

Presenting policy analysis

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PED250: Second year policy analysis

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Messages

- In most professional settings, good work will be ineffective without good presentation, writing and orally
- Persuasive presentation is not a gift, but a *craft* that can be learned
- It's about *both*
 - Substance: presenting material
 - Style: your physical presence

Today's presentation

- Presentation – substance
- Presentation – style
- Handling questions and follow up

Presentation: substance

- There are many ways of presenting effectively
 - Anecdote plus analysis: NYT
 - Shock, story and surprise
 - Blink + classical
- The safest is blink + classical
 - Immediate message
 - Adjusted sonata form: message, development, recapitulation/implications

Presentation: substance

Organize around messages

- Main message--in one sentence
- Subsidiary and supporting messages
- Evidence: how best to convey?
 - Graphs
 - Text
 - Tables
- Refer to *model-driven* analysis where needed to convince audience messages are sound, conceptually and empirically

Presentation: substance

Powerpoints

- You don't have to use them! But graphs and possibly tables are important
- Avoid too much text; use a large font; use titles for messages
- Use *simple* figures, e.g. flowcharts, if they tell the story as well as text
- Review and *update* the overview slide
- Most common mistakes: too much material on individual slides and too many slides
- Average 2 minutes per slide!

Presentation: substance

Presenting evidence

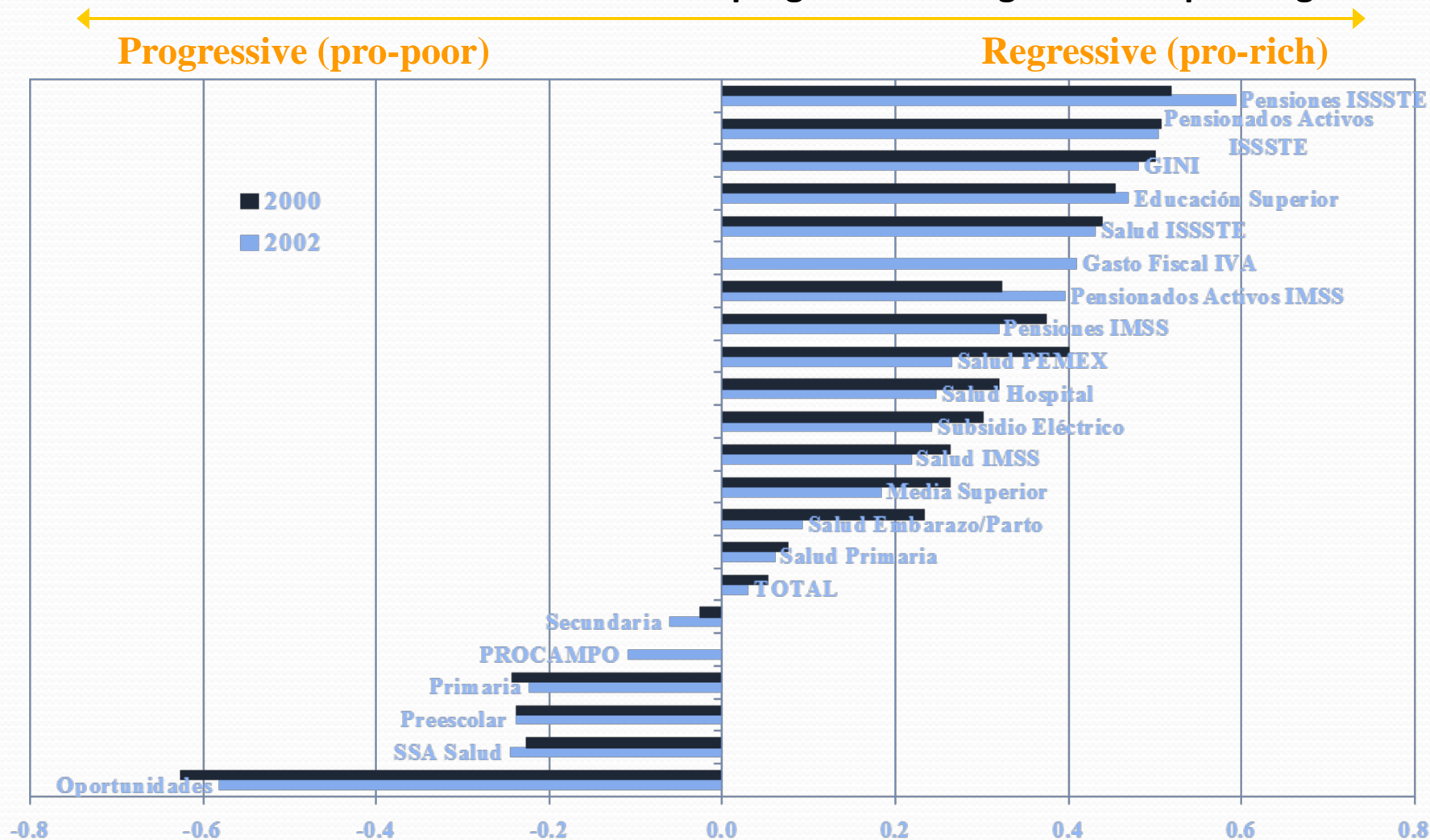
- Doing it well for the written paper can save a lot of time for a presentation —you can cut and paste good graphs
- Loads of books on presenting data. Luci Herman session next week
- Some tips...

Presenting data to influence..

- Don't
 - Present piles of detailed tables
 - Construct overly fancy graphs
 - Cut and paste econometric results
- Do
 - Lead the reader with the title
 - Highlight key results
 - For presentations graphs should pass the 3 second (blink) test

There is enormous variation in the incidence of programs, from very pro-rich to very pro-poor

Concentration coefficients measure how progressive or regressive is spending



Tables

- Have a descriptive *title* that conveys your message.
- Put your “favorite variable” in a prominent position
- Use asterisks to indicate significance levels
- Think about suppressing covariates
- Make the table itself tell the story
- Put into convenient terms (*not absolutes*).

Explaining results—make it intelligible

“Regression coefficient of civil liberties in explaining project performance is .08 and statistically significant”

versus

“A country moving from the level of civil liberties of Zaire to that of Costa Rica could expect to see project performance increase 16 percentage points”

“the coefficient of agency commitment to beneficiary participation is .42”

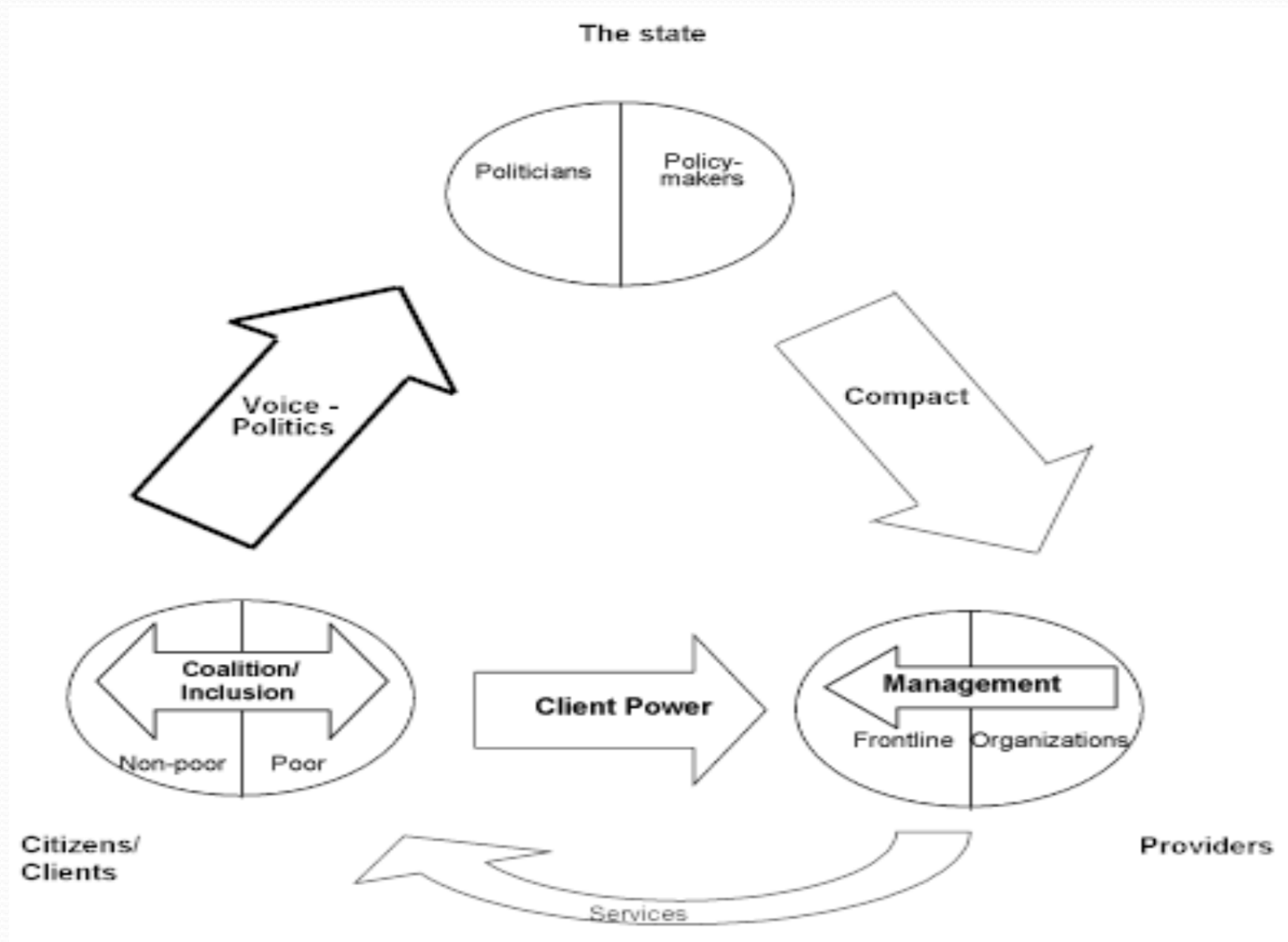
versus

“Increasing agency commitment from low levels to high levels has the same impact as the project having no spare parts to all spare parts being available”

Presenting Analytical Results (e.g. theory and modeling)

- Present a figure with the complete conceptual model
- Be able to give a graphic interpretation
- Be able to give intuition, an example

Graphical illustration of complex relations



Presentation: style

- Most of the impact of a presentation derives from your physical presence, not the substance!

Presentation: style

- Take command of the space and audience
 - Eye contact
 - Body movement
 - The opening is key
- Manage the material, don't let the material manage you
 - If you use powerpoint, think where you want the audience to look
 - Don't read the powerpoint!

Presentation: style

- Feel the energy level in the room, adjust if necessary
- Prepare the ending--be prepared to jump to it if time runs out
- For a high profile/stressful presentation
....relax for a few minutes before starting
....have a drink after ending



Presentation: style

Miscellaneous tips

- Don't apologize
- Don't turn your back on the audience
- Don't over-stay your welcome
- If timing matters and the meeting is crucial, do a practice run
- Be prepared for technology failure

Managing questions

- Engaged and respectful, but clear
- It's not (usually) a debating context
- Taking questions in groups works in many contexts
- Address *concerns*, which *may* involve answering questions
- Manage the questioners with big egos (don't let them get to you, perhaps stroke them a bit, and don't let them take over)
- Pay attention to the decision makers you need to persuade

...final thoughts

- It's not about you!
- The best presenters are deeply engaged in conveying their material, not themselves
- TED <http://www.ted.com/> has good (and not so good) examples

...additional resources from the Shorenstein center

<http://shorensteincenter.org/students/communications-program/communications-workshops/>

- Handouts from presentations will be available at

<http://shorensteincenter.org/students/communications-program/writing-public-speaking-handouts/>

- The Shorenstein center will also provide individual support.

Conclusions

- If your work was worth doing, it is worth presenting well
- Anyone can be an effective presenter—but it takes time and thought....see the King's Speech!
- Make use of your SYPA presentations to learn about presenting