibilities Model 2 was re-run with dummy variables for single-party government and government majority, which were interacted with fulfilment. No effect was detected when these interactions were included in the model, either individually or together. Given the small number of observations, this does not mean an explanation related to government type should be ruled out. It does, however, leave the door open to other possibilities.

A third way opposition pledges are fulfilled is that parties' policy agendas and pledges overlap. A significant amount of legislation is uncontroversial and passed with near-consensus support (Giuliani, 2008), and pledge studies have repeatedly shown that some promises are made by multiple parties. In the full CPP dataset, 22.5% of pledges are made by at least two parties at each election. These consensus pledges are also more likely to be fulfilled. This explains why even opposition parties with little parliamentary representation see some of their pledges fulfilled, albeit incidentally. It is not clear, though, why opposition parties would be punished for fulfilling a greater number of pledges this way. Given negativity bias (Boyne et al., 2009), voters are unlikely to pay attention to consensus legislation. It is also difficult to conceive of parties being rewarded or punished for participation in consensus politics. It might be the case that some opposition parties are abandoned by voters when "the distinction between government and opposition is blurred" (Andeweg, 2013, p.110) in this way, or that governing parties are able to claim credit for consensus achievements. These dynamics represent further avenues for investigation.

The final way opposition party pledges can be fulfilled is if they are "stolen" by governing parties. The idea of policy stealing has received some attention in the issue agendas literature, especially in the context of issue ownership under the umbrellas of "issue trespassing" and "convergence" (Damore, 2005; Tresch et al., 2015). A well-known and effective example is the Democratic party's rightward shift on law and order under Bill Clinton, which they used to "neutralize the Republican advantage" on the issue (Holian, 2004).

Though in Clinton's case the trespassing took place from opposition and before he was elected, it is certainly plausible that incumbents also make use of this tactic when opposition-owned issues become salient. This would adequately explain the finding that opposition parties tend to lose vote share when more of their pledges are fulfilled. From a policy-seeking voter's perspective, why elect an opposition party whose agenda the government are already carrying out? This question is highly relevant in the wake of the European migrant crisis and the rise of populist nationalist parties across the democratic

world. Evidence has shown that mainstream parties have recently tacked right on issues of multiculturalism and immigration in an attempt to neutralise the electoral threat posed by these parties (Han, 2015; Wagner and Meyer, 2017). van Spanje and de Graaf (2018) find that this strategy of "parroting the pariah" is effective in reducing the vote share of populist challengers who are simultaneously ostracised by the mainstream. Though there are no parties of this profile in the dataset used here with the exception of the Austrian FPÖ, it could well be the case that more limited parroting - in the form of stealing specific campaign promises - occurs with regularity in the mainstream and that this accounts for the effect. That said, future investigations would need to control for the degree of consensus between parties to ensure this dynamic was causally isolated.

6.4 Conclusions

This chapter presented an exploratory analysis of the electoral repercussions of the programme-to-policy linkage. In doing so I have brought the thesis full-circle, having addressed the emergence of party programmes, the effects of their structure on fulfilment and their relationship with the government agenda in previous chapters.

The hypothesis was strongly supported by the analyses. If governing parties fail to carry out the policy mandate handed to them by voters, they are likely to be punished at the next election. This finding is in alignment with classical models of the party mandate, and suggests that researchers are correct to take the programme-to-policy linkage seriously. Voters might not pay close attention to manifesto pledges. But they notice when promises are broken and can hurt parties at the ballot box. This conclusion squares well with recent work at the level of individual voters, which also demonstrates evidence of voter negativity bias surrounding pledge-breaking and assessments of government performance (Naurin et al., 2019). A clear next step, bridging the gap between this chapter and the approach of these authors, is to examine the effects of perceived pledge fulfilment on voting behaviour using survey panel data.

The findings are also highly suggestive of other paths for further research. Indeed, more than anything else presented so far in this thesis, the findings will be of significant interest even to those working outwith the pledge fulfilment research programme. This is especially because, somewhat counter-intuitively, the connection between opposition pledge fulfilment and vote share was shown to be nearly as pronounced as it is for incumbents - but in the opposite direction - with parties outside government experiencing electoral losses in the event of higher fulfilment rates.

Why might parties without power be punished as their own policies are enacted? I elaborated several possible explanations for this dynamic and concluded that policy stealing is the most compelling theoretical answer - one with some existing empirical backing, not least from the results of the previous chapter. This is another area in which scholars of the programme-to-policy linkage could find common cause with research on policy agendas.

The extent to which governments appropriate existing specific policies from rival parties has not yet been investigated, and such a study would make a fascinating contribution to both research traditions.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: Where Next for the Programme-to-Policy Research Agenda?

At the beginning of this thesis I pointed out a recent, rapid uptick in researcher activity on the topic of the programme-to-policy linkage and outlined several research questions. Though the linkage has been a subject of scholarly interest for around half a century, it did not attract widespread attention until recent years. Several core inferences have been well established in this literature through repeated empirical testing. The subject area is reaching maturity, with researchers looking beyond the central descriptive question to consider topics such as, *inter alia*, the causes and conditions of pledge fulfilment, citizen attitudes to the mandate and alternative dimensions of manifesto content. The stated purpose of this thesis was to take pause; to reevaluate some fundamental assumptions about the conceptualisation, measurement and normative meaning of the programme-to-policy linkage.

I believe that, together, the six preceding chapters fulfil this aim. The empirical studies in this thesis make a range of novel contributions to the literature. Additionally, through the process of designing these studies, I have compiled several new sources of data, most notably by combining Comparative Party Pledge data with the MARPOR dataset. This thesis refines the scholarly understanding of the linkage and what it means when one is found, connects the concept to a much wider literature on party competition and issue agendas and highlights a path to several new areas of research.

The findings also have substantive implications for scholarly understandings of democracy, as well as *applications* for citizens and party elites. My goal was to contribute to a more rounded understanding of promissory linkages beyond narrow academic debates, and I believe the dissertation also accomplishes this. Though I find no general connection between manifestos and government spending, I underline the importance of manifesto documents for the immediate agenda of government, and demonstrate their staying power up

to the mid-point of a party's time in office. This reinforces the main lesson of the literature on this topic so far, which is that manifestos are a useful way for voters to prospectively evaluate candidates. Promissory representation works in practice, albeit imperfectly. What I demonstrate is that this extends beyond specific pledges to the government's agenda more generally.

I then demonstrate that manifestos are highly strategic documents, coining the term "manifesto composition" to describe strategic dimensions of party programme design. I show that there is no inherent tradeoff between the breath of a party's issue appeals and the detail of its pledges, but suggest that this is likely a function of party resources. Well-funded parties can develop highly detailed policy platforms across a range of issue areas. Since they seemingly little incentive to rein this in, it is is likely that the trend to more detailed and wide-ranging manifestos will continue.

Whether this is seen as a positive or negative development depends greatly on your perspective of promissory representation. For those with the view of Finer (1975), this trend will only serve to further alienate professional parties from the electorate. Indeed, this somewhat contradicts the rather optimistic picture of promissory representation conjured by the general finding that parties keep their promises (Pétry and Colette, 2009). There is a paradox here: the more complex and opaque the manifestos are, the less clear the electoral choice becomes for the average voter. But for others, the existence of detailed policy platforms which are reliably carried out by whichever party enters office is a boon. To policy stakeholders, for example, it suggests that policy concessions may be obtained more easily by appealing to party organisations ahead of elections than incumbent governments with limited capacity and resources. Parties themselves face a difficult balancing act. It might benefit parties to end the manifesto arms race and present stripped-back, digestible messages. The UK's newly emerged single-issue Brexit Party have explicitly rejected the idea of releasing a manifesto at all. Though this approach will serve them well for the country's unexpected and hastily organised 2019 European Parliament election, it remains to be seen if this approach is sustainable in the longer term or during a first-order, multi-issue election.

Finally, I provide lessons for parties in how to use manifesto documents and approach pledge fulfilment by exploring its relationship with election outcomes. It seems to be the case that by behaving responsibly, government parties can only hope to *avoid punishment* rather than reap electoral rewards. If they have any expectation of entering government, therefore, parties should avoid making pledges they cannot keep. Parties confident of reelection may be able to get away with making fewer concrete policy commitments. Opposition parties, meanwhile, should be wary of cooperation with governing parties. By allowing the government to enact items from their own platforms, they run the risk of losing making themselves seem superfluous to prospective voters. Of course, for many opposition parties, policy concessions are the end in itself. But those with serious aspirations of governing would be well advised to cooperate as little as possible.

In the remainder of this concluding chapter I summarise the findings in greater detail, while acknowledging their various limitations, and evaluate their contributions to the academic literature. I then propose several next steps for this burgeoning area of research.

7.1 Summary of Findings and Limitations

In Chapter 1, I drew attention to several neglected questions in the wider programme-to-policy linkage literature. These were not identified as gaps in the literature as such, but rather gaps in understanding. While acknowledging the wealth of empirical pledge studies and increased coordination among these researchers in recent years, I argued that scholars have devoted too little attention to the meaning of manifesto documents and the linkage, as well as the relationship between different forms of linkage. Primarily, I argued that the pledge and saliency approaches operationalise different linkage concepts, but that it was not possible for scholars to understand the extent to which these concepts are complementary until this is recognised and the saliency approach is resurrected. I set out five primary research questions which subsequent chapters were designed to answer before providing an overview the literature from its origins to the state-of-the-art.

Though Chapters 2 through 6 are self-contained studies, they nonetheless follow a logical structure in roughly three parts, shifting from an initial focus on the saliency approach to some fundamental questions about the pledge approach via a test of their operational compatibility. Effectively, the first half of the thesis is spent reassessing the saliency approach, while the second half tracks the mandate process from beginning to end. To be more specific, Chapter 2 and 3 reconsider the validity and empirical utility of the saliency approach to the linkage. Having found that manifesto issue emphasis has some kind of impact on government policy, Chapter 4 tests the connection between the distribution of issue attention and the number of specific pledges made by parties, investigating whether party issue emphasis strategies and pledge-making strategies are interlinked. Chapter 5 extends the investigation of "manifesto composition" by examining its relationship with pledge fulfilment, an important normative question. Chapter 6, finally, moves beyond the mandate itself to test its impact on party performance at the following election.

As a first step to understanding the relationship between the pledge and saliency approaches, Chapter 2 comprised a replication of the Budge-Hofferbert method. I argued strongly against the claim by (McDonald et al., 1999) that the type of linkage specified by Klingemann et al. (1994) is not a causal one. In the chapter, I distinguished between a reproduction and a replication, using the former to refer to the use of the same models with new data and the latter to refer to a substantially revised approach. The findings of the reproduction were scattershot; inconsistent at best and spurious at worst. This finding was not a surprise given well-documented flaws in the original methodology (King and Laver, 1993; Thome, 1999; King and Laver, 1999; Gibbons, 2004). However, it demonstrated that the claims of Klingemann et al. (1994) could not be supported by their own method, and

was a useful exercise in terms of illustrating the issues with their approach step-by-step. Rather than claiming that this falsified their theory or challenged the general conclusions of the pledge approach, however, I argued that the method was an invalid test of the programme-to-policy linkage.

At this point I was careful to emphasise that, while the particular modelling approach was flawed, there remain good reasons to anticipate a relationship between party emphasis and government spending. Hence, I built on existing criticism to develop a revised test using an error-correction approach, pooling countries and policy areas. The main analysis as well as several jackknife and subset robustness tests demonstrated no causal association between changes in party emphasis and subsequent changes in government expenditure in the medium term. This is the most definitive test of the approach so far conducted. However, it is worth acknowledging certain limitations. Though the use of the COFOG time series was essential to ensure reliability and cross-national comparability, it is currently limited in scope. Fewer than twenty years' worth of observations were included in the analysis. Ordinarily this would not be an issue, but the necessity of using government terms rather than years as observations reduces the available number to however many elections took place over the period.

The chapter concluded by leaving open the possibility of some relationship between emphasis and budgets while criticising the choice of budgets as a general operational indicator for the "policy" part of the programme-to-policy linkage. Though authors like Garritzmann and Seng (2016); Russo and Verzichelli (2016) and Horn and Jensen (2017) have recently demonstrated it is possible to identify an association between these two variables, this only applies to select policy domains in particular contexts or circumstances. To disentangle the relationship in this way, modelling must take account of highly idiosyncratic factors relating to the particular country, time-period or issue. Hence, though I don't rule out the idea that manifestos influence budgets, it is fair to state that the saliency approach as originally specified is not an adequate test of the programme-to-policy linkage in general. Instead, I advocate retaining the quantitative, issue-based approach but a shift in focus from the linkage between manifestos and spending toward that between manifestos and the government agenda in general.

Expanding on this, in Chapter 3 I argue that a more suitable operational indicator of programmes is required; from a substantive perspective as well as a methodological one. I argue that it is more appropriate to position the saliency approach under the umbrella of issue agendas, and reframe the linkage concept it uses as the "programme-to-agenda linkage". Though there is some overlap in the meaning of policy outputs, manifestos and features of the agenda, this term encapsulates an appropriate distinction between the pledge and saliency linkage concepts.

I select throne speeches as a new operational indicator for the dependent variable, one of the earliest hurdles in the linkage process and one which much more closely resembles the format of the manifesto than budgetary shares or counts of legislative acts (Bevan et al.,

2011; Froio et al., 2016). I test the relationship between the two in the UK, selected as a most likely case. The research design in this chapter is, in other words, designed to be a low bar for the approach to clear to establish whether it has any consistent explanatory value. Matching CAP and MARPOR data in nine policy areas, the analysis is heavily informed by previous studies of the British Queen's Speech agenda and legislative agendas (Jennings et al., 2011b; Bevan et al., 2011; John et al., 2014; Froio et al., 2016) which have shown mixed evidence of partisan effects.

I find that the Queen's Speech agenda more closely reflects the governing party's manifesto than that of the opposition, and identify a statistically significant relationship between changes in government manifesto emphasis and corresponding changes in Queen's Speech content in the first and third years of a government's time in office. Robustness tests demonstrate that this finding cannot be unequivocally accepted. However, it does provide another indication - complementary to the contribution of Froio et al. (2016) on the link between manfestos and counts of legislative acts - that the programme-to-agenda linkage can be identified at a more granular level in a country with a strong programme-to-policy linkage. And, although the result is somewhat at odds with expectations, it complements the recent finding that parties tend to stop fulfilling pledges after approximately two years (Duval and Pétry, 2018). My Chapter 3 analysis can be easily and reliably replicated - for all areas of policy - if and when the CAP UK manifesto time series is extended and made available to other researchers.

Because it is not possible to meaningfully compare the strength of the two linkages at this point, in Chapter 4 I turn my attention to how the approaches operationalise the key independent variable i.e. the programme. I argue that manifesto structure is an independent aspect of party strategy and define length, the number of pledges and issue diversity as three dimensions of "manifesto composition". Combining MARPOR and CPPG data for the first time, I derive hypotheses from existing work on position blurring, issue agendas, pledge-making and issue clarity and test the relationship between issue diversity and pledge-making. Contrary to expectations about broad-appeal strategies, I find that issue diversity positively predicts pledge-making. In other words, all else being equal, parties which discuss a wide range of issues produce more detailed manifestos. I suggest that this result can be ascribed to resource advantages and conclude that there is a strong connection between parties' issue emphasis and pledge-making strategies.

Though this analysis does tap the aggregate association between issue emphasis and pledge-making, I acknowledge that this does not comprise a complete test. Ideally, this chapter would have built on Praprotnik's (2017a) test of issue clarity in Austria, examining the distribution of pledges among policy areas and compared this to overall emphasis on those issues. The observations ought to have been manifesto-issues rather than manifestos. If it could be shown that more pledges were made in heavily emphasised issues, it would suggest an even stronger connection between parties' manifesto composition strategies and a great deal of compatibility in the ways the linkage is operationalised by pledge and

saliency scholars. On the flipside, if a great deal of variation was found, it would suggest a limited relationship and gesture toward interesting strategic dynamics. However, this type of analysis is not currently feasible at the comparative level. Pledges are not categorised by issue area for most of the countries included in the CPPG dataset. This limited the analysis in Chapter 4 to the aggregate level.

With Chapter 4 establishing that there is substantial variation in manifesto composition features, Chapter 5 examines a potentially confounding implication of this observation for the pledge approach. Scholars have so far assumed that manifesto fulfilment rates are essentially comparable to one another. But until now nobody has investigated the extent to which the structure of the manifesto - especially the number of pledges made - might impact the calculation of how many were fulfilled. I hypothesised that a greater number of manifesto pledges and greater issue diversity predict lower rates of fulfilment. Manifesto-level analysis demonstrates no relationship on either front. This galvanises the conception of manifestos as credible commitments. It also strengthens pledge scholars' claims to contradict the "conventional wisdom" of politicians as habitual promise-breakers; it does not seem to be the case that governing parties make pledges they have no intention of keeping. At the very least, it demonstrates that pledge researchers are not fooled by parties trying to "game the system" by promising little and delivering it. The only caveat I would apply here is that the importance of pledges is not yet systematically accounted for, though very early efforts to understand this unexplored area by measuring voter ratings of the centrality of pledges to the party agenda are now underway (Mellon et al., 2018).

Pledge-level analysis also fails to reveal any relationship between the number of pledges and rates of fulfilment. However, it does show a moderately negative relationship between issue diversity and fulfilment for parties of both government and opposition. This suggests that pledges are more likely to be fulfilled if the party has a more focused issue strategy - in other words, if they are policy-seekers (van Heck, 2018). Ostensibly, this somewhat contradicts the dynamic identified in the preceding chapter, since parties with high issue diversity were found to make more campaign promises. However, I emphasise that it is early days for this area of study. Together, Chapter 3, 4 and 5 demonstrate that the relationship between the issue agenda, pledge fulfilment and party strategy is a multi-layered one. Chapter 5 represents only a first step toward understanding how these staples of party politics interact with one another.

Chapters 2-5 are very much concerned with the question of mandate fulfilment and its measurement. Chapter 6, the last in the sequence of empirical studies in this thesis, moves beyond this topic to present an exploratory analysis of the relationship between party responsibility and electoral performance. With the programme-to-policy linkage well-established, this chapter essentially presents an investigation of classical mandate theory, testing if the "responsible electorate" follows through by punishing parties which themselves failed to behave responsibly. I assume that voting decisions are made using some combination of pro- and retrospective calculations, but that negativity bias leads voters to

weigh promise-breaking more heavily than promise-keeping.

The empirical analysis seems to bear this out, with a positive and strongly statistically significant positive relationship between government pledge fulfilment and vote share identified. I do not claim that this is direct evidence of the responsible electorate, but it provides support for the notion that promise-breaking has tangible electoral costs. This reinforces the findings of Naurin et al. (2019) in survey experiments, which identified negativity bias in relation to voters' beliefs about pledge fulfilment and their views of government performance. More interestingly, the opposite effect is found for opposition parties in both subsample and interaction models: opposition parties tend to perform worse at elections when more of their policy agenda is enacted. This complements findings concerning the predictors of opposition pledge fulfilment in the previous chapter. To explain this, I suggest that, in the appropriate circumstances, governing parties "steal" competitors' policies to neutralise the electoral threat posed.

It is worth noting here that the final three chapters are limited by a relatively low number of available observations. This restriction is unavoidable, as the CPPG comparative dataset represents a near-complete collection of pledge data collected so far. Though between 20,000 and 25,000 individual pledges have been coded and checked for fulfilment in the studies associated with this project, this amounts to fewer than 200 manifestos in total, before unsuitable observations are excluded. This means any analysis at aggregate level is restricted in its statistical power and should be considered preliminary. Thankfully, the continuing efforts of pledge researchers and the topic's growing popularity mean it should not take long to greatly increase the number of manifestos included in the core pledge dataset.

In sum, despite some unavoidable limitations, this thesis presents a wide variety of innovative and substantively interesting contributions to the literature on the programme-to-policy linkage. To summarise, I update the saliency approach and apply the most stringent test so far of the Budge-Hofferbert method, definitively rejecting the general notion that manifesto issue emphasis predicts government spending. This is followed by a slight conceptual rethink in which the approach is redesigned as a test of the link between programmes and government agendas rather than programmes and government policy. An initial test of this is applied, and I report the first evidence that such a connection does exist. I go on to offer further conceptual innovation, coining the concept of manifesto composition to refer to non-ideological structural features of manifesto documents, as distinct from substantive content. Three main dimensions are identified and I explore the connection between them by combining CPPG and MARPOR data for the first time. I report evidence that parties which address a wide range of issues also tend to issue more specific pledges. This suggests a strong connection between parties' emphasis and pledge-making strategies. Further to this, I test the relationship between these composition features and mandate fulfilment at both pledge- and manifesto-level, finding that fulfilment rates are not merely a function of the number of pledges made. I do, however, uncover a tentative relationship between issue

diversity and fulfilment, suggesting that more focused parties are more effective at carrying out mandates. Finally, I reach beyond the scope of the rest of the thesis to perform an initial test of the relationship between party responsibility and electoral success or failure. I find strong evidence that governing parties are punished for low fulfilment rates, while opposition parties do worse at the polls the more of their pledges they see fulfilled. This finding suggests that the mandate process works more or less as it is supposed to - albeit in an uneven and messy way - from beginning to end.

In my view, the chief achievement of all this work is to explicitly connect this burgeoning linkage literature to multiple related areas of political science. So far the literature on the topic, particularly pledge approach, has remained somewhat insulated from other areas of the discipline (Körösényi and Sebők, 2018). By clarifying the underlying difference between the pledge and saliency approaches, exploring the structure of manifesto documents and testing the extent to which mandate fulfilment impacts election performance, this thesis has addressed some fundamental questions about the topic and contextualised its position in the wider party competition literature. To end the thesis, I suggest some immediate and longer-term steps to carry forward the advances made in this thesis and advance the research programme more generally.

7.2 Next Steps

I do not claim to have uttered the last word on the saliency approach, manifesto composition or the responsible electorate. Rather, I believe my work provides a springboard for continued research into these topics. Throughout the thesis I noted several directions for further study. Here, I reiterate these while making more general and practical suggestions which would facilitate this crucial work.

Though I believe Chapter 2 represents the most definitive test yet of the original saliency theory, researchers should continue investigating revised versions of the Budge-Hofferbert approach as more data becomes available. Most importantly, though, is investigation of the specific policy areas or conditions in which a connection between manifesto pronouncements and budget changes is evident. Efforts to this end have already begun, and further study on this matter would be more informative than the identification or not of a general correspondence between emphasis and spending. Some pledge studies have coded for pledges to increase or decrease spending (e.g. Royed 1996), but the connection between these and actual spending has not yet been investigated. If, as I have argued, the Budge-Hofferbert theory really is wrong, one would anticipate that these pledges are a more important determinant of spending changes than the distribution of issue attention. However, again, it is an open question how amenable to adequate measurement budgetary change is in this context.

Despite many substantive commonalities - particularly regarding the connection between policy inputs and outputs - research on the programme-to-policy linkage has been

conducted without much regard for the policy agendas literature. Pledge research specifically has barely engaged at all with the idea of issue ownership, which could be an important determining factor in pledge creation and fulfilment. Chapter 3 of this thesis represents a first step in bridging these separate but complimentary traditions. In my view, forging conceptual and empirical links with work on policy agendas is one the most fruitful routes pledge scholars can take at present. Manifestos are deeply embedded in the party system agenda, and there are many outstanding questions about the relationship between pledge-making, issue attention, the government agenda and eventual government policy. Which policy domains governments address and when is a particularly interesting avenue for further research building on the findings of Chapter 3.

Disentangling this complicated causal web, however, requires adequate data to be collected and made available. It would not be necessary to crudely aggregate and combine disparate datasets if richer data or code were already available. A vital practical step to facilitate improved understanding of the issues I highlight is the integration of issue coding into pledge studies. It is my understanding that issue coding has been completed for most pledge country studies, but that it has not been checked for reliability or released publicly, and different schemes have been used for different countries e.g. MARPOR for the Netherlands and CAP for Portugal. This is not the fault of pledge researchers, since the coordination of data collection and inter-coder checking presents enormous practical challenges. However, it would be highly beneficial if consistent and reliable issue codes were made available. I hope that efforts to standardise and check existing pledge issue coding are prioritised in the near future, and would recommend that anyone collecting original data on pledges categorises them by issue as a matter of course. More generally, the effort to collect information on more manifesto- or pledge-level variables would be welcomed. From my perspective, party organisation information would be especially valuable given the suspected influence of this factor on manifesto development (Däubler, 2012). To this end, the Austrian National Election Study is an exemplar, having collected by far the richest manifesto data of any project with pledge fulfilment as a substantive focus (Dolezal et al., 2014, 2016; Praprotnik, 2017a,b).

In addition, I recommend that manifesto researchers of any stripe leave a "paper trail", digitally storing original manifesto documents and spreadsheets of the specific quasi-sentences or pledges coded and making them publicly available so others can be confident in the data. Dozens of observations were tossed out of the analysis in Chapter 4 and 5 because it was not clear that the two datasets referred to the same document. This is a genuine concern, especially for older observations and countries in which it is normal for parties to publish multiple policy documents during the campaign. I found that was often no way to make the determination of document congruence for sure, short of a significant investment of time and effort in tracking down the original coders. Even then, it is unlikely researchers will be able to recall a document they worked on years or decades ago. This kind of transparency would have greatly ameliorated the difficulties in Chapter 4 and 5

concerning the mismatch of CPPG and MARPOR observations.

This thesis contributes to a related area of research practice by combining this manifesto data for the first time. The code used to aggregate and merge the publicly available versions of CPPG and MARPOR datasets has already been made publicly available for other pledge researchers to use on GitHub. The advantage of releasing the code itself rather than a combined dataset is that the data can be updated when new observations are added to either dataset, as long as the party-matching files are also updated. There are many possible applications for this data beyond the addition of further manifesto composition features to the pledge dataset.

Furthermore, although pledge studies have included descriptive analysis of opposition party pledge fulfilment, its dynamics have not been investigated separately. Chapter 5 and 6 suggest that opposition pledge fulfilment is more than a question of just parliamentary power, but national economic performance and incumbent strategy. Strong general conclusions cannot be drawn from the analysis presented here, but it is important that the pledge research programme takes account of the independent causes and conditions affecting the translation of election losers' campaign promises into policy.

I end this thesis with one final recommendation, perhaps the most important. It has become clear over the course of my doctoral research that too little is known about the origins of manifesto documents or specific linkage mechanisms. This adds to the difficulties surrounding the "causal question" identified in earlier chapters and hinders the development of theory. I made some effort to address this gap in Chapter 4 by operationalising manifesto composition and its determinants, complementing other recent efforts to better conceptualise manifestos and their contents (Dolezal et al., 2016; Harmel, 2018).

This gap can only be filled, however, with rigorous qualitative investigations. The long and rocky route from idea to public policy, the intervention of bureaucracies, the idiosyncratic nature of political party organisations and the importance of individual actors in drafting manifesto documents make it difficult to fully understand the process when using aggregate level data and inevitably simplified operational definitions of fulfilment. Scholars would do well to follow (Däubler, 2012) in carrying out elite interviews to better understand manifesto development. This approach, as well as candidate or elite surveys and other qualitative tools, would allow researchers to better understand the meaning of pledges and, ultimately, mandate fulfilment.

I hope that this thesis can serve as a foundation for much of the future work I propose. Its central message is that manifesto documents are more important to party competition and representative democracy than often assumed. In recent decades manifestos have grown arms and legs, developing into complex and wide-ranging plans for the government of democratic societies. Because this shift has been gradual, the increased prominence of promissory representation has been overlooked by theorists and empiricists alike. Though this concluding chapter has presented nearly as many questions as answers, I believe this thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of the party mandate in a number of ways. I

have demonstrated that manifestos not only influence specific policy measures, but shape the wider political agenda; that they are not only proxies of party competition, but sites of it; that when parties commit to pledges, they mean it; and that party responsibility is not a mere box-ticking exercise, but a politically consequential endeavour. These are not brand new ideas, but they are each strengthened by the evidence presented in this thesis.

Appendix A

Appendix: Supplementary Tables and Figures

A.1 Chapter 1

Table A.1 summarises all the academic outputs used in Figure 1.1 to demonstrate growth in interest in the programme-to-policy linkage and adjacent topics.

Table A.1: Programme-to-Policy Linkage Literature

Authors	Year	Focus	Type	Territories
Artés	2011	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Spain
Artés, Bustos	2008	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Spain
Bara	2005	Manifestos	Article	UK
Belchior	2018	Citizen evaluations	Article	Portugal
Bonilla	2017	Theory	Working paper	-
Born et al.	2018	Citizen evaluations	Article	-
Bouilland et al.	2017	Pledge fulfilment	Article	France
Bradley	1969	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Brouard et al.	2018	Saliency linkage	Article	France
Budge, Hofferbert	1990	Saliency linkage	Article	US
Carson et al.	2019	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Australia
Costello, Thomson	2008	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Ireland
Däubler	2012	Manifestos	Article	Ireland
Däubler	2015	Manifestos	Article	UK
Däubler, Benoit	2013	Manifestos	Conference paper	Comparative
David	1971	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Dolezal et al.	2016	Manifestos	Article	Austria
Dolezal et al.	2012	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Austria
Dolezal et al.	2014	Saliency linkage	Article	Austria
Dupont et al.	2019	Citizen evaluations	Article	Germany
Duval, Pétry	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Canada
Eder et al.	2017	Representatives	Article	Austria
Eichorst, Lin	2019	Manifestos	Article	Anglosphere
Elinder et al.	2015	Citizen evaluations	Article	Sweden
Elling	1979	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Ferguson	2012	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Germany
Fishel	1985	Pledge fulfilment	Book	US
Gregor	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Czechia

Gibbons	2004	Saliency approach	Article	UK
Harmel	2016	Manifestos	Article	-
Håkansson, Naurin	2014	Manifestos	Article	Sweden
Hofferbert, Budge	1992	Saliency linkage	Article	UK
Hofferbert, Klingemann	1990	Saliency linkage	Article	West Germany
Hofferbert et al.	1993	Methodology	Article	US
Holmqvist	2007	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	France
Horn, Jensen	2017	Saliency linkage	Article	Comparative
Joly et al.	2015	Saliency linkage	Article	Belgium
Kačur	2015	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Slovakia
Kalogerpoulou	1989	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Greece
Kavanagh	1981	Manifestos	Article	-
King, Laver	1993	Methodology	Article	US
King, Laver	1999	Methodology	Article	-
Klingemann et al.	1994	Saliency linkage	Book	Comparative
Körösényi, Sebők	2018	Theory	Article	-
Kostadinova	2013	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Bulgaria
Kostadinova	2016	Citizen evaluations	Article	Eastern Europe
Kostadinova	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Bulgaria
Kostadinova, Giurcanu	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Article	EU
Kropivnik, Lipicer	2016	Manifestos	Article	Slovenia
Krukones	1984	Pledge fulfilment	Book	US
Lindgren	2017	Citizen evaluations	Article	Sweden
Lindgren	2017	Manifestos	Thesis	Sweden
Lindgren, Naurin	2017	Manifestos	Article	Sweden
Lipsmeyer	2009	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Eastern Europe
Louwerse	2011	Spatial linkage	Article	Netherlands, UK
Louwerse	2011	Spatial linkage	Thesis	Netherlands, UK
Louwerse	2012	Spatial linkage	Article	Netherlands, UK
Mansergh	2004	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Ireland
Mansergh, Thomson	2007	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Ireland
Markwat	2015	Citizen evaluations	Book chapter	Sweden
Markwat	2017	Citizen evaluations	Book chapter	Sweden
Mathieß	2019	Pledge fulfilment	Article	North Rhine Westphalia
McCluskey	2008	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	NZ
McMillan	2013	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Scotland
McMillan	2019	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Scotland
Mellon et al.	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Preprint	UK
Monière	1988	Pledge fulfilment	Book	Canada
Moury	2011	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Italy
Moury, Fernandes	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Portugal
Natsika	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Greece
Naurin	2002	Citizen evaluations	Conference paper	Sweden
Naurin	2009	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Sweden
Naurin	2011	Pledge fulfilment	Book	Sweden
Naurin	2014	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Sweden
Naurin	2012	Representatives	Article	Sweden
Naurin	2016	Representatives	Article	Sweden
Naurin, Oscarsson	2017	Citizen evaluations	Article	Sweden
Naurin et al.	2019	Citizen evaluations	Article	Sweden
Naurin et al. (eds)	2019	Pledge fulfilment	Book	Comparative
Naver, Urombi	2007	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	EU
Pétry	2015	Party ideology	Book chapter	Canada
Pétry	2002	Pledge fulfilment	Book chapter	Quebec
Pétry	1988	Saliency linkage	Article	Quebec
Pétry	1991	Saliency linkage	Article	France
Pétry	1995	Saliency linkage	Article	Canada

Pétry, Colette	2006	Pledge fulfilment	Book chapter	Quebec
Pétry, Colette	2009	Review	Book chapter	-
Pétry, Duval	2015	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Canada
Pétry, Duval	2017	Citizen evaluations	Article	Canada
Pétry et al.	2017	Citizen evaluations	Conference paper	Comparative
Pétry, Duval	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Canada
Pétry et al.	2018	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Canada/Quebec
Phiri	2016	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Zambia
Pomper	1967	Manifestos	Article	US
Pomper	1968	Pledge fulfilment	Book	US
Pomper, Lederman	1980	Pledge fulfilment	Book	US
Praprotnik	2017	Manifestos	Article	Austria
Praprotnik	2015	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Austria
Praprotnik	2017	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Austria
Praprotnik	2017	Pledge fulfilment	Book	Austria
Praprotnik, Ennder-J.	2012	Pledge fulfilment	Conference paper	Austria
Praprotnik, Ennser-J.	2014	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Austria
Praprotnik, Ennser-J.	2014	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Austria
Rallings	1987	Pledge fulfilment	Book chapter	Canada, UK
Ringquist, Dasse	2004	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Roberts	2008	Pledge fulfilment	Working paper	Czechia
Rose	1984	Pledge fulfilment	Book chapter	UK
Royed	1996	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US, UK
Royed, Borelli	1997	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Royed, Borelli	1999	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Sandvold	2008	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Norway
Schedler	1998	Theory	Article	-
Schwars et al.	2010	Spatial linkage	Article	Switzerland
Sebők	2016	Theory	Article	-
Serra-Silva, Belchior	2019	Pledge fulfilment	Portugal	
Shaw	1998	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Škvrňák	2015	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Czechia
Sussman, Daynes	2000	Pledge fulfilment	Article	US
Svačinová	2016	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Czechia
Thome	1999	Methodology	Article	-
Thomson	2011	Citizen evaluations	Article	Ireland
Thomson	1999	Pledge fulfilment	Thesis	Netherlands
Thomson	2001	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Netherlands
Thomson, Brandenburg	2018	Citizen evaluations	Article	UK
Thomson, Costello	2016	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Ireland
Thomson et al.	2017	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Comparative
Werner	2019	Citizen evaluations	Article	Australia
Zubek, Klüver	2013	Pledge fulfilment	Article	Poland

A.2 Chapter 2

Tables 2.3 and 2.5 show the results of the reproduced saliency models. The dependent variable is the share of government spending for each issue area, led by two years. The party coefficients refer to the party's manifesto emphasis in the relevant issue area. Each model is shown in one column. The number of observations for each model corresponds to the number of years included in the dataset, which is 15 for the UK and 18 for every other case.

Table A.2 presents a jackknife test of the full error correction model used in Chapter 2, Table 2.7. The model is run as many times as the number of countries in the dataset, with one country removed each time. Here, there are six iterations. The model findings do not substantively change, demonstrating that the finding is robust.

Table A.3 shows a similar model run for each policy area, with the country observations remaining pooled. Change in government emphasis is shown to have any statistically significant effect in any policy area. However, it is worth noting the low number of observations for each policy area.

Table A.2: Jackknife Test: Chapter 2 Error Correction Model

	Dependent variable:					
	Δ-Spending					
	w/o Austria	w/o Germany	w/o Denmark	w/o Ned.	w/o Sweden	w/o UK
Δ-Emphasis	.001 (.016)	-.008 (.015)	-.001 (.027)	.005 (.013)	.002 (.011)	.002 (.014)
Emphasis $^{t-1}$	-.007 (.010)	-.009 (.010)	-.027* (.013)	-.020 (.012)	-.006 (.014)	-.008 (.011)
Spending $^{t-1}$	-.093 (.052)	-.098 (.053)	-.108 (.057)	-.150* (.071)	-.083 (.053)	-.109 (.057)
Growth	.085* (.032)	.077* (.032)	.063 (.033)	.062 (.031)	.067 (.036)	.045 (.025)
Range	-.009 (.012)	-.007 (.012)	-.001 (.012)	.002 (.009)	-.005 (.017)	-.008 (.012)
Majority	-.153* (.072)	-.226** (.076)	-.241** (.084)	-.203* (.085)	-.171* (.078)	-.181 (.089)
Culture†	-.144 (.078)	-.118 (.078)	-.203 (.102)	-.159 (.093)	-.076 (.069)	-.097 (.065)
Defence	-.261** (.084)	-.239* (.085)	-.262** (.076)	-.179* (.080)	-.225* (.080)	-.264** (.073)
Education	.856 (.426)	.901 (.444)	.820 (.428)	1.288* (.572)	.691 (.392)	.951 (.474)
Enviornment	-.204* (.086)	-.214* (.097)	-.259* (.123)	-.329* (.152)	-.211* (.100)	-.269** (.085)
Welfare	5.635 (2.761)	5.857* (2.809)	6.297* (2.988)	8.596* (.883)	5.091 (2.825)	6.508* (2.989)
Constant	.382 (.197)	.414 (.204)	.636* (.257)	.581* (.269)	.361 (.224)	.486* (.205)
Observations	132	132	132	132	138	144
R^2	.372	.392	.375	.381	.347	.449

Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
†Reference group = law and order

Table A.3: Issue Area Subset Analysis: Chapter 2 Error Correction Model

	Dependent variable:					
	Δ-Spending					
	Culture	Defence	Education	Environment	Law	Welfare
Δ-Emphasis	.011 (.013)	.016 (.061)	.035 (.038)	.018 (.013)	.001 (.010)	−.090 (.079)
Emphasis $^{t-1}$	−.002 (.019)	−.063 (.100)	−.052 (.068)	−.038 (.020)	.002 (.017)	.120 (.134)
Spending $^{t-1}$	−.632*** (.105)	−.448* (.154)	−.727** (.224)	−.734*** (.097)	−.508* (.206)	−.569** (.160)
Majority	.410*** (.088)	.026 (.129)	.390 (.353)	.236 (.112)	.044 (.162)	−2.737* (.958)
Growth	.018 (.024)	.138** (.041)	−.009 (.097)	.010 (.026)	.016 (.047)	−.165 (.306)
Range	−.019 (.012)	.049 (.054)	−.034 (.030)	−.005 (.011)	.004 (.019)	.005 (.081)
Germany†	−.077 (.079)	.406 (.199)	−.546 (.355)	.287** (.084)	.427* (.173)	1.940* (.901)
Denmark	1.221*** (.135)	.495 (.300)	2.318** (.657)	.387* (.180)	−.393 (.334)	−1.949 (1.874)
Netherlands	1.220*** (.157)	.632* (.274)	1.589** (.453)	1.909*** (.231)	.768** (.235)	−3.594* (1.247)
Sweden	.216* (.084)	.534 (.329)	2.614** (.682)	−.030 (.130)	−.025 (.185)	−2.129 (1.309)
UK	−.060 (.088)	1.666* (.657)	2.374** (.775)	.710*** (.112)	1.242* (.564)	−2.209 (1.037)
Constant	.822* (.300)	.401 (.323)	7.180** (2.255)	.571** (.158)	1.270 (.658)	33.998** (9.026)
Observations	27	27	27	27	27	27
R^2	0.914	.588	.614	.854	.559	.614
Adjusted R^2	.852	.285	.331	.748	.236	.331

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
†Reference group = Austria

A.3 Chapter 3

Table A.4 shows the MARPOR and CAP code crosswalk used for the policy areas included in the Chapter 3 analysis.

Tables A.5 and A.6 show jackknife tests of the Chapter 3 error correction model, with observations from the third year of a government's term. The analysis demonstrates that the findings in Chapter 3 were strongly driven by the economic category. However, although the government emphasis variable loses power, it remains close to conventional statistical significance at 0.05 level.

Table A.4: Chapter 3 Coding Crosswalk

CAP code	MARPOR codes
1. Macroeconomy	Free Enterprise 401 Incentive 402 Market Regulation 403 Economic Planning 404 Corporatism 405 Protectionism 406, 407 General Economic Goals 408 Keynsian Economic Management 409 Economic Growth 410 Controlled Economy 412 Nationalisation 413 Economic Orthodoxy 414
2. Civil Rights	Freedom and Domestic Human Rights 201 Minority Groups 705 Non-Economic Demographic Groups 706
4. Agriculture	Agriculture 703
6. Education	Education 506, 507
7. Environment	Environmental Protection 501
12. Law and Crime	Law and Order 605
16. Defence	Military 104, 105
17. Technology	Technology and Infrastructure 411
24. Health and Welfare	Welfare State 504, 505

Table A.5: Jackknife Test: Chapter 3 Error Correction Model, Part 1

	Dependent variable:				
	Δ-Queen's Speech Attention, Year 3				
	w/o Agri.	w/o Civ.	w/o Def.	w/o Econ.	w/o Edu.
Δ-Gov. Emph.	.298*** (.080)	.347*** (.082)	.346*** (.072)	.244 (.126)	.301*** (.084)
Gov. Emph. t-1	.184 (.108)	.306** (.113)	.266** (.098)	.115 (.147)	.192 (.110)
Δ-Opp. Emph.	−.052 (.078)	−.048 (.079)	−.042 (.069)	−.011 (.109)	−.080 (.085)
Opp. Emph. t-1	.038 (.111)	.006 (.111)	.025 (.097)	.096 (.131)	.017 (.118)
Speech t-1	−.739*** (.081)	−.700*** (.078)	−.806*** (.079)	−.663*** (.092)	−.683*** (.086)
Growth t-1	.206 (.133)	.163 (.129)	.147 (.119)	.150 (.137)	.144 (.137)
Incumbent	−1.023 (.575)	−.771 (.561)	−1.101* (.520)	−.696 (.600)	−1.082 (.591)
Labour	.711 (.508)	.029 (.490)	.894 (.462)	.088 (.518)	.308 (.518)
Constant	1.085 (1.038)	1.706 (.859)	2.045** (.767)	1.999* (.872)	2.181* (.879)
Observations	104	104	104	104	104
R^2	0.586	0.577	0.636	0.495	0.541
Adjusted R^2	0.515	0.505	0.573	0.409	0.463

Note: Issue fixed effects omitted

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table A.6: Jackknife Test: Chapter 3 Error Correction Model, Part 2

	Dependent variable:			
	Δ-Queen's Speech Attention, Year 3			
	w/o Env.	w/o Law	w/o Wel.	w/o Tech.
Δ-Gov. Emph.	.297*** (.083)	.279*** (.081)	.328*** (.086)	.278** (.084)
Gov. Emph. t-1	.188 (.113)	.199 (.108)	.219 (.113)	.149 (.122)
Δ-Opp. Emph.	−.068 (.082)	−.075 (.082)	−.072 (.084)	−.057 (.086)
Opp. Emph. t-1	.019 (.114)	−.016 (.114)	.023 (.117)	.076 (.125)
Speech t-1	−.709*** (.083)	−.639*** (.092)	−.707*** (.084)	−.724*** (.089)
Growth t-1	.144 (.138)	.155 (.133)	.182 (.140)	.237 (.138)
Incumbent	−.962 (.604)	−.764 (.577)	−.957 (.604)	−1.121 (.595)
Labour	.338 (.523)	.329 (.506)	.202 (.530)	.282 (.514)
Constant	2.187* (.891)	1.924* (.869)	2.026* (.908)	1.932* (.875)
Observations	104	104	104	104
R^2	0.562	0.465	0.556	0.546
Adjusted R^2	0.488	0.373	0.481	0.468

Note: Issue fixed effects omitted

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

A.4 Chapter 4, 5 and 6 Observations

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 employ similar data. However, due to data availability issues, slightly different sets of observations are used for these three chapters. I present the manifestos used for each chapter in the tables below. The only difference between Chapter 4 and 5 is the removal of most Swedish manifestos because of missing fulfilment data. These manifestos are still left out for Chapter 6, but this chapter has the highest number of observations because it is not necessary to exclude those which appear "incongruent" with the corresponding observations in the MARPOR dataset. Parties which entered government after the election are shown in bold.

Table A.7: Chapter 4 Observations

	Austria
1999	**FPO**, **OVP**
2002	**FPO**, **OVP**
2006	**OVP**, **SPO**
	Canada
1993	PCP, RPC
1997	BQ, **Liberal**, PCP
2000	BQ, **Liberal**, NDP
2004	Conservatives, **Liberal**, NDP
2006	**Conservatives**, Liberal, NDP
2008	**Conservatives**, Liberal, NDP
2011	**Conservatives**, Liberal, NDP
	Germany
2002	CDU, FDP, **Green**, **SPD**
2005	**CDU**, FDP, Green, **SPD**
	Spain
1989	CiU, PP, **PSOE**
1993	CiU, PP, **PSOE**
1996	CiU, **PP**, PSOE
2000	CiU, **PP**, PSOE
	Ireland
1987	**FF**, FG, Labour, PD, WP
1989	FG, Labour, **PD**, WP
1992	**FF**, FG, **Labour**, PD
1997	**FF**
2002	**FF**
2007	**FF**, FG, **GP**, Labour, **PD**, SF
	Netherlands
1986	**CDA**, PvdA, **VVD**
1989	**CDA**, **PvdA**, VVD
1994	CDA, **PvdA**, **VVD**
	Portugal
1995	CDS, CDU, **PS**, PSD
2005	BE, CDS, CDU, **PS**, PSD
	Sweden
1994	C, L/FP, M, **SAP**, V
1998	C, G, L/FP, M, **SAP**, V
2002	C, G, KD, L/FP, M, **SAP**, V
2006	**C**, **KD**, **L/FP**, SAP, V
	United Kingdom
1974	**Labour**
1979	**Conservatives**, Labour
1983	**Conservatives**, Labour
1987	**Conservatives**
1992	**Conservatives**

Table A.8: Chapter 5 Observations

	Austria
1999	**FPO**, **OVP**
2002	**FPO**, **OVP**
2006	**OVP**, **SPO**
	Canada
1993	PCP, RPC
1997	BQ, **Liberal**, PCP
2000	BQ, **Liberal**, NDP
2004	Conservatives, **Liberal**, NDP
2006	**Conservatives**, Liberal, NDP
2008	**Conservatives**, Liberal, NDP
2011	**Conservatives**, Liberal, NDP
	Germany
2002	CDU, FDP, **Green**, **SPD**
2005	**CDU**, FDP, Green, **SPD**
	Spain
1989	CiU, PP, **PSOE**
1993	CiU, PP, **PSOE**
1996	CiU, **PP**, PSOE
2000	CiU, **PP**, PSOE
	Ireland
1987	**FF**, FG, Labour, PD, WP
1989	FG, Labour, **PD**, WP
1992	**FF**, FG, **Labour**, PD
1997	**FF**
2002	**FF**
2007	**FF**, FG, **GP**, Labour, **PD**, SF
	Netherlands
1986	**CDA**, PvdA, **VVD**
1989	**CDA**, **PvdA**, VVD
1994	CDA, **PvdA**, **VVD**
	Portugal
1995	CDS, CDU, **PS**, PSD
2005	BE, CDS, CDU, **PS**, PSD
	Sweden
1994	**SAP**
1998	**SAP**
2002	C, G, M, **SAP**
2006	**C**, SAP
	United Kingdom
1974	**Labour**
1979	**Conservatives**, Labour
1983	**Conservatives**, Labour
1987	**Conservatives**
1992	**Conservatives**

Table A.9: Chapter 6 Observations

	Austria
1999	**FPO**, **OVP**
2002	**FPO**, **OVP**
2006	**OVP**, **SPO**
2008	FPO, **OVP**, **SPO**
	Canada
1993	**Liberal**, NDP, PCP, RPC
1997	BQ, **Liberal**, NDP, PCP, RPC
2000	BQ, **Liberal**, NDP
2004	BQ, Conservative, **Liberal**, NDP
2006	BQ, **Conservative**, Liberal, NDP
2008	BQ, **Conservative**, Liberal, NDP
2011	BQ, **Conservative**, Liberal, NDP
	Germany
2002	CDU, FDP, **Green**, Linke, **SPD**
2005	**CDU**, FDP, Green, Linke, **SPD**
2009	**CDU**, **FDP**, Green, Linke, SPD
	Spain
1989	CiU, PP, **PSOE**
1993	CiU, PP, **PSOE**
1996	CiU, **PP**, PSOE
2000	CiU, **PP**, PSOE
	Ireland
1977	**FF**
1982	FG, Labour, WP
1987	**FF**, FG, Labour, PD, WP
1989	**FF**, FG, Labour, **PD**
1992	DL, **FF**, FG, **Labour**, PD
1997	**FF**, FG, GP, Labour, **PD**
2002	**FF**, FG, GP, Labour, **PD**, SF
2007	**FF**, FG, **GP**, Labour, SF
2011	FF, **FG**, **Labour**, SF
	Netherlands
1986	**CDA**, D66, PvdA, **VVD**
1989	**CDA**, D66, **PvdA**, VVD
1994	CDA, **D66**, **PvdA**, **VVD**
	Portugal
1995	CDS, CDU, **PS**, PSD
2005	BE, CDS, CDU, **PS**, PSD
	Sweden
1994	**Social Democrats**
1998	**Social Democrats**
2002	Centre, Greens, Moderates, **Social Democrats**
2006	**Alliance**, Social Democrats
2010	**Alliance**
	United Kingdom
1974	**Labour**
1979	**Conservatives**, Labour
1983	**Conservatives**, Labour
1987	**Conservatives**
1992	**Conservatives**

Appendix A. Appendix: Supplementary Tables and Figures

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