

How to (not) Study Candidate Selection 2

Peter Spáč

9.3.2015

Hazan and Rahat

- Most prominent researchers in candidate selection
- *Democracy within parties. Candidate Selection Methods and their Political Consequences.* (2010)
- A **complex framework** based on 4 dimensions:
 - Candidacy
 - Selectorate
 - Decentralization
 - Appointment and voting systems

Other authors

- Different approaches towards theoretical framework of candidate selection
- Various complexity of such models
- Often mutual collisions in their logic

Lars Bille



- University of Copenhagen
- *Democratizing a Democratic Procedure: Myth or Reality? Candidate Selection in Western European Parties 1960–1990*
- Modelling of relations between party bodies and levels

Lars Bille

- Analysis of trends in rules of candidate selection in political parties in several (11) Western European countries
- Aim – to decide whether candidate selection processes have become more democratic
- Comparison of two time points:
 - 1960 – 57 parties
 - 1989 - 71 parties

Lars Bille

- **Democratization** – two features:
 - The role of individual party members
 - Decentralization to sub-national levels
- Sole transfer of power from central level to local oligarchy is not a true democratization
- Results of analysis – Candidate selection in 1989 (compared to 1960) was more decentralized with more powerful party members

Lars Bille

- Typology of candidate selection
- 6 categories based on relations between party bodies and levels
- Only formal rules applied
- Rising number of category represents higher democratic model

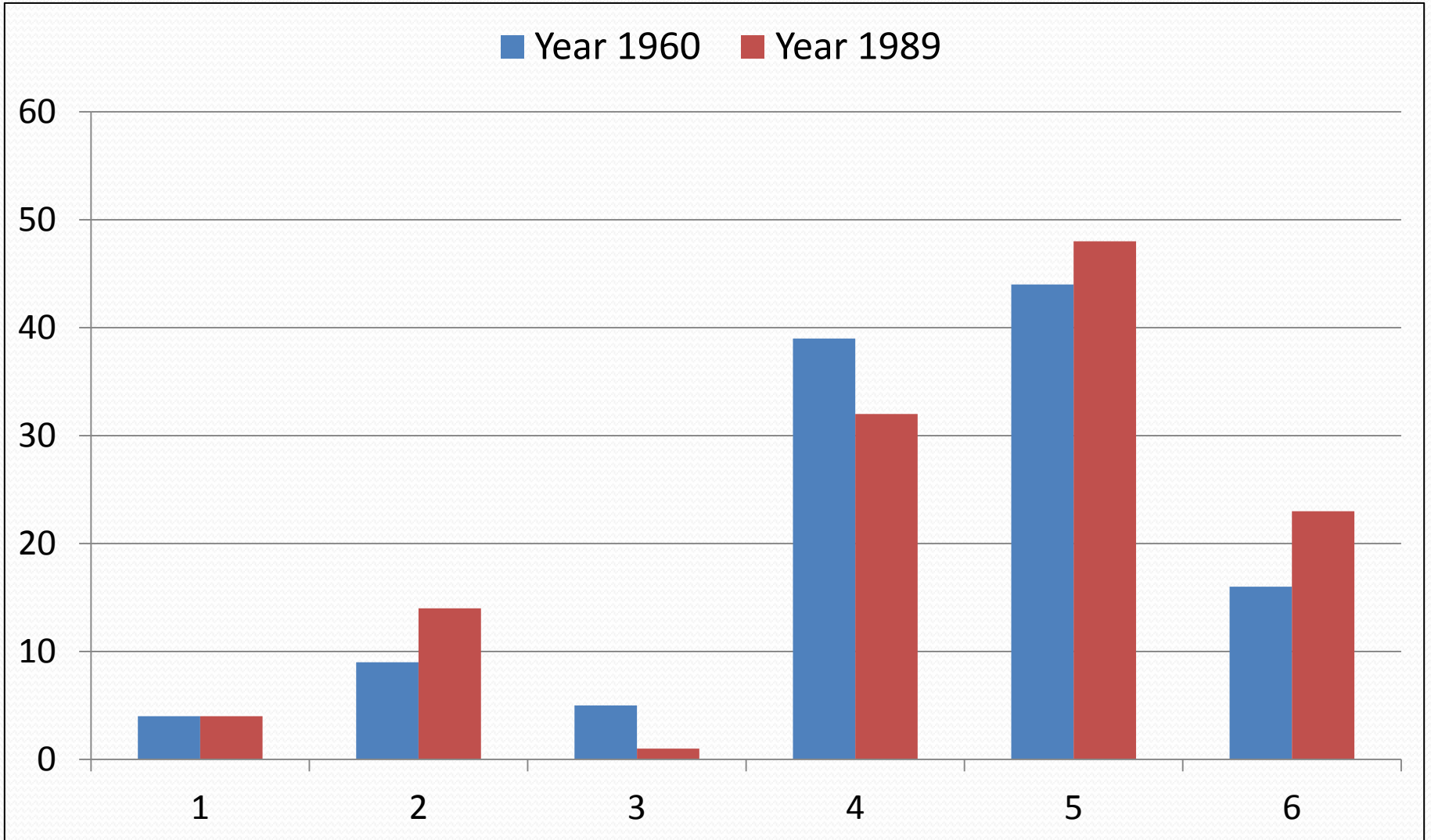
Typology

1. **National** party organs completely control the selection of candidates.
2. The **subnational** party organs propose candidates, but the **national** party organs make the final decision.
3. The **national** party organs provide a list of names from which the **subnational** party organs can select the final list.

Typology

4. The **subnational** party organs decide, subject to the approval of the **national** party organs, including the right to add or delete names according to a variety of stipulated qualifications.
5. The **subnational** party organs completely control the process and make the final decision.
6. A **membership** ballot is introduced, thus making the process more inclusive.

Results



Potential weak spots

- Logic of categories
- Decentralization vs. selectorate
- Multistage process
- Formal rules only

Logic of categories

- Non-systematical creation of categories
- Each category represents a certain model of relations between party bodies or territorial levels
- Categories built on empirical grounds → what if new cases arise which are not covered by models 1-6?

Decentralization vs. selectorate

- Some categories do not differ between decentralization and selectorate
- Examples:
 - 1. **National** party organs completely control the selection of candidates.
 - 5. The **subnational** party organs completely control the process and make the final decision.
- How can we be sure that parties belonging to 5 have a more democratic candidate selection than those in 1?

Multistage process

- Categories stress the importance of the „final“ decision
- In reality many candidate selection processes are multistage
- What if the most important part is done in one of the earlier stages while the last decision is just a formality?
- What if `subnational` is not a solid bloc?

Formal rules only

- Political parties are sorted to categories solely based on their formal rules
- Reality may be quite different than formal procedures
- Is this a weakness of Bille's typology?
- Can changes of formal rules mean something?

Lars Bille's approach



- Analytical framework for candidate selection
- Several weak spots may be eliminated by adding more categories → this could spoil the clarity of the whole typology
- Rather applicable for broader cross-national comparisons

Krister Lundell



- Determinants of candidate selection in political parties
- Independent variables as ideology, party size, age, region, district magnitude
- Created a typology reflecting Bille's approach with further modifications

Typology

1. Selection at local party meetings, by local selection committees or by primaries open for all party members.
2. Selection at the district level by a selection committee, executive district organ or by delegates from the local parties.
3. The same as 1 or 2 but regional or national organs exercise influence over the selection process (veto). The decision, however, is taken at the district level.
4. The same as 5, but local, district or regional organs exercise influence over the selection process. The decision, however, is taken at the national level.
5. Selection by the party leader, by the national executive organ, selection committee, or by primaries at the national level.

Krister Lundell's approach



- Same arguments as in case of Bille
- Mixing decentralization with selectorate
- Selection by the party leader, by the national executive body, selection committee, or by primaries at the national level.
- Useful only when measuring (de)centralization

P. Norris and J. Lovenduski



- *Political Recruitment. Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament*
- Analysis of candidate selection in UK with stress on potential social bias

Framework

- Analytical framework built on two dimensions
- **1. Dispersion of power:**
 - Central – main decision taken by the national party leadership
 - Regional – main decisions taken by regional officers
 - Local – local party membership has the most influence

Framework

- Analytical framework built on two dimensions
- **2. Formalization of the process:**
 - Formal – at each step the procedures are standardized, rule-governed and explicit
 - Informal – tacit rules with only a few binding rules and constitutional regulations

Framework

- Together these dimensions form 6 categories
- *Formal-centralized*
- *Formal-regional*
- *Formal-local*
- *Informal-centralized*
- *Informal-regional*
- *Informal-local*

P. Norris and J. Lovenduski

	Central	Regional	Local
Informal	LP (NED)	LDP (JAP)	N/A
Formal	UDF (FRA)	DC (ITA)	PC (CAN)

Potential weak spots

- Decentralization mixed with selectorate
- Inconsistency of categories
- Broadness of categories

Mixed dimensions

- Automatic premise that higher territorial levels are more exclusive
- *„Is the process centralised with the main decisions taken by the **national party leadership**, is it left to **regional party officers**, or is it dispersed with **grassroots local party members** exerting most influence?“*

Inconsistency of categories

- Parties with different candidate selection processes may end up in the same category
- Canadian PC:
 - Example of informal local case
 - *„local ridings decide (..) the choice of individual candidate. (..) **practices vary widely**; some constituencies may, nominate at large-scale meetings open to **all members**, while patronage by a **few local leaders** may be significant in others.“*

P. Norris and J. Lovenduski

	Central	Regional	Local
Informal	LP (NED)	LDP (JAP)	N/A
Formal	UDF (FRA)	DC (ITA)	PC (CAN)

Broadness of categories

- Categories are built on rather weak indicators
- Formal vs. informal:
 - According to Norris and Lovenduski even informal processes include some formal rules
 - Where is the border between formal and informal?
 - Can parties be divided only into formal and informal types?

Norris and Lovenduski's approach



- Two dimensional model using formal and non-formal rules
- Rather broad categories without specific indicators for application
- Rather applicable for broader cross-national comparisons (same as Bille)



Magnus Blomgren



- *Candidate Selection to the European Parliament:
A comparative study of Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden*
- Analysis of candidate selection in 9 political parties – social democrats, conservatives and greens
- Comparison between candidate selection for EP and general elections
- Specific attention paid to the role of party leaderships

Three-step process

- **Nomination procedure:**
 - Proposals for candidates
- **Selection process:**
 - Selection of candidates out of nominees
 - Its importance depends on whether it is binding or not
- **„The decision“:**
 - Final ranking of candidates

Three-step process

- All steps may involve different selectorate on various levels
- **Nomination procedure:**
 1. Free nominations
 2. Intra party nominations on constituency or national level
 3. Subset of members on constituency or national level
 4. Selection committee on constituency or national level
 5. National executive

Three-step process

- All steps may involve different selectorate on various levels
- **Selection process / the decision :**
 1. Inter party primaries
 2. Intra party nominations on constituency or national level
 3. Subset of members on constituency or national level
 4. Selection committee on constituency or national level
 5. National executive

Three-step process

- Blomgren accepts presence of intermediate bodies between the steps
- Potential high influence on the whole process (screening of candidates, organization of the process)
- These bodies may operate as different selectorate on various territorial levels
 - Local / regional
 - Selection committee
 - National executive

Party	Nomination procedure	Intermediate body	Selection process	Intermediate body	Decision
LP (IRE)	2	1	3	0	5
GL (NED)	2	0	4	0	3
SAP (SWE)	2	1	5	0	3

- Labour party (Ireland):
 - Nomination – intraparty nominations
 - Intermediate body - regional / local
 - Selection – subset of members on const. / nat. level
 - Intermediate body – none
 - Decision – national executive

Role of party leadership

- Blomgren distinguishes two types of procedures
- **Pre-monitoring:**
 - Takes place before the selection
 - „Advice“ for the selectorate
 - Proposals and recommendations
- **Post-monitoring:**
 - Takes place after the selection
 - Veto over decisions in the selection process

Role of party leadership

- Blomgren distinguishes two types of procedures
- Typically **pre-monitoring** gives the leadership more effective tools how to control the whole process
- Why is that so?

Blomgren's approach



- Important findings:
- **Multi steps of the process:**
 - Character of one step does not imply the shape of others
 - Final decision may not be the most important among others (vs. Bille)
- **Role of leadership:**
 - Division of two categories
 - Power issues exceeding the formal rules and procedures

Summary

- Authors apply different frameworks which mutually may collide in some of their parts
- Most important dilemmas:
 - Mixing of dimensions
 - Understanding of terms (decentralization, selectorate, democratization)
 - Consistency of categories and clarity of whole typologies