Legislative Accountability in PR Open-List Electoral Regimes: The case of Poland

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To what degree do voters attach responsibility to individual legislative candidates in proportional representation systems? The literature on economic voting argues that voters punish incumbents when economic performance is unsatisfactory and reward them when the economy is doing well. At the same time, it has been shown that PR closed list electoral rules prevent voters from effectively signaling their preferences for individual candidates, thus reducing overall accountability. The difficulties in estimating how performance affects the vote for individual candidates however, have hindered the analysis of accountability for individual legislators under PR electoral rules. In this paper I use an original candidate level dataset to analyze the effect of economic voting on individual legislators under Poland's open-list PR electoral rules. I estimate the degree to which voters effectively attribute responsibility to individual candidates in response to contextual changes in the economy. Employing multilevel modeling I test how parties place candidates in the party list and, taking advantage of Poland's open-list design, how voters effectively rearrange the list to elect specific candidates. This research has important implications for parties and representative democracy, explaining the conditions that allow voters to distinguish high/low performers and ultimately change the composition of parties in the parliament.

To what degree do voters attach responsibility to individual legislative candidates in proportional representation systems? The literature on economic voting argues that voters punish incumbents when economic performance is unsatisfactory and reward them when the economy is doing well. At the same time, it has been shown that PR closed list electoral rules prevent voters from effectively signaling their preferences for individual candidates, thus reducing overall accountability. The difficulties in estimating how performance affects the vote for individual candidates however, have hindered the analysis of accountability for individual legislators under PR electoral rules. I argue that that by neglecting differences between preferential and non-preferential voting systems, researchers have not been able to correctly assess patterns of accountability in the open-list PR countries in Eastern Europe. This has important implications for understanding the development of responsible party governments in new democracies. In this paper I explain the conditions that allow voters to distinguish high/low performers under PR open list rules and, ultimately, to change the nature of parties delegations in the parliament. These findings are particularly important at a time in which a larger number of countries are incorporating open list rules, particularly former communist countries.

This paper looks at one of these countries, namely Poland. It is divided in six sections. The first two sections are theoretical. The first one introduces previous research on economic voting, highlighting the difficulties to held accountable individual legislators under PR electoral rules. The second section proposes a re-conceptualization of the economic voting modeling as a two-stage process. The third and fourth sections describe the variables, hypotheses and the specification of the model. The fifth section tests the empirical implications of the proposed conceptualization, using original candidate-level data from the Polish legislative election of 2001. The last section discusses the results and concludes with providing some implications for future research.

Economic Voting as a Way to Ensure Accountability

The idea of economic voting is intimately related to the concepts of accountability and agency. As outlined by Fearon (1999), agency can be defined through reference to two conditions; firstly, the agent is obliged to a principal and is required to act in his best interest. Second, the principal has the authority (formal or informal) to reward or punish the agent for her performance. Democratic accountability models translate this idea of agency into the political realm, under the presumption that politicians are agents who act in the best interest of voters while voters are principals that have the means to sanction or reward politicians. Accordingly, voters set their evaluation criterion in order to maximize their utility and punish the incumbents if the criterion is not met while rewarding them in an opposite situation.

Standard in the economic voting literature is that voters reward the incumbents when the economy is doing well and punish them when the economy is doing poorly. As principals, voters face specific challenges that include the need to set up the so-called "cut rule" for the government's economic performance that politicians need to meet in order to be reelected (Ferejohn, 1986). This cut rule has to be appropriate to encourage politicians' interest in getting reelected but at the same time prevent them from shirking. If the cut rule is not met by the incumbents they lose their votes in elections. Thus, voters

in economic voting models are usually assumed to be retrospective and evaluate only the performance of incumbents when making their voting decision.

There is a widespread consensus in this literature that economic performance is a major determinant of the voters' decision to reward or punish incumbents. This argument was first developed and tested on single-member district systems, primarily in the United States (Kramer 1971, Goodman and Kramer 1975, Beck and Stegmeier 2000, Tufte 1978). Looking predominantly at the performance and approval ratings of the presidents, researchers have created economic voting models that led them to conclude that economic performance determines the presidential vote. Some controversies among the researchers, however, emerged when explaining the motivations of voters, i.e. whether they are prospective or retrospective, sociotropic or egocentric (Lewis-Beck and Stegmeier, 2000; MacKuen *et al.* 1992)

Research on accountability and economic voting in other countries yielded inconclusive results (Anderson, 2007; Lewis-Beck and Stegmeier, 2000; Sanders 2000; Naanestad and Paldam, 2000; Hibbs 1993). Specifically, scholars have been less successful in explaining economic voting in countries which use proportional representation systems (Duch 2000; Tucker 2006). As a response, they have refined the model by introducing variables that condition economic voting on political context and institutional features of electoral and political systems. Results have shown that the level of economic voting depends on political system characteristics such as separation of power, electoral laws that induce two-party or multi-party systems, or a political environment that influences clarity of responsibility, such as minority or majority governments and perceived levels of corruption (Powell and Whitten 1993; Anderson 2000; Duch and Stevenson 2007; Alvarez et al. 2000). Another set of research has shown that economic voting may depend on the type of incumbent party and voters' evaluation of what goals this party is to serve. According to this view, left parties are punished by voters for high levels of unemployment while right parties are punished for high levels of inflation (Anderson, 1997; Hamann 2000; Dorussen and Taylor 2001;Swank 1993) Even so, similar research on Eastern Europe has not yielded conclusive results, (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000; Tucker 2002; Zielinski et al. 2005) and instead has brought yet another challenge for the research on economic voting and its determinants.

Empirical evidence presented in the literature (Duch, 2000; Tucker, 2006; Harper, 1999) suggests that voters in new democracies and transitional economies often do not follow the strategy of rewarding incumbents for good economic performance and punishing for an unsatisfactory one. The weak performance of traditional economic voting models in these countries caused authors to consider new models with other issues besides incumbents' performance being taken into account by the voters. Competency models have been developed motivated by Fearon's (1999) suggestion that voters' choices may be influenced by motivations other then retrospective sanctioning. Competency models have been applied for the study of Eastern Europe but also in a cross-national context to account for problems with confirming the economic voting hypotheses (Duch, 2000; Duch and Stevenson, 2006; Duch and Stevenson, 2007)

Joshua Tucker (2006) presents one of the fullest accounts to date of how Eastern Europeans process information about the economy and how this is reflected in their voting decisions. He shows that one factor that conditions the impact of the economy on elections is whether parties have ties to the old (communist) or new (post-communist)

regime. However, Tucker notices that this differentiation is temporary in nature. As time progresses the public perception of old and new regime parties is destined to fade; and there is no other way of determining what will follow other than waiting for the democratization process to come to an end and old alliances to fade. Will these fading alliances bring Eastern European democracies to resemble more the traditional accountability models? Or should we rather expect an increase in accountability based on competency-based or other types of voting behavior?

Though interesting this question offers only a departure point for this paper. Difficulties scholars have had with determining possible answers to it provided a motivation to look for new elements that could explain how accountability works in new Europe. Instead going the old route, I want to focus scholarly attention on an element rarely mentioned in the literature on economic voting, which may be responsible for the difference between Eastern European democracies and in their Western counterparts in how accountability works. A profound disparity between these democracies lies in the type of electoral system they have implemented. New democracies have usually adopted electoral systems based on open-list arrangements while majority of established democracies functions as closed-list systems. Open list systems create the opportunity for voters to hold parties accountable not only through selecting a particular party in elections but also through selecting a particular candidate on their preferred party list. Thus, in order to assess accountability in open list systems one should re-conceptualize economic voting to fit this type of electoral arrangements. By redefining economic voting to include consequences of open-list, this paper is addressing the question of accountability in Eastern Europe in a new light as well as it is responding to the shortcomings of the previous research which has failed to notice that open-list arrangements may have consequences for the way governments are held to accounts.

Economic Voting Redefined

Literature often suggests that open list systems facilitate the trend towards greater importance of personalities. Especially in Eastern Europe where parties are often short-lived, the general public may be well predisposed to look at the people who run for office and not at the economic performance. However, there are several reasons to doubt such as pervasive impact of personalities in Eastern Europe as to bloc accountability altogether. Firstly, the evidence on economic voting in this region presented in literature is mixed and non-conclusive, and as such neither confirms nor rejects the idea of economic voting with some evidence for and some against accountability based on economic performance. Secondly, in many open-list systems the sheer number of candidates in elections brings a justified doubt as to whether voters have enough information to make a decision about each candidate. It has been shown in the literature that voters are usually uninformed and follow party cues in voting in elections. The importance of parties is confirmed by Zielinski et al. (2005) who take into account consequences of open-list arrangements for accountability. Based on examination of party switchers, authors find that accountability in Poland works through political parties and not through individual politicians, despite the fluidity and immaturity of the party system. Thus, there should be the potential for economic voting to take place in open list systems.

Trying to fill the gap in the literature, this paper attempts to identify the mechanism that allows voter to hold parties accountable in elections in Eastern Europe using the open-list arrangement. This mechanism though can only be noticed if the very act of voting is re-conceptualized to fit the open-list systems. In those systems voting consists not of one but two stages. The first stage is identical to voting under closed-list systems: voter decides which party to support. The second stage is what distinguishes the open- from closed-list systems. At this stage voter has to decide which candidate he or she wants to support (or whether they want to vote for any candidate at all if the system allows them to abstain from a preferential vote by voting only for a party list).[1] Incorporating the second stage of voting decision into the models of voting makes it possible to extend the narrow scope of economic considerations that voters are allowed under the traditional economic voting model without dismissing this model altogether. If this is the case, in open list electoral systems voters can hold parties accountable even when their main decision about which party to support is based on non-economic considerations. Having decided which party to vote for, a voter may still punish or reward the party for economic performance through rearranging party lists.

If there is a considerable doubt as to whether voters are informed enough as to make decisions based on personalities and since there is some evidence that party labels are important (Zielinski et al. 2005), rearranging of party lists may be a venue for traditional-type accountability where voters hold not individual candidates but parties into account. This can, however, only take place if ordering of electoral lists is decided by the party either by its leadership or through some more democratic process. By systematically changing the ordering of the candidates and "sending" the preferred candidates from the top of the list to further positions where their chances for being elected are much smaller, voters can discipline their parties to act in a manner consistent with voters' expectations.

Such systematic rearranging does not require voters to poses much more information about the party or its candidates than he or she needed to make the decision at the first stage of voting (i.e. which party to support). Miller and Krosnick (1998) provide a mechanism in their psychological theory of voting when exploring the influence of ordering on voters' choices. According to this theory voters who do not have enough information to vote based on their preferences, are influenced by the ordering of the candidates. If they have reasons for support a party they vote for candidates listed earlier (primacy effect) and if they only have reasons to vote against (another party), they vote on the candidates listed late (recency effect). In this way, voters have the ability to send a signal to the party that they are unsatisfied with the outcomes of policies. Thus, the party has a powerful incentive to take voters' preferences into account if it wants to have its preferred candidates elected to the parliament.

If this is the case, traditional accountability in Eastern European democracies may be much greater than the literature suggests. In order to determine such possibility, this paper advances a traditional accountability model for the second stage of voting decision that could be a platform of the yet undiscovered - "second layer" of economic voting in

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[1] Surely, the first decision may be based on an individual candidate and not a party following the candidate-based vote explained by the competence voting literature. Here I want to account for the residual group of voters who do not have enough knowledge to distinguish between the good or bad type of candidate and who still feel closer to one party or feel that one party is more competent than the other.

open list systems. This is a first attempt to conceptualize this theory using a single country experience: the 2001 parliamentary elections in Poland.

The open list system in Poland allows voters to cast a single vote for only one party list. The ordering of the candidates depends on the parties. However, when casting this ballot voters have the option to vote for a preferred candidate and rearrange the party list. The number of votes received by each candidate determines the final ordering according to which mandates are allotted to the candidates on the list. The ballot that each voter receives includes all party lists that participate in the elections with the names of all candidates who run from each list. When voting for a party list, voters have no choice as to whether they want to cast a preference vote or not. Instead, they vote for the list by indicating the name of the candidate they want to elect. If the voter marked two or more candidates on one list, the candidate who is higher on the list gets a vote. In the 2001 elections voters were voting for a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 15 party lists and a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 38 candidates per list.

As noted, my theory of second layer of economic voting works only if the condition holds that party is responsible for the ordering of the candidates on the lists. If the candidates' ordering is left to chance (i.e. lottery in Brazil) my theory ceases to apply since voters in such a case have no way of punishing or rewarding the party for their performance. My fieldwork in Poland has confirmed that party is responsible for the ordering of the candidates on the list. Interviews with party elites indicated a common pattern of list creation among all major Polish parties. Candidates are usually proposed by party organization in a precinct (town, village etc.) and than are successively reviewed by an upper party organization in the districts, in a voivodeship (administrative region) and at the national level. The ordering of the candidates at the top of the lists (usually first three positions on the list, sometimes up to first five positions depending on the importance of the district to the party) is usually left to the party leader or leaders. Thus, the results of my fieldwork confirm that there is a broad venue for the voters to demonstrate either their satisfaction or disappointment with a party by appropriately rearranging party lists.

Variables and the Hypotheses

Testing theoretical claims requires two key measures: 1) the voters' decision on how to punish or reward a candidate, and 2) measures of economic performance. To this end I have devised my dependent variable *Rank*. *Rank* is operationalized as the position of the candidate given the number of votes she received in relation to the number of votes received by other candidates from this specific party list and in this specific district. Hence, the candidate who receives the highest number of votes on her list (in a district) is ranked first; the one that received the second-highest number of votes is ranked second, and so on.

My main independent variable in the model is devised to assess whether there is a relationship between economy and the way voters rank the candidates. Scholars are divided on this issue with some arguing in favor of the measure of economic perceptions and others in favor of the objective indicator (Duch *et al.* 2000; Duch and Stevenson 2005; Palmer and Duch 2000; Nadeau and Lewis-Beck 2001; Sanders 2000;). I have decided to include survey data from the Polish National Election Survey (PNES) rather

than the objective measure of economic performance –GDP and/or unemployment level. This decision was based on three important grounds. Firstly, the survey data allowed me a more detailed approximation of economic performance in electoral districts as I could divide survey responses according to each district. GDP has only been available at a regional level (Poland is divided into 16 administrative regions and 41 electoral districts). Thus, by using survey data I minimize measurement error.

Secondly, objective evaluations capture the overall feelings towards the economy that the voters actually perceive irrespective which of the elements of economy is the most important for a specific voter. Including itemized data such as GDP and unemployment levels may well mask some other economic considerations that voters may have. Thus, the survey measure of economy is more general and reflects actual considerations and not considerations we believe voters should have towards economy. Lastly, the PNES includes not only questions that can be used to measure retrospective evaluations of the economy but also questions that can be used to measure prospective evaluations. Thus, using this measure allows me to address the issue of whether voters are prospective or retrospective; how these evaluations matter and whether either one matters more.

The question I used to gauge retrospective evaluations asked the respondents whether they think the economic situation in Poland during the last 12 months definitely improved, rather improved, did not change, rather deteriorated or definitely deteriorated. I recoded this measure to take values from 1 to 5, assigning the most negative evaluation the score of 1. Once recoded, I assigned each of the candidates running in an electoral district the mean evaluation score of her district. The retrospective evaluations ranged from the mean of 1.7 to 2.14 indicating rather low levels of satisfaction with the economy in the past 12 months. The measure of prospective economy was gauged using a similar question that asked respondents to assess whether the economy in the next 12 months will improve, rather improve, will not change, will rather deteriorate or will definitely deteriorate. Again I assigned those responses scores from 1 to 5, with the most negative evaluation assigned the value of 1. The prospective evaluations were somewhat more positive ranging from 2.7 to 3.5. The mean prospective evaluation was 3.1. Thus, in all instances Poles were more positive about the future than they were about past economic performance.

Expectations as to the effect of economic performance (both retrospective and prospective) on candidate positions cannot be formed, however, without conditioning the impact of economy on the position on the list that a candidate has been assigned by his/her party. Consistent with psychological theory of voting presented earlier party candidates listed at the early positions should experience a downfall if economy is doing badly and should keep their high rankings if economy is doing well. This expectation generates the following hypothesis:

H1: *The better the country's economic evaluations the less likely will the top listed candidates be ranked lower by the voters and vice versa: the worse the economic evaluations among voters the more likely will the top listed candidates be ranked lower by the voters.*

I pose this hypothesis with respect to both governing and non-governing parties despite the fact that economic voting literature informs us that governing and non-governing parties should be differently affected by economic conditions. In this case we look at the behavior of voters who have already decided which party to support and, one can imagine that in both cases (for governing and non-governing parties) voters may be similarly affected by the economy and the ordering of the candidates. On the other hand, however, as underlined by the economic voting literature, voters may be evaluating these parties differently putting more responsibility on the governing parties. The expectation would be that for the governing parties we should observe a stronger effect of economy on the ordering than for non-governing parties. To check whether this is the case I additionally run my model separate for the two types of parties. As governing party (*PM Party)*, I consider the party of the Prime Minister – *Solidarity Electoral Action* (AWS) that formed a minority government in 2000-2001 as well as *Citizens' Platform* (PO) and *Law and Justice* (PiS) - parties that have been created as splinters from the AWS in 2001 elections. I decided not to include the coalition partner *Freedom Union (UW)* since the coalition fell apart in June 2000 (over a year before the 2001 election) and we are looking at the impact of economic performance in the last year before the election. When running separate model for the governing party, I introduce a dummy variable to control for possible differences between the AWS and the splinter parties (*Splinter*). Given the general disappointment with AWS, one may expect that the candidates of PiS and PO will be ranked higher by the voters than those who hid behind a new party name.

Since voters are affected by the ordering of the candidates on the list, one needs also to control for the position each candidate has on the list. Therefore, I introduce a variable *Position* to my model. The usual expectation in the literature as well as among political elites (as confirmed by my fieldwork) is that those listed early, especially those listed first, will be benefiting from electoral positive bias. With my theory in mind, one should expect that those listed first, may be less likely to fall (since they cannot advance any more) than those listed later under the same economic conditions. In order to see the effect of economy on each position I interact these variables to extract the by-position effect. This is also consistent with the conventional wisdom in the scholarship and among political elites that position on the list affects the voters' choice, in particular the first position on the list produces a positive bias towards a candidate.

In addition to economic and list variables, I control for candidates' campaign resources as well as the information about candidates available to voters by introducing a dummy variable that distinguishes between those who were members of the previous parliament (*Incumbent*). This variable is assigned a value of 1 if a candidate held a legislative seat in the retiring legislature and 0 otherwise. The general expectation is that if a candidate is an incumbent he/she should be ranked higher by the voters which would reflect effects of name recognition, greater resources for the campaign etc.

The last of my independent variables controls for the gender of the candidate. As I have learned during my interviews in Poland, there is a conviction among the elites that women are subject to a positive bias when running in parliamentary elections. This is rather surprising since most of the literature on voting provides evidence to the contrary: voters are usually negatively biased towards women candidates. In order to control for the possible effect and see whether and which of these two conflicting expectations is correct, I include dummy variable *Female*.

Methodology

In order to test systematically whether preferential voting has an impact on the levels of accountability, I created an original candidate-level dataset for the Polish legislative elections of 2001. The dataset includes results for candidates that ran in the 41 electoral districts. I decided to include only those candidates who run only from positions 1 to 6, as assigned by the party. This decision has been motivated by the information I acquired during my fieldwork in Poland in the interviews with political elites. It is commonplace that only the early positions are imperative for the party leadership in Poland and only those are decided by the leadership. These are usually positions 1 to 3 and, in regions with greater number of available mandates, positions 1 to 5. For example, in the Polish Agrarian Party (PSL) the candidates lower than position 5 are listed in alphabetical order. Also, those at the front of the lists are known to represent party leadership (and being preferred by the party).They include: incumbent legislators, national party leaders, city mayors or regional self-government legislators. If voters want to punish/reward a party they should decide for or against those listed early and we should see systematic movement of those persons on the list caused by economic conditions (perceptions). Those listed later on the list will move up and down only as a result of this movement above. As a result of including only candidates running from the first six positions on the list I downsize the number of observations from about 7500 to just above 2400. Thus, even though considerable, this downsizing leaves me with a very generous number of available cases.

Based on such collected data I test whether voters in a district effectively attribute responsibility to individual candidates in response to contextual changes in the economy. The data structure requires estimating a model that will account for the effects of analyzing individuals within regional administrative units. Using regular one-level models we would be risking statistical problems such as clustering, nonconstant variance, and underestimation of standard errors that leads to results a greater chance of committing Type I errors. Given these considerations, I specify models in two equations, where the influence of individual-level attributes on candidate ranking i in region k can be written as:

For the model including both the governing and non-governing parties:

$$Rank_{ik} = \beta_{0k} + \beta_{1k}Position_{ik} + \beta_{2k}Incumbent_{ik} + \beta_{3k}PM\ Party_{ik}\ \varepsilon_{ik} + \beta_{4k}Female_{ik}\ \varepsilon_{ik},$$

where the βs are individual parameter estimates and ε_{ik} is a level-1 disturbance term. Regional contextual variables are specified as affecting the model intercept, β_{0k}, expressed in the second equation as

$$\beta_{0k} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}Retrospective\ Economy_k | Position_{ik} + \gamma_{02}ProspectiveEconomy_k | Position_{ik} + \delta_{0k},$$

where the γs gauge the effect of level-2 predictors on the model intercept and δ_{0k} is a level-2 disturbance term which captures the degree of variation remaining in the model intercept after controlling for the five contextual predictors (Gelman and Hill 2007).

Next I adjust the above model to fit the data when divided for governing and non-governing parties. Both of these models leave out the dummy variable *PM Party* and the

model for the governing parties incudes an dummy additional variable *Splinter* that distinguishes between AWS (PM Party) and PiS and PO (parties that emerged from AWS just before elections): The model for the governing parties is as follows:

$Rank_{ik} = \beta_{0k} + \beta_{1k}Position_{ik} + \beta_{2k}Incumbent_{ik} + \beta_{3k}PM\ Splinter_{ik}\ \varepsilon_{ik} + \beta_{3k}Female_{ik}\ \varepsilon_{ik},$
$\beta_{0k} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}Retrospective\ Economy_k\mid Position_{ik} + \gamma_{02}Prospective\ Economy_k\mid Position_{ik} + \delta_{0k},$

The model for non-governing parties can be presented by the following equations:

$Rank_{ik} = \beta_{0k} + \beta_{1k}Position_{ik} + \beta_{2k}Incumbent_{ik} + \beta_{3k}Female_{ik}\ \varepsilon_{ik},$
$\beta_{0k} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}Retrospective\ Economy_k\mid Position + \gamma_{02}Prospective\ Economy_k\mid Position_{ik} + \delta_{0k}$

To estimate my model I use negative binomial estimation that recognizes the skewed distribution of probabilities for advancing/falling on the list and fits best the relationship that we observe with open list electoral systems. In addition, I look at every position separately while determining how it is affected by economy.

Results

As mentioned above, I run my models for different subsets of my data as to determine whether effects of economy on candidate ranking in election are common for all parties or whether there are different patterns for the governing and non-governing parties. Firstly, I run the model for the entire dataset to test the general expectations introducing only a dummy variable controlling for the governing party. The results are presented in tables 1A and 1B.

<p align="center"><Tables 1A and 1B about here></p>

The results for the level-1 variables (*Incumbent, Female, PM Party)* confirm my expectations. Those who served as legislative representatives in the earlier parliament are more likely to be ranked higher by the voters than those listed later. Interestingly, the model confirms the expectations of political elites with regards to women according to which being a woman results in higher ranking by the voters. Also, holding all else equal, being a member of incumbent party (*PM Party)* is beneficial for the candidates. Those who run on this party ticket from any of the first six positions are usually ranked higher than those who run from other party lists. Economic performance, either retrospective or prospective does not have any statistical significant impact on the placement in terms of fixed effects. However, things are different for the level-2 analysis where the effect of economic performance is estimated for each position of the first six positions separately. Random effects estimations indicate that retrospective evaluations *(Past Economy)* have negative impact on all candidates' rankings but the candidate listed first. This means that the better evaluations of economic performance in the last 12 months, the lower the candidates are ranked by the voters. This result is unexpected and opposite to what has been hypothesized. On the other hand, the results confirm my hypothesis with respect to

prospective economy *(Future Economy)*: the more positive evaluations of prospective economy the higher are the candidates ranked by the voters.

The unexpected random effects coefficients for the retrospective economy make one wonder whether there is a problem with the model. As mentioned, the governing and non-governing parties' candidates may differ in terms of the effect of economy on their ranking by the voters. Thus, tables 2 and 3 present the models for those parties as specified above. Results in these tables show that the fixed effects coefficients, although slightly different in magnitude, remain signed in the same direction and of the same statistical significance. Incumbent and women candidates are higher ranked by voters. Additionally, we can see that, as expected, candidates of parties that emerged from the AWS (*Splinter)* are ranked higher by the voters than those who remained associated directly with the governing party (AWS). In terms of level-2 variables and random effects the impact of economy is somewhat different for the two types of parties. For the governing parties it is much more muted: only candidates listed on positions 2, 4 and 5 seem to be affected by retrospective economy, and only for those listed on positions 1 and 2 prospective economy seems to matter. For all models, however, where retrospective economic evaluations matter, this effect is opposite to the one predicted, i.e. the better the evaluations the lower will be ranked those listed on position 2, 4 and 5. On the other hand, prospective economic evaluations yield the expected effect effect.

<Tables 2A and 2B about here>
<Tables 3A and 3B about here>

Since the coefficients in a negative binomial regression are not directly interpretable in terms of their actual magnitude of effect, I obtain estimates of the most stable effect produced by the future economy. They are presented in Tables 4 through 6. Figures 1 through 3 provide a graphical illustration of the effect that future economic considerations have on candidate position for two situations for each of the models presented above: when evaluation of future economy by the voters is at the highest and when it is at the lowest.

Table 4 presents estimations obtained from the coefficients in model 1 with evaluations of future economy at minimum and maximum as well as the maximum effect of this variable on candidate final ranking by the voters. Other variables are held constant. Thus, we look at the effects for a male candidate at a specific position, who is an incumbent and comes from the governing party and whose evaluations of past economic performance are average.

From Table 4 we see that even though they are not large in magnitude there are differences between such candidates in ranking under different economic evaluations. Candidates on any of the first six positions are ranked higher by voters when evaluations are high. Interestingly, those candidates listed at position 2 and 3 always rank lower than their list position. Those at position 4 through 6, on the other hand always gain. Graphical representation of this relationship is presented in Figure 1.

<Table 4 about here>
<Figure 1 about here>

The estimations presented in Table 5 are for a male candidate at a specific position, who is an incumbent and comes from the AWS (the PM Party between 2000 and 2001 as opposed to splinter parties PiS and PO) whose evaluations of past economic performance reflect average evaluations.

<Table 5 about here>

Here the pattern of rewarding for projected good economic performance is not as clean-cut. Those listed in positions 3 and 6 seem to be negatively impacted by improving evaluations of economic future. Also, here we see that not all candidates improve their initial ranking or at least stay at the original position on the list when future economic evaluations are at the maximum: only those listed further (position 4, 5 and 6) improve their initial position. Interestingly those listed at positions 5 and 6 also see their ranking improve when evaluations are at the lowest. Figure 2 offers a graphical representation of these results.

<Figure 2 about here>

The last table presents estimations of change in position of a male candidate of an opposition party, who is an incumbent and whose evaluations about the past economy are average.

<Table 6 about here>

We see that again in this case that more evaluations result in a higher ranking of the candidates. Here, however, only those listed on position 1 retain their position and only those who are listed sixth under the conditions of higher economic evaluations can count on improving their ranking. These effects are presented also in a graph form in Figure 3.

<Figure 3 about here>

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of my analysis reveal a mixed pattern with respect to the hypothesized effect of economy on candidate placement by the voters. Importantly, prospective economy seems to matter. As indicated by estimations of the effect of prospective economy, candidates of governing parties are held responsible for their performance in office to a greater extent than candidates of other parties. Thus, the results confirm the findings in economic voting literature according to which voters assign responsibility to parties and award/punish those parties accordingly.

On the other hand, the effect of retrospective economy is inconsistent and in the opposite to the predicted direction The reasons for the mixed and unexpected results of past economic evaluations may be several. Firstly, the 2001 elections in Poland that this paper focuses on may be specific in that they encourage mixed results. As reported by a publicist right after the elections: "Miller's team [the opposition-SLD] simply better fits the image that people have of competent politicians and administrators, capable of forming a stable and efficient government. Supporting the SLD, people not so much

supported its program as radically rejected the way in which Buzek's [the Prime Minister in the outgoing cabinet] government exercised power" (Majman, 2001). This negative assessment of the outgoing governing party was prevailing to the extent that the party was not able to collect enough votes to gain any legislative seat in the new parliament. Under such conditions, the psychological theory of voting offers an important insight as to why retrospective economic considerations seem to have the opposite effect to the one we hypothesized. As Miller and Krosnick argue, if voters have only reasons to vote against they will vote for those at the back of the lists. It seems that could be the case in the 2001 elections among those who voted for SLD only as a sign of protest against the outgoing government. Those few who voted for the list were highly loyal to AWS.

Thus, we have a mix of voters, i.e. those who decided to support non-governing parties either rejecting the previous government or because of ideological closeness to these parties and those who felt ideologically committed strong enough to support the incumbent party irrespective its poor performance. These conditions are difficult to capture in an analysis of candidate voting. Thus, more effort is needed to incorporate these voting constraints. Secondly, the presented model does not include many explanatory variables and thus, may be underspecified. Including additional variables could help with strengthening or dispelling the effects reported above.

Still, the effect of the few contextual variables included in the model is interesting. Once again the results confirm that incumbent legislators have an advantage over new legislative candidates in elections. On the other hand, the conventional view that women are discriminated against in elections is questioned. In Poland voters seem to favor women candidates. Another interesting result regards the parties that emerged from the unsuccessful governing party. As expected the candidates listed early did better than their counterparts that stayed under the old banner. This relates to the findings by Zielinski et al. (2005) who look at party switching and economic voting and conclude that those who switched from unsuccessful incumbent parties were able to hide behind a new party banner.

In conclusion, this paper is the first attempt to re-conceptualize and test the way voters behave in PR open-list elections. It re-conceptualizes the act of voting in PR open-list systems as a two-stage process where voters first decide on the list and than decide on the candidate. The results provide some evidence that voters behave according to expectations of economic voting models in the second stage of their decision. This has important implications for the way accountability is measured and for the way accountability levels are assessed by the scholarship. Especially vital here is such assessment in new democracies. Lower levels of accountability observed by the scholars may be incorrect since many of the new democracies have employed open-list electoral systems in which voters can hold governing parties to account not only when choosing a party, but also when voting for a party candidate. Of course, this is a novel issue and much more research is needed to compare and contrast different PR open-list countries and different elections as well as to account for the differences in specific arrangements for casting the preferential vote.

Appendix

Table 1A. Fixed Effects: All political parties

Intercept	1.4548***
	(0.3866)
Incumbent	-0.3889***
	(0.049)
Female	-0.2465***
	(0.0284)
PM Party	-0.094***
	(0.0221)
Past Economy	0.1504
	(0.097)
Future Economy	-0.0539
	(0.0674)
N	2403

Table 1B. Random Effects: All Political Parties

	Intercept	Past Economy	Future Economy
Position 1	0.3	0.122	-0.054***
	(0.32)	(0.082)	(0.00003)
Position 2	1.2***	0.16**	-0.054***
	(0.31)	(0.08)	(0.00003)
Position 3	1.6***	0.098	-0.054***
	(0.31)	(0.079)	(0.00003)
Position 4	1.7***	0.175**	-0.054***
	(0.31)	(0.079)	(0.00003)
Position 5	1.9***	0.18**	-0.054***
	(0.31)	(0.078)	(0.00003)
Position 6	2***	0.168**	-0.054***
	(0.31)	(0.078)	(0.00003)

Table 2A. Fixed Effects: Governing Parties

Intercept	1.2576***
	0.4612
Incumbent	-0.5141***
	0.0696
Female	-0.2529***
	0.0428
Past Economy	0.3072
	0.2614
Future Economy	-0.0804
	0.1316
Splinter	-0.1244***
	0.0368
N	970

Table 2B. Random Effects: Governing Parties

	Intercept	Past Economy	Future Economy
Position 1	0.88**	0.36	-0.34**
	0.42	0.41	0.14
Position 2	0.87**	0.64*	-0.23*
	0.36	0.35	0.12
Position 3	2.09***	-0.52	0.17
	0.34	0.33	0.11
Position 4	0.92***	0.73**	-0.14
	0.32	0.32	0.11
Position 5	1.17***	0.52*	-0.05
	0.32	0.31	0.11
Position 6	1.61***	0.13	0.11
	0.31	0.31	0.11

Table 3A. Fixed Effects: Non-Governing Parties

Intercept	1.6614***
	0.4375
Incumbent	-0.357***
	0.0687
Female	-0.2429***
	0.0372
Past Econ	0.063
	0.1197
Future Econ.	-0.0699
	0.0894
N	1433

Table 3B. Random Effects: Non-Governing Parties

	Intercept	Past Economy	Future Economy
Position 1	0.59**	-0.037	-0.07***
	0.27	(0.025)	(0.00003)
Position 2	1.5***	0.048*	-0.07***
	0.26	(0.025)	(0.00003)
Position 3	1.78***	0.074***	-0.07***
	0.26	(0.025)	(0.00003)
Position 4	1.88***	0.083***	-0.07***
	0.26	(0.025)	(0.00003)
Position 5	2.08***	0.102***	-0.07***
	0.26	(0.025)	(0.00003)
Position 6	2.14***	0.108***	-0.07***
	0.26	(0.025)	(0.00003)

Table 4.
All Parties: Candidate Rank and Evaluations of Future Economy

Position	Econ. Future at Minimum	Econ. Future at Maximum
1	0.91	0.87
2	2.5	2.4
3	3.3	3.2
4	4	3.8
5	4.8	4.6
6	5.4	5.2

Table 5.
Governing Parties: Candidate Rank and Evaluations of Future Economy

Position	Econ. Future at Minimum	Econ. Future at Maximum
1	1.14	0.86
2	2.6	2.2
3	2.8	3.2
4	4.1	3.6
5	4.5	4.4
6	5.2	5.6

Table 6.
Opposition Parties: Candidate Rank and Evaluations of Future Economy

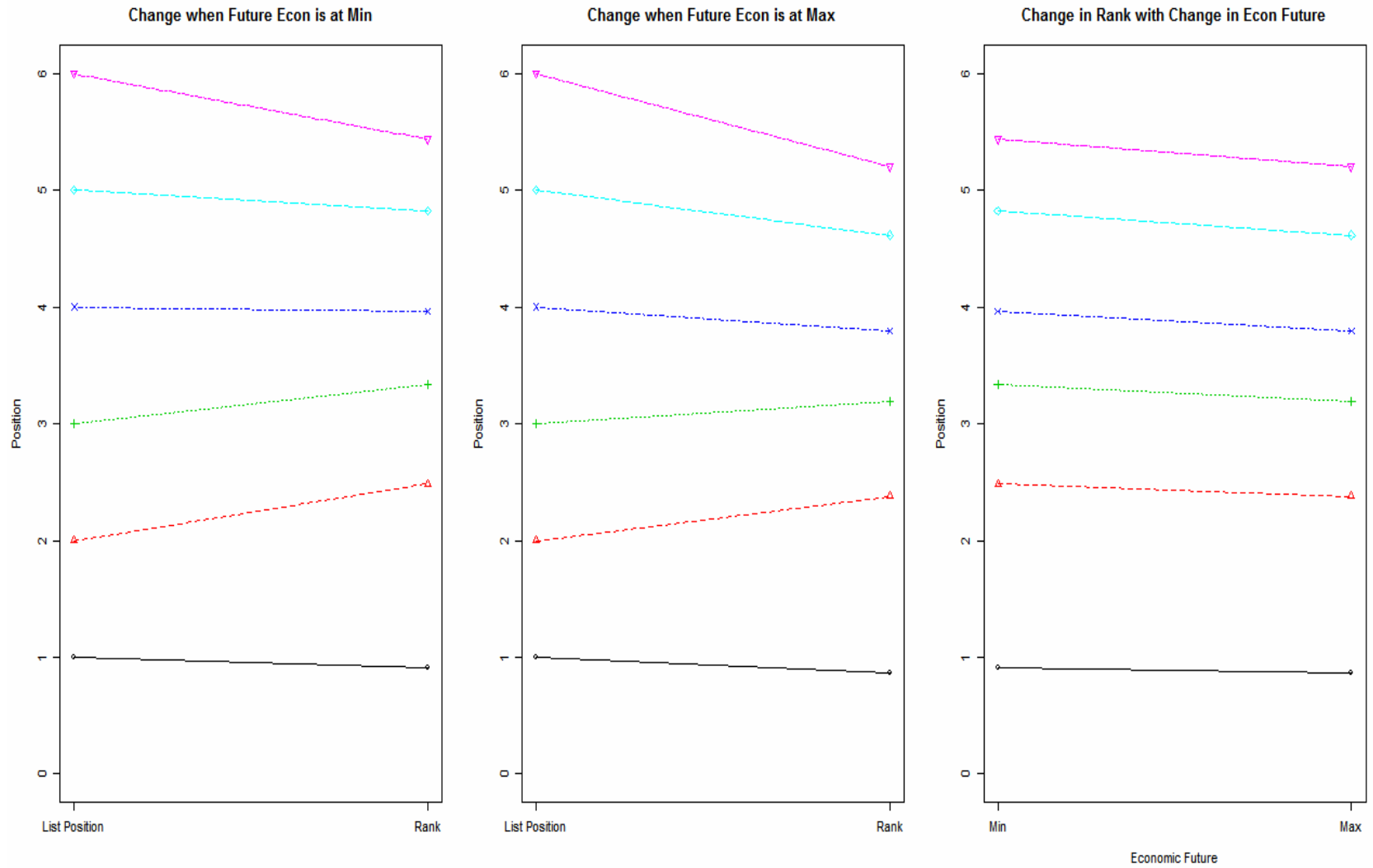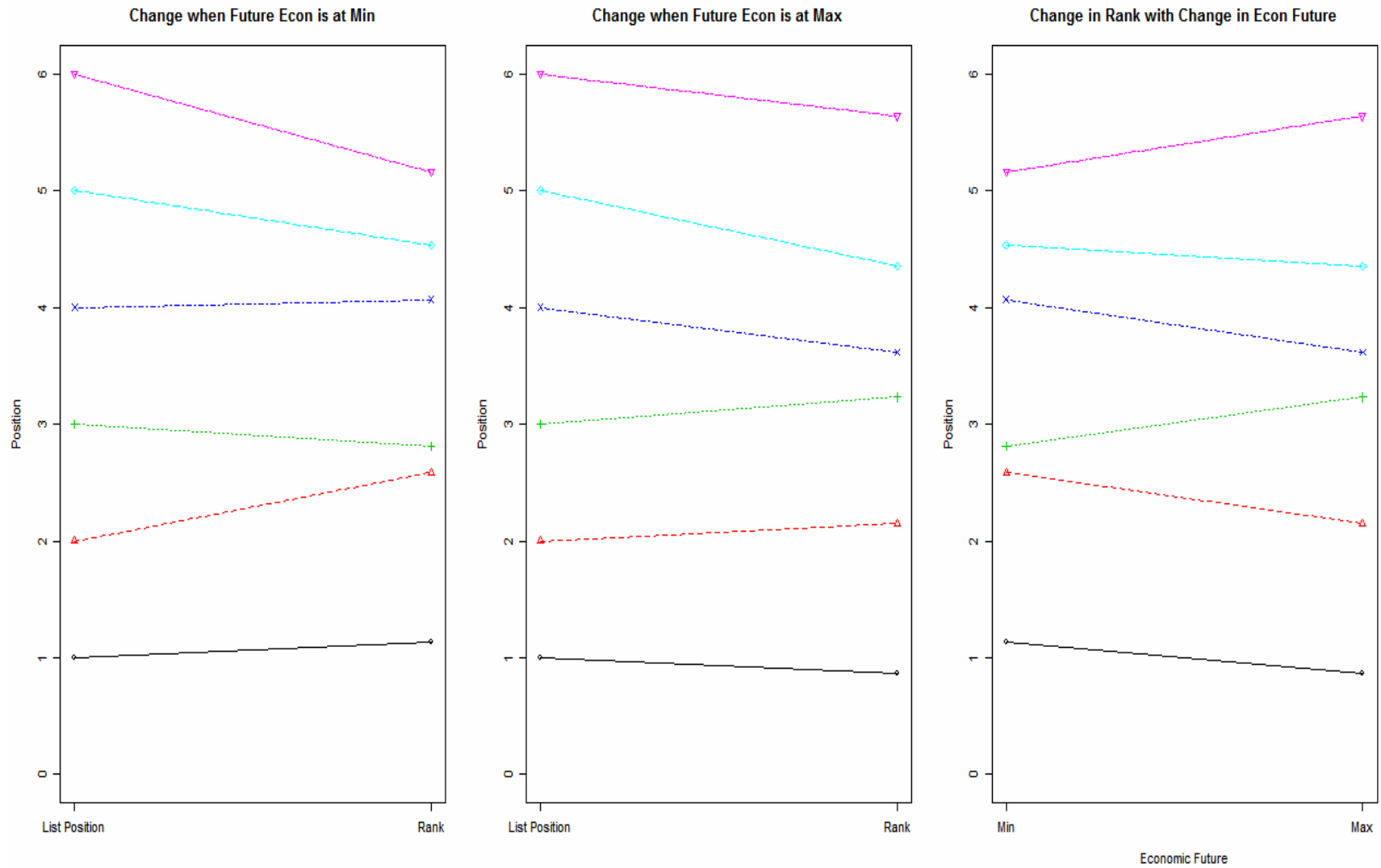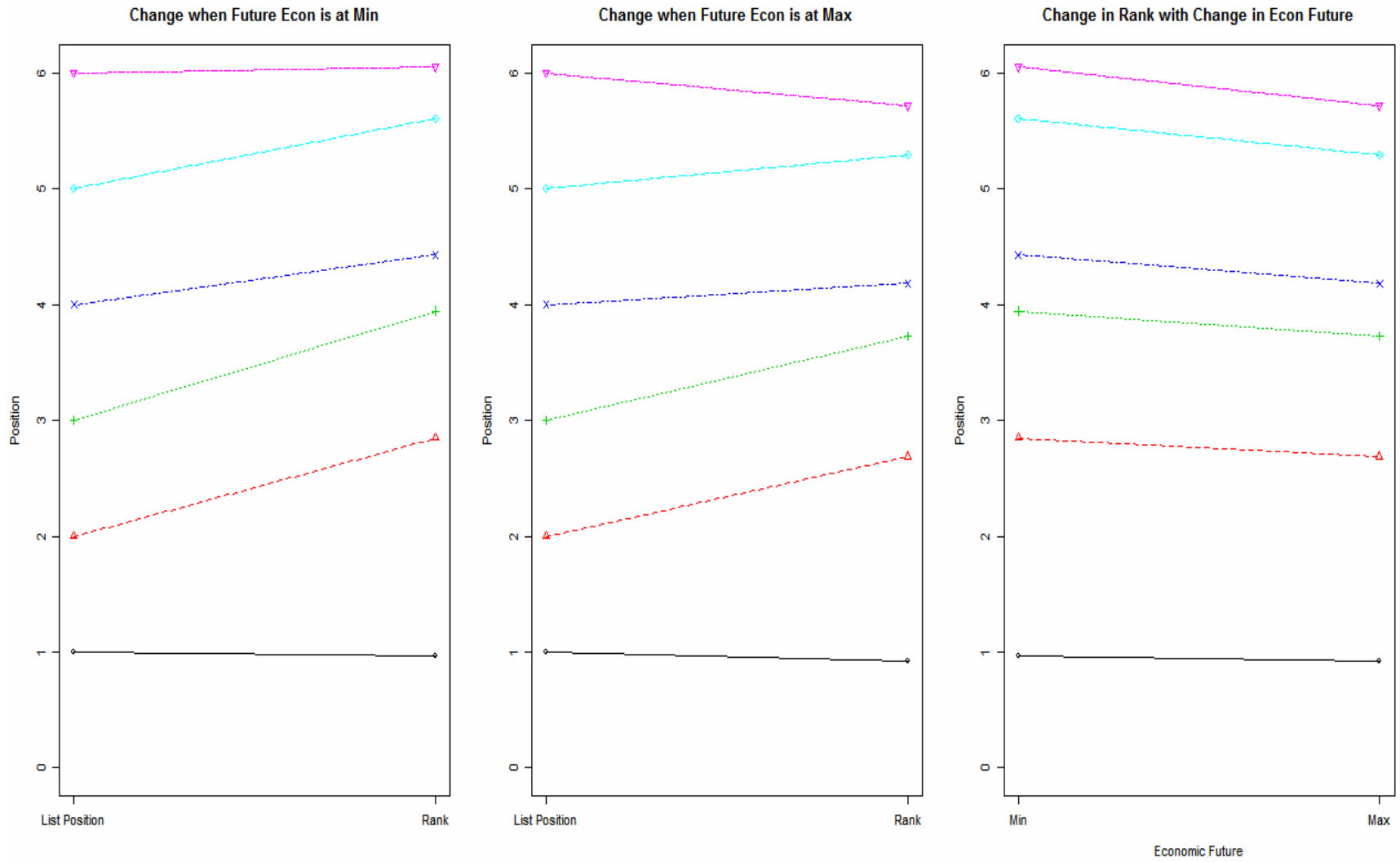| Position	Econ. Future at Minimum	Econ. Future at Maximum
1	0.97	0.92
2	2.8	2.7
3	3.9	3.7
4	4.4	4.2
5	5.6	5.3
6	6.1	5.7

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

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