THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY TURKISH POLITICAL PARTIES AS A TOOL FOR POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

by

Atilla İlker Tuncay

A Thesis Submitted to the

Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

International Relations

Koç University

October 2012

Koc University

Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

This is to certify that I have examined this copy of a master's thesis by

Atilla İlker Tuncay

and have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by the final
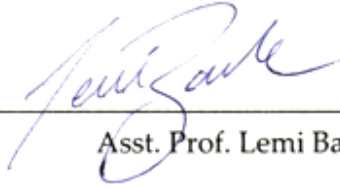examining committee have been made.

Committee Members:

_____
Assoc. Prof. Şuhnaz Yılmaz Özbağcı

_____
Assoc. Prof. Bahar Rumelili

_____
Asst. Prof. Lemi Baruh

Date: _____30·10·2012_____

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for any award or any other degree or diploma in any University or other institution. It is affirmed by the candidate that, to the best of his knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Atilla İlker Tuncay

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the use of social media by Turkish Political Parties as a tool for political communication. Since the development of online technologies that began in the early 2000's, the use of online communication has increased dramatically. Social media tools like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have become crucial tools of communication for political parties. As the concept of political communication has the ultimate goal of interacting with people in order obtain electoral support, this thesis will mainly focus on the subject and collocutor contents and the specific language characteristics that Turkish political parties and leaders possess and use in their social media accounts in order to obtain online participation and support. As well as the content usage of the sources, the feedback proportions of the followers and subscribers, which give social media its unique position, will also be analyzed in order to apprehend the characteristics, norms and values to which Turkish social media users give importance. Two main methods of data collection and analysis are employed in this thesis: (1) the quantitative analysis of social media in order to define the contents and feedback used in the accounts of Turkish political leaders, and (2) secondary analysis of the existing statistics and documents. Analysis shows that social media participants positively evaluate online messages based on their content, not their means of transmission or the use of specific set of language skills.

Keywords: Justice and Development Party, AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Republican People's Party, CHP, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, Nationalist Action Party, MHP, Devlet Bahçeli, social media, political communication, Turkish political culture, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, feedback, content, message variables.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Türkiye'deki öne çıkan siyasi partilerin bir siyasal iletişim aracı olarak sosyal medyayı nasıl kullandıklarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. 2000'li yıllardan sonra son derece hızlı bir şekilde gelişen bilişim teknolojileriyle birlikte ortaya çıkan sosyal medya kavramının Facebook, Twitter ve YouTube gibi önemli sosyal medya araçlarının siyasal iletişim amacıyla kullanımı da etkilemiş, en önemli amacı insanlarla etkileşime geçerek siyasi destek sağlamak olan siyasal iletişim kavramına yeni boyutlar katmıştır. Bu nedenle çalışmada, ülkemizde siyasete yön veren üç parti olan Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP) ve Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi'nin (MHP) liderlerinin sosyal medya hesapları aracılığıyla siyasi destek sağlama amaçlı izledikleri yöntemlerin içerik analizi mesajların içerdiği konular ve söyleniş teknikleri temel alınarak yapılmıştır. Bununla beraber, çalışmada sosyal medyanın farklılığının ve bulunduğu önemli pozisyonun kaynağı olan geri bildirim oranlarının da istatistiksel verileri hesaplanmış, böylece sosyal medyada bu partilerin hesapları ile etkileşime geçenlerin iletişim öğelerindeki hangi özelliklere önem verdiği incelenmiştir. Bu incelemenin metodolojik odağı niceldir ve kullanılan iki ana veri toplama ve veri analiz yöntemi vardır. İlki, Türk siyasal liderlerinin sosyal medya hesapları üzerinde yapılan sayısal araştırma, ikincisi ise mevcut istatistikler ve belgelerin ikincil analizidir. İncelemenin sonunda, çevrimiçi katılımcıların bir siyasal iletişim aracı olarak kullanılan sosyal medya hesaplarında mesajların belirtilme şekilleri veya belirli dil özellikleri yerine içeriğe önem verip konuları temel alarak değerlendirmelerini gerçekleştirdikleri anlaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP, Devlet Bahçeli, sosyal medya, siyasal iletişim, Türk siyasal kültürü, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, geri bildirim, içerik, mesaj değişkenleri

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 3: FOCUS ON TURKEY: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF TURKISH POLITICS, PARTIES AND THEIR LEADERS

CHAPTER 4: THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS USAGE AS A POLITICAL COMMUNICATION TOOL

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Aim of the Study

1.1.1. Introduction

On 23 November 2010, during the AKP party group meeting, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan criticized the party's ministers for using Twitter as a communication tool. His main concern was that the ministers, who are basically the representatives of the Turkish people, were not physically visiting their constituencies enough, and were not interested in the problems of the electorate. During his speech, he warned the members of parliament against giving more importance to digital communication tools than to physical interaction, saying "If you are the representatives of a certain constituency, you need to visit those places frequently. You can't do it with Twitter, you will to go there and hug people, feel the smell of dung". (Şimşek, 2010)

Once again, on 12 May 2011, during an election campaign meeting in Balıkesir, Prime Minister Erdoğan criticized another powerful social media tool: Facebook. During his speech, he accused the website of sheltering too much indecency by saying "Web pages like Facebook are nasty and awful technologies. Every kind of immoral act can be seen there, in the name of every person". (CNN Turk, 2011)

While Erdoğan was speaking these words in Balıkesir, at AKP Headquarters in Ankara the party's vice-president Reha Denemeç was announcing the results of the web-based competition entitled, "We are aware of the change, therefore what did AKP change?" The main characteristic of this contest was that the participants could easily participate via Facebook and Twitter by writing their opinions. Denemeç argued that the party constantly organizes web-based competitions like this. (CNN Turk, 2011)

Even though Prime Minister Erdoğan was consistently complaining about the improper usage of social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook, the political party that he leads had already embraced this technology. Even from these examples, it can be seen that with all its positive and negative aspects, social media is deeply involved in all aspects of people's lives, including Turkish Politics, and has become a brand new tool for political communication.

As social media took its special place within political communication tools, Turkish political parties, which are the main units using those procedures, adapted their message transferring skills into this new technology. Especially after 2005, official social media accounts for Turkish political parties were operational. Along with other characteristics that will be mentioned later, the main difference between social media tools which and other communication instruments is that they provide a mutual transmission process which directly includes message receivers into the network by enabling their active and passive participation through commenting, liking and sharing the messages that are delivered by the political agents.

With these new characteristics, people became participants in the communication process while affecting message sources to shape the contents of their transmissions. As the communication tools used by political entities deliver messages in order to gain support from the electorate, this mutual participation plays an important role in shaping both the policies of political units, and the preferences of the electorate. In this sense, this thesis will basically analyze the usage of social media tools by Turkish political parties for the purposes of political communication and the reflection of their messages within the online public.

1.1.2. Social Media Defined

Despite the personal disinterest of the Turkish Prime Minister, internet and web based communication tools have affected the daily life of people for a long time. People prefer to

use digital technologies in message transferring because of the many advantages of web based communication tools including borderless usage (except filtering and banning processes which are being executed manually) and access options, which are easy to reach, use and transfer. The spread of information becomes faster and more efficient because searching the requested knowledge is convenient for an average internet user when compared with other information seeking processes such as scanning books, encyclopedias, or other non-digital sources.

Along with the improvement of internet and digital technologies, social media emerged as a key function within the communication framework. Along with different tools which are capable of increasing and critically affecting ongoing web communication traffic, this technology changed the very balance of all known communication paradigms, including politics.

In the late 1990's, with the introduction of internet technology into the public, there was a popularity surge in home pages, whereby average citizens could share information about their private life; today's equivalent would be the weblog, or blog. This was followed by the era of corporate web pages and e-commerce, which started relatively recently with the launch of Amazon and eBay in 1995. Those internet sites were generally applying the strategy of one-way information delivery, without enabling sharing between the source and users. However, the current trend in social media communication can be seen as an evolution back to the roots of the internet, since it transforms the World Wide Web to what it was initially created for: a platform to facilitate information exchange between users (Kaplan and Heinlein, 2010).

According to Forrester Research, 75% of internet surfers used social media tools in the second quarter of 2008 by joining social networks, reading blogs, or contributing reviews to shopping sites; this represents a significant rise from 56% in 2007. The growth is not limited

to teenagers, either; members of Generation X, now 35-44 years old, increasingly populate the ranks of participants, spectators, and critics. It is therefore reasonable to argue that social media represents a revolutionary new trend with a user potential in almost every generation; this increasingly used technology has also attracted the interest of private companies and other institutions operating in online space (Kaplan, Haenlein, 2010).

In reality, social media is neither a single tool like the internet, nor a program. It is a type of online media technology based on tools, which aim at accelerating conversation as opposed to traditional media, which delivers content but doesn't allow its readers, viewers or listeners to participate in the creation or development of the content. It is a category of online media where people are talking, participating, sharing, networking, and bookmarking online. It consists of not one but many online tools which have different social, cultural, political and economical purposes across the web (Ward, 2009).

There are lots of different forms of social media tools being used as a channel for communication. Many social media sites come in the form of blogs, microblogs, podcasts, videocasts, forums, wikis, or some kind of content community. Firstly, social news sites like Digg, Sphinn, Newsvine, and BallHype let users read about news topics and allow them to vote and/or comment on the articles. Articles with more votes get promoted to a more prominent position. There also social sharing sites like Flickr, Snapfish, YouTube, and Jumpcut which let people create, upload, and share videos or photos with others, while enabling the option to be rated on the shared posts. Social network sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Twitter allow their participants to find and link to other people. Once connected, people can keep up to date with their contacts about their personal information, interests and posts. Many people are connecting with friends and business associates with whom they had fallen out of touch. Lastly, social bookmarking sites like Delicious, Faves, StumbleUpon, BlogMarks and Diigo allow people to find and bookmark sites and information

of interest. Participants save their bookmarks online and access them from anywhere or share them with others (Jones, 2009). The main research sources of this thesis will be social networking sites, which have intense usage rates by message recipients and official account managements by the sources.

By means of social media tools, it became very easy to share ideas, photos, videos, likes and dislikes with the world at large in order to find out what the communicating entities think of themselves. Social media enabled people to find friends, business contacts, and other needed information while becoming part of a community or a bunch of different communities. Through those elements, social media gave people what television, radio, press media or other traditional media tools had never accomplished: a chance to be engaged with others (Ward, 2009).

Despite the fact that social media enables two way communication and participation among participants, there are also sources which create the information desired to be delivered to the public using social media channels. Therefore, those channels are also transformed into practical communication tools, in which several institutions are involved. In this sense, social media basically allow private and public institutions to engage in timely and direct communication at relatively low costs and higher levels of efficiency than can be achieved with more traditional communication tools. This makes social media not only effective for large multinational firms, but also for small and medium sized companies, and especially for nonprofit and governmental agencies (Kaplan, Heinlein, 2010:59-68).

Regarding the relevance of social media to politics, it can be argued that as social media continues to transform personal and public spheres; it has also begun to change the political sphere significantly. With the increase in the usage and sharing of social media tools, traditional forms of media became outdated for effective political communication and advertising. Traditional tools such as television, radio, and newspapers eventually failed to

create the same impact on their audience that they once did, because of the affects of online media. Therefore, across the political spectrum, an embrace of social media, including popular networking tools like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, and a de-emphasis on traditional media has occurred (Rondeau, 2011).

Politicians throughout the world were forced to adapt to this new digital environment and capitalize on the opportunities which social media presents to engage with the public in a personal and conversational way. Social media has permeated every aspect of personal lives and has changed views on celebrities, persuasive discourses, and news delivery. In this sense, it became an obligation for politicians to embrace social media technologies and use them effectively in order to remain on top of the public's mind and not to be kept off from modern communication technologies which can help them to obtain positive political revenues effectively (Rondeau, 2011).

In this sense, social media also began to be operational as a successful tool to connect political institutions, such as governmental bodies, political parties and political leaders directly with the electorate. Unlike traditional communication, social media technology's two-way conversation affects a nation's public by having a direct impact on the political communication processes (Rondeau, 2011). In what follows, the definition and characteristics of political communication as a social science paradigm, and its relation to social media will be defined.

1.1.3. Political Communication and Social Media

The concept of political communication has been described commonly as a field which has been concentrated on electoral persuasion; however this specific communication field doesn't only cover election campaign periods. Besides electoral persuasion strategies and election communications, the notion of political communication involves a much more detailed framework. At the beginning, it only represented the relationship between political

candidates and electorate. Later, its meaning expanded to the debates of statements between the politicians who are in power and those who are in opposition. Afterwards, this notion was also enlarged to incorporate the concept of researching the dissimilarities between the actions of politicians and the demands of the public. Today political communication covers the characteristics mentioned above, but also includes the role of communication in politics, while paying special attention to concepts like political advertising, political marketing, public opinion polls, and the relationship between the media and the public (Yılmaz, 2012:195-226).

On the other hand, public spheres in which there generally occurs a struggle for obtaining power, including family, school, culture or any other social institutions, are also eventually included into the field of interest of political communication as a result of increasing and developing communication technologies. Binark and Fiske go as far as to suggest that all communicative acts realized in personal or institutional manners, somehow has an underlying social and political dimension, which consequently lead them to be a part of political communication because the messages and information that were transported can't be evaluated by anything but the perspective of political communication (Yılmaz, 2012:195-226).

All of those functions are realized through the use of political marketing, political advertising, public opinions polls and mass communication tools, which are included in the application procedures of the political communication framework (Wolton, 1990:24). In this sense, as a scientific paradigm, political communication builds a bridge between communication and politics while providing researchers with the ability to define the identity of the public in renewed and scientific manners (Köker, 1998:22).

Therefore, as with the developing communicative tools throughout public relations, marketing and advertising sectors, new technologies and tools for effective communications began to be embraced by every kind of political unit and institutions. As online networking,

which provides the use of social media became more prominent in society, it has been utilized as a successful tool for political figures. It is crucial for politicians and other political entities to consider and evaluate the use of new media technologies, especially social media, in order to run their election campaigns, govern afterward, effectively connect with the electorate and constantly measure public opinions and trendy political values occurring throughout the society (Barrett, 2011:3).

As with any successful communication method, political entities are reaching out into the world of social media in order to better connect with voters and constituencies. Through organization, fund-raising, and press coverage, the internet and other new media technologies have changed the way that politicians manage their campaigns and other political activities (Barrett, 2011:3). Combining new political groups and new online technologies eventually create an interesting perspective on how grassroots campaigns and traditional methods can be mixed. Within this sort of sequencing, social media is more personal, more targeted, and has a user-friendly method; as a result its effective usage can increase political participation among the masses while enabling a pure, easy and fast channel of communication for political agents (Baym, Zhang, & Lin, 2004).

As with other communication tools which emerged throughout history, with the improvement into the information technology, social media also took its place within the usage of political communication services. In general, it has lots of serviceable advantages for political entities in order to survive and get an advantageous position within online communication networks. There even exist several online companies which offer social media services for political agents while listing the reasons and needs for social media usage in political manners, as an effective communication tool.

The social network management service SocialGO compiled a list of several reasons for the use of social media by political agents. According to the company, a dedicated social

media network allows political agents to have a focused and controlled online space which easily facilitates e-clientele and elective engagement of constituents on a scale that was previously not economically possible. Further, the dynamic environment that has been created by online tools enables political agents to develop policy with a live and active consultation with the electorate, thus creating ownership in their specialized policies. Other important and advantageous functions of using social media tools are coordinating volunteers and online workers, raising campaign funds and establishing an electorate database which will consequently enable political entities to establish both qualitative and quantitative analyses of their supporters as well as the effectiveness of their policies (SocialGO, 2012).

Along with those advantages, another social network management company, Relenet defines several other characteristics about social media tools, which will definitely work for the benefit of political agents. Those features include giving up-to-date information on local events to increase the degree of direct citizen involvement, allowing photo and video galleries linked to interesting events or persons, enabling personalized online design and a proven online marketing concept which broadens the space for adverts or banners in a virtual community which adapts perfectly to the needs of requirements of political agents, permitting peer-to-peer discussions and instant chat with candidates online, and giving opportunities for supporters to create popular products which can easily spread virally in the world wide web (Relenet, 2012). All of these characteristics show that social media has multiple online services which can be used effectively by political agents inside the concept of political communication.

1.1.4. Aim of the Study

As has been stated above, political communication has evolved over time, and provided its users with more options than making online political campaign transmissions. Today, political communication is neither only a work for designing and delivering electoral

messages, nor a tool used only during election periods. It has been enlarged into a process which forces its users to become active in every moment while being provided with advertising and public relation frameworks. In this sense, as an active and constantly developing communication tool, social media perfectly fulfills the requirements of today's political communication users. Political entities such as political parties, leaders, government officers and public opinion leaders - in other words, people or institutions involved in politics in official or non-official ways - use these communication channels effectively and consistently in order to get electoral support and to be kept up-to-date with their supporters and the whole electorate.

The most important notions in a communication process are sources, messages, channels, and receivers (Communication Theory, 2012). However, in this thesis, as it is not possible to analyze the characteristics of the online participants in detail, and the channels consist of identical online transmission organs, the main focal point of analysis will be the message givers/sources and their message characteristics. In order to gain support, political agents create their messages based on constructed socio-political values, norms and ideologies which are recognized by the public. While realizing this message transmission process, they choose certain contents and message characteristics (MSG, 2012).

There exist several ideas regarding the sources and messages which need to be taken into consideration. For the communicator source; the establishment of useful skills, attitudes, knowledge, social system and culture that are effective during a successful communication process. However, the characteristics which are applicable to social media research are only the attitudes of the message givers and the existing socio-cultural system of the political arena. On the other hand, in terms of messages, featured concepts for communication are content, elements, treatment, structure and code. These characteristics don't contain specific

rules and regulations, but they can be reshaped through the features of the message givers and their communicative context (MSG, 2012).

In sum, the aim of this study will be the content analysis of the Turkish political party leaders (and their represented parties) in social media, while giving detailed information about the usage rates of social media tools within Turkish political parties and statistical data about which content and subjects they prefer to use, which message and language characteristics they choose to apply during message transmissions, and the feedback ratios regarding those deliveries. This research will deliver detailed information about the social media usage preferences of political parties and the public participation rates in those networks.

Other important results of this quantitative content analysis will be the obtainment of the result about whether the support and participation rates of the participants are based on message contents or language characteristics, and whether political parties follow their constructed political ideologies in the social media, while adapting the values of Turkish political culture.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

The detailed analysis of social media tools which are actively being used by Turkish political leaders will be seen from the perspective of political communication, and the main theory which will be addressed during the field research of the content mentioned above will be Language Expectancy Theory (LET), which is one of the important academic research theories in the field of political communication and persuasion. Although LET is a theory of persuasion, in this research it will only be utilized as an explanatory mechanism in order to define the message and language characteristics of the sources, because it is not possible to define the persuasion rates of online participants in social media networks.

Language Expectancy Theory is a language based theory of political communication developed by Michael Burgoon in 1970 (Burgoon, Jones & Stewart, 1975:240-256). The theory assumes that language is a rule-governed system and that people develop expectations concerning the language or message strategies employed by others in persuasive attempts. Expectations are the basic function of cultural and sociological norms and preferences which arise from cultural values and societal standards or ideals for successive communication (Burgoon, 1995:29-52). Such social forces influence language and affect attitude changes of receivers in obtaining different opinions through the messages (Burgoon & Miller, 1985:199-229).

LET argues that typical language behaviors occur within a normative "bandwidth" of expectations determined by a source's perceived credibility and the individual listener's normative expectations, along with a group's normative social climate. Within this framework, communication expectancies derive from three factors: (1) the communicator features, such as source credibility, personality, appearance, social status and gender, (2) the relationship between a receiver and a communicator, including factors such as attraction, similarity and status equality, and (3) the context, in which privacy and formality constraints on interaction can be analyzed (Burgoon, Hunsacker & Dawson, 1994).

The theory is a formalized model about message and language strategies along with attitude and behavior change. Message strategies especially include verbal aggression like fear appeal, explicit opinions and language intensity (Burgoon, 1995:29-52). Burgoon claims that the application for his theory is very effective in the research of management, media, politics and communication studies (Burgoon & Miller, 1985).

This specific theoretical framework was chosen for this research because it fits the essence of the studied field. The messages delivered by political party leaders through social media tools are formed of post shaped dispatches. Even though there are several videos and

photos attached to the posts, the messages are still supported with written statements, which enable LET to work with online communication tools. By building the relationship between message transmitters and receivers, LET works as a connector between all the researched features including the role of socio-cultural norms within the establishment of message contents and language attributes, source characteristics, and specific norms concerning the feedback.

1.3. Methodology

The research will be realized through a detailed quantitative content analysis. The Turkish political parties which are currently members of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM) will be analyzed. As mentioned above, those parties are Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP), and Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP) because of the significant impact and influence of their political action and messages throughout Turkish politics.

Another member of the Turkish Assembly, BDP (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi) is not included within this research because the party was formed through the assembly after the elections by independently elected politicians who didn't include themselves in any political party during the elections. Since these party members have a technical priority before their electorate, the party's social media representation remains ambiguous. The party, as the representation of a particular ideology, has also changed its name, its members, and its characteristics throughout history because of the legal struggles that it has encountered, thus weakening the possibility of realizing proper research regarding its social media strategies.

Besides the political parties, the research sources which will define the social media methods of those political entities in order to realize persuasion will be limited to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The reason for this choice is that Turkish political parties and their

members are officially using only those social media channels for political communication. As for the selection of the official social media accounts of the selected parties, there appears an interesting result:

	Facebook	Twitter	YouTube
Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi			✓
Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	✓	✓	✓
Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi	✓	✓	✓
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	✓	✓	
Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	✓	✓	✓
Devlet Bahçeli		✓	

Table 1 – Selected Social Media Accounts of Turkish Political Parties and their Leaders

According to the results, only YouTube (Political Party) and Twitter (Party Leader) hosted official accounts for all of the selected entities. However, Facebook is also another powerful social media tool in the online communication world, so despite not having official accounts created by all the selected parties, it will be included in the research with the detailed analysis of the official Facebook accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (AKP) and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (CHP). While investigating Facebook, the selection of party leaders has been chosen instead of the political parties themselves for two reasons: firstly, as all party leaders have official Twitter accounts, analyzing their Facebook accounts as well will constitute a much more consistent result; secondly, as AKP have a more significant impact on Turkish

14

politics than MHP, it will be appropriate to focus on "party leaders" instead of "political parties" while analyzing Facebook content, since Facebook lacks the official representation of the AKP as a party entity. In this sense not analyzing the official Facebook accounts of MHP and Devlet Bahçeli won't be a considerable deficiency in the research, compared with the absence of AKP and its leader.

However within this research, YouTube has a special position which needs additional consideration. All of the parties have official YouTube accounts, which are applicable for obtaining comparative results; however those accounts are closed to any feedback, comment or liking options. Parties embed their videos on the website but only the number of videos and their sharing rates can be observed. Therefore, in the thesis, general information and characteristics about YouTube will be given, but the only outcome for the impact of this tool within political communication will consist of the comparison between the given contents.

Accordingly, the official Facebook and Twitter accounts of the political leaders will be the main focus of the research. With the formation of a prepositional framework consisting of a set of notions and characteristics which will be explained in detail in the following chapters, those tools will quantitatively investigated.

The units of analysis will consist of the subject content choices of the political leaders, language characteristics used within the messages and the feedback proportions of transmissions. All of the research units will be selected through a process of random sampling, of which only 10% of the whole posts in every social media network will be analyzed.

1.4. Content of the Thesis

In the next chapter, the concept of political communication and details about the selected theory will be carefully analyzed while referring to their characteristics and importance. Along with a brief history of political communication, its agents, functions and

the place of political culture within the framework, the relationship of the selected theory with this infrastructure will also be analyzed in order to help contextualize the content analysis.

The third chapter will focus on the political culture of Turkish politics along with the ideological and functional features of the selected political parties and their leaders. Those units will be analyzed for obtaining inferences about their constructed communication templates within the public. Information about their history, their development over the years and their ideological stance with the representation of their current leaders will be helpful in defining the expected language characteristics used within the political communication process.

In the fourth chapter, the analysis will concentrate on social media, while introducing detailed information about internet and social media tools as well as their usage by the public and political agents. The history of the online technologies as communication tools, and social media networks will be investigated. After a brief overview, the integration of social media into political communication will be analyzed. As this technology has been used throughout the world in order to mobilize societies and increase political participation, detailed examples will be given about which agent used which social media service in order to work on gaining political support. Finally, with the synthesis obtained through the above-mentioned information, a representation of Turkish political parties in the social media will be given. This part will consist of statistical information only, while giving opinions about the rate of online political party representation.

The fifth chapter will cover the content analysis of official Facebook and Twitter accounts of Turkish political leaders while concentrating on the use of Turkish political parties through the representation of their leaders. In this part, the results of the quantitative analysis between the Facebook use of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, and the Twitter use of all three major party leaders will be investigated. The results will define the

content and language characteristics used in their posts, videos and messages, while categorizing their traits in a comparative framework. Thus, a simultaneous analysis of the feedback given by the public along with their density based on content and language choices will be defined. Although these results will not exhaustively define the factual rates about the effectiveness of social media tools used by Turkish political parties, the study will successfully obtain results about the role of social media within politics and the achievements of political parties as online communication agents. Those results will be evaluated within the same chapter.

In the concluding remarks, along with an overview of the research, the future of the social media in political communication, along with an assessment of the basic requirements for further studies will be articulated. As the field of social media is a relatively new communication tool whose popularity is consistently increasing, many other investigations with varying purposes will occur over time, especially with the help of developing features of technological analysis.

CHAPTER 2: THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND SELECTED THEORY

2.1. Political Communication and Its Characteristics

2.1.1. Brief History of Political Communication

The emergence of political communication as a scientific phenomenon and process has been realized within the last 50 years. However its roots as the use of communication skills for political aims and purposes date back to Ancient Greece. The people who were directing the societies in that era frequently applied specific techniques and procedures in to order govern and gain support from the public, although they didn't name it political communication (Aziz, 2011:1)

After antiquity, applications of different communication techniques in terms of political purposes occurred throughout history based on the social progress, population increase, socio-cultural changes and technological developments. The messages along with their contents and usage techniques have changed over time as a consequence of changes in political entities. Like every discipline, political communication evolved and took its place within the social science paradigm with its unique terminology and methods (Aziz, 2011:1)

With the development of political science in 19th century, the focal point of the paradigm was mainly the political elements and the basic characteristics which rely on this concept. However in the 20th century, the concept of communication also began to gain importance as a scientific feature as technology improved. Through technology, accessing information became easier, and consequently issues like the sources, transmission channels, receivers, techniques, time and place of communication began to be emphasized (Aziz, 2011:2).

The close relationship of politics to communication was established with the emergence of modern democracies after the Second World War. With the reconstruction of a

new political framework; the thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes of the people needed to be re-identified in scientific ways. As an answer to this need, political communication emerged in a modern political science paradigm (Köker, 1998:22).

2.1.2. The Position of Communication within Political Process

The definition of politics has been consistently debated and reshaped from different perspectives. According to one source, politics is the distribution and share between people or societies who belong to different social classes, and who possess different benefits and demands. In this definition, the essence of politics is considered to be the conflict which arises through the struggle between clashing opinions and interests. While the effort of sharing values and scarce sources in a society causes this conflict, simplifying the distribution of these values can only occur through obtaining political power (Kapani, 1992:17).

Van Dyke interprets politics as one's conviction among others regarding the challenges facing the general public, as well as implementing his/her ideas to while obstructing other convictions to become realized (Turan, 1977:7).

Politics is primarily a social concept. It includes social units within its entity and becomes operational inside social environments. Personal and social policies that have been created in the political sphere are shaped based on the characteristics of the citizenry that exist within particular boundaries. However, politics cannot only be shaped by the survival of a wide range of people together; it can correctly function only when those people are connected and interacting with each other and while they have the perception of having different identities. However those differences may eventually create disputes within a political entity in which social units are the main norms, if they are not understood or assimilated correctly (Turan, 1977:8).

In this sense, communication arises in politics as an important agent, in order to provide an association between people and political agents through message transactions. As a

definition, the concept of communication aims at the transfer of the information, opinion and preferences of people to other sources, while creating correspondence and concurrence among societies. The concept can be defined basically as the whole allocation of news, culture and knowledge in different human societies (Kaya, 1985:1).

Communication is not a mutual interaction process which occurs as a result of situational reactions, but instead it is an activity realized by people who want to fulfill their own purposes by introducing personal perspectives and building private meanings on any issue or situation that has been used as a communication unit (Nimmo, 1978:4). Just like politics, communication also plays an important role between single agents and groups, while occurring in a social framework. In politics, communication doesn't only aim at giving information, but also to orient itself toward and play on one's affections. The relationship and similarity between politics and communication arises at this point. Along with informing and giving messages to their electorate, political parties and their representatives also use communication as a tool for trying to gain support from the public (Özkan, 2004:28).

Within a standard democratic political system, mass communication tools and political agents (governmental or non-governmental) have a key position and cooperation in order to deliver messages and affect the behavior of the public. These instruments have the power to mobilize and manipulate people. With regular application of political communication tools, public interest and participation in politics can be increased. Despite the fact that its usage critically increases during electoral periods, this communication perspective also has an important role in everyday politics while transferring casual, daily messages of political agents to the public. In this sense, the use of political communication tools cannot be understood merely to be a tool of political advertising during electoral campaigns (Özkan, 2004:29).

Mass communication tools attract the attention of the society and increase political interest. These devices have different distribution channels and are easy to use and to track (Berelson, 1960:527). The effect of political communication is crucial for manipulating political and social agendas. In this sense, the acquisition of political knowledge is the first step in political participation (Lane, 1959:10). In today's technological conditions, it is impossible to realize comprehensive and public politics through the masses without the widespread tools and power of political communication. Television, printed media, and recently developing online and mobile technology serve political communication in reaching the public correctly and rapidly. However, in contrast with traditional communication tools, the new online techniques give ordinary people the chance and option to participate in politics directly as active single agents or groups which represent various political, economical and social values (Özkan, 2004:31).

Politics and communication have several similarities and characteristics that work as an advantage in actualizing straight and effective political communication throughout the world. Both concepts supplement each other and create an influential power that could never be obtained independently of each other. Additionally, these concepts have at least two sides within their operational mechanism (source and receiver), they both are intertwined with similar conceptions and both of them have the ability to reach the masses. From these characteristics, it can be inferred that communication is a supplementary element for politics, and politics uses communication as a tool to fulfill its purposes (Özkan, 2004:32).

2.1.3. Characteristics, Functions and Agents of Political Communication

Political communication, as the combination of the two concepts mentioned above, emerges as a tool which constantly constitutes one sided or mutual connection and information transaction. It is supported by advertising, propaganda and public relations techniques, while providing assistance to political entities, agents or any other unit which

aims to obtain power, by assuring support and trust across the society (Uslu, 1996:790). This framework both creates transparency in politics while enabling the public to participate in politics and share their personal opinions and views about the political agenda along with providing an opportunity for political agents to reach and affect their electorate and even change the minds and voting behaviors of their non-supporters (Oktay, 1993:77).

Therefore, political communication can be defined as an interdisciplinary academic field which studies the relationship of political processes and communicational procedures (Oktay, 1993:77). In simpler terms, it signifies the form of mutual understanding and recounting, which operates within the political arena (Kentel, 1991:40).

As for the functions of political communication, there exist seven main factors which serve the realization of successful message creation and delivery between agents for effective persuasion. Those key issues and abilities basically are the delivery of political messages, improvement of message effectiveness and subsistence, measurement of public expectations in the socio-political agenda, facilitation of feedback channels through the media, effectiveness of opinion leaders within society, enhancement of agenda setting abilities for political agents, and finally taking an advantageous position against rival entities. Those functions must be defined and utilized effectively in order to obtain successful message transfers from political agents to the public without losing their original form and meaning (Uslu, 1996:791).

As for its agents, political communication exists between people or institutions who share different identities but the same socio-political environment. Political communication encompasses everything related to the production and change of political statements stated by every single agent and transferred to the public through media tools. In traditional terms, there exist three types of agents within the political communication framework which participates in different processes of message transmission and persuasion. According to this concept;

political entities, as the sources, usually create and deliver messages in the media through different communication channels. As the second agent, journalists take the messages from politicians and deliver them to the public as the intermediary unit within this process, and finally the public plays the role of a receiver through this procedure while reacting to the output of the political agents (Wolton, 1991:52).

However, in present democratic political systems, not only the official political organisms or professional media agencies are considered to be agents of political communication, but every person or group which tries to gain a significant legitimacy within the political system are also considered to be political agents. In this sense, individuals, local governments, public opinion leaders and agencies, think-tanks, non-governmental organizations and public interest institutions are all welcomed as the agents of political communication and members of the political system. They did not only receive messages, but also created them. In this manner they also become a part of both communication and persuasion paradigms (McNair, 1995:5). For the purposes of this thesis, as social media doesn't require intermediaries for message transmissions, the sources (political leaders) and the electorate (receiver and feedback givers) are mainly analyzed as political agents.

There exist some rule-based features for political communication from the perspective of political agents, especially for obtaining a successful mutual understanding between the source and the target. Political communication is important for the political agent in order to affect his/her target, and so the source must consider some notions in order to create and deliver a consistent and powerful message. The characteristics which increase the impact of the communication units consist of the identity of the source, socio-political condition of the receiver, the timing of the message delivery, the selection of communication channels and the characteristics of the message language. All the political messages are reshaped and created through those features, which provide successful incorporation within different types of

receivers and result in behavior change favorable to the initiating political agents (Aziz, 2011:5).

Political communication has widespread operational types that serve different purposes. The methods and characteristics of these communication types mainly vary with regard to the purposes of the political agents, the position of the target audience, and the kind of transmission channel chosen in order to get proper and successful feedback. In this sense, two types of political communications concepts come forward, namely political communication according to purpose and political communication according to the position of the target and political agent (Aziz, 2011:6).

The first communication concept is based on the purposes of the political agents. There exist three subfolders in this framework. Firstly, the internalization of the messages which will be distributed out of the political parties, called "in-house political communication" must be placed and operated properly. Secondly, "interior (national) political communication" and "international political communication" become operational by delivering the announcements and statements of the political agents to national or international targets. The content of every message and the tools selected differ according to the preferences of ongoing policy, events or the addressed unit. Within the changing political agenda and differentiation of targets, political agents develop different kinds of statements which aim to reach every different target unit without creating a communicative confusion (Aziz, 2011:7).

The second concept is constructed by the position of political agent and the target. This framework varies based on the location and situation of the communicative process. Therefore, it can be realized either through face-to-face communication or distant communication options. Face-to-face communication is an important opportunity for political agents, because despite launching their messages to small units, the effectiveness of those

messages has an immense effect through that unit when compared with the messages received through other communication tools. The physical appearance of the political agent shapes the electorate in favor of the source and eventually creates positive persuasion. A second option, different from the first one, is when distant communication takes an important place within current technical progress, by controlling several technological tools serving to the deliver political messages to the masses instantly. The only disadvantage of this choice is the ambiguity of whether the electorates receive the messages that are delivered or simply dismiss them. Despite of this lack of knowledge, it is an effective option for mass communication by allocating a considerable amount of personal transmission through different channels (Aziz, 2011:45-48).

2.2. The Role and Importance of Political Culture

All the agents of the political communication process directly create their policy agendas based on the political culture of that specific political unity. Therefore political culture is a key factor for realizing successful communication acts for the political functioning mechanism, which helps the creation of policy agendas and the effectiveness of the agents within the communication process while organizing their message content and language characteristics.

In every political system, members of the society have specific sets of rules, beliefs and attitudes towards politics. Therefore, political culture can be defined as the material and moral conditions which are shaped through the perceptions, interests, knowledge and actions of people that have developed throughout history of their environment (Özkan, 2004:78).

Political culture has two basic functions. Firstly, it simplifies the operational mechanism of the political process by standardizing the rules of certain behaviors and beliefs that exist in societies. Secondly, political culture exists as a tool for ensuring the continuity of

the already established political system (Turan, 1977:33). The political culture of a society is composed of the people's values and orientation towards political objects, and their beliefs about diplomatic symbols; thus the political culture is being fed by both public acts and personal experiences. Through this, it eventually shapes the basic socio-political characteristics of a specific society (Huntington & Dominguez, 1985:19).

Political culture constantly affects and frequently manages the ideologies, behaviors and opinions of the agents who influence the political system. However, as well as affecting those mentioned entities, political culture is permanently affected by notions like the financial provisions of a society, all aspects of social culture, choices of the people who run the political system, social events and historical experiences (Huntington & Dominguez, 1985:34).

Political culture has three major dimensions in reshaping the political communication. Firstly, the dimension of knowing, perceiving and believing enables individuals to be informed of the political in which they live. Through this dimension, individual members of the electorate receive information about the identities, attitudes and ideologies of the members of the government or political parties. In this sense, political culture creates a general knowledge and expectation for the political agents and the political system. During the recognition of those characteristics, individuals perceive structures, events and agents existing through a political system within the perspective of a sentimental framework. Individuals are human beings and therefore they feel satisfaction, excitement or fear, in every framework including the political context. People eventually approach all participants of the political system within the projection of specific emotions and the combination of all of these ideas establishes the essence of the emotional dimension of the political culture. Finally, as for the dimension of evaluation, individuals determine their thoughts and behaviors related with the political system, based on the knowledge that they have already gained. By referring to their

learned experiences and environment, they choose their own political patterns in accordance with specific beliefs and characteristics. In this process, some of the members of society become persuaded by political agents, while some do not (Almond, Verba, 1963:308).

Political culture essentially consists of the degree of the society's obtainment of knowledge and consciousness as well as their emotions and excitement towards political objects. It represents gained behavioral and ideological templates, which are basically the shared values of members of societies towards political issues. This notion also shapes the psychological atmosphere within a society by influencing the form and content of political communication, the establishment of public policies and the negotiation processes regarding political problems (Ranney, 1990:16).

Political culture, which is created by the norms of social system, directly affects the political role of mass communication tools and the characteristics of the political communication system. It determines the agenda of political debates, the forms and components of society's demands from political agents and the boundaries of political communication systems within specific territories based on socio-political norms (Oktay, 2002:17).

In sum, it can be argued that political culture is a crucial notion which affects the components of the political system within specific entities, and consequently influences the characteristics of political communication tools. Political culture creates stable norms and values for societies about their views and perception of their political system. In this sense, it creates expectations for the public about political issues, and individuals respond to political messages and transmissions based on their gained knowledge through political culture.

All political communication tools operate through specific rules that the political culture creates, political agents shape and the public receives and evaluates. The characteristics of the culture depend on historical, socio-cultural and economic characteristics

of that specific territory, as well as the use of communication tools. Therefore every political agent which creates messages and every unit who receives and gives feedback to those outputs create their behavior based on the norms of their society's political culture.

As the political culture affects the establishment of both the subjects and language choices of the messages that are delivered, the next part of this chapter will focus on the analysis of the selected theory while helping to define one of the focus features of this thesis: the selection of the language characteristics of the messages which are used by political agents in social media for political communication.

2.3. Language Expectancy Theory and Its Use for the Research

Political communication tools are used for mutual interaction between political agents and the electoral audience. They have many purposes including message sharing about the country's political agenda or delivering news and events occurring within parties. However as was argued earlier, the aim of political communication by political agents is to gain support from their message recipients. Moreover, since members of the electorate have already established communicative expectancies in their minds, political agents use political communication tools as fast and effective ways for reaching the masses and gathering more support while establishing special strategies.

2.3.1. Operational Process of Successful Political Communication

Getting support from the electorate mainly relies on symbolic transactions. Mostly, language emerges as an internal aspect of the persuasive transaction, with the help of non-verbal behaviors which play a supportive role as a tool of reinforcing the effectiveness and credibility of verbal messages delivered to the audience. In the end of the message transmission process, those symbolic transmissions operate as tools which change people's emotions and behaviors (Dillard and Pfau, 2002:5-6).

Political communication is the main instrument capable of creating motivation or manipulation through a deliberate action; therefore, the analysis of a successful political communication process consists of assessing the structures of the media employed and the contents of the messages. These are sociological and psychological approaches, covering the ways in which the information is dispersed, the sorts of information that are used in media, and the necessary ways of controlling this process. They deal with the content of the delivered transmissions while concentrating on open and closed meanings, values that the information carries, flows of symbols and signals, and categorization cultural anthropology, semiotic, semantic and linguistic studies (Anık, 2000:35). Political communication tools have a direct correlation with the wide range of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral outcomes that are associated with gaining support. In this sense, manipulation and coercion are counted as possible strategies for achieving persuasive outcomes (Miller, 1980:11-28).

Successful communication processes (including political ones) which conclude with effective persuasive results have six main stages from top to bottom. The first phase refers to the creation of message presentation, which is very important in order to attract attention. A complete perception of the communication process is not possible for the target if an interesting notion is not received within the delivered message. In this sense, the second notion pertains to the creation of attention getting content. The purpose of this part is to stimulate as many people as possible and to provide as much impact as possible impacted upon the targets. In the third phase, comprehension emerges as the key factor. It is not enough for the target to be attracted by communicative units; the messages need to be comprehensible enough for the recipients and also need to be perceived smoothly. The fourth phase refers to the acceptance or rejection of the message. The fifth phase involves the formation of a new decision or attitude generated by the previous phase. It is important in this part to keep those opinions consistent because the changed behaviors of the targets after the presentation of

communicative messages are only temporary and people can return to their initial perceptions within a very short time. The sixth and final phase of a successful communication process is taking action. In this last part, the final activity created through communication arises as a behavioral change or reaction. Thus, the process finalizes with this motivational and manipulative part (Kapferer, 1978:3-45). All six parts build an entity which is continuous and connected with those phases.

Negligence or inattention in one step will cause the ultimate failure of the system, resulting in an ineffective communication process (Özkan, 2004:159). Unfortunately, in this thesis, the effect of the persuasiveness cannot be measured through social media messages and participation of the online public for the reasons mentioned in the first chapter.

After the transmission of communicative components, recipients first expound the messages. This coding process changes according to any difference that people accommodate. After a detailed calculation based on cultural heritage, personal values or social influences; the recipient finally decides on taking a specific action based on those characteristics (Özkan, 2004:161).

The technological developments in mass communication tools have also increased the successiveness and effectiveness of message transmissions in political arena. While effective messages can direct the electorate from one candidate to another based on the differences in message content, they also play a significant role on indecisive electorate to aim their support towards a specific political agent (Kalender, 2000:128).

In this sense, specific strategies and tactics emerge in effective political communication from the perspective of the message sources. Strategies contain details about the communicative process including decisions about the works that will affect the electorate, the selection of important topic titles, resource transferring, the determination of allocated

time for political agents, details about communications management, and selection of the weaknesses of opponents (Nimmo, 1970:128).

However people need to be convinced long before they mobilize. On the other hand, targets must establish all the values and norms about the political agents in their own minds by receiving all of the detailed information about them before their judgment. Then the audience compares all the candidates, reconsiders all the received information and individually decides on choosing the political entity that he/she will support. Hence, the effectiveness of the message strategies plays a key role in obtaining positive reconsideration (Özkan, 2004:165-166).

In some accounts, communication strategies for gaining support are analyzed through the options based on messages or attitude. Those strategies aim either at persuading targets directly through the contents of the messages, or at affecting the recipients indirectly by using specific gestures and language characteristics for constructing new behavior and attitudes. As a result, behavioral changes occur either through the influential effect of the delivered messages along with their exclusive contents or through specific message transmission skills which are shaped and used during the communication process by the agents themselves (Kalender, 2000:130).

In order to realize the quantitative analysis about the political communication usage of the selected units within this thesis, both the subject contents and the language characteristics of the political agents will be taken into consideration. The arrangement and placement of the contents don't require a specific theoretical framework; those characteristics will be argued for in detail in the next chapter while defining the socio-cultural and political features of Turkish politics, along with the selected political parties and their leaders. Their constructed ideologies and norms will give clues about the contents of their messages and a detailed

comparison of how successfully they implement those values through social media will be analyzed in the quantitative analysis.

On the other hand, defining the characteristics of particular language skills during a political communication process needs to be validated by special rules and regulations. The Language Expectancy Theory, which is basically a persuasion theorem, has been chosen for this research firstly in order to define the necessary values for the analysis of a successful political communication attempt, and secondly because it is the only communication theory that deals with the language characteristics of the message sources, instead of the recipients. In this sense, the features which will be referred to during the quantitative analysis will be chosen based on the characteristics of this explanatory mechanism.

2.3.2. Defining the Theory: Literature Review

The roots of Language Expectancy Theory (LET) have been established in Brooks as an investigation of reversals of previously held attitudes and stereotypes. According to this research, the possibility of contrasting effects should be taken into consideration. This principle assumes that recipients carry pre-established stereotypes into situations regarding communicative message transmissions. In such cases, the behavior of the speaker may be different from the expectancies of the audience and the final attitude of the audience may change positively or negatively based on those norms (Brooks, 1970:155).

Prior research on the topic has resolved the controversy that recipients have shared expectations about the behaviors that the communicative source should perform. However when these expectations are violated, recipients overreact to the behaviors transmitted by the source. Therefore, if the source is initially perceived negatively and demonstrates more positive behaviors than expected, recipients overestimate and increase the level of positivity towards those unexpected behaviors. As for the reverse, when an initially positively perceived communicator displays negative behaviors, recipients exaggerate and increase their negative

evaluation of the source and the message that has been delivered (McPeek and Edwards, 1975:193-208).

The part which is relevant to the thesis relies upon the argument that during the testing process of the theory, the impact of different linguistic strategies on securing persuasive outcomes has been observed (Burgoon, Jones and Stewart, 1975:240-256). The work provides evidence that strategic linguistic choices and characteristics can be shown as significant rates of persuasive success (Dillard and Pfau, 2002:120).

In its final shape after all the research and statements, Language Expectancy Theory is considered to be the persuasive theory in that it assumes that language is a rule governed system and that people develop macro-sociological expectations and preferences concerning the language or message strategies delivered by the sources in persuasive attempts. These expectations are primarily the functions of cultural and sociological norms. According to this socio-cultural perspective, preferences are formed as a result of a function of cultural values and social standards, or ideals which are a part of the communication performance provided by the source (Dillard and Pfau, 2002:120).

LET argues that changes in the direction desired by communicative agents occur when positive violations of expectations occur. In this sense, positive violations can be observed in specific circumstances when the behavior in question is better or more preferred when compared with the act which was expected in the situation, or when negatively evaluated sources conform more closely than expected to socio-cultural norms, values and situational necessities (Dillard and Pfau, 2002:121).

LET has been refined and reshaped over many years. Thus, the boundaries of the theory are not only specified but also broadly compared to existing sub-theories of socio-cultural influence. Those particular theoretical formations are divided into different paradigms including "The Traditional Passive Message Reception" framework, in which a persuader

presents a message to the target with a desire to change attitudes or behaviors, "The Active Participation Paradigm", in which individuals are self-persuaded by actually producing messages, usually against their own attitudes, resulting in a change in their behavior to a position that more closely conforms to their public communication behavior; and another paradigm which deals with how language and expectancy violations operate in tandem in resistance to the persuasion paradigm (Dillard and Pfau, 2002:119).

The language characteristics which affect the judgments of message recipients will be chosen from the Passive Message Reception Paradigm, which was the only sub-paradigm concerned with the perspective of the message sources. As political agents constantly aim to affect their electorate, they carefully work on the content of their messages as well as the language that will be selected during the delivery. In this sense, the selected paradigm is the best source for realizing a content analysis based on the social media techniques used by political parties and their leaders in order to get support from the electorate.

2.3.3. Generating Features of the Message Variables

LET is a message-centered and source based theory (Burgoon, 1995:29). It explains the reason why certain linguistic formats in messages influence the outcomes. As language is a rule-governed system in which people develop individual norms and expectations concerning appropriate language use in given situations, generally socio-cultural forces shape the patterns of ordinary language and determine their normative and non-normative use. In this sense, people develop cultural and sociological expectations about language behaviors which affect their acceptance or rejection of messages (Burgoon and Miller, 1985:199-229).

Message sources and their characteristics define the options for message transfers and are important norms of persuasive communication, especially in politics. Besides delivery techniques, other factors related to the condition and feature of the source that affect the recipients during communication are the credibility or trustworthiness and gender of the

source. According to this paradigm, highly credible communicators have the freedom to select varied language strategies and compliance-gaining techniques in developing persuasive messages, while low credibility communicators must conform to more limited language options in order to be effective. In addition to source credibility differences, there also exist gender-specific expectations about effective persuasive behavior. LET argues that males and females have differing bandwidths in terms of the affect of their persuasive message choices on the recipients. According to the paradigm, males are usually more persuasive using high intensity persuasive appeals and compliance gaining message attempts, while females are usually more persuasive using low intensity appeals (Dillard and Pfau, 2002:123-124).

The genders of the political agents cannot create a difference within this analysis because all of the representatives are male; therefore the research will follow the instructions of the paradigm pertinent to the usage of specific language characteristics by males. However, source credibility is an unfeasible characteristic to measure because it is not possible in this research to define the trustworthiness level of the political agents based on their message characteristics or feedback. The polls that have been done in the public generally give some statistics about the level of trust of Turkish political leaders; however in this procedure the main problem is that individual interpretations are anonymous and they do not represent all members of society which uses social media as a political communication tool.

On the other hand, as for language characteristics, message variables that contain the use of language intensity, opinionated language, verbal aggression and fear arousal - the characteristics argued within the theory in order to accomplish an effective communication process - will determine the effectiveness of a message in terms of affecting the targets while measuring their feedback rates. According to the theory, the use of opinionated language skills, instrumentally and verbally aggressive message strategies, highly intensive language

use and profanity create positive violations towards high credibility and male sources and affect their participation and persuasion rate positively (Burgoon, 1990:51-72).

Language intensity is one of the most important factors which affected the participation and impact rate. It refers to the degree to which language deviates from neutrality. The selections of words with emotionally extensive differences create the degree of intensity within a message. As an example, "hate" is more intense than "dislike," "horrified" is more intense than "scared", "overwhelmed" is more intense than "influenced". Messages employing high-intensity language generally produce greater attitude change than similar messages using low- intensity language. However, the effect also largely depends on the position advocated. The deviation of intensity may be positive or negative, therefore when the source uses intense language while advocating a position viewed favorably by the audience; in such cases intense language increases credibility and promotes message acceptance. In this research, the language intensity level and scale will be measured in order to effectively analyze the success of the message strategies (Bradac, Bowers and Courtright, 1979:257-269).

The use of opinionated language is also another important factor. Non-opinionated statements deliver information related to the communicator's attitude towards a particular idea or belief. Therefore, sentences like "I believe that the United States should withdraw its troops from Vietnam" or "I think Taiwan should be admitted to the United Nations" are defined as examples for non-opinionated language use. Conversely, opinionated statements transmit two kinds of information by orienting the communicator's attitude towards an idea or belief as well as towards those who agree or disagree with them. Opinionated statements can be placed mainly in two categories. On one hand, opinionated rejection refers to the statements that imply the rejection of a given belief and also rejection of those who accept the belief (e.g., "Only a warmonger would oppose the withdrawal of United States troops from Vietnam"). On the other hand, opinionated acceptance refers to the statements which imply the acceptance of

a particular belief and those who accept that specific belief (e.g., "Any intelligent person knows that the United States should withdraw its troops from Vietnam") (Miller and Lobe, 1967:333).

The existence of verbal aggression also has an effective impulse. In communication, it has been studied to examine the underlying message of aggressive behavior in order to gain support by the target audience. The concept has been defined as the usage of verbally aggressive methods as personality traits which enable people to attack the self-conceptions of other people instead of, or in addition to, their positions on topics of communication. Verbal aggression is mainly a destructive form of communication; however it can produce positive outcomes. It signifies the aggressive behavior in mutual communication as a product of the individual's aggressive traits and the perception level of the targets within the given situation (Infante and Wigley, 1986:61-69). Verbal aggression has forms including accusing, blaming, character attacks, competence attacks, physical appearance attacks, insults, malediction, scolding, teasing, mockery, profanity, verbal abuse, nonverbal emblems, name calling, denial, trivializing, withholding, discounting, judging, criticizing, undermining, ordering, diverting, countering and threatening (Koester, 2004).

All of the collected data concerning the usage of specific language characteristics and message variables will be used within the framework of this theory and mentioned features in order to define the social media communication norms of the Turkish party leaders and their represented political entity, along with the participation rate of the online public. Along with those characteristics mentioned above, the constructed socio-political and cultural characteristics that both Turkish society and political agents possesses (which will be discussed in the next chapter), the social media use of Turkish political parties as a tool of political communication will be employed in the quantitative analysis, while covering the message subjects, variables and participation rates in those networks.

CHAPTER 3: FOCUS ON TURKEY: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF TURKISH POLITICS, PARTIES AND THEIR LEADERS

3.1. Defining the Expectancies: Political Communication in Turkey

As message variables and the use of specific language characteristics for an effective communication process has been mentioned in the previous chapter, this part of the thesis will concentrate on the constructed norms, values and ideologies of Turkish politics and its agents, which have been established throughout history by the influence of political culture. These norms are important in order to build the contents, message subjects and most importantly all the ingredients of the messages that political agents deliver to the electorate. In order to identify the content management of the political agents, the characteristics of Turkish political culture and the research units will be analyzed in this chapter. Later, the compatibility of their ideological characteristics and the use of those values in political communication messages will be compared within the content analysis.

3.1.1. Characteristics of Turkish Political Culture

Most of the values which constitute templates within Turkish politics are formed through the political culture, just like the rest of the world. Turkish political culture has its distinctive characteristics and consequently requires Turkish politics to adapt universal norms. Turkish society didn't differentiate itself in this regard and this directly affects the political communication mechanism. This is because at the social level, mentioning differences instantly becomes associated with divisive behavior, and this affects the political agent's reputation negatively. Therefore, Turkish society doesn't support acts or statements which drift apart from average means (Turan, 1996:25).

In Turkish political culture, sociability is much preferred to individualism; therefore it places priority on the society as a whole instead of individuals. Thus, because of the adoption

of traditional means, as the society has more effective value and influence than individuals, all aspects of social life have been evaluated automatically within the political framework. Thus, political agents have the opportunity to employ a wide range of subjects while creating their political communication contexts, and they always find the right to include themselves in every discussion and debate occurring at the social level (Turan, 1996:25).

Conflict is one of the major characteristics of Turkish political culture. As every unit involved in politics refuses to compromise their inflexible values, there consistently exists a political environment in which ongoing stress and politically irresolvable negotiations are the dominant notions (Özkan, 2004:81).

In addition to conflicts, elitism is one of the key functions of Turkish political culture. There exists a common belief that supports the idea that some people have a special right to govern the society. In this sense, some people permanently support particular political agents who are positively evaluated in terms of good governance; no matter what those agents do people don't change their minds and opinions about them (Özkan, 2004:82).

In Turkey, support to political parties is given mostly with the aim of obtaining a better socio-political future. In this sense, the main reasons for Turkish society to participate in the political process are the belief in having an influential position who can improve the future prospect of the state along with political parties, and who can change the deficiencies which negatively affect the Turkish political system (TÜSİAD Report, 2001:38-50).

The Turkish electorate participates in politics and supports their favored parties based on the following order of precedence. The first characteristic which affects support towards a specific political party in Turkey is the correspondence of the party's political program and ideology with the political expectations of the electorate. The next characteristic is the effectiveness and strength of the party leader; once again the influential and persuasive position of the leader comes forward. Other specific issues, including the identities of party

members, the party's ability to fulfill individual and social needs or the influence of the electorate's family and close network follow these features (TÜSİAD Report, 2001:38-50).

3.1.2. Main Agents: Political Parties and Their Leaders

After discussing some basic characteristics of the political culture which determines the patterns of Turkish politics and the settled political norms of the society, the main agents of political communication within this thesis will be analyzed in what follows with reference to Turkish politics.

In Turkey, political parties have the most influence in policy making and using political communication. According to the Code of Political Parties passed in 1983, a political party is defined as a legally juristic personality, which obtains political power through elections, by making electoral campaigns, propaganda, and other activities that have been defined within its party regulations, and which serves the public afterwards by working toward the improvement of prosperity and modernity within a society (Atabek, 2000:32).

Political parties have strong governing bodies, which are synonymously connected from the entire state to a small village. The center organization holds the power within the political entity and coordinates the relations between the sub-governance units of provinces, districts and towns (Atabek, 2000:32-34).

All of those units are crucial agencies that enable political parties to control a broad communication network which can access every location throughout a political entity by using convenient mass communication tools (Atabek, 2000:34). Political parties are the most frequent users of political communication tools. Although all the units which actively participate in the party structures are political agents, they all have different access levels and obtain different power ranks. Political parties are fundamentally the most organized groups whose aim is to politically govern the society to which they belong (Aziz, 2011:103). The entire operational network of Turkish political parties can be seen in the table below:
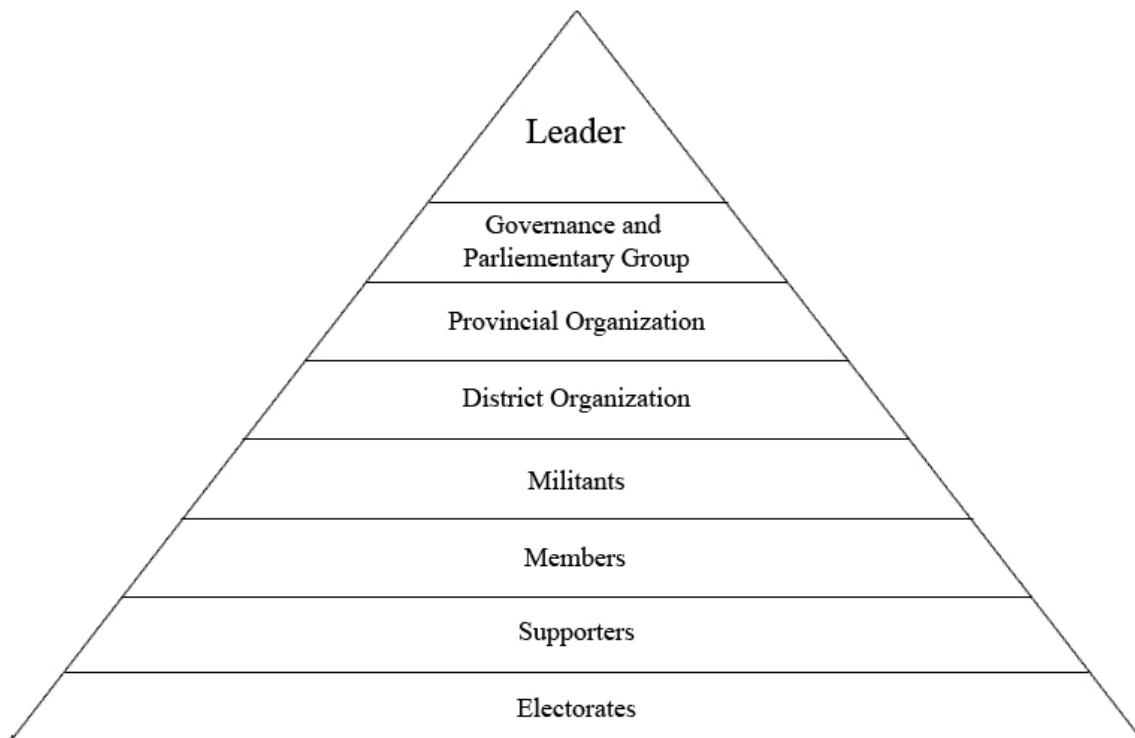
Figure 1 – Standard Operational Mechanism of Turkish Political Parties

There exist many types of political party organizations. Every path that a specific political entity follows in order to gather around a single purpose and act for its realization, gives information about the structural characteristics of the party. According to those differences, it is possible to categorize types of political parties in two main categories: Homogeneous parties consist of political agents which share similar political ideas and thoughts, which support pluralism, and simply exclude people with different values. By contrast, non-homogeneous parties welcome differences and opposing views in their entities (Aleskerov, Ersel & Sabuncu, 1999:112). However especially since the political regulation process occurred after the 1980 military coup, the presidential period of political party leaders became limitless and *de facto* power of selecting party members was also given to the leader. As the power of political parties was essentially transferred to the oligarchy of the party

leader, it can be argued that homogeneous parties are the dominant type in the Turkish political system (Yazıcıoğlu, 1997:262-263).

Parties always conduct their works with the aim of gaining political revenue in every act that they perform and every relational network that they construct. In this sense, every communicative act that political parties direct towards the public becomes included in the definitive context of political communication. The parties always perform communication activities through different agents and channels, but their communication reaches the highest degree during election campaigns, in which all the agents work constantly to gain the support of the electorate (Aziz, 2011:93-108).

According to TESEV's research, the party system in Turkey is mostly under the influence of traditional leader governance, instead of social segmentations or disputes. Unfortunately, the military interventions which occurred throughout the nation's history didn't give Turkish political parties the chance to establish consistent and strong fundamental norms. Thus their system failed to develop into institutional bodies, leading to the traditional acceptance of "rule of the leader" principle. The party leader in all political parties has a significant and dominant role in the policy making process and in performing communication activities. They are also *de facto* press agents of their representing units. As the Turkish political parties have similar governing bodies, this lets them perform within uniform organizational structures and also affords researchers the chance to make generalizations about the dominance of party leadership within the policy making process in Turkish politics (Erdem, Kabasakal and Gençkaya, 2000:36).

The term "leader" is defined as the person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country in order to lead masses for specific causes and in order to show them the way to a better destination by preceding or accompanying them. In other words, setting goals and creating motivation are both essential attributes for the framework of leadership. On

the other hand, the concept of leadership eventually emerges as a notion directly related with the political agent who acts for the realization of his or her objectives. It is also used in politics to signify the dignity, actions, or position of a political party leader, showing his or her ability to lead and direct a group of people by influencing them within a given context (Blondel, 1987:10-36).

Both leaders and followers are involved in a mutual process of motivation and power exchange which is generally difficult to break up into a causal sequence. Leaders mobilize significant numbers of followers while making them accept their ideology and their policy prescriptions for collectively surpassing problems and crises. Moreover, leadership is a symbolic activity mediated by culture for political leaders that puts them in the position of identity entrepreneurs, who principally engage in providing myths and visions to create, reshape or enhance national and international political cultures (Masciulli, Molchano and Knight, 2009:4).

While defining the effectiveness of political leadership, the following elements must be must be considered as key factors: the personality and traits of leaders, including their ethical and cultural characters, the traits and cultural specialties of the followers with whom the leader interacts, the societal or organizational context in which the mutual interaction occurs, the agenda of collective problems or tasks which confront the leaders and followers in particular historical situations, the nature of the leader's interpretive judgment (because situations have to be defined by insights of the leaders), the material and intangible means that the leaders use to attain their ends and the goals of electorate, and the effects or results of leadership (whether real or symbolic, permanent or temporary) (Peele, 2005:187-204).

The leader of a political party is the most powerful and legitimate member of that entity. Party leaders in different countries are chosen in different ways based on intra-party elections. In Turkey, three sequential election steps occur in district bases, province bases and

then in congress bases to determine the leader of a political party. The political and influential power of a party leader increases over the years with the consolidation of his or her trustworthy personality within the party as a result of winning several elections. Political leaders are often experienced and senior diplomatic personalities who gained power by working in the political field for many years, or they can be elected from people who are popular in society as a result of creating sympathy, trust and influence over the masses. In either case, proper language use and strong speaking skills (rhetoric) of leaders increase their socio-political impact within communicative acts and their persuasive power over the electorate (Aziz, 2011:102).

3.1.3. The Effect of Rhetoric in Turkish Politics

In Turkey the art of rhetoric works is an important characteristic that is the key to successful and effective leadership in influencing the masses through the specific use of both written and verbal messages. Most of the political messages used in traditional and online media are delivered to the public through messages in local trips, group meetings and election campaigns. The content of the messages as well as the image of the leaders become the main effective units in Turkish political communication before the electorate (Uztuğ, 2004:291).

The standard frame of the given messages generally covers notions like attracting attention, describing an existing problem, the solution that the leader created for that specific challenge, and giving examples about the result. This template is useful for many mass communication tools, but the effectiveness of the content changes through the conspicuousness, contextual knowledge and the emotional condition of the party chairman. Leaders must send their messages through a careful and easily articulated language choice. The creation of the message content must also be built based on the socio-political expectancies and characteristics of the audience. All of these concepts determine the effectiveness of the rhetoric (Uztuğ, 2004:296-299).

There exist three main prerequisites that a successful political leader should possess in the field of rhetoric. The first characteristic is the concept of *ethos*. Political leadership needs to motivate a society to recognize and deal with its problems, which is actually a very hard assignment. In this sense, the leader's own representation should appear effective and impressive to the society. *Ethos* (which means "character" in ancient Greek) refers to the trustworthiness or credibility of the political leader. It is often communicated by a specific tone and message style and through the way the leader refers to differing views. It can also be affected by the leader's reputation or independently from the messages that are delivered. The impact of ethos is generally established by the argument's ethical appeal or the appeal from credibility (Ramage and Bean, 1998:81).

Logos (which means "word" in ancient Greek) refers to the internal consistency of the message, the clarity of the claim, the logic of its reasons, and the effectiveness of its supporting evidence. The impact of *logos* on the electorate is also called the argument's logical appeal. *Logos* also affects *ethos* because the delivered information makes the leader look knowledgeable and prepared to his or her audience. This notion is useful for studying the relation between the consistency of political leaders and the persuasion rate of the electorate (Ramage & Bean, 1998:81-82).

Pathos (which means "suffering" or "experience" in ancient Greek) on the other hand, is the last rhetorical characteristic, and is associated with emotional appeals to the electorate. This application causes the electorate not just to respond emotionally but to internalize the emotional points of view of the leaders through deciphering and becoming influenced by the messages of the sources. The notion of *pathos* is mostly used within political speeches, but it is effective only when the speaker demonstrates agreement with an underlying value of the audience. Political leaders frequently use *pathos* while appealing to fear, referring to hopeful and positive future projects, along with their possible results (Ramage & Bean, 1998:82).

Leadership is an important factor in political communication, especially in Turkey, because leaders are both the main sources of influence on the electorate and the chief policy making agents within their political environment. Although it is a historically concrete phenomenon, its structures and methods change over time. To influence political events and affect electoral outcomes, leaders need to be prepared to abandon policy instruments and ideas that no longer work in a new political environment. They have to be able to embrace new ideas and reevaluate (or even dismiss) old ideas and methods in order to adapt to new environments (Masciulli, Molchano & Knight, 2009:3).

3.2. Turkish Political Parties and their Characteristics

There exists a mutual relationship between political parties and their leaders in terms of constituting the party identities and ideologies. The leaders of Turkish political parties reflect the structural components of the entities that they lead, but they are also affected by the historical context of their political environment. These norms also directly reflect the expected behaviors and statements of the electorate from the political parties. Eventually, those generated characteristics become the most effective factors for the electorate in achieving successful persuasion. The expectancies of the electorate about Turkish political parties will be mainly defined through primary and secondary sources. Therefore the following section will analyze the socio-political characteristics of the most powerful and influential Turkish political parties: AKP, CHP and MHP.

3.2.1. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP)

AKP is a centre-right conservative political party and is the largest politically governing unit in Turkey, with 327 members of parliament. Its leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, is the Prime Minister of Turkey, while fellow former party member and former PM Abdullah Gül is Turkey's President. Founded in 2001 by members of a number of existing parties, the

party won a landslide victory in the 2002 national elections, winning over two-thirds of parliamentary seats. Gül became Prime Minister, but a constitutional amendment in 2003 allowed Erdoğan to take his place. In early general elections in 2007, the AKP increased its share of the vote to 47%. Its number of seats fell to 341, but Erdoğan was returned as Prime Minister, while Gül was elected President. In the general elections held on June 12, 2011, the AKP further increased its share of the popular vote to 49.8% and secured 327 parliamentary seats to form a third consecutive majority government (AKP Website, 2012).

AKP has been named as an alternative to the Turkish political parties which were involved in corruption, and declared itself as a clean party. They were aware of the lack of a rightist-liberal political organization in Turkish politics, and they obtained power though filling this gap and gaining the support of a newly emerging Anatolian Bourgeoisie class which adopts both liberal economic policies and a political context influenced by religious and historical values. The party consistently rejected the use of its Islamic background in Turkish politics, yet it assimilated this conservative framework (Yavuz, 2010:7-27).

AKP's ongoing moderate framework has been raised by the party itself, as an opposition to radical Islamic socio-political norms supported by its predecessors (Akdoğan, 2006:59-61). In domestic policies, the party uses Islamic references in several discourses, however according to the party itself, AKP is defined as an organization which is assimilated and accepted by the Turkish people. In terms of every socio-economic, political and cultural domain, the AKP officially supports adapting democracy at every level of the society while strongly opposing any kind of segregation and discriminatory activities towards different cultural identities, ideologies and religions (AKP Party Program, 2012). In this sense, it can be argued that AKP is trying to place Islamic norms and values within the developing content of democracy framework. This specific perspective of "moderate democracy" has been

created in Turkey not because of the enforcements of national or international political conditions, but has evolved through history as a practical application (Hale, 2010:97-98).

As a conservative political party, AKP successfully filled the gap within the Turkish political system, which had been suffering from erratic and inconsistent electoral campaign policies and a fragmented party system. The party identified its political and ideological stance in the Turkish political system not as a political project rooted in Islam, but instead as a political unit which sees Islam as a value which has been marginalized and traditionalized in the public sphere (Tepe, 2010:141-145).

Despite the concerns of the people who adopt secularism within Turkish socio-political framework, the party established its own political balance about secular norms (Kuru, 2010:201-202). The concern of secularists comes from the possibility of the emergence of Islamic rules and regulations within Turkish constitution and political system. AKP's origins come from the Welfare Party of the 1980's, which supported a radical Islamist outlook and was consequently removed from power by the military in 1997. Therefore Turkish secularists worry about the increase of an Islamic discourse within state entity. Turkey's secularist elites, which mainly consist of military leaders and political opposition entities, are opposed to any changes which could affect the separation of state and religion. However, unlike the Welfare Party and other Islamic radical political representation within Turkish political history, AKP strongly supports liberalization, capitalism, pro-European and pro-business norms as well as encouraging Turkey's accession to European Union (Giraldi, 2008:33-41).

With the statements and actions which support EU accession, AKP pursues a desirable goal which will increase the economic prosperity of the country and at the same time controls the agents who can prevent the party's increase of power and influence through political governance (Öniş, 2010:269-272). In this sense, AKP is represented in Turkish politics as the

force which can dispute, protest, and even rise against all the inflexible *de facto* or *de jure* characteristics that Turkish politics has sheltered throughout history, including the role of military in politics, the definition and application of both Islamic and secular values, democratic consolidation, different economic policies, and the fragmentation of socio-cultural differences within the country (Yavuz, 2010:7-27).

In foreign policy, since AKP became the single party of the government, a new perspective emerged in Turkish politics. Using Islamic and historical discourses, the policy mainly advances as a new perspective while adapting to play a decisive role as a participant in the multi-dimensional world order, as well as being in a positive relationship with both Eastern and Western World and an active policy-decision maker in Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia (Onar, 2009.1-16).

AKP has revived the sympathy of the Ottoman past in domestic policy making, and especially in foreign policy making. Members of the party transformed the Ottoman classical age to an ideology within AKP and began to use notions about the strength and influential power of Ottoman Empire in their statements, or began to build their actions on those historical characteristics. In this sense, the messages and actions that they deliver to national and international collocutors consist not of the values like the collapse of the state, or an invasion of foreign forces through the country, but mainly consist of ideas about the magnificence of Ottoman civilization and heritage (Yavuz, 2010:7-27). While reflecting this neo-Ottoman trend in Turkish intellectual life, AKP proposed a deliberate revival of the Ottoman past, both as a matter of cultural enrichment and as a source of an enriched Turkish identity as a strong political agent (Murinson, 2006:945-964).

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as the leader of this party and the prime minister of the Turkish Republic, successfully utilizes the characteristics of his party in the policy making process. Possessed of a charismatic leadership opportunity and using globalized statements in

election campaigns, he was able to gain large-scale political support from Turkish society. As a former subscriber of Necmettin Erbakan's political ideology, he still uses Islamic discourse within his speeches. However the most important element which brought him into power, was (and still is) the application of locally-based politics at a national level. He uses political discourse as a pragmatic tool which regulates and controls the ongoing political agenda, delivers social services to the public with a well distributed party network, and therefore enables himself and his party to influence the electorate in order to gain more support (Yavuz, 2010: 7-27).

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan first came to political power in 1994 as mayor of Istanbul. During his term of office, he was imprisoned by Turkish secular courts because of the constitutionally harmful content of his radical speeches, but he later emerged on the political scene more popular than before. Erdoğan saw three political parties banned for Islamism, and took note, founding his Justice and Development Party on a pro-Western, pro-business platform in 2001. As Turkish Prime Minister since 2002, he took on the controversial role of global spokesman for the Muslim world. Along with these norms, he is a devout Muslim and a person who prefers aggressive communication skills (Turgut, 2010).

3.2.2. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP)

As the main opposition party against the AKP government, CHP is the party which has the oldest roots in Turkish politics. The party was established during the Congress of Sivas as a union of resistance groups against the invasion of Anatolia. The union represented the Turkish people as a unified front during the Turkish War of Independence. On September 9, 1923, it officially declared itself a political organization, and then announced the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 29 November 1923 (CHP Website, 2012).

There exist six arrows on the logo of the party which signify the six main political principles of Ataturk. The party followed those principles throughout history and still

maintains them as constant policy doctrines. The first principle refers to the importance of republicanism. As the Turkish State has been transformed from a sultanate to a republic, this change signifies for CHP the ultimate revolution in Turkish politics and society. Through this principle, the party shows the importance that has been given to national will, unity, equality and the destruction of old traditional political fashions which harm the state and society (CHP Party Program, 2012).

In terms of nationalism, CHP supports an ideology which is based only on a political consciousness and on the association of ideals. The party argues that the solution to the problems of the country should be based on the concept of citizenship, rather than ethnicity, and also rejects the context of class superiority and majority. However along with this view, CHP emphasizes the protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Turkish state. Ethnic identity and difference have been defined as an honorable and enriching norm for the society and the party prefers integration within the country. In this sense, the party generally prefers equality among different identities and supports a pluralistic and inclusive perception within state administration, as long as it doesn't damage the main principles and structure of the state (CHP Party Program, 2012).

The populism principle refers to the popular sovereignty of the people over the government. In this sense CHP supports the will of the people in every socio-political decision making process and opposes the socio-economical privileges that only a few classes possess. Thus, the party gives main political importance to the entire Turkish people, not to some elites (CHP Party Program, 2012).

Statism is another important notion for CHP, giving importance to the existence of the state mechanism within social, political and economic frameworks. The party symbolizes and glorifies the idea of the state in order to serve people better and establish a fine balance between political agents and society. In terms of economy, CHP doesn't simply ignore or

oppose liberal monetary policies, but gives importance to the supervisory role of the state within politics (CHP Party Program, 2012).

Secularism is one of the most important principles that CHP defends in its policies. The party believes that religious and governmental affairs should be separate. CHP supports the absence of any religious references in any layer of the Turkish governmental system. According to the party, since religion is an individual notion, every Turkish citizen must realize their different beliefs within an environment of moral freedom. In this sense, the party supports a secular-based state governance model (CHP Party Program, 2012).

Revolutionism is the last principle that CHP has supported throughout its political history. As the Turkish Republic was constituted from a revolution, the party aims to continue this process within legal rules and peaceful methods for the benefit and prosperity of the Turkish people. In this sense, the main characteristics of revolutionary changes refer to a positive change towards modernity, not a change in the governance or political model (CHP Party Program, 2012).

CHP mainly plays the role of criticizing AKP, especially on issues which create nation-wide problems like economic crises, the Kurdish Question and international policy failures. While opposing the policies and political moves of the government, CHP employs two specific perspectives in its policy strategies. One of them includes CHP's historical roots in the establishment of the modern secular Turkish state. The current party program and all other policies are based on the legacy of the early Republican tradition. The other factor is the use of center-left political ideology within every statement and action. However this perspective tends to fail especially when addressing solutions to problems of religious and ethnic identities (Ayata & Ayata, 2007:211-232).

CHP's party organization is mainly related with class interests, religious groups, issues regarding welfare economy, and identity groups such as ethnic and feminist minorities

(Ayata, 2002:102-122). In its party program, priority is given to democratic values, human rights, national security, political participation, equality, social modernity, and labor integrity (CHP Party Program, 2012).

However the party fails to achieve an organizational reform to properly get support and cannot create new political ideologies. In general terms, CHP has to reinitialize its political framework in order to adapt to the conditions of current world politics. The influential new agents in Turkish politics developed their views outside the realm of the political parties. CHP is basically threatened with marginalization unless it finds a way to restructure its obsolete ideology and to support the organization of a participatory structure (Ayata, 2002:102-122).

In response to these problems, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu emerged as the new and revolutionary leader of CHP, a leader who had a different view of society, politics, democracy and freedom than Deniz Baykal, the former leader of the party. The common belief of the electorate and the society was that with Baykal as party chairman, CHP had no chance of success in the elections. The motive behind Kılıçdaroğlu's election as the party leader mainly reflected this concern. CHP supporters defend their party and Kılıçdaroğlu because CHP's roots are grounded in the foundation of the Turkish Republic, and because the party has the strongest chance against AKP (Tosun, 2010:31-42).

Baykal's views on Turkish politics and society were increasingly considered outdated and not in line with the needs and wants of the Turkish people in the early 2000's. Therefore, the party needed a new type of leadership and a new direction. Kılıçdaroğlu was a crucial agent in expressing the need for change coming from its social democrat base. In other words, the only way to create the possibility for a successful process of change in the CHP was seen to be the new leadership of Kılıçdaroğlu. The party's loyal voters accepted Kılıçdaroğlu as their new leader, but the test for Kılıçdaroğlu as CHP's new leader has just begun. His visit to

Brussels to develop the party's relations with the EU, his speech on the solution of the headscarf issue and his critiques of the 1960 military coup right after the referendum should all be taken into consideration. These positions are a reflection that he has the potential to move the CHP towards the liberal-left line (Tosun, 2010:31-42).

CHP has the power to become a liberal-leftist party. Today's more global political thinking, policy making and the views of the liberated left which use a pro-dialogue approach exist in the party agenda for the CHP. However instead of all these options, CHP chooses an easy solution, which is to criticize the policies of the AKP government and survive only in relation to it. Although Kılıçdaroğlu did not inherit the Baykal's secular discourse, he inherited the CHP's oversimplified understanding of political critique, which is only to criticize Erdoğan, the party that he leads and the state that he governs (Tosun, 2010:31-42).

CHP still protects its electoral potential, which provided the party with 40% of electoral support in late 1970's, however it needs to realize policy reforms and change its inner structure in favor of contemporary politics in order to gain more support from different layers of the society (Ayata, 2002:102-122).

3.2.3. Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP)

MHP is the main representative of the ultra-nationalist dimension of Turkish society. The party first emerged in 1969. Despite monopolizing the right wing nationalist ideology in Turkish politics, MHP successfully created its own ideological context, called idealism. Throughout the 1970's, the "Idealist Hearts" (Ülkü Ocakları) spread the mainstream ideology of MHP throughout the country. Within the party, the concept of Islam was also politicized and used in party policies. In its gestation period, the party was unable to gather wide support from Turkish society because of its adoption of radical and extremist values (Çınar and Arıkan, 2002:83-105).

Before the 1980 military coup, radical nationalist partisans who were generally members or supporters of MHP were involved violent political acts, targeting leftists and people who belong to different sects and races. There were 200.000 registered "Grey Wolves" throughout Turkey, while 220 of its members were charged with 694 acts of murder. In this sense, extreme nationalist groups were mainly crime based organizations in that time period (New Internationalist, 2008:35).

However, a new era began for MHP after 1997, under the leadership of Devlet Bahçeli, who aimed to reunite the party around its founding principles. Bahçeli began to restructure the party's policies and strategies in order to influence every layer of society, and as a consequence the party began to gain support in both rural and urban areas in a small time span. As a result of this policy restructuring, the autocracy of Devlet Bahçeli has been deeply established, ideological standards were tightened and the relations with rural people increased. The inclusion of a scholarly perspective within the party increased both the interior quality of the political unit and the image of Bahçeli in society (Çınar and Arıkan, 2002:83-105).

There also occurred major changes within party structure under the leadership of Bahçeli. Alparslan Türkeş, the founder of MHP, was close to radical and extremist policies and favored military activism instead of politics; however Bahçeli, with his academic roots, shaped a more reliable portrait and increased the popularity of MHP. Another important move of Bahçeli was to reorganize the Idealist Hearts, which were formerly accused of involvement in criminal activity. Along with visual and structural changes, MHP also evolved its ideology after Bahçeli. MHP's main perception was the combination of nationalism and Turkish-Islamic synthesis. With Bahçeli, the party (although still favoring Islamic and nationalist values) absorbed a center statist ideology instead of a radical, even racist nationalism (Çınar and Arıkan, 2002:83-105).

Bahçeli manipulated authoritarianism, only in order to suppress extremist notions within the party. He doesn't insist on having an ethnically homogeneous Turkish nation. In the late 1930's and early 1940's, a group of rightist intellectuals in Turkey argued that the country didn't have distinct ethnic groups, and the Kurds were basically Turkish people who lived in the highlands in Southeastern Anatolia and had forgotten their earlier ethnic identity. He argued that every country shelters a mosaic of cultures within its entity and simply rejected the idea of eliminating distinct cultures (Heper and İnce, 2006:873-888).

Nationalism is the main political motive of both the party and its leader. MHP party program defines a nation as an entity in which its participants live together in harmony within the same territory along with a shared historical background. In these terms, nationalism is the entity which aims to enable the Turkish nation to perceive its distinguishing characteristics. The nationalist approach covers the establishment of a national identity, language, culture, sovereignty, state and solidarity. In terms of rights and liberties, the party supports equal treatment to every person who lives within the same entity. It refers to differences as cultural prosperity and supports tolerance in order to protect the national integrity (MHP Party Program, 2012).

According to the party, nationalism refers to the love of Turkish nation and loyalty and service to the Turkish state. In this sense, the ideology is defined as a national culture, rather than a policy based on ethnic or racial differences. In 2000, the term "nationalism" was defined by the party as a concept which directs the energy of the social, economic and cultural developments towards making the Turkish nation a powerful and respectable entity in the world (Çınar and Arıkan, 2002:83-105).

For MHP, preserving the continuity of the nation state is a major subject. During the 1990's, until the arrest of Abdullah Öcalan in 1998, the leader of the PKK, the main enemy for the party was the separatist PKK. For this reason it has acted as the supporter of the fight

against the PKK for a decade and in its 1999 election campaign, the party basically promised the execution of Öcalan. However, in terms of consolidating democracy, the co-operation of leftists and extreme nationalists after the 1999 elections was a significant step. The coalition has also proven the possibility that former political enemies of the pre-1980 period could come together and act harmoniously for the long-term interests of the country. By acting in this manner, the parts tried to reduce the ideological polarization of Turkish politics. Along with MHP, DSP also denied the existence of a Kurdish problem in Turkey. Consequently, these parties had similar standpoints with respect to the domestic challenges of Kurdish nationalism, and this similarity made the formation of a coalition of leftists and ultra-nationalists at the end of the twentieth century easier (Başkan, 2005:53-69).

The preceding assessment surveys the specific ideologies, beliefs and preferred policies of the most influential Turkish political parties and their leaders, who are the main agents of policy making, taking actions and communicating. Nevertheless, the factual application of those norms and values, along with their public reflections, will be measured by the content analysis. As this research mainly covers the use of those messages and their specific characteristics within social media communication, social media, its history, characteristics, and its relation with politics will be analyzed in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS USAGE AS A POLITICAL COMMUNICATION TOOL

4.1. Importance of Social Media within the Changing World

This chapter will discuss the use and affects of social media throughout the world and Turkey (which is the main communication channel researched in this thesis), while giving detailed information about its tools and their successful affect on politics, using detailed examples. Social media tools are the supplementary components of this work and therefore the relationship of political communication and social media within Turkish political parties cannot be understood without a detailed report on this technology and statistics about its broad usage.

4.1.1. Brief History of Internet and World Wide Web

Web-based communication became a very common tool within the world especially after 2004. It scope was extensive, encompassing advertising, social interactions, networking, broad communication and broadcasting. This technology basically transformed communication into an interactive dialogue among people. Those innovations have been referred as a set of internet-based applications which have been built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan, Haenlein, 2010:59-68). It is a tool for social interaction as a super-set beyond social communication. Enabled by easily accessible and scalable communication techniques, such digital interaction it has directly changed the communication methods of organizations, communities, and individuals (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011:241-251).

In the mid-1990's, the commercialization of internet technology resulted in its increased popularity and corporatization into every aspect of human life. It is estimated that in

1993, the internet carried only 1% of the information flowing through two-way telecommunication. By 2000, this parameter had grown to 51%, and by 2007 more than 97% of all telecommunicated information was carried by the internet (Hilbert, Lopez, 2011:60-65). As of December 2011, more than 2.2 billion people use the services of the internet, which corresponds to nearly one third of the entire world population (Internet World Stats, 2011).

According to research in April 2012; there are 676,919,707 websites on the internet, with a monthly growth rate of 5% (Web Server Survey, 2012). Internet technologies continue to grow, driven by ever greater amounts of online information and knowledge, commerce, entertainment and social networking, along with the increase in data transmission, sharing and speed.

4.1.2. Social Media and Its Characteristics

However in today's world, soft internet technologies are not sufficient for meeting the demands of the people who ask for a more social world. There exists a great need for accessible, feasible and effective communication tools and techniques in order for people to communicate easily with one another and participate in interactive communications. Social interaction became a need which is extremely necessary in the existing socio-political and cultural context. In this sense, social media became a useful tool for digital technology and internet-based applications in order to exchange or create conversations. In other words, it is the media used for social interaction. It is also highly effective for building social authority, individuals or organizations, which can position themselves as experts in their fields, and begin to influence other people. Social media technologies are capable of reaching audiences all over the world (Adams, 2011).

Social media is relatively economical and accessible for individuals who wish to publish or access digital contents. Although the main characteristic of social media is its ability to reach audiences of all sizes, it also has other features. Firstly, it is approachable.

Social media technologies are capable of reaching a global audience. They are decentralized by their natural characteristics, and distinguished by multiple features which encourage productivity and utility. Secondly, social media is easily accessible. The means of production are publicly owned, and social media tools are generally available to the public at low or no cost. Thirdly, it is usable. Most social media production does not require specialized skills or training, their usage and interface are easy to practice for anyone. Anyone with access can operate these tools easily. Fourthly, it is timely. The lag between communications produced by social media is insignificant. It has the capacity of virtually instantaneous response timing. In this sense, participants don't suffer from communication delays caused by networking tools and transmit their messages effectively and properly in high speeds. Finally, it is eternal, yet changing. The social media landscape can be altered almost instantaneously by comments or editing. Any social media tools stay the same as its initial state (Adams, 2011).

Social media is a phenomenon that has transformed the interaction and communication of individuals throughout the world. However, despite being used by the masses very recently, it is not a new concept. Social networking has been evolving and continuing to exist throughout the history of human interaction.

4.1.3. History of the Social Media

The earliest information encountered related with social networking interaction refers to 1792 and the use of the telegraph to transmit and receive messages over long distances (Ritholtz, 2010). In the late 1800's, the radio and telephone began to be used for social interaction among people (Rimskii, 2011:79).

The 20th century was an important era for the improvement of information technology. Between 1950 and 1970, the main social networking tools were telephones, telegraphs, and mail. After the advances on the internet technology mentioned above, and after the internet went public, many social networking sites were created, especially in the 1990's. Some

examples include Six Degrees, BlackPlanet, Asian Avenue, and MoveOn. These were online niche social sites where people could interact, including sites for public policy advocacy and a social network based on a web of contacts model. Also, blogging services such as Blogger and Epinions were created. ThirdVoice and Napster were two software applications created in the 1990's that have since been removed from the market. ThirdVoice was a free plug-in service which allowed users to post comments on web pages. Opponents of the software argued that comments were often impolite or slanderous. On the other hand, Napster was a software application that allowed peer-to-peer file-sharing. Users were allowed to share music files in a way that bypassed normal distribution methods, which in the end was determined to be a violation of copyright laws at the end of the decade (Ritholtz, 2010).

In 2000, social media received a great boost with the witnessing of many social networking sites springing up. They improved and transformed the interaction of individuals and organizations who share common interests in art, music, education, movies, personal interests and friendship, based on social networking. Among those that were launched included LunarStorm, Six Degrees, Cyworld, Ryze, and Wikipedia. In 2001, Fotolog, Sky Blog and Friendster were launched, and in 2003, MySpace, Linkedln, lastFM, tribe.net, Hi5 etc. In 2004, popular names like Facebook Harvard, Dogster and Mixi evolved. During 2005, big names like Yahoo! 360, YouTube, Cyword, and Black planet all emerged. In 2006, Facebook went corporate and Twitter launched. In 2007 FriendFeed and Tumblr, in 2008 Apple Ping, in 2010 Google Buzz, and in 2011 Google + and Pinterest were born (Junco, Heibergert and Loken, 2011:119-132).

History has seen a wide range of technologies that have facilitated conversation, and in the last 40 years there have been an increasing number of innovations within this sector. People recently began using digital media for networking, socializing and gathering

information. There are the niche websites for every individual and specialized interest (Adams, 2011).

4.2. Popular Channels of Social Media

Presently, social media is an integral part of modern society, and social networking is a big industry. Thus, social media is a blend of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of norms and values. It is a form of mass media, and it can be used for interactive, informational, educational or promotional purposes. It can take many forms, including internet forums, blogs, encyclopedias, podcasts, photograph or picture sharing, video rating and social bookmarking (Adams, 2011). In this thesis, according to the relevance of the researched topic, only Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube will be analyzed.

4.2.1. Facebook

Facebook is a social networking service and website launched in February 2004, operated and privately owned by Facebook Inc. (Eldon, 2008). As of April 2012, the social network has more than 900 million active users (The Nation, 2012). In order to use Facebook, users must register with their selected e-mails and passwords, after which they may create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their profile. Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups, organized by their workplace, school or college, or other characteristics, and categorize their friends. Facebook allows any users who declare themselves to be at least 13 years old to become registered users of the site (Facebook, 2011).

Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg with his college roommates and fellow students Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes (Carlson, 2010). The website's membership was initially limited by the founders to Harvard students, but was expanded to other colleges in the Boston area, the Ivy League, and Stanford University. It gradually added

support for students at various other universities before opening to high school students, and eventually to anyone aged 13 and over. However, according to a May 2011 Consumer Reports survey, there are 7.5 million children under 13 with accounts and 5 million under 10, violating the site's terms of service (Fox, 2011). A January 2009 Compete.com study ranked Facebook as the most used social networking service by worldwide monthly active users (Kazeniac, 2009).

Facebook has many communication features within its content, including "news feed", which enables users to follow other user's posts and shares; "notes", which can be used as a blog page for writing comments, stories, poems, or opinions; "wall", in which users can see and comment on the profiles of their own and their friends. Users can upload and share posts, photos, links, news and videos anytime. The site is also equipped with several instant communications tools such as Facebook Chat, mailing, messaging, voice calling and video calling; and it also possesses some interactive tools for personal communication, including liking, poking, commenting, sharing and highlighting (Facebook, 2012).

Facebook is the leading social networking site based on monthly visitors. In May 2010, Facebook attracted 130 million visitors, with an increase of 8.6 million people (Schonfeld, 2010). According to Alexa, Facebook has the second ranking among all websites in the worldwide internet traffic after Google (Alexa, 2008). The website is the most popular for uploading photos, with 50 billion uploaded cumulatively. In regional internet markets, Facebook penetration is highest in North America with 69 percent, followed by Middle East-Africa with 67 percent, Latin America with 58 percent, Europe with 57 percent, and Asia-Pacific with 17 percent (McCarthy, 2010). Below, the increase in the membership popularity of Facebook and the increasing amount of its members can be observed:
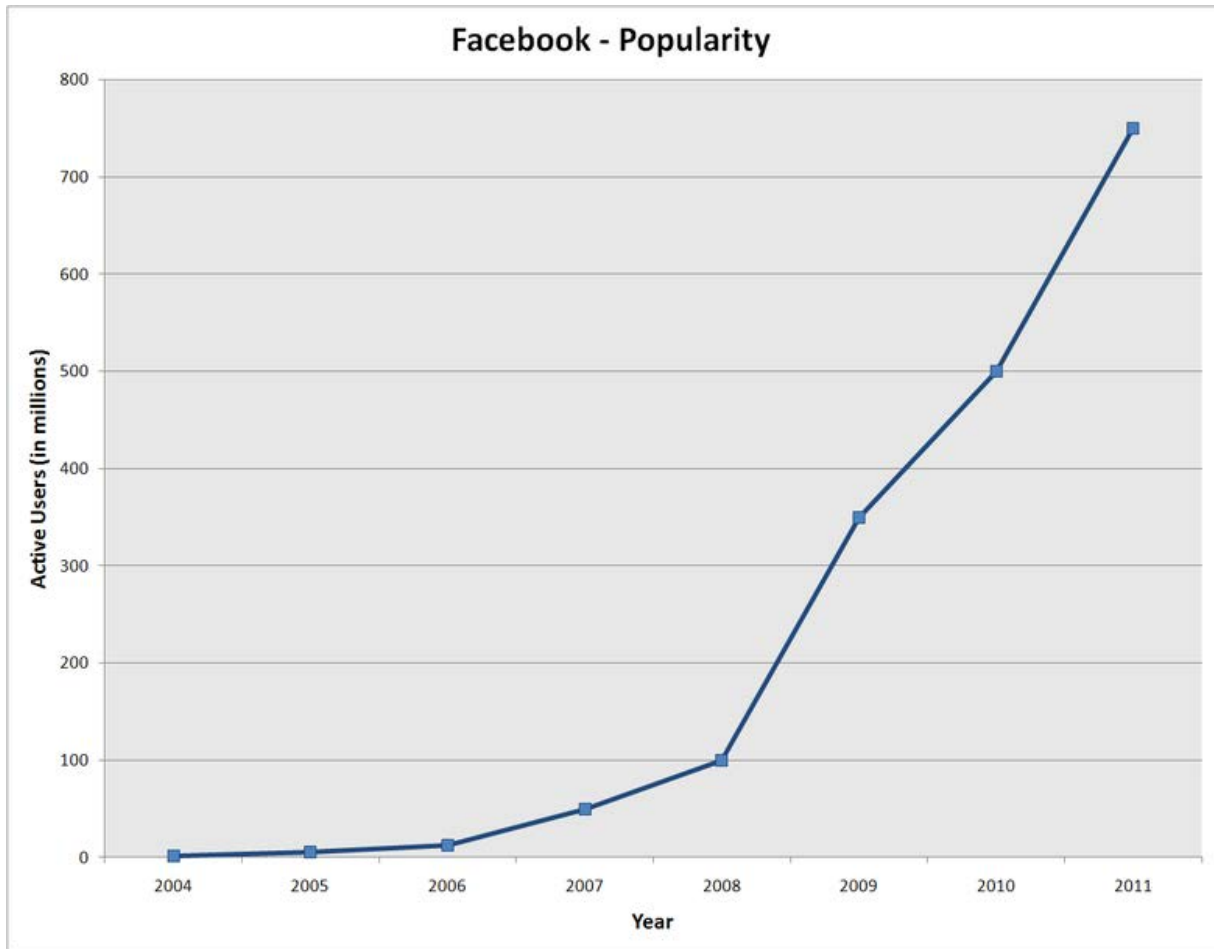
Figure 2: Facebook Popularity Statistics from 2004 to 2011 (Facebook, 2011)

In addition to incorporating many people from different geographical regions, Facebook also contains several people from different age groups. Within the enlisted data of the website, most of its visitors and members belong to 26-34 and 55-64 age groups, with an equal participation rate of 26%. Participants within the 13-17 age group follow them with a rate of 20%. Other age groups have less influence within the social networking site. In this sense, the demographic variance of the website users can be analyzed below, while referring to six different age groups:
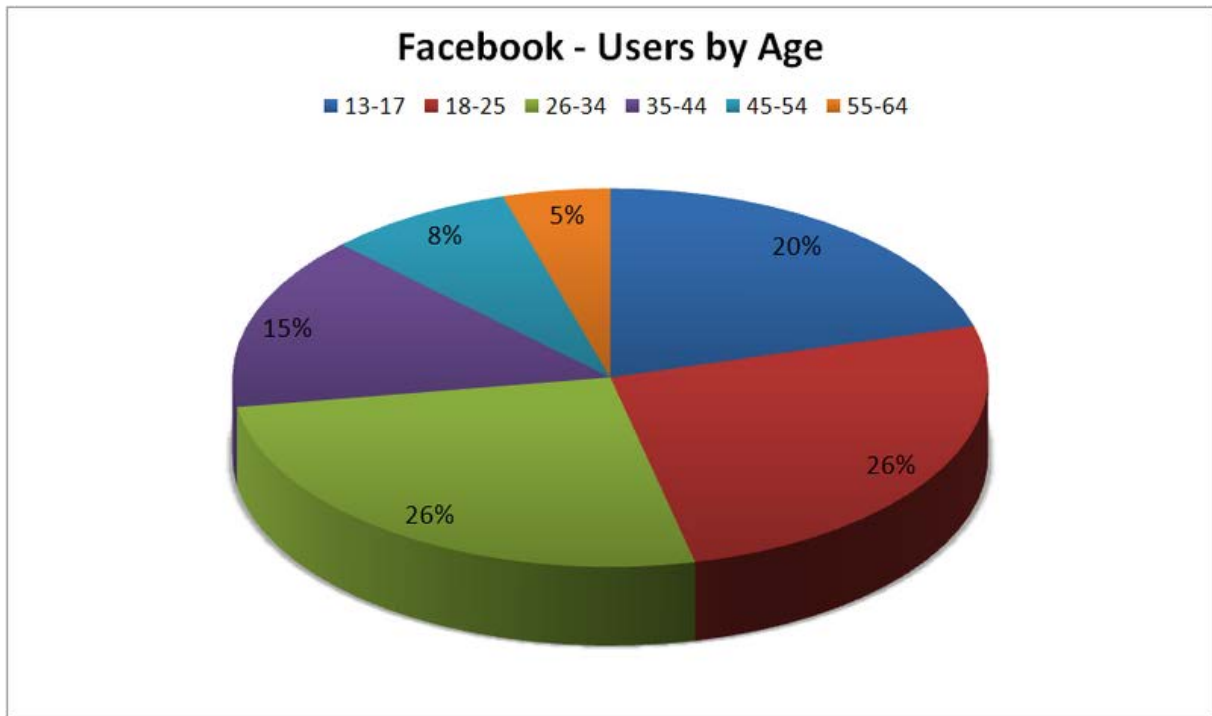
Figure 3: 2011 - Facebook Users by Age (Burbarry, 2011)

Facebook members are still increasing and the social network site has been transformed to an indispensable part of the daily life of human beings who are accustomed to use the internet intensively and consistently.

4.2.2. Twitter

Another strong social media service which is famous with delivering instant opinions, comments and thoughts into the digital world of communication is Twitter. Twitter is an online social networking service and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters, known as "tweets". It was created in March 2006 by Jack Dorsey and launched in July 2006. The service quickly gained worldwide popularity. As of 2012, Twitter has 140 million active users. The social network system generates approximately 340 million tweets daily (Twitter Blog, 2012). It has been described

as the SMS of the internet because of its ability to send instant messages from computers and even mobile devices (D'Monte, 2009).

From September to October 2010, the company worked on the concept of "New Twitter", an entirely renewed edition of the social media site. Changes included the ability to see pictures and videos without leaving Twitter itself by clicking on individual tweets which contain links to images and clips from a variety of supported websites including YouTube and Flickr, and a complete redesign of the interface, which shifted links such as "@mentions" and "Retweets" above the Twitter stream, while "Messages" and "Log Out" became accessible via a black bar at the very top of the website. As of November 1, 2010, the company confirmed that the "New Twitter experience" had been launched for the practice of all users. On March 21, 2012, Twitter celebrated its sixth birthday while also announcing that it has 140 million users and sees 340 million tweets per day. The number of users increased 40% from September 2011 numbers, which was estimated at 100 million at the time (Wasserman, 2012).

Twitter has a simple interface and mechanical usage method even for basic internet users. At the beginning, Twitter users create their profiles and from that moment on they have the opportunity to send comments and messages through their homepage. Users may follow whoever they like, and they can communicate with their followers in an SMS based structure while having 140-character limits for posting (Johnson, 2009). According to the Alexa Web Traffic Analysis, Twitter is ranked as one of the ten-most-visited websites worldwide. In both global and American trends, the social media tool has the 8th place within the traffic rank (Alexa, 2012). The website has a user retention rate of 40% (Hoffman, 2009).

Twitter has been generally used by adults. Only 11% of the users are aged twelve to seventeen (Miller, 2009). According to a study by Sysomos in June 2009, women make up a slightly larger Twitter demographic than men, with a rate of 53% vs. 47%, and 5% of users accounted for 75% of all activity (Cheng, 2009). On September 7, 2011, Twitter announced

that it has 100 million active users logging in at least once a month and 50 million active users every day (Taylor, 2011). The social media tool was also confirmed to be the biggest social media network in Japan, with Facebook as a close second. It is argued that Japan is the only country in the world where Twitter beats Facebook (Yarrow, 2012).

Twitter, as can be surmised from the statistics and characteristics mentioned above, is a social network website which is based on simplicity and speed. Users send their tweets and share their opinions employing the fastest and easiest interactive communication tools. People can share not only written comments, but also pictures, videos and audio files. In short, Twitter, while having similar technological features as Facebook, also has a completely different communication perception, one which is as common and popular as Facebook, with the main rule that shared content must be embedded in 140 character posts.

4.2.3. YouTube

Another powerful and influential social media tool is YouTube. YouTube is a video-sharing website on which users can upload, view and share videos. It was created in February 2005, by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, who were formerly PayPal employees (Hopkins, 2006). The website is based on Adobe Flash Video and HTML5 technology and can display a wide variety of user-generated video content, including movie clips, TV clips, and music videos, as well as amateur content such as video blogging and short original videos. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, although media corporations including CBS, BBC, VEVO and other organizations offer some of their material via the site, as part of the YouTube partnership program. Unregistered users can watch videos, while registered users can upload an unlimited number of videos and make comments. Videos considered to contain offensive content are available only to registered users at least 18 years old. In November 2006, YouTube was bought by Google for 1.65 billion dollars, and now operates as a subsidiary of Google network (Weber, 2007).

YouTube grew rapidly; in July 2006 the company announced that more than 65,000 new videos were being uploaded every day, and that the site was receiving 100 million video views per day (USA Today, 2006). According to data published by the market research company comScore, YouTube is the dominant provider of online video in the United States, with a market share of around 43 percent and more than 14 billion videos viewed in May 2010 (comScore, 2010). Approximately 60 hours of new videos are uploaded to the site every minute, and around three quarters of the material comes from outside the U.S (Oreskovic, 2012). The site has eight hundred million users a month (Seabrook, 2012). It is estimated that in 2007 YouTube consumed as much bandwidth as the entire Internet in 2000 (Carter, 2008). Alexa ranks YouTube as the third most visited website on the Internet, behind Google and Facebook (Alexa, 2010).

In terms of calculating the website ratings, it can be argued that in May 2010, YouTube was serving more than two billion videos a day, which it described as "nearly double the prime-time audience of all three major US television networks combined" (Chapman, 2010). In May 2011, YouTube reported in its company blog that the site was receiving more than three billion views per day (Richmond, 2011). In December 2011, YouTube launched a new version of the site interface, with the video channels displayed in a central column on the home page, similar to the news feeds of social networking sites (BBC, 2011). And finally, after the establishment of linkages with other social media networks, in January 2012, YouTube stated that the website increased its usage to four billion videos streamed per day (Oreskovic, 2012).

Along with these references, it can be argued that YouTube is the most viewed and most popular social media tool that is based on video publishing and sharing. Along with uploading videos, the website also enables sharing the uploaded videos in other social media

networks, as well as commenting, rating and using other mobile platforms to spread the website's content.

As the information and statistics given above show, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are used by most people who have online access. These tools are basically the network channels for effective communication in every subject; therefore they are actively used by individuals and official entities in many contexts including marketing and advertising. Moreover, since these tools provide effective means of persuasion, the network channels are also being used by the agents in political contexts.

4.2.4. Social Media Usage in Turkey

Turkey is one of the countries which has the highest online usage rate. According to the Internet World Statistics, Turkey is among the top twenty countries with the highest number of internet users. As of June 2010, there were 35.000.000 internet users in Turkey, which comprises 45% of the total population of the country (Internet World Stats, 2011). According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, in April 2012, 47.2% of households have internet access at home, increased from 42.9 % in April, 2011. The main reason given for households not having access to the Internet at home is "lack of need," a rate of 27.6%. The percentage of households with access to the internet was 55.5% in urban areas and 27.3% in rural areas. The regions which have the highest rates of access to the internet in their households are Istanbul (60.5%), West Marmara (49.7%), East Marmara (60.6%), and West Anatolia (57.5%), which are above the Turkish average (TUİK, 2012).

The computer and internet use of individuals aged 16-74 are 48.7% and 47.4%, respectively. According to the results of ICT Usage Survey in Households and Individuals, the proportion of males that use computers and the internet are 59% and 58.1%, while these proportions are 38.5% and 37% for females, respectively in 16-74 age group. The proportion of computer and internet use are 57.8 % and 56.6 % in urban areas, and 27.6 % and 26.4 % in

69

rural areas. These proportions were the highest in Istanbul with 62.2% and 60.9%. This region was followed by West Anatolia with 58.6% and 57.1% respectively. The highest proportion of computer and internet usage is to be found in the 16-24 age group. For all age groups, the proportion of computer and internet usage by males was higher than females (TUİK, 2012).

37.8% of all individuals aged 16-74 use the internet almost every day or at least once a week. This share is 88.5% in internet users aged 16-74. The proportion of regular internet users is 89.7% in urban areas, 82.5% in rural areas and 90.7% in Istanbul. As for the purposes of use, 72.5% of internet users read or download online news, newspapers or news magazines for private use. This proportion is followed by sending/receiving e-mails (66.8%), finding information about goods or services (61.3 %), and playing or downloading games, images, films or music (49.1 %) (TUİK, 2012).

As for the use of online technologies in political communication, during the twelve months of April 2011-March 2012, 45.1% of internet users interacted with public authorities over the internet for private purposes. This proportion was 38.9% for the period of April 2010-March 2011. Obtaining information from the websites of political and public agents is in the first rank with 42.9% being the main usage purpose of online political communication tools. In this sense, the use of internet for politically directed aims has increased throughout the country (TUİK, 2012).

Facebook usage in Turkey is also a popular, as it is the most visited internet site in the country. According to September 2012 stats, there are 31.108.760 Facebook users in Turkey, which places it in the 7th highest user position in the ranking of all Facebook statistics by country. Social networking statistics show that Facebook penetration in Turkey is 40% of the country's population and 88% of the number of Internet users. As for the ratio of male to female user ratio on Facebook, 63% are male and 37% are female. Turkish Facebook

demographics are also monitored below, where it can be seen that the largest age group is currently 18-24 with total of 10.576.978 users (Social Bakers, 2012).
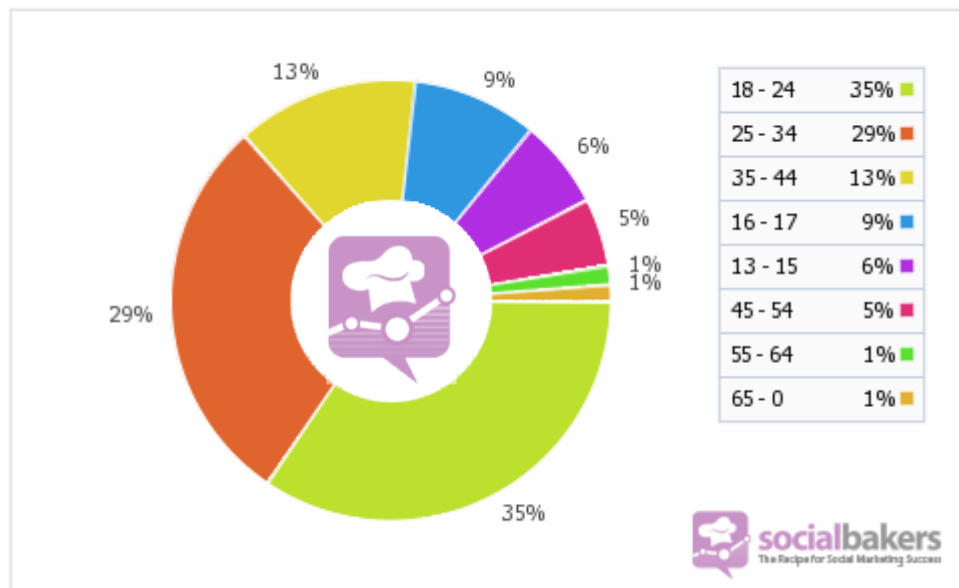
Figure 4 – User / Age Distribution of Facebook in Turkey (Social Bakers, 2012)

Twitter has very different results while comparing its user statistics with Facebook. The social media tool occupies 7th place in Turkey's top visited sites (Alexa, 2012). Turkey slightly misses being in the top 10 countries based on worldwide Twitter usage traffic (Gervai, 2011). The country has the 11th place in the worldwide Twitter visiting rate comprising 2.5% of total visitors to the social media site (Alexa, 2012). However, according to March 2011 data, 16.6% of internet users over 15 years old in Turkey used Twitter. In this sense, it has been announced that Turkey ranked 8th place in the top countries in internet penetration for Twitter, which indicates the ratio of all Twitter users within the country over general internet users in Turkey. According to this information, there exist 3.746.786 Twitter users in Turkey (Kutsal, 2011). The Twitter accounts of the three political leaders that will be analyzed in this thesis are among the top 25 most followed Twitter accounts in Turkey (Alexa, 2012).

YouTube has 3rd place among the top visited websites in Turkey (Alexa, 2012). The social media website is being used in Turkey especially for marketing and entertainment purposes. All of the popular channels which are visited most frequently by Turkish people belong to multinational brands or famous production companies. Official channels of politicians or political parties are not included into this chart (Social Bakers, 2012).

In the following part, the relation of social media tools and political communication, along with the main advantages and disadvantages of using social media in politics for persuasion and behavior change will be analyzed. The political application of the aforementioned social media tools will be given and the statements will be supported by successful examples of social media usage which ensured and increased political participation.

4.3. Involvement of Social Media in Politics

4.3.1. Political Communication in Social Media

New communication technologies provide an environment where participation and discussion is the basis and where people can share their thoughts, ideas and creations. This virtual environment is a user based field which is important in terms of bringing crowds and people together and increasing the interaction among them. People spend more time in this environment, while trying to meet their real life necessities in this virtual reality, preferring to live in that virtual reality by rebuilding a new world for themselves. Moreover, it is possible to share social and political opinions with others, and even to make more serious decisions. Digital and social media, which is on a rapid rise particularly among youngsters in terms of use value, seems to be a serious competitor to today's traditional media (Vural and Bat, 2012:3348-3382).

Especially with the rise of the internet technology in the 1990's, the world's networked population has grown from millions to billions. In the same period, web based media have become a fact of life for civil society worldwide, not only by including business networks and non-profit organizations in its entity, but also affecting worldwide politics by involving many political and non-political agents including regular citizens, activists, non-governmental organizations, telecommunications firms, software providers, governments and political leaders in politics. As the communications landscape gets denser, more complex, and more participatory, the networked population gained more access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speeches, and an increased ability for proceeding to collective action (Shirky, 2011).

Within the political landscape, there exists a common belief about the strong effectiveness of new media tools with the transformative potential of social media along with digital networking channels for establishing government transparency, public participation, alongside intergovernmental and cross-sector collaboration. There also exist several theoretical frameworks written about the combination of communicative and political ideas while inspiring the creation of notions such as Democracy 2.0 and Government 2.0 (Bryer and Zavattaro, 2011:325-340).

Those new communication skills and characteristics can be combined within the concept of Web 2.0, which consists of the latest technological means for people, in order to achieve social and political ends. In order to grasp the concept of Web 2.0, one must understand the notion of Web 1.0. It has been referred to as anything digital on the web, which is intended to be read or shared in unidirectional ways. The communication within the Web 1.0 system is unilateral, in which the information giver and taker have no direct contact with each other. Web 2.0 and social media tools enable the construction of bilateral

communication possibilities between the message giver and taker (Bryer and Zavattaro, 2011:325-340).

While investigating digital communication technologies, it can be argued that internet websites are more one-sided; social media however, is completely different. It helps conversations to reach a wider audience with the help of the long tail concept, in which conversations have the ability to be spread into different forums and platforms. The use of social media has greatly increased the channels of communication and its effectiveness within organizations. Thanks to this technology, people don't waste their time because it is easy to send messages through an instant messenger or a tweet and get the response quickly (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Sitalaskhimi, Kouame, Watson and Seymour, 2011:79-91). In this sense, in addition to business and civic organizations, government entities, along with other political agents, might get social with the use of Web 2.0 tools among their choices of public accessibility options (Bryer and Zavattaro, 2011:325-340).

Web 2.0's most important agent is social media. It has been referred to as an effective tool for political communication, as well as affecting the efficacy and quality of daily-life political message transmissions and election campaigns, and possesses the following characteristics. First of all, social media provides the electorate with a ground in which they can interact with their political representatives easily, enabling them to manage their voting power effectively, and increasing the participation rate in political issues. Secondly, as other platforms shift their communicative sources from traditional to new media, this process will also affect political agents while encouraging them to build a proper interactive democratic framework within the system. Thirdly, all organizations created by political agents need political communication processes that include daily messages, communicative practices, public relations, political campaigns and electoral advertising; these will require lesser budgets than are required to employ traditional media. This is also an important opportunity

for political parties because this technology enables them to reach and affect more people in order to gain support and votes in simpler and cheaper ways (Devran, 2011:11-12).

Social media technology furnishes political parties with the ability to spread and transmit the messages that they create for their supporters through online channels. As examples, political agents can share their prepared videos and the visual messages that their leaders carry through YouTube and they can connect and meet with their supporters, followers and voters through Facebook and Twitter while meeting and chatting with them in an online platform (Devran, 2011:12).

Furthermore, parties and their participants can transmit the messages that they want deliver to the mass public and their followers easily through fast and free communicative channels. In this sense, party representatives, leaders, or spokesmen come into prominence as well as the party entities, because within this system every component of an infrastructure became important agents for communicative activities. Reaching people through the internet is easy because basic information about the supporters is saved instantly to the databases of the political party websites, making it easy for delegates of the parties to reach their people. With the use of social media, political parties can rapidly reach their target audiences, send bulk messages to several different types of electors, obtain financial resources through digital channels, and create armies of voluntary campaign workers. Most importantly, they can obtain feedback about their work in order to improve their communication techniques enabling them to reach more people and obtain more support (Devran, 2011:12-13).

Social media tools are also advantageous for political communication because they have a free environment for message transmission. Political agents don't have boundaries while promoting themselves or their represented entities and they don't have language limitations (except for harmful content) about affecting and trying to persuade the electorate. The messaging and posting tools of social media also increase the speed of communication

while enabling fast updates in every context. As every individual has access to these technologies, both message publishers and receivers have the occasion to gain fast feedback. Moreover, as social media tools like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube can be interconnected with each other easily, the messages reach a vast environment through the online world, and the amount of viewers and people who share the information in other networks also increases enormously. In this sense, social media is a limitless communication tool (Aziz, 2011:66-72).

4.3.2. A Successful Example: Obama's 2008 Election Campaign

Despite being a recent concept, social media has had an immense effect on the political world. Politicians and political parties, along with several agents and institutions related to politics embraced this new technology for the reasons mentioned above. Up to this time, the most successful user to employ social media for political communication is Barack Obama, the current President of the United States. In his 2008 election campaign, he conducted his promotion through online channels, obtaining a high amount of support in both electoral and financial gains.

Obama focused on social media sites in order to target young people and mobilize millions of volunteers, as well as receive donations. The campaign used social media to connect with voters and supporters. His campaign used social media platforms in order to encourage voters to participate within the campaign process and organize campaign activities of all shapes and sizes. With the help of such strong distribution channels, Obama raised a record-breaking amount of funding, mainly through small donations. Those small donations, mainly collected from ordinary people, formed a donation pool of 750 million dollars (Borins, 2009:753-758).

Obama's widespread use of social media seemed to be a major factor in his victory against his Republican rival, John McCain. While competing against his opponent, McCain generally used the prototypical strategies of mainstream media; moreover, his popularity was

lower than Obama in the online world, from the beginning of the election. Obama had more than 2 million Facebook friends, while McCain had only 600,000. Similar disparities were seen on other social media outlets like YouTube, Twitter and the like. Obama spent millions advertising on Facebook and Google, while McCain mainly used television advertisements (Smith, 2011:12-16). In return, Obama raised 656 million dollars for his electoral campaign, 500 million dollars of which came from online sources. McCain raised only 201 million dollars in total (Başusta, 2009).

Facebook and YouTube were the main communication channels used by for Obama to transmit his messages to the electorate. It can be argued that Obama's Facebook page contains all the information about himself including favorite television shows, hobbies, books and movies because that information made him one step closer to the electorate while transforming people's perception of him into a positive, engaging and favorable agent against McCain. Thus, he became an online phenomenon while having more than 10 million likes (Smith, 2011:12-16).

The ineffectiveness of the Republican campaign lay in its failure to pursue actual trends and technologies that are cheaper and much more effective in order to reach the electorate. YouTube videos were more effective than television ads, because viewers chose to watch them or received them from a friend instead of having their television shows interrupted. This was an advantage. Also, advertising on YouTube is much more cost effective. The content that Obama's campaign team created and published in official YouTube channel was watched for 14.5 million hours. The cost of publishing that content online is free and such online viewer rating is a huge benefit for campaign makers. By contrast, in the traditional media that McCain preferred to utilize, to buy 14.5 million hours on broadcast TV would cost 47 million dollars (Miller, 2008). In recognition of its success,

Obama's social media campaign was recognized by the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in 2009, winning Titanium and Integrated Lions (Durmuş, 2011).

Barack Obama changed the face of politics in the United States by rationally using the concept of Web 2.0, while integrating social media channels, unifying supporters and employing the options of easily mobilizing them using cheaper communication methods and having maximum revenues, and most importantly, constantly continuing his social media usage even after being elected president. In this sense, as a political leader he became an example to other political agents of how to using social media effectively for electoral purposes or for daily use in persuading the public.

The history, main characteristics and statistics about the social media tools were given in this chapter. The role and power of such tools was also illustrated using an important example, one which shows the effect of social media in mobilizing the masses in their supported and endorsed political streams. While this section focused on global data and examples, the next one will focus on Turkey and the relationship of social media with its political components.

4.3.3. Representation of Turkish Political Parties in Social Media

Turkish political parties have been represented in the online world, especially in the social media, in official and unofficial ways. This part will only concentrate on the social media presence of the parties that will be analyzed in this thesis. As for the statistical information about the sources, only the social media tools mentioned earlier (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) will be considered. This part will not include content analysis, but only give a general opinion about the official and unofficial online formations which represent Turkish political parties. At the same time, this part will determine the list of the exact accounts that will be analyzed at the next chapter.

Facebook is the most active social media network for all political parties and supporters to share ideas, statements, pictures and videos. Most of the accounts created in Facebook are unofficial and composed of fan made content. As for the case of AKP, which has the highest number of pages in Facebook, there exist 458 Facebook accounts created by many different users according to September 2012 data. None of them however, are official. On the other hand, there exist 416 community pages related to the name of party's leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, but only one page (https://www.facebook.com/RecepTayyipErdogan) functions as an official communication portal. Two of those created pages were created for the purpose of denigrating Erdoğan.

As for CHP, there exist 317 community pages in the name of the party itself, and 281 pages in the name of the party leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. 34 of those pages are created in order to revile him. Two of the pages representing Kılıçdaroğlu are official; however in this thesis only one page (https://www.facebook.com/K.Kilicdaroglu) will be analyzed.

MHP has 334 Facebook pages bearing its name and there also exist 103 community pages in the name of Devlet Bahçeli; however 41 of them exist for negative and cynical purposes. Within the pages related with MHP leader, there exists no official page; therefore only the Facebook pages of Erdoğan and Kılıçdaroğlu will be analyzed.

In Twitter, AKP has 322 accounts named for the party itself, and 104 accounts created in the name of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan; 7 of those 104 accounts are negatively generated. One of those accounts is official (https://twitter.com/RT_Erdogan), which is the 6th most popular Twitter account in Turkey (Social Bakers, 2012), and will be studied in the next chapter as a source of analysis.

CHP, on the other hand has 37 accounts in the name of the party, 48 accounts based on the name of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, and only 6 of the pages that belong to the party leader are created for negative purposes. Among those accounts, the official Twitter account of

Kılıçdaroğlu (https://twitter.com/kilicdarogluk), which the 15th most popular Twitter account in Turkey (Social Bakers, 2012), will be analyzed in detail in the next chapter as a point of comparison.

Compared with other parties, MHP has slightly low representation in Twitter with only 14 accounts created on behalf of the party itself. Accounts about Devlet Bahçeli are limited only with 23 pages, and only 2 of them have been made for negative purposes. The official twitter page of Devlet Bahçeli (https://twitter.com/dbdevletbahceli), which is the 39th most popular Twitter account in Turkey (Social Bakers, 2012), will be analyzed in detail while researching the online impact of his representation in Twitter.

4.3.4. Youtube Analysis of Turkish Political Parties

A crucial social media tool which will be analyzed in this thesis, YouTube is also an effective tool in the online communication networks of the Turkish political parties, in terms of uploading and storing visual data. All three parties have official and unofficial accounts just like other social media tools. The statistics about those pages will be given in this chapter only, because not all of the parties allow feedback options in their channels; this situation restricts the possibility of making a comparative study. On the other hand, YouTube has been mentioned in this thesis for another reason, namely that most of the videos in the YouTube network have also been shared in Facebook or Twitter, allowing users of those tools to provide feedback. In this sense, only the information about subscribers, video views and video amounts of the channels are given.

Beginning with AKP, the party is represented with 53 channels in YouTube, its leader Erdoğan is represented with 5 channels; 4 of those channels are negative. Only one of them (www.youtube.com/user/AkPartiGenelMerkez) is the official party channel. The channel was founded on April 20, 2011 and currently has 419 subscribers. There are 1540 videos in total as of September 2012, and the videos have been viewed 937.237 times.

CHP has different results than AKP in its YouTube performance. There exist 28 accounts which use the name of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, and 2 accounts based on the name of Kılıçdaroğlu. Only one channel among them has negative content. CHP's official party channel (www.youtube.com/user/herkesicinchp) was founded on March 24, 2011 and it currently has 267 subscribers. There exist 144 videos as of September 2012, and the videos have been viewed 897.410 times.

MHP is represented in YouTube with 23 channels on behalf of the party and 3 pages in the name of party leader Bahçeli. All the channels using Bahçeli's name are unofficial and negative. The party's official channel, (www.youtube.com/user/mhpiletisim) was founded on March 4, 2012 and it currently has 4 subscribers. There are 40 videos in the channel as of September 2012, and the videos have been viewed 11.434 times in total.

In social media representation, AKP has the lead with high rates of both inputs and outputs. The party is generally followed by CHP; MHP stood very far behind in the usage of social media compared with other parties. The party's lack of proper representation in the social media makes it difficult to define its impact on online users.

This chapter was especially concentrated on the use and worldwide characteristics of the social media network, while also giving brief statistical information about the representation of selected Turkish political parties in social media. The next chapter will focus on the content analysis of the social media usage of Turkish political leaders, while concentrating on the other selected social media tools, Facebook and Twitter.

CHAPTER 5: SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE OF TURKISH POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR IMPACT

The political communication process requires several specific skills and norms from the perspective of both the sources and recipients. These requirements were listed separately in previous chapters as features for the quantitative analysis of the social media use of Turkish political parties as a tool of political communication. This chapter will focus on the research itself, as well as making comparisons of the social media tools of the political parties by covering the Facebook accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, and the Twitter accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Devlet Bahçeli.

The analysis will consist of four main parts which refer to different features of a political communication process within social media. The first part covers statistical data about the accounts of Turkish political leaders while analyzing the time length of the active use process, and the number of followers or subscribers, posts and participation rates.

The second part will deal with the detailed information of the contents used in the messages and the collocutors which consist of people or institutions within those message units. During communication processes, political agents (including Turkish political leaders) deliver their messages based on specific topic(s) and timing. They usually shape their subjects based on special events and days, but they may also create additional sub-topics regardless of the context of the event. Also, mentioned persons, institutions or entities are also crucial notions within message transfers. Politicians usually blame their opponents, or they positively or negatively argue about other political and non-political agents in order to gain support from the electorate. Along with message subjects, this feature also covers an important part of the analysis of message contents.

Message variables cover the third part of the content analysis. The features of message tones, language intensity, opinionated language and verbal aggression, selected within the framework of Language Expectancy Theory will be the main subjects of analysis. These characteristics will help to define both the convenience of the selected theory with regard to political communication in social media, and the support proportions of the public towards messages which contain or omit these notions.

As for the fourth part of the analysis, one of the most important components of the research will be the feedback which social media users share online through different techniques. Their participation in the online communicational process yields successful outcomes about the effectiveness of persuasion, which is also the aim of the Turkish political leaders.

In Facebook, the number of likes, shares, and the amount of comments which contain both positive and negative ideas define the effectiveness and support rate of the delivered messages. On the other hand, in Twitter, besides the number of positive and negative comments, the amount of Retweets by the users and marking of tweets as favorites gives information about the effect of social media on the Turkish electorate.

In addition to the written explanations in this chapter, all of the statistical data concerning usage and proportional percentages of all the subjects and collocutors of the messages, language characteristics, message variables and feedback rates delivered by the online users can be obtained in the appendix as a full list.

5.1. Facebook Analysis: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan – Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu

Facebook differs from other social media networks in terms of not only enabling the share of written posts, but also several different communicative tools like videos, pictures, GIF images, links, and other audio-visual material. In this sense, during the Facebook

comparison of two political leaders, all of the posts except unrelated spam messages, advertisements and irrelevant feedback are recognized as research units and included in the content analysis. In Facebook analysis, the subjects of communicative messages, their message variables, mentioned units, forms, and feedback statistics will be observed.

5.1.1. General Information

Beginning with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook account, it can be argued that it is the most popular social media network within Turkish politics and online communication. The page became operational on 1 March 2010, and continues to realize political communication. As of 1 October 2012, Erdoğan has the highest rate of online subscribers with 1.613.251 people and the highest current talking rate with 53.476 people. With those numbers his page beats Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu in terms of online public participation. From its launch to the end of September 2012, 2641 posts were published.

On the other hand, the Facebook page of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu has a completely different content from Erdoğan's. He has a higher message density than Erdoğan's Facebook account, with the advantage of having an older Facebook account. His Facebook account was launched on 11 September 2008, and first post was delivered on 23 March 2009. However, despite his early admission into this specific social media network, his total "like" amount is lower than Erdoğan's, whose likes total 1.367.469. Also the active talking rate is also fewer than Erdoğan's with 20.148.

According to this data, Erdoğan's Facebook popularity is higher than Kılıçdaroğlu and the party that he leads, in terms of every online and communicational aspect, including subscriber numbers, liking rates and the ratios of being constantly discussed, despite the fact that Kılıçdaroğlu's use margins are higher than Erdoğan's, having both a longer online lifetime experience and more messages within the network. This situation indicates that the

representation and popularity of Erdoğan in the most popular online media tool show similarities with the actual political supports through votes.

5.1.2. Message Subjects

According to the analysis, the most mentioned message subjects on Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook page are the discourses about political agents, units, entities and institutions, followed by statements about foreign policy issues, announcements about the public services that his party and the government realizes, and citations concerning military and terrorism issues. A detailed list can be observed in the figure below:
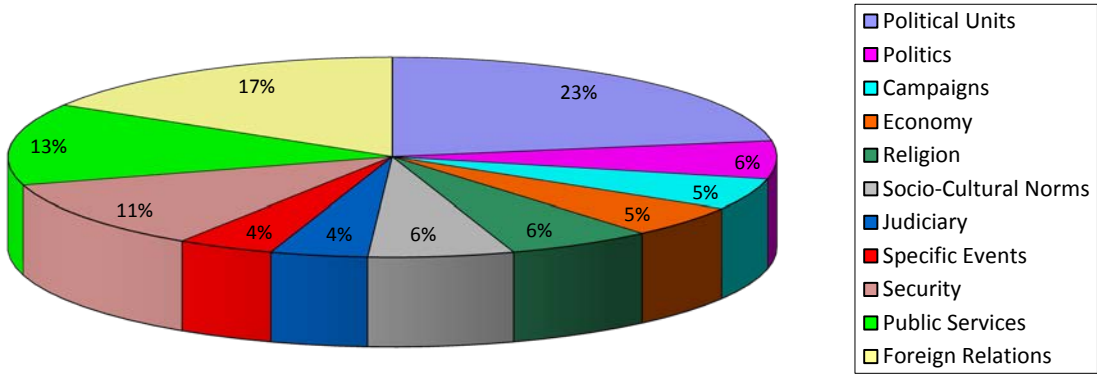
Figure 5 - Subject Fields of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook Page

As for political units, the most discussed subject is CHP along with the party's ex-president Deniz Baykal and current leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. The opposition in general, in which the messages didn't mention the identity of the opposition members, is another important subject matter of Erdoğan's Facebook page. In this sense, the amount of messages which contain news, issues and details about the political units outside AKP occur more than those about the party itself, its members and sympathizers.

As for foreign relations, the density of the subjects is categorized based on geography. Middle Eastern countries including Israel, Palestine and Syria are the most mentioned subjects of the messages concerning foreign issues. As AKP prioritizes the Middle East in the party's

foreign policy, the regional conflicts occurring within those mentioned entities and Turkey's political role appear most often as the main subjects in the Facebook messages.

Public services that AKP Government realizes also take a significant place within message themes. Since they have the governing and ruling power within the country, the party uses the benefits of those abilities in order to gain more support from the public. In this sense, those actions have been proudly announced by Erdoğan through social media, a considerable amount of which are announced on Facebook. The mostly mentioned message subjects are services in transportation, logistics, energy, health, housing, tourism, military, and unspecified favors that the party realized during its governance.

Terrorism and security issues are other important subjects for Facebook messages on Erdoğan's Facebook page. Matters dealing with the Kurdish Question, social unrest that occurs temporarily, political crises based on ethnicity issues, the acts of the terrorist organization PKK, and the Turkish military have been used extensively in the social media network.

Other subjects are less popular in the Facebook account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Comparing the constructed ideological norms and values of AKP with the messages published in the social media, the party's vision of foreign policy maintains its popularity in online media. However issues concerning religion, economy and other socio-political notions dealing with power, unity, democracy and nationalism are not mentioned much in Facebook posts.

Based on these subjects, Erdoğan's Facebook account is used mostly as a tool for publication and promotion and a reflection of traditional media coverage concerned with the daily dialogues and debates among political parties in an online arena. Messages mentioning CHP and other opposing units have a majority within subjects, which shows that the party is

trying to gain support from their subscribers and followers mostly based on negative campaigning aspects and aggressively confronting with rival agencies.

Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook account on the other hand, while having some similarities, has a different agenda in the use of the message subjects in Facebook. The table which deals with the main subject titles can be observed below:
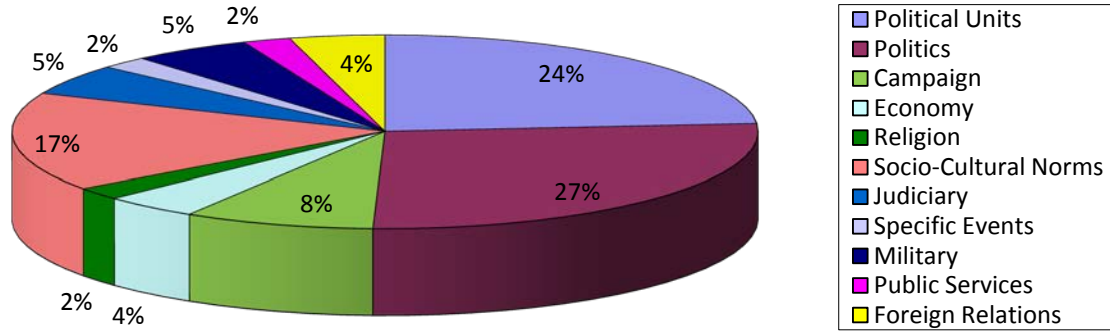
Figure 6 - Subject Fields of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook Page

In contrast to Erdoğan's page, the most popular subject fields in Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook are political concepts and notions, instead of political units like parties, institutions and agents. Kılıçdaroğlu's subject topics on politics mostly cover negatively constituted issues like corruption and bribery cases, protests against the government, socio-political problems including the rise of poverty, inequality, crime and violence. Also, leftist policies concerning social democratic norms and values that the party adopts are the important subject values for Kılıçdaroğlu's account that are especially absent from the subject contents of the social media accounts of the other party leaders. As for political units, CHP and its leaders (including former leader Baykal) has been mentioned as the most popular political subject unit, which is followed by AKP and its leader. In this sense, during social media communication, unlike AKP's method, CHP prefers mentioning its own entity more than the party's political rivals in its Facebook posts.

Another popular message subject for Kılıçdaroğlu is socio-cultural norms, mostly concerning the situation of Turkish media, events and cases related with sports and the national education system. These messages mostly contain criticism of the government's policies and acts; they have negatively constituted contents and blame AKP and its supporters for the current situation. Another interesting finding concerns the popularity of posts containing satirical content, biographies and memories on the Facebook page of Kılıçdaroğlu; these are mainly absent in other political social media accounts. These shares mostly contain the articles of supportive press agents and detailed information about the party's supporters and institutions which influence their policies and help them to gain support using different sources.

Other subjects have less popularity on Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook page compared with the aforementioned features. Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook works as a complaint and critic mechanism against AKP and the government. As the main opposition party in the government, CHP mainly uses its communication skills in order to give opinions, news, and blame concerning domestic policies. As is reflected in the chart, the use of messages containing subjects which deal with foreign issues, public services, security issues and economics are quite limited in Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook account, and when they are mentioned, they mostly discuss negative aspects in criticism of the government.

As they possess less political power within the state than AKP, CHP's communication capacity prevents the party from referring to substantive issues less and redirect the party to realize communication against the government. However, the party mostly chooses to blame its rival in much more indirect ways while giving detailed information about negative aspects in the country without directly mentioning AKP. For this reason, unlike Erdoğan's page, the proportion of messages directly mentioning AKP is lower than CHP itself.

The party's aim is also to attract the attention and support of its followers and subscribers by using specific contents including leftist policies, concepts related with the party's ideology and negative contents which will create negativity towards its rivals; it uses different communication mechanism compared with AKP, based on message contents.

5.1.3. Collocutors

As for the collocutors, the units that are addressed, mentioned, accused, congratulated or remembered in the Facebook posts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, once again there appear slight differences between the accounts in the mentioning of people, institutions, and units based on ideological and socio-political differences between the two parties.

In the Facebook posts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's page, there exists breadth in the collocated people. Although 5% of the posts mention no specific person or topic, the remaining rates of the collocated people can be observed in the table below:
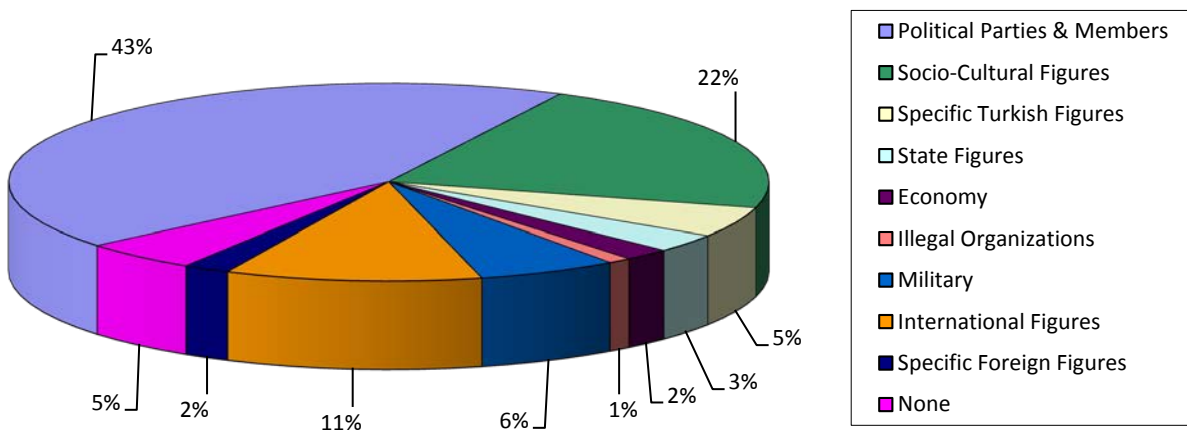
Figure 7 - Collocutors of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook Posts

Political parties and their members are the most mentioned units of Erdoğan's Facebook page. Units which are included within the subject of AKP are the most mentioned

units in Erdoğan's Facebook account, followed by the mentioning of CHP and its members. The rate of MHP mentions on Erdoğan' Facebook page is very low compared with CHP mentions. However once again, the term of opposition in general emerges as an important but ambiguous and undefined notion as a mentioning unit within the posts.

Followers and subscribers of the Facebook page are also one of the highest popular collocutors of Erdoğan's Facebook account. In fact, this rate is the highest rate after Tayyip Erdoğan as a mentioned person. This notion verifies the significance of social media in political communication. Through Erdoğan's Facebook account, subscribers and followers are invited to special occasions, asked to support the party through questionnaires, participation in meetings, etc. With this opportunity, political leaders like the Prime Minister became capable of organizing and directing massive amounts of people simply through online communication, without spending lots of money and, thanks to feedback that the page allows for, without doubting whether the transmitted messages reached their target.

International figures are other dense collocutors in Erdoğan's Facebook. The high percentage comes from the variety of international states and statesmen. In this sense, all of the collocutors have very few occasions of being mentioned. Within this group, the most mentioned one is Israel as a state and Barack Obama and Bessar Esad as political leaders.

As for domestic figures, Turkish military personnel, martyrs that have died during military operations or wars, and the Turkish people in general are some of the popular entities. However, in terms specific persons, the range of diversity increases in favor of the party's main socio-political characteristics. Those mentioned units are generally historical figures, which are memorialized on special occasions. In this sense, the most common collocutors of this field are the deceased Turkish symbols like Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Sabri Ülker, Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Turgut Özal, Necmettin Erbakan and the people who belong to the

Ottoman era, who are basically part of AKP's communication contents and ideological infrastructure.

The ratios of the people who are mentioned on the Facebook page of the CHP leader have important differences from the account of Erdoğan. Total mentions are presented in the table below:
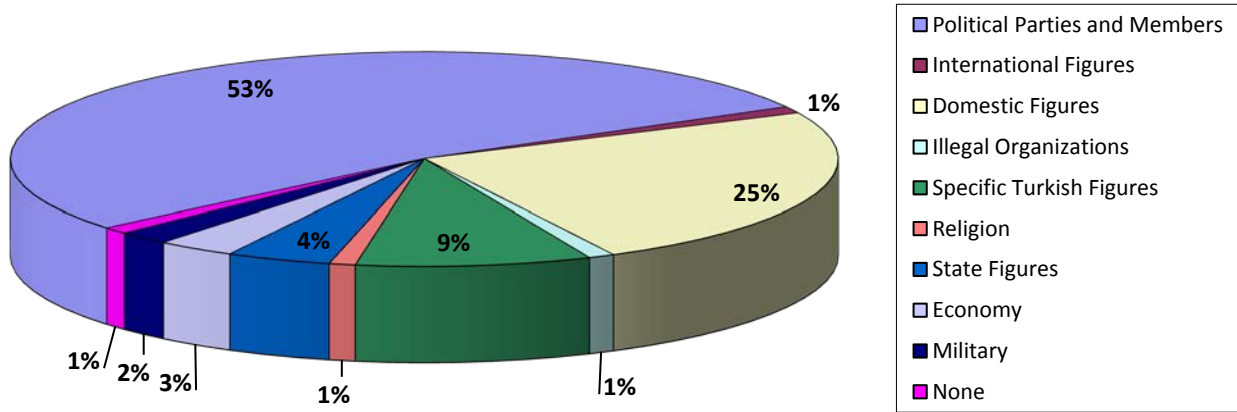
Figure 8 - Collocutors of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook Posts

According to the research results, political parties and their members cover the most mentions within Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook. Similar to Kılıçdaroğlu's message subjects, mentions about CHP are slightly higher than the messages which contain references to AKP and its crew. MHP once again is insignificant in the mentioning proportions. In terms of mentions, both parties chose to deliver messages about themselves, in order to get the attention of their followers.

Another popular collocutor framework looks at domestic socio-cultural figures. Once again, similar to Erdoğan's Facebook page, Kılıçdaroğlu also pays attention to directly communicating with online supporters through this specific social media channel, and like Erdoğan's page, the administrators of Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook page directly contact supporters, while directing them and giving them suggestions in favor of the party. Different

from Erdoğan, who frequently prefers to speak to the Turkish people and Turkey as a whole state, Kılıçdaroğlu's messages lack such content, and prefer referring to much more specific audiences rather than a general entity. Also, as another significant difference, Kılıçdaroğlu's delivers more Facebook messages mentioning workers, academics, media and press agents, artists, sportsmen and women, who basically belong to different and various socio-cultural layers of Turkey, than Erdoğan's do.

As for specific people and entities, despite the absence of international figures in the framework, several Turkish figures have been mentioned in Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook page including Atatürk and deceased leftist journalists, artists and academics like Hrant Dink, İlhan Selçuk, Abdi İpekçi, Can Yücel, and Neşet Ertaş. Other collocutors have significantly low rates and were used as mentioned units slightly.

The people and institutions mentioned in Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook reflect the party's constructed ideological framework. In this sense, similar to AKP, CHP also organizes similar patterns of contents within the most popular social media network, in order to communicate with its followers and obtain their support. Although it has a completely different ideological spectrum from AKP, the density of leftist policies, Republican values and the people who increase the support for CHP have been used in order to affect the online participants and gain their sympathy.

5.1.4. Message Variables

Message variables define and analyze the sentimental position of the delivered messages and the use of specific language characteristics that were mentioned within the explanation of the selected theoretical framework. Message and collocutor tones, total intensity rates, the rates of opinionated language usage and verbal aggression will be comparatively analyzed in this part.

As for message and collocutor tones, Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook page has some interesting details. Most of the message tones are neutral (49%), especially because of the page's purpose as a news publishing platform. Also, the density of positive messages (34%) is higher than the negative ones (17%). Rates about the mentioned collocutors also share similar results. Only, this time the ratio of positively mentioned units (42%) is more than neutral ones (32%). Once again, the number of negatively mentioned units (26%) is lower than those two other tones. According to this result, in terms of the sentimental context of the message subjects and mentioned people, Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook page doesn't frequently contain negative aspects and covers communication units which contain mostly neutral or positive scopes, in contrast to his expected aggressive attitude.

On the other hand, the sentimental ratios of Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook messages are different from Erdoğan's. For the subject and collocutor tones, Kılıçdaroğlu's social media posts contain negative tones (17 and 30%) in both features more than positive ones (11% and 26%). However in both of the message categories, the applications of neutral tones are higher than the sentimental ones with 72% and 44% of use rates. The reason for the popularity within neutrally delivered messages lies in the fact that those communication posts mostly consist of news, announcements, invitations or requests, in which either neutral or positively established message subjects or collocutors are present. Negative posts consist mostly of the statements of the political leaders while engaging in negative campaigning against each other for the purposes of gaining support.

In terms of language characteristics, beginning with Erdoğan's Facebook page, the usage of language intensity is low in the Facebook page of the Prime Minister. Most of the messages were given in lower (63%) and medium (29%) intensities. This is once again the result of the role of the Facebook page, which has been mostly used as a news portal, delivering the messages in neutral forms, without expressing extreme values. Consequently,

highly intense messages (8%) only represent a small amount of the total number of posts. Those messages generally contain extremely religious, aggressive, or sentimental language characteristics.

In contrast to the general climate of negativity in its content, the usage of intense language is quite low in Kılıçdaroğlu's messages. Messages which carry low intensity have a ratio of 54%, while moderate and high intense language has been used only in 41% and 6% of the messages respectively. The reason for this result is the fact that either Kılıçdaroğlu, in his comments, argues about negative issues with slightly intense manners, or the messages published within the website carry insensitive content like news and regular announcements.

Opinionated language and verbal aggression also were also rare on Erdoğan's Facebook page. Non-opinionated language (85%) has a clear majority over opinionated language (15%). Relative to this result, the use of verbal aggression is also very low (15%), compared to messages which were delivered with a calm language style or the ones whose content doesn't cover aggression (85%). The similarity between the ratios of those two subjects once again occurred because of the use strategy of the page as a communication tool aimed at delivering news and developments.

The use of opinionated language (12%) and verbal aggression (10%) is quite low in Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook messages. The reason for this result once again overlaps with the facts mentioned above. Although social media is a whole new brand of communication, users still continue to use it with traditional media preferences. The Facebook pages of both Erdoğan and Kılıçdaroğlu deliver posts in the format of news publishing. Despite having the chance to build stronger bonds between political leaders and the electorate, which will eventually create active public support, Turkish party leaders avoid this option and use Facebook as an official news channel, wasting the potential and power of the social network to construct sentimental relations.

5.1.5. Feedback

5.1.5.1. Feedback Based on Contents

Feedback is the most important element of analysis within this research because it enables participatory reflection towards the published communication units. in addition to delivering detailed statistical information about online involvement rates, the reactions of the participants can be measured through the replies Facebook allows. This mutual process has its own advantages since the parties can shape and organize their policies based on the returned data, or they can manipulate their content in order to get more support from the followers.

Beginning with the proportion of "likes" of the Facebook messages, the a comparison of feedback in the case of both leaders can be observed below:
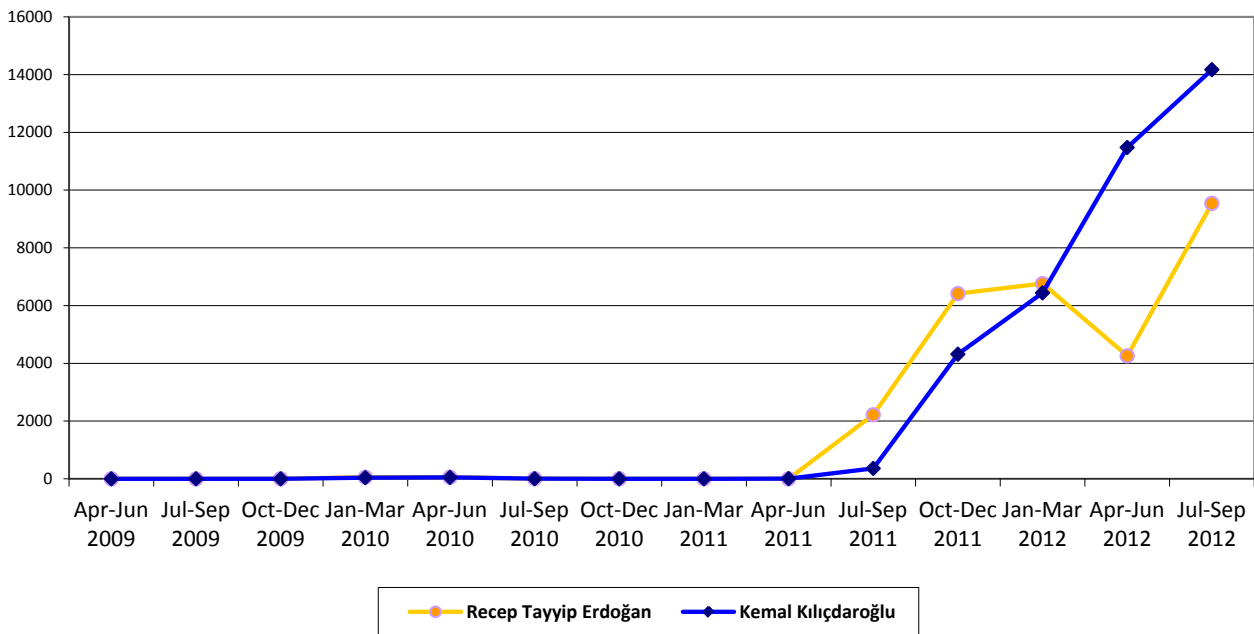
Figure 9 – Facebook "Like" Rates (April 2009-October 2012)

For Erdoğan, "likes" have a consistent increase rate except for the sudden decreases after intensive electoral campaign periods in which high amounts of advertisements and online activities have been produced and published. The decrease in early 2012 can be

explained by the introduction of the Facebook time-line function. After the visual and functional change of the social media network, feedback rates dropped for a while. The most liked subjects of Erdoğan's Facebook page are the posts referring to the religious commemorations and statements of the Prime Minister, his personal quotes about foreign issues or domestic public services, his visits on special religious occasions and the online negative campaigning publications against the rivals of AKP.

Kılıçdaroğlu's messages have been liked on a regularly increasing basis, beginning with the launch of the social network. It can be observed that during the referendum and election campaign periods, the amount of likes increased dramatically. This situation occurred as a result of both the intense message deliveries of the page owners and the self-participation of the followers on the social network. The most liked subjects are the personal commemoration messages (not religious) of the CHP leader, publications about party meetings, Kılıçdaroğlu's statements about the corrupt acts and elements of AKP Government, and his own videos taken especially for his followers and published within the social media channel.

Sharing rates, on the other hand, have different characteristics in terms of statistical feedback proportions. The act of sharing enables the Facebook posts of the political leaders to appear in other online networks, which have the chance to be observed by other people who don't belong to a specific platform. This characteristic makes the sharing process the most valuable feedback action of the political communication within social media. As subscribers send feedback to the source by sharing the messages as an act of acceptance and support, they also voluntarily extend the edges of the messages by working on behalf of the communication process of the sources. In this procedure, message sources don't need to give additional attention to the ongoing process.

The comparative analysis of the message shares of the both leaders can be observed in the figure below:
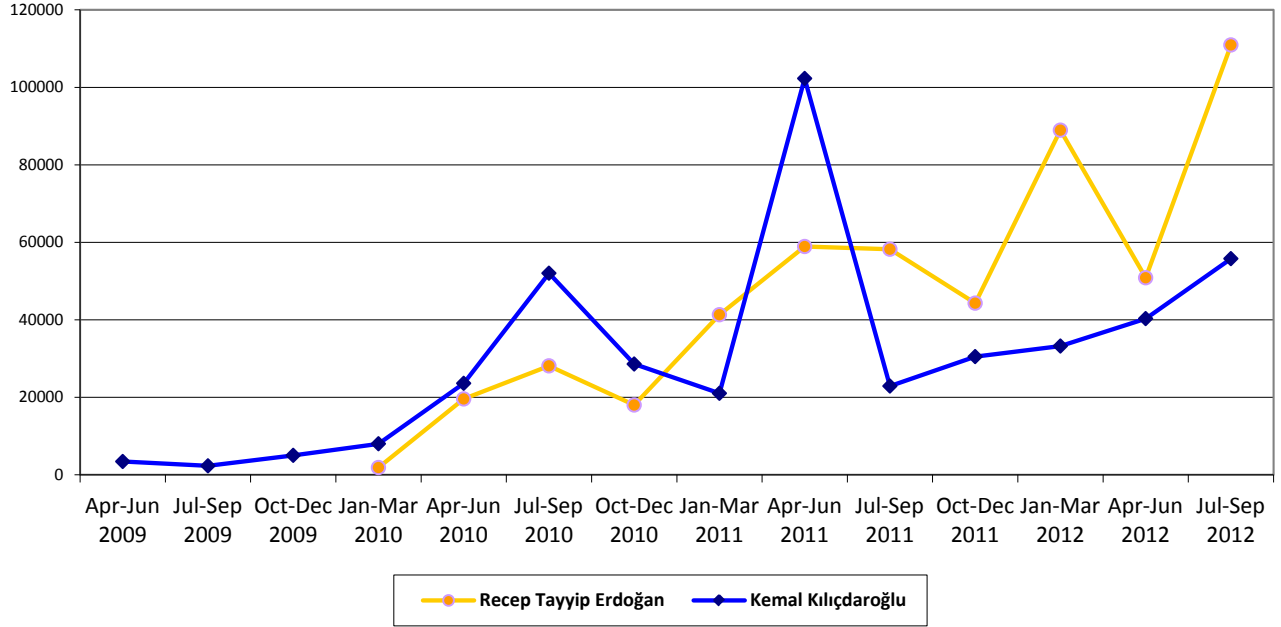
Figure 10 – Facebook "Share" Rates (April 2009-October 2012)

Sharing is harder to observe in the fans of Tayyip Erdoğan. People actively began to use sharing options in real terms, only after the 2011 elections. This function also continued to increase continuously, once again excepting the time in which Facebook had a major functional change. The most shared subjects are the Prime Minister's personal thoughts about the power of Turkey towards Middle East and European countries, his religious acts and statements, and negative campaigning towards the opposition and rivals.

In Kılıçdaroğlu's page, message shares have also an increasing rate; however the sharing culture couldn't be properly established within that network. Even during election and referendum campaigns, online users didn't share the posts in their own accounts. Followers began the sharing process in immense rates just after the 2011 election period. In this sense, they couldn't properly contribute support to CHP in an online environment, because message

sharing is the only option which can spread the posts (along with the delivered content) to more online channels, even outside Facebook. The most shared message subjects of Kılıçdaroğlu's posts are the visual material and occasional messages related with the works of the CHP leader, specific celebrations (non-religious), the shares of satirical content, and the news and statements about the corrupt and negative acts of the government.

Commenting on the posts is the most used feedback function after liking, and unlike other features, it yields an understanding of a much more active participation by writing personal thoughts and evaluations towards the communication process. In this sense subscribers have a sense of belonging to the online political entity that they follow. The comparative rates of comments between Erdoğan's and Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook pages are shown below:
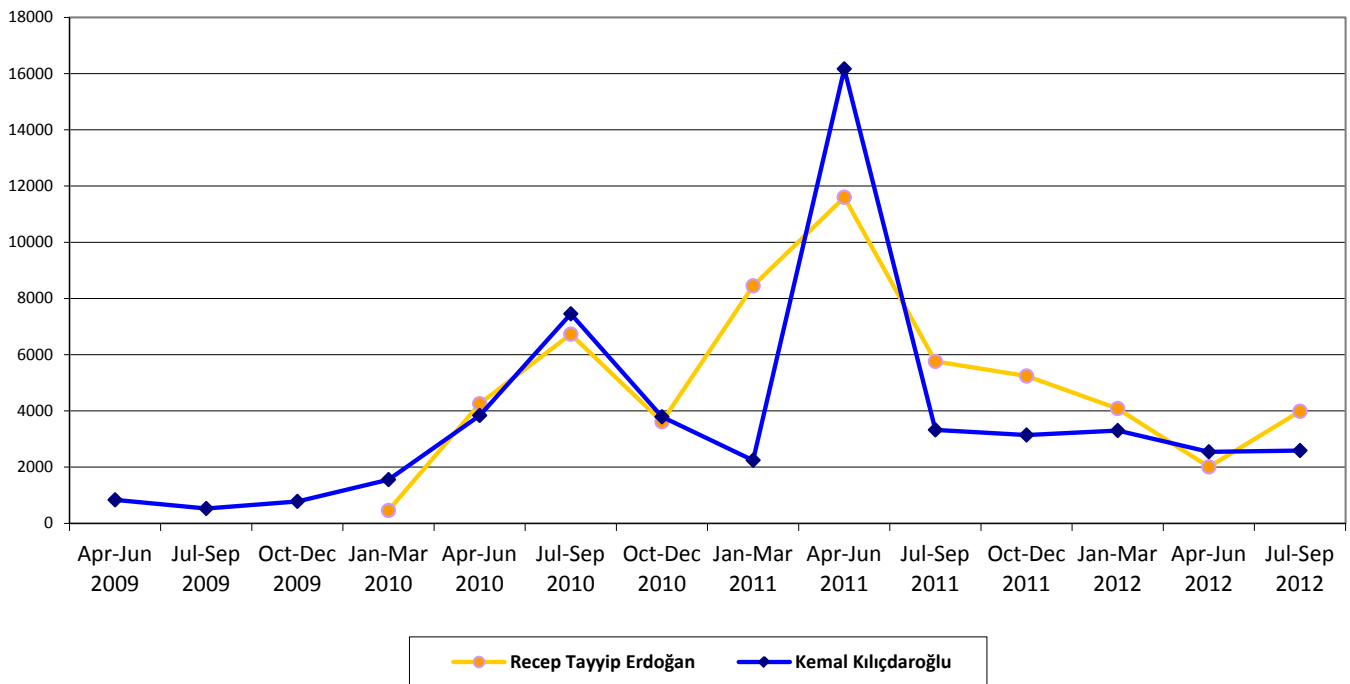
Figure 11 – Facebook "Comment" Rates (April 2009-October 2012)

In the Facebook page of Erdoğan, it can be observed that during election campaign periods, the comment numbers increased. In fact, in the June 2011 elections, with the

combination of increasing numbers of Facebook fans and the political climate of the moment, the commenting rate reached its peak. Also, it can be argued that most of the positive comments were published during campaign periods with 12% in the 2010 Referendum Campaign, and with 15% and 20% during the 2011 General Election campaign period. Erdoğan received strong online support from Facebook. In terms of statistics based on comments, he has 94% positive feedback, while negative comments did not exceed 1%. The remaining 5% of the comments are neutral. Post subjects which have the highest positive comment rates are those related to the personal and family affairs of the Prime Minister, in which people basically offer their gratitude to him. Other positively commented on subjects are the public and socio-cultural services that the government realized. Once again most of the comments share the same idea of gratefulness. Yet another positively commented on subject group is the Prime Minister's negative statements about the opposition. In messages containing this specific subject, people support and protect Erdoğan indirectly by attacking the opposition instead of directly giving positive comments about him.

As for the Facebook page of Kılıçdaroğlu, comment rates dramatically increase within election periods, but especially after the 2011 election period; there exists a systematic decrease within comment rates that is still continuing to decrease. The reason for this situation will be either the effect of the structural change in Facebook, or the loss of interest of the page followers after the electoral defeat. In terms of the positivity and negativity of the comments, comments delivered in support of the party and Kılıçdaroğlu are in the majority with an immense rate; the negative comments do not surpass 1% of the total. The most commented on messages are the ones related to the election meetings, the campaign works of Kılıçdaroğlu, and shared specific visual material prepared by the supporters themselves.

Thus far, the contents of the subjects and the collocutors along with their feedback proportions basically fulfill the expected socio-political characteristics of the party and its

followers, acting in line with the expected Turkish political culture and the ideological infrastructures of the selected parties. In the following part, the elements of Language Expectancy Theory will be addressed and the results will show that whether the use of specific language characteristics and message variables affect the participation and support rate of the public on behalf of the Turkish political communication framework.

5.1.5.2. Feedbacks Based on Language Characteristics

The use of specific contents within communication units in Facebook gives positive and useful feedback, support and participation ratios for the political parties and their leaders. This part will focus on the other selected feature within the quantitative analysis, namely the feedback rates based on the usage of the characteristics of the Language Expectancy Theory.

Beginning with message sentiments, people who respond to the posts of Erdoğan especially chose to show interest to neutral messages. In all aspects of Facebook feedback including liking, sharing, and writing comments, and followers of Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook page chose to give positive feedback to the messages which contain a neutral context. Total proportions of liking, sharing and positively commenting processes within neutral messages occur between 35% and 56%. Those results are followed by giving feedback to the messages which have a positive context (between 33% and 46%) and negatively messages (between 10 and 30%).

As for Kılıçdaroğlu, beginning with message and collocutor tones, it can be argued that the total likes, shares, and comment rates towards positively and negative messages and collocutors are quite low. As the feedback response rates of positively delivered messages vary between 6% and 33%, negative messages have positive feedback between the rates of 16% and 30%. Most positive feedback was given to the messages which contain neutral subjects and collocutors (between 41% and 76%).

As for the usage of language intensity within the messages on Erdoğan's Facebook page, the units which are delivered with moderate and high intensities are less popular, and their feedback percentages is also low with a changing ratio changing between 7% and 32%. On the other hand, messages which contain low intensity are both used within the majority of total communication deliveries, and also attract more positive attention and support by the followers with a rate that varies between 59% and 62%. This shows that low intensity messages are highly assimilated by the people who follow Erdoğan in Facebook.

On Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook page, messages which carry low intensity rates are in the majority as well as possessing higher positive feedback rates (between 53% and 60%). Messages which carry moderately intense language characteristics have feedback rates between 32% and 42%, while highly intense messages comprise only 5% to 8%. This shows that as the usage of intensity increases, both the amount of those messages on Facebook and their positive feedback rates diminish correlatively.

The same reasons apply to the use of opinionated language and verbal aggression. Neither Erdoğan nor Kılıçdaroğlu favored those concepts intensively in their online messages, and therefore it didn't receive extensive feedback in terms of online support. On Erdoğan's page, messages which have opinionated language have lower positive feedback ratios (13 to 21%) than the messages which have non-opinionated language characteristics (79 to 87%). Those proportions are 12% for the messages containing opinionated language on Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook page, and 88% for the messages which don't contain opinionated language.

Verbal aggression is also ineffective in Erdoğan's Facebook account. The messages which contain belligerence have a positive feedback spectrum of 7 to 13%. By contrast, messages which were delivered in a calm language style have more online popularity with an 87 to 93% feedback rate. In Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook account also, the use of verbal

aggression doesn't change the results of positive feedback, while all the messages which use verbal aggression have lower positive feedback (between 10% and 19%) than the ones which use opposite characteristics (between 81% to 90%).

According to the language characteristics, along with message sentiments and variables, positive participation rates drop drastically while using the mentioned features of the Language Expectancy Theory. In this sense, it has been statistically observed that LET couldn't fulfill the expectations of its framework within Facebook. Although this research is not a persuasion analysis, still the proportions of positive feedback and online support have a correlation that is opposite to LET's arguments.

5.2. Twitter Analysis: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu - Devlet Bahçeli

As the other social media network, Twitter is considered as a completely different social media tool, one whose communication characteristics and infrastructure differ from Facebook. In this sense, the effect of the structural changes in the content, message variables, and feedback rates of the leaders will be comparatively analyzed in this part in order to apprehend whether different social media tools create different results in communication features. Along with the Twitter accounts of AKP and CHP leaders, in Twitter, the social media strategies of another major party leader, Devlet Bahçeli will also be analyzed. The online communication skills of Devlet Bahçeli and the party that he leads could not be analyzed in Facebook because of the absence of official accounts; however in Twitter, Devlet Bahçeli's account exists as an online representative network for both the political party and its leader.

The Twitter accounts of the Turkish political leaders show great differences from each other in every aspect. As the views, assessments, ideologies and manners of the political

leaders that represent their parties are different; these characteristics also affect the communication characteristics of their social media accounts.

5.2.1. General Information

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Twitter account has been active since 23 August 2009. The Prime Minister has 1.822.206 followers in total as of October 2012. Erdoğan doesn't follow any accounts, even ones related to AKP and its members. Once again, like Facebook Erdoğan and AKP possess the stronger online participation rate in Twitter compared with other parties. The account has 1393 tweets; as with the rest of the whole research, 10% of the data will be analyzed and evaluated.

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's Twitter account was launched on 4 April 2010. This is a late attempt compared with the online participation of Tayyip Erdoğan. 1462 tweets have been posted within the network. Although this amount is higher than Erdoğan's deliveries, Kılıçdaroğlu's followers are relatively fewer than the subscribers of the Prime Minister, with 914.869 people as of October 2012. However, different from the AKP leader, Kılıçdaroğlu follows 417 people in his Twitter account, accounts belonging mostly to CHP party members, members of parliament, journalists, media channels, and several artists. These follows shows the significance of Kılıçdaroğlu's Twitter account, in being constantly connected with other party members and sympathizers in order to both to control and be informed by these people.

Online representation of MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli, which couldn't be analyzed in Facebook due to the absence of an official account, will be examined in this part. It can be argued that in social media, MHP's main presentation has been realized through the Twitter account of its leader. Devlet Bahçeli's account was launched on 10 November 2010, and as of October 2012, 775 tweets have been published within an official framework. Although Bahçeli has 378.317 followers as of October 2012, like Erdoğan he doesn't follow any accounts including party representatives and other accounts which share similar ideologies

with the party and its leader. As Bahçeli's own subscription to Twitter occurred later than other political leaders, both the number of tweets and followers are lower than Erdoğan and Kılıçdaroğlu, which makes his online representation weaker.

5.2.2. Message Subjects

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's message subjects can be analyzed in the table below:
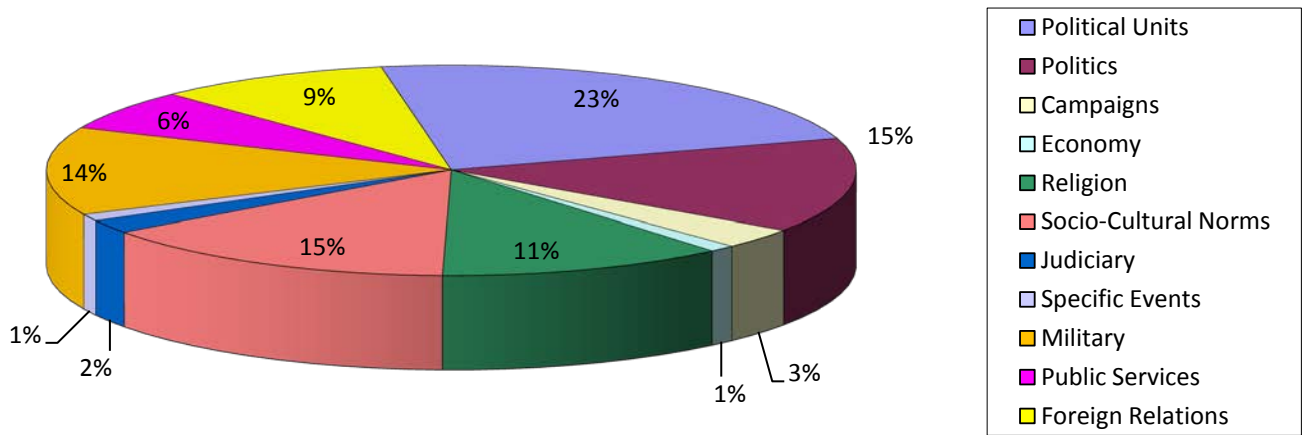
Figure 12 – Subject Fields of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Twitter Account

According to those results, once again political units, especially the ones related with the CHP, MHP, and BDP opposition combined are far more intense than message subjects related to AKP and its leader. Turkey and the Turkish people are also other popular message subjects of online messages. In terms of political notions, subjects including unity and power are prominent features of this field. The Kurdish Question and Ethnic Disputes are also popular on Erdoğan's Twitter account. Religious context once again plays an important role within the content of the Prime Minister's Twitter messages. Similar to the Facebook page, foreign policy, especially with Middle Eastern countries dominate those subject fields. The rest of the message contexts have a minor density within the Twitter account.

Kılıçdaroğlu's message subjects can be analyzed in the table below:
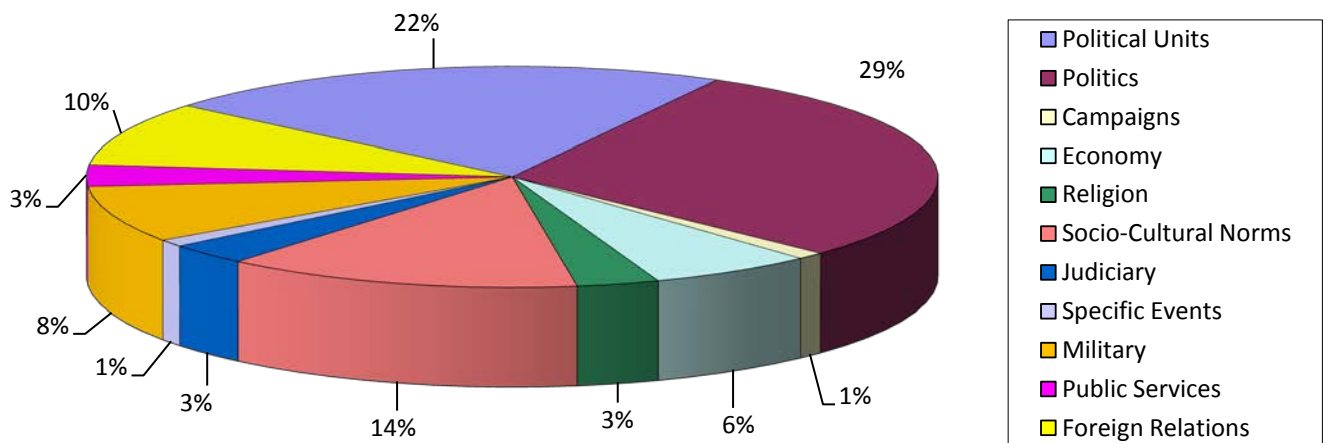
Figure 13 – Subject Fields of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's Twitter Account

As can be observed, for the first time in this analysis, subjects related with political notions and concepts are mentioned more than political units. Communicative deliveries concerning those specific concepts mostly emphasize negative aspects such as bans, corruption, bribery, crime, violence, socio-political problems and protests, followed by mentions of the concept of unity and leftist policies. As for political units, AKP, its members and state institutions have similar mentioning popularity with political units belonging to CHP. The other important subject unit of this field is Turkey itself. The mentioning of socio-cultural norms including education, arts and media are followed by messages about Turkish foreign policy issues and its relations with other countries including the United States, Palestine, Syria and Germany, which were all but absent from Facebook. Following popular subject fields are terrorism issues and economic patterns which mainly deal with unemployment and the negative course of the Turkish economy. Similar to the content usage in Facebook, CHP once again plays the role of main critic in this social network. In this sense, the selection and usage of specific contents including the share of messages about leftist values and policies have a positive correlation with the constructed values of the party.

As the third political agent, message subjects which are shared within the Twitter account of Devlet Bahçeli can be observed in the table below:
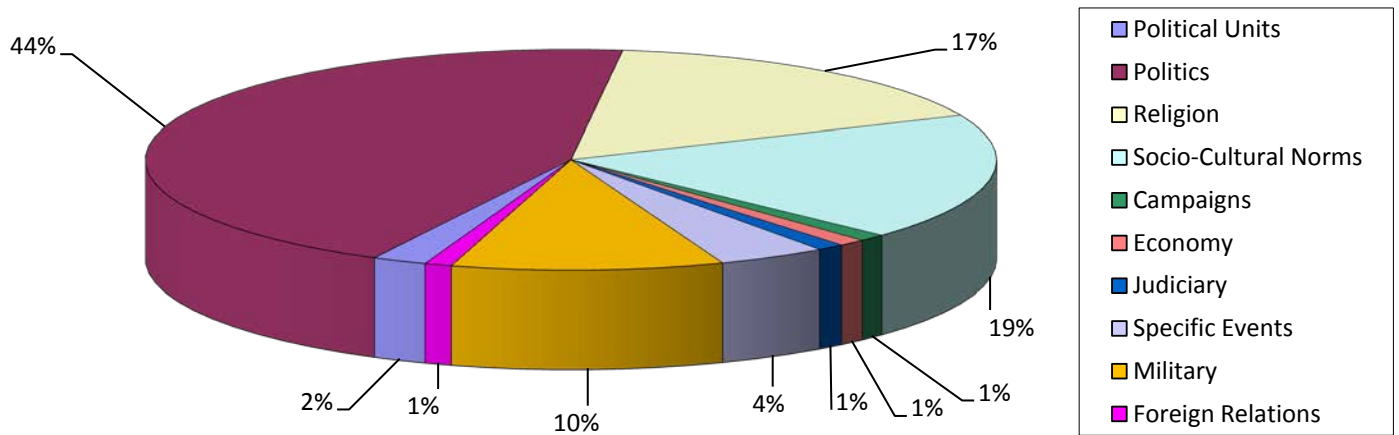
Figure 14 – Subject Fields of Devlet Bahçeli's Twitter Account

According to the data, differently from other accounts, Bahçeli's subject topics are especially concentrated on political norms and concepts including nationalism, unity, socio-political problems and conflicts. In this sense, political units as parties, their leaders and members are not prominent within the messages of the MHP leader. Socio-cultural norms also have popularity in this account. Therefore, most mentioned message subjects are ethical and moral values, women's issues and education. Religion is also a key factor within Bahçeli's Twitter account, even the intensity of that specific subject field is higher than any other social media account of any political leader. Military issues follow religion as another popular subject topic within the MHP leader's Twitter account, in which terrorism and ethnicity issues as well as messages about Turkish military forces have popular densities. In this sense, therefore MHP's Twitter contents accommodate the message subjects which represent the party's ideological orientation along with the targeted issues in order to obtain support. The interaction level of his account with his followers is higher than any other account, as he consistently mentions his supporters by name, tries to gain personal information about their

opinions and even works on establishing mutual communication platforms. Also, as a different characteristic, he frequently suggests some theories and personal opinions about how to increase the socio-economic and political status of Turkey. In all of these aspects, it can be argued that Bahçeli both uses the ideological and political features of AKP with religion and traditional values and message characteristics of CHP while pointing out the socio-economic problems that the country is facing because of the incompetence of the government.

5.2.3. Collocutors

As for the mentioned collocutors of Erdoğan's Twitter account, the results can be analyzed in the table below:
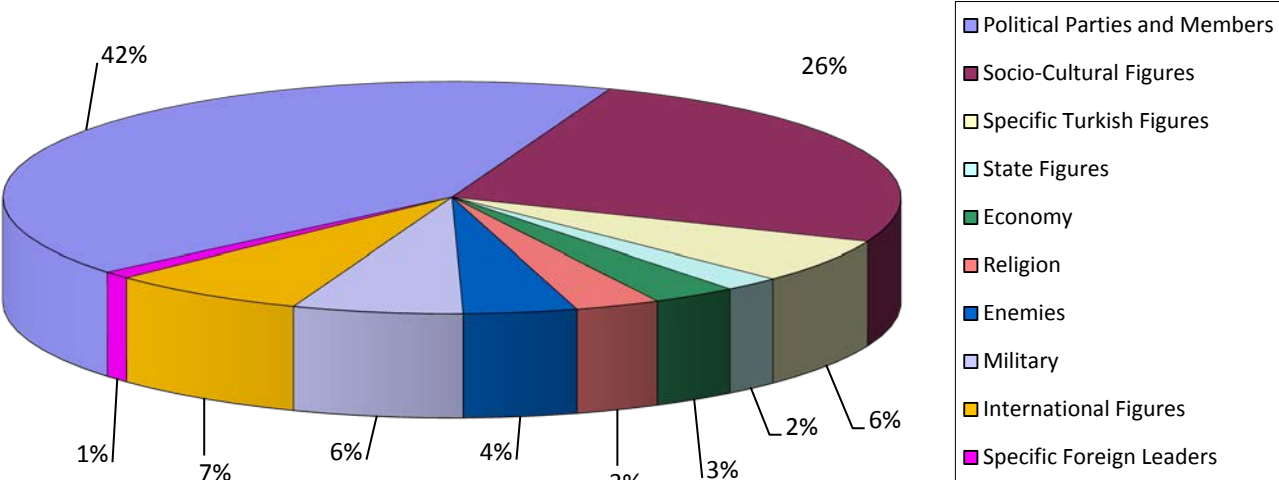
Figure 15 – Collocutors of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Twitter Account

Based on the statistical data, political party members, especially the opposition members in total have a majority within the mentioned units. People related with AKP are the following popular collocutors. Another important collocutor for Erdoğan's Twitter account is the Turkish people. Especially historical Turkish figures including Adnan Menderes, Necmettin Erbakan and Rauf Denktaş have a popular mentioning ratio. Military personnel, international politicians related with Middle East and Turkish martyrs are other extensively mentioned units. Once again like Facebook, Erdoğan's Twitter account also mentions

opponents more than the party itself. In this sense, it can be argued that the party chooses to gather online support from negative campaigning.

Kılıçdaroğlu's mentioned collocutor list can be observed below:
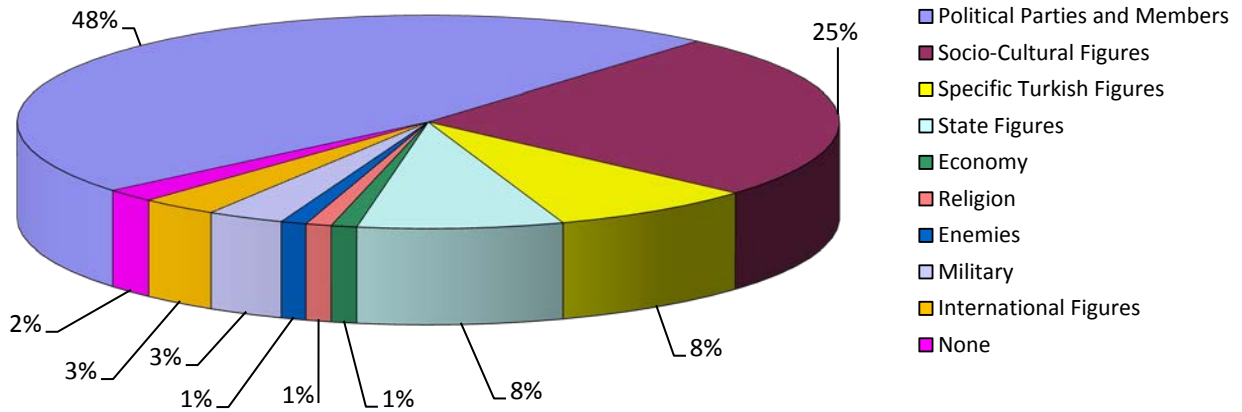
Figure 16 – Collocutors of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's Twitter Account

According to this research data, Turkish political parties and their members have a strong majority as mentioned collocutors within the Twitter messages of Kılıçdaroğlu. However unlike Facebook, it can be observed that AKP, its leader and its members are mentioned more than CHP and its members in this specific social media network. Lacking a wide perspective within collocutors, Kılıçdaroğlu's tweets nearly always mention opponent sources and targets. As for socio-cultural figures which are other important collocutors of Twitter, Turkey and the Turkish people are mentioned with a very high ratio, which is followed by online followers and Turkish students. Those subjects are followed by collocutors including specific Turkish figures like Atatürk and deceased public figures like Sabahattin Ali, Fikret Kızılok and Neşet Ertaş, who are known for their association with leftist organizations and ideologies. State figures also have an important proportion within the Twitter account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, in which state institutions and their members are collocutors as a source of crimes, corruption and socio-political problems. Once again the

points that are mentioned about the Turkish government are used as negative sources of communication.

As for the mentioned people and units within Bahçeli's Twitter account, the results can be observed in the graph below:
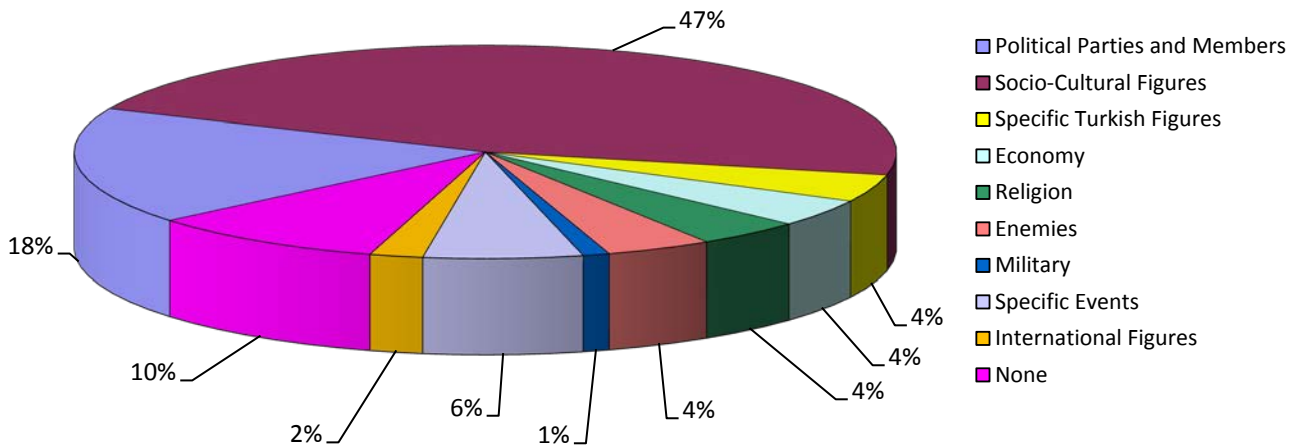
Figure 17 – Collocutors of Devlet Bahçeli's Twitter Account

In Bahçeli's Twitter account, socio-cultural figures have a major place within collocutors. Bahçeli prefers to mention mostly the Turkish people without making distinctions or implementing ethnic segregations. He mostly speaks to a general audience without giving detailed information about the targets. Collocutors as online followers are the next most popular mentioned units. Political units concerning MHP and its members and founder Alparslan Türkeş also have an important density. In contrast to other users, Bahçeli significantly avoids speaking about other political units. The tweets in which no one is mentioned are also frequent in the account of the MHP leader. Other subjects, listed in the appendix, have less density.

As for collocutors, Erdoğan and Kılıçdaroğlu both deliver messages and statements about one another; the MHP leader mostly refers to the people of his own party. Also Bahçeli refers to his followers and the Turkish people in general more than any other accounts. All of

the leaders mention historical figures in order to share their importance or commemorate them, however while Kılıçdaroğlu refers to figures related with his party like Atatürk, Nazım Hikmet or leftist politicians, Erdoğan and Bahçeli refer more often to religious, rightist and traditional ideas and figures including the Ottoman Empire, the Prophet Muhammad, Alparslan Türkeş and Adnan Menderes. Kılıçdaroğlu often mentions state institutions, most often in negative tones, while Erdoğan mentions foreign leaders and statesmen more than the other Turkish leaders.

5.2.4. Message Variables

In Tayyip Erdoğan's Twitter messages variables, online communicative deliveries which have negative tones (59%) are surprisingly more than messages which are delivered with positive (21%) and neutral (49%) ones. However the scheme changes while referring to the collocutors, in which positively mentioned people and units are slightly higher than negative ones. In both message and collocutor tones neutral messages are especially avoided. In Erdoğan's Twitter account, messages which contain moderate intensity (49%) are in favor. Nearly half of the messages have been published within an intense framework. Low intensity messages (36%) are the next popular message frameworks and finally the rate of high intensity messages is 15%. Proportions of opinionated language and verbal aggression usage are also very low in this specific account with rates of 32% and 23%. This means that most of the messages are negatively delivered, albeit using non-intense and emotionless language characteristics.

In the Twitter account of Kılıçdaroğlu, unlike Erdoğan, neutral messages are higher (49%). Nearly half of the deliveries are published within the framework of a balanced context. The same is also true of collocutors, however all the positively (32%), negatively (32%) and neutrally (36%) mentioned characters have more or less similar proportions. In language characteristics and message variables, moderately intense messages (53%) are higher than low

(38%) and high intensity (9%) ones. Other important message characteristics like opinionated language and verbal aggression are infrequent with proportions of 24% and 16%. In this sense, it can be argued that overall Kılıçdaroğlu favors a neutral, calm and moderately intense language context in his Twitter account.

In both message and collocutor tones, Bahçeli's tweets are mostly delivered with a neutral tone (53% and 58%). While comparing positive and negative messages, it can be argued that messages which contain positive tones (25% and 34%) are more than the negative ones (23% to 8%). This result shows that as Bahçeli made more statements about socio-political features than political people, he especially avoided using an aggressive context and negative campaigning. As for the message variables, it can be observed that most of the messages have medium intense language skills (54%), followed by the usage of low (40%) and high (6%) language intensity. In Bahçeli's Twitter account, positive and neutral message and collocutor tones are prominent; consequently the amounts of opinionated language (19%) and verbal aggression (5%) use are quite low. Those results show significant differences from the social media accounts of the other two political agents, putting MHP away from the daily accusations and controversy between AKP and CHP which also occupy a large space even in the online arena.

In message variables, it can be seen that Erdoğan uses negative, Kılıçdaroğlu and Bahçeli use neutral message tones in general. The leader that uses negative tones in the messages least is Devlet Bahçeli. As for collocutors, all users prefer neutral tones, however within this comparison the leaders who use negatively mentioned people in their messages are sequentially Erdoğan, Kılıçdaroğlu and then Bahçeli. All of the leaders mostly use messages which have moderate intensity levels. The use of high intensity messages is sequentially preferred by Erdoğan, Kılıçdaroğlu and Bahçeli. In terms of the use of opinionated language and verbal aggression, all users prefer using those elements in their tweets in a minimum

level; however when compared with each other once again Erdoğan uses those elements most followed by Kılıçdaroğlu and Bahçeli.

5.2.5. Feedback

Twitter feedbacks within all of the accounts of the political leaders are very hard to track because of the lack of public participation rates. Even though detailed information about statistical data can be observed in the Appendix, it can be argued that the scarcity of feedback features (especially comments) make it difficult to measure the online participation rates of the Twitter followers of Turkish political leaders. This result shows the disinterest of the Turkish electorate towards the use of this specific social media tool. As the total Twitter usage rate is low within the country, it directly affects the popularity of online communication proportions in Twitter.

As this characteristic is valid for the Twitter pages of every single political leader analyzed, similar to this characteristic, active and passive participation activities truly begin in all the accounts after the second half of the year 2011. As the comment ratios are very low in every account, the acts of retweet and favorite will be the main focus of analysis in this part.

The feedback ratios of retweets and favorites have different proportions in Twitter based on the user. Although these Turkish political leaders have different amounts of followers, and their Twitter accounts have been launched in different time periods, feedback rates show a sustained progress within each account.

The data also shows that all of the leaders have specific tools and strategies to communicate with their online supporters. In this sense, all of the differences caused by their political inputs eventually caused the creation of different outputs. As a comparative framework, all the detailed information about the favorite and share proportions of the three political leaders can be observed below:
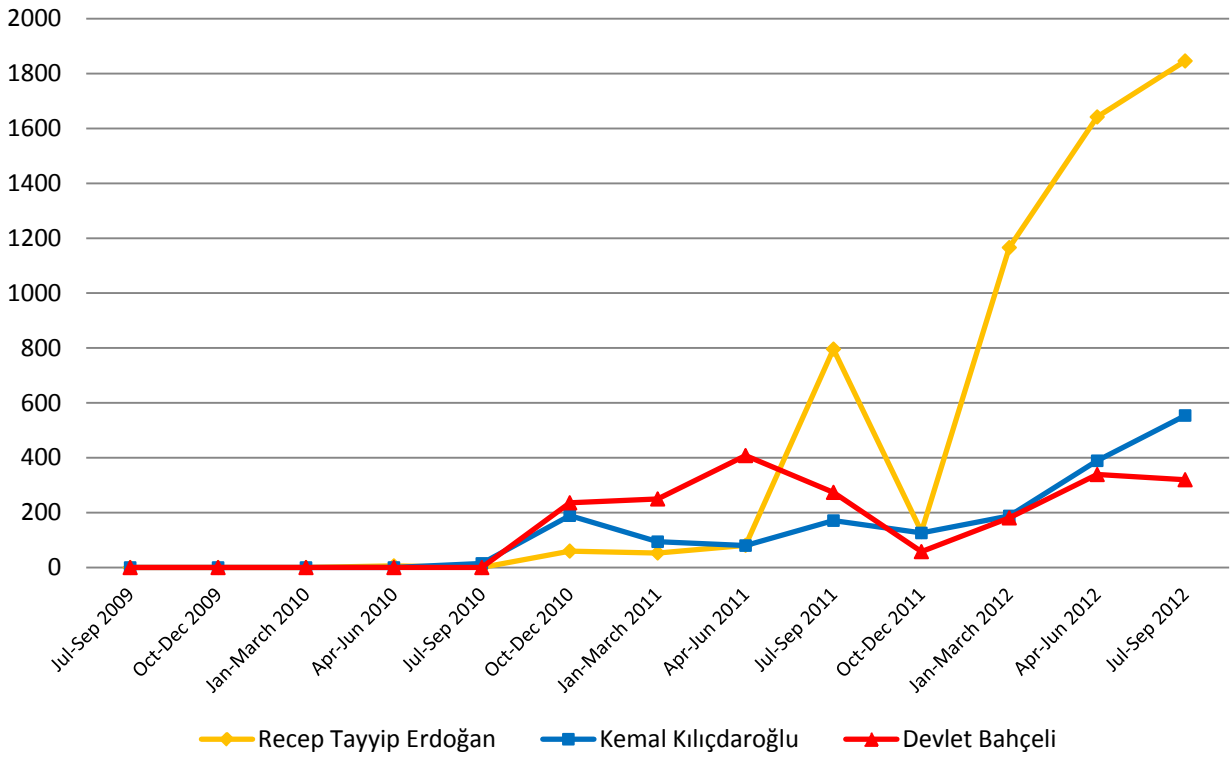
Figure 18 – Twitter "Retweet" Rates – (July 2009-October 2012)
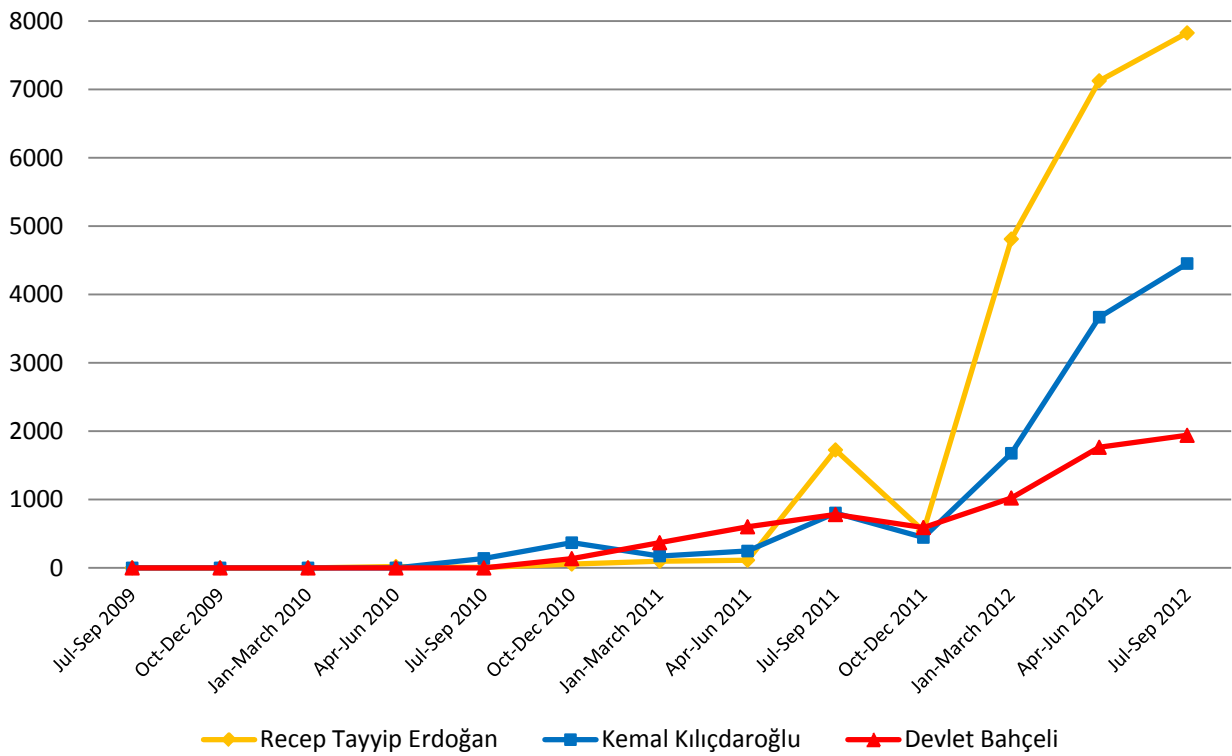
Figure 19 – Twitter "Favorite" Rates – (July 2009-October 2012)

For the feedback proportions of Erdoğan's Twitter account, it can be observed that both retweet and favorite processes immediately increased after the June 2011 Elections. Even though after an intensive election campaign period, the density of both of these actions decreased, the rise of participation rates begins once again in within a three month period. Most retweeted subjects within the account of the Prime Minister are messages which carry his own words, while containing intensively negative statements against Israel and the CHP leader, and commemoration messages about religion, family and ethical values, in which either highly intense language choices or verbal aggression are used. Most favorite subjects consist of similarities with the most retweeted ones (even some messages are the same), while those online publications refer to personal quotes of the Prime Minister who uses religious commemorations, and aggressive statements towards foreign powers and local opposition while combining violent and religious content. Once again, these messages contain mostly intense and verbally aggressive interpretations. As for the comments, although their consistencies are quite low, still they give information about the evaluation perspectives of online Twitter followers. The comments that had been written on the Twitter account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan are mostly unfavorable, with a ratio of 59%. Positive comments remained within a proportion of 17% only. Commenting in the tweets became popular especially after the first quarter of 2012; however three month comment ratios are stable. In this sense it can be argued that written feedback rates show significant differences from the ones on Facebook. In Erdoğan's Twitter, the general proportion of positive comments can only be observed within the use of high intensity message language. Although nearly all the comments are negatively delivered towards the messages which are opinionated and verbally aggressive (80% each), high intensity messages are the only feature in the Twitter account of Erdoğan, which positively works on behalf of the selected theory. In the Twitter account of the AKP leader, features of Language Expectancy Theory show positive results within passive

participation features such as favorites and retweets; however they fail to match the arguments of the theory regarding the comments of the participants.

Kılıçdaroğlu has utilized Twitter successfully during election campaign periods. Although the overall participation rate is low, the increase of retweets and favorites during specific campaign days indicates its success. As with the increase in the rate of general participation especially with the beginning of 2012, the rates are still continuing to increase with similar proportions for both of the feedback methods. Tweets which have the highest retweet rates belong to the messages personally delivered by Kılıçdaroğlu, while containing either negative message tones, intense language skills and verbal aggression, dealing with accusations against the Prime Minister, or commemorations about the events the foundation of the Turkish Republic or the victory within the Independence War, which hold a prominent place in the CHP party ideology. Most favored subjects also contain messages about commemorations of specific events related to the foundation of Turkish Republic, celebration of Labor Day and then accusations against the Prime Minister about corruption within state institutions. However most of those messages don't use intense language, opinionated language or verbal aggression. In this sense, followers preferred to favor mostly neutral messages that have strong socio-cultural and sentimental effects on them. In terms of comments, it can be mentioned that negative comments hold a majority of 46% to 16%. In Kılıçdaroğlu's written Twitter feedbacks, most of the user messages have neutral or irrelevant content. Although this negativity is effective in all aspects of the selected framework of Language Expectancy Theory, in negative message and collocutor tones, the rate of negative feedback is relatively lower. In this sense, Kılıçdaroğlu's Twitter account coincides with the mentioned theory framework only within the usage of message intensity level in passive feedbacks like retweets and favorites, and with the use of negative message tones during

active feedback actions. The data proves that once again the theory gets unsuccessful results within Twitter.

The feedback rates of the MHP leader in Twitter are different from the other political agents. As the content and message variables that he used show differences, the reaction to those communicative units also occurred differently. In Bahçeli's Twitter account, the densities of not only the comments, but all kinds of feedback ratios are very low. In terms of feedback increases and decreases based on months, Bahçeli's Twitter account resemblances the other accounts, however, the proportions of retweets show an unexpected ongoing decrease. This imbalance may be explained by Bahçeli's inconsistency of participation in the social media,   writing high amount of tweets in one day and then vanishing from the social media for days or even weeks. As for the most retweeted units, they consist of the personal quotes of Devlet Bahçeli which refer to counsels about abstract ethical and sentimental values like peace, justice, unity, brotherhood and the historical power of the Turkish people, or religious commemorations. Most of them have neutral message and collocutor tones, and usually lack any message variables that are claimed to increase support by the selected theory. Most favored messages also have common characteristics; some of them are the exact same units which have the highest retweet ratios. The messages, whose feedback rates are high, are written directly addressing the followers, and in this sense, it can be argued that the use of more personal messages increases positive feedback ratios. The comment density of Bahçeli's Twitter account is the lowest in comparison with those of the other leaders. However, by contrast, positively evaluated messages are higher in his account with a proportion of 40% positive vs. 20% negative comments. As usual, the rest of the messages are either neutral or ones referring to irrelevant conversations. In Bahçeli's Twitter account, the features and claims of Language Expectancy Theory and its selected paradigm couldn't obtain successful

results; although the amount of negatively delivered, non-intense, non-opinionated, and verbally non-aggressive messages are in majority, all the feedback aspects are in favor of him.

In both retweet and favorite rates, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan took the lead especially since the beginning of 2012. As the feedback rates during the 2010 Referendum are all but non-existent, about electoral periods, it can be argued that MHP was the most effective party based on online participation of its supporters and spreading the party's campaign notions into other networks. However in terms of general feedback intensity, Bahçeli's account comes last. Even the support rate decreases in terms of message favorites. CHP is in the middle in every aspect, in general having less positive feedback than Erdoğan, and more than Bahçeli. The support rates provided to Kılıçdaroğlu in Twitter sometimes coincide with Bahçeli's, however the participation and support ratios follow an unbalanced course while having less feedback than Bahçeli. For comment reception, as mentioned above, Erdoğan and Kılıçdaroğlu receive the same ratio of positive feedback (17%), while Erdoğan receives more negative comments than Kılıçdaroğlu with 60% vs. 46%. Among those three political leaders, only Bahçeli has a ratio of positive comments (40%) which are much higher than negative ones (18%). Although Bahçeli has lower rates of passive feedback features, in active participation, his Twitter account takes the lead.

5.3. Evaluation: The Use of Social Media by Turkish Political Parties

Social media usage in political communication is a brand new concept in Turkey. As networks like Facebook and Twitter became globally popular just after the second half of the early 2000's, nearly all the social media accounts of the main political parties launched publishing messages at the end of the decade. This situation caused a negative result in terms of obtaining useful information about the online participation and support rates of the electorate because of their late involvement in these networks.

Nevertheless, social media participants, followers and subscribers of Turkish political parties are growing rapidly and effectively. This increase can be observed with the consistent boost in passive and active feedback. Therefore, in order to fulfill the expectations of their supporters, and get more support, political parties constantly shape their communication substances in popular social media networks like Facebook and Twitter.

The aim of this research was to determine both the online usage contents of the main Turkish political parties along with their use of specific language and message variables in order to get support from the electorate. After the selection of a specific paradigm for the use of language skills and the realization of the quantitative analysis, the results have shown significant versatilities for each specific tool and user.

In general, domestic and foreign policy issues were not discussed or communicated within the social media accounts of the political leaders. All of the agents publish either news or statements regarding the works of the party that they lead, or participate in negative campaigning. Most of the messages are related to the personal controversies within the current political system, instead of creating innovative policies in order to solve socio-economic problems. In order to gather support, they have chosen this strategic perspective. The existence of intense rivalry, especially between AKP and CHP, continues to exist in the digital world.

All the parties have specific addressing skills in social media. As examples, AKP and MHP prefer referring to the Turkish people overall while highlighting genuine attributes like brotherhood and unity. On the other hand, CHP address its followers in social media messages by mostly employing terms concerning companionship, which effectively introduces leftist values into the thoughts and eventually the feedback of the online public.

Most of the messages are delivered within the framework of a news channels, in this sense the vast majority of the communicative units possess either neutral or positive

statements published through non-sensitive language characteristics. Negative statements are mostly the products of strategic negative campaigning.

These communication choices don't represent any difference from traditional media channels; as a result, the message sources are wasting the potential of those technologies. They have the chance and capability of building stronger connections between all types of political entities which will eventually create an environment of mutual understanding and cooperation while enabling the creation of better policies; however the parties have not taken advantage of these features of the networks so far.

In Facebook, it can be argued that this specific social media tool enables the sharing of many audio-visual documents along with written statements and documentations. As Facebook has nearly ten times more subscribers than Twitter, the amount of posts and participation rates are quite high. Both Erdoğan's and Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook accounts started as fan page projects administrated by party supporters. Later on, parties began to own existing pages and transformed them into official social media networks. In this sense, the used language and content of the posts were quite subjective and disordered at the beginning of their launching period. In time, along with the structural changes of Facebook itself, the pages of the leaders took their current organized forms in which news, statements and developments considering both the parties and Turkish political system began to be mentioned with proper language skills and content.

As Twitter accounts differ from Facebook pages in not being closed online platforms from which antipathetic people are excluded and only supporters are discussing the delivered messages. Twitter is open to all kinds of people, and people choose either to follow or dismiss the accounts that they like within their own framework. Twitter also has a much lower usage ratio than Facebook in Turkey; hence all the feedback proportions are very low, which generally prevents establishing accurate and valid results about the support rates.

In Twitter, both usage mechanisms and feedbacks show differences compared with Facebook for all agents. First of all, Twitter is mostly used by the leaders as an arena in which much more aggressive, intense, sentimental and personal statements have been presented to the online public. Even Erdoğan, who was using negative messages tones with 17% of his Facebook messages, delivered messages containing negative aims with 59% in Twitter. Although the sentimental intensity has been increased in this social media network, the used message contents show little differences from Facebook.

MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli appears as an additional factor in Twitter for the content analysis of Turkish political figures and parties. Although he has an official online communication platform, he neither engages reciprocal dialogues or debates with other party leaders, nor does he or his party attract the attention of Erdoğan and Kılıçdaroğlu. In this sense, both CHP and AKP leaders are disputing with each other in Facebook and Twitter, while mostly excluding Bahçeli and MHP from these reciprocal negative campaigning processes.

In terms of the variables of Language Expectancy Theory, all three political leaders chose to deliver their messages within a negative, moderately intense perspective, while keeping high intensity, non-opinionated language skills and verbal aggression to a minimum. According to those results, all political leaders except Bahçeli received an immense amount of negative feedback. In all accounts but Bahçeli, the messages which contain the features of the selected persuasion paradigm had higher proportions of negative feedback than the ones which don't contain those specific characteristics. Bahçeli, on the other hand, while using mostly neutral messages that exclude high levels of intensity, opinionated language and verbal aggression, has relatively positive feedback ratios in every type of message. In this sense, the theory couldn't be acknowledged as a proper mechanism in social media for measuring the

support rates because in all of Bahçeli's messages, positive feedback is higher than negative feedback regardless of the style of the message deliveries and the language skills employed.

On the other hand, in terms of message contents, the subjects which related to the specifically constructed ideological characteristics of each party have the highest and most positive online participation and feedback rates in the social media networks. This is also a strong demonstration of the argument that the communication deliveries of expected message contents provide higher rates of online participation and support in the online communication process than the usage of specific language skills during the publication processes.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUDING REMARKS

As the concept of social media has entered into the daily lives of people with the development of technology in the second half of the early 2000's, it has immediately begun to be employed as a key feature in everyday communications at both personal and institutional levels. As use of popular social media networks like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube by masses began to increase, the popularity also spread within the political world while creating its own characteristics within the online communication process, especially by political leaders and parties that aimed to extend their support rate among the masses with easy, cheap and effective methods.

In this sense, social media became an important tool of political communication and also began to be used in Turkey especially with the end of the early 2000's. The main purpose of social media use for political communication is to always increase public participation and electoral support rates. From this perspective, those specific online communication tools provide the requirements of a successful and fast communication process.

As social media is being used without borders and temporal limitations, it has become one of the most highly used communication methods of political units. Cheap (mostly free) delivery methods enable political parties to withdraw from the monopoly of expensive communication methods like television advertising, billboards and other promotional activities whose cost is high but whose effect is in return very low. Also, the possibilities for mutual interaction with the electorate without always needing other specific communication methods generally favor the political parties and their leaders, because based on the support and feedback rates that their followers give, they can shape their political strategies in order to get more positive results.

One other important notion about social media for political parties and leaders is the opportunity to keep their electorate updated. In traditional and old-fashioned political communication, such activities are realized only during election campaign periods; with the developing technological facilities, in a world where people can react to each other easier than before, interacting with electorate only during elections would result in critical failures. In this sense, as well as with other users, political parties also chose to constantly keep their followers informed and keep abreast of their support rates, regardless of time or location.

For these reasons, in this research, the content strategies and support rates of the political entities have been investigated in order to determine their use of social media tools within Turkish political communication. While categorizing the units of analysis, the subject contents of the messages and specific language usage characteristics have been chosen as two major research features.

The selected theory of LET has been used as the key tool for determining specific language skills used in communication processes. Although LET is originally a persuasion theory, in this research, it has been used as an explanatory mechanism for establishing the main language characteristics analyzed in this thesis, which are the usage of opinionatedness, language intensity and verbal aggressions, employed to create persuasive effects over the message recipients.

As for listing the contents of the research units, constructed ideologies used by the political units needed to be analyzed. Therefore, firstly Turkish political culture, representing the expected norms and values possessed by the Turkish electorate, and secondly the functional characteristics of Turkish political parties have been investigated. As it was impossible within this research to individually explore the expected values and thoughts of the Turkish people and Turkish political parties one by one, the constructed values referred to in

the chapters above are considered to be the crucial norms of both parties and electorate within the political communication process.

As the political leaders are the main symbols representing the party that they rule, social media accounts of those people are investigated. The content analysis has been applied to the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, leader of CHP and the main opposition in the parliament. As the MHP leader Bahçeli didn't have an official Facebook account, his online representation has been realized only through Twitter.

According to the results of the content analysis, there are two significant points. The first important result is the fact that Turkish political parties are definitely acquainted with their electorate because the messages published in the social media are strongly connected with the characteristics of the Turkish political culture, Turkish electorate and the parties themselves. These characteristics show that all the constructed online content of the political leaders are based on both the generalized norms of the Turkish electorate and the ideological features of the parties that they represent. As for the participation results, people mostly give importance and positive feedback with their shares, likes, favorites, retweets and comments, to the posts which contain the constructed historical socio-political norms, values and ideologies of AKP, CHP and MHP. As examples, Erdoğan, as the Prime Minister of Turkey and AKP leader, mostly refers to the concepts like the importance of unity, ethical values or socio-cultural features, using messages which have a pluralistic and religious format. Kılıçdaroğlu refers to similar notions by using leftist values more, in which the rights and the need for the unification of the people, workers and other socio-political units have been mentioned with a format especially used by CHP. On the other hand, Bahçeli tries to meet the expectations of the Turkish electorate in order to gain more support, by referring to the issues

familiar to his party, like nationalism, unity and the strength of the Turkish nation, with a format which contains mostly religious, nationalist and rightist features.

The parties and their leaders are generally aware of the expectations of the Turkish people and using their experiences about the characteristics of Turkish politics, they use specific contexts to keep the support of their followers and also to affect new people positively. It can be argued that selection of accurate message contents based on the expectancies of the electorate during the message transmission process can effectively increase the participation, effectiveness and support rates of the political parties in online political communication.

The second notion which is important for the realization of a successful communication process within the social media networks of Turkish political parties - the language characteristics that were used during online publications - were also analyzed. However, unlike the specification of message contents, the features of LET which change the feedback rates of the messages couldn't be verified as serviceable methods for achieving online support. With the content analysis, it can be observed that all of the Turkish political leaders use the features mentioned within the theory in very low percentages. Even if there exist several ongoing debates and discussions between the parties of the parliament about many socio-political and economical issues, those discussions are not effectively reflected in the official social media networks. Leaders mostly refer to neutral issues keeping characteristics like language intensity, opinionatedness and verbal aggression to a minimum.

As a result of this limited usage, the positive feedback rates and persuasion proportions of these mentioned features were observed in low densities and in negative manners, except for some slightly opposite conditions. In this sense, with the expectation of changing and positively affecting the participation rates of through the communication

processes, the theory is not suitable within the social media usage of Turkish political parties and the Turkish electorate who use online communication methods.

Considerable further research is needed in order to obtain more accurate and efficient results in this specific field. As social media is a concept which came into the lives of Turkish people very recently, the feedback amounts, especially in Twitter, were very low while analyzing data from before 2010. Although political leaders used social media networks in increased frequency beginning with the late early 2000's, the notice of the electorate towards those online platforms was realized quite late.

By analyzing the graphs and tables above, it can be observed that in 2009, 2010, and early 2011, all kinds of feedback intensities are very low. The significant increase within both active and passive feedback has begun to be given effectively after the June 2011 election. After that period, the feedback rates consistently increase. Therefore, in further research, the dates of the analysis may be arranged based on this notion. Most of the accounts were active for approximately two or three years which is a very short time period for a proper analysis. In this sense, in a similar research which may be realized after several years, the study can be concentrated on a specific time period which possesses high amounts of both message deliveries and feedback rates.

Also, in order to properly determine the complete content analysis, one must organize the delivered transmissions and the expectations within a wider perspective. This research has been realized by randomly sampling 10% of the total message contents. In this sense, for further research, all of the delivered messages and full feedback contents of the online users can be analyzed in order to understand both the exact message strategies of the political leaders and the level of participation within the messages from a broader and stronger perspective. With the establishment of an extended time period and the coordination of multiple researchers, certainly a better result will be achieved in the end of the work.

Social media is rapidly transforming into an indispensable communication tool, especially with the increase of its reach towards mobile devices. With further improvements in information and communication technologies, the use of communication mechanisms has the potential to increase personal platforms in order to deliver messages more easily and effectively. Those developments in future will eventually work for the benefit of the political agents and reach more people.

The use of social media as a political communication tool has a big potential while operating as a more efficient tool of getting electoral support. In Turkey, although it is not culturally developed, fund raising for political parties through online and social media channels (as they are used in USA) can be activated; this will be very useful in allowing party campaigns to reach more people and get more support. Also, political entities and agents may transform their functional representations within social media into a much more transparent status while institutionally contacting with the electorate so as to include them in party activities, campaigns, while creating a sense of belonging in their minds. With these examples and further additional advantages, social media can be used within political communication as a useful tool for effectively informing people and affecting their judgments in favor of the sources.

As a specific topic, the social media use by Turkish political parties as a tool for political communication has been researched in this study. Social media is an effective tool for worldwide communication; it affects and changes the rules and regulations of the entire political communication framework, enabling the electorate to participate into politics more than ever. As this online technology develops, both Turkish political parties and the electorate will find better ways to increase their communication skills.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Daniel, 2011. "History of the Social Media", *instantShift*, 20 October 2011, Consulted in 16 May 2012, <http://www.instantshift.com/2011/10/20/the-history-of-social-media/>

- Akdoğan, Yalçın. 2010. "Muhafazakar-Demokrat Siyasal Kimliğin Önemi ve Siyasal İslamcılıktan Farkı", Yavuz, Hakan (eds.) *Ak Parti: Toplumsal Değişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi.

- AKP Official Webpage, Consulted in 15 August 2012 <www.akparti.org.tr>

- AKP Parti Programı, Consulted in 15 August 2012 <http://www.akparti.org.tr/ site/akparti/parti-programi>

- Aleskerov, Fuad; Hasan Ersel ve Yavuz Sabuncu. 1999. *Seçimden Koalisyona: Siyasal Karar Alma*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

- "Alexa Traffic Rank for Facebook". *Alexa Internet*, Consulted in 26 June 2012, http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/facebook.com

- "Alexa Traffic Rank for Twitter". *Alexa Internet*, Consulted in 26 June 2012, <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/twitter.com>

- "Alexa Traffic Rank for YouTube". *Alexa Internet*, Consulted in 26 June 2012, <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/youtube.com>

- Almond, Gabriel and Sydney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Anık, Cengiz. 2000. *Siyasal İkna*, Ankara: Vadi Yayınları.

- Atabek, Necdet. 2000. *Siyasi Partilerde Örgütsel İletişim: Bazı Siyasi Partilerin Eskişehir İl Kongre Üyeleri Üzerine bir Deneme*, Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Yayınları.

- Ayata, Ayşe G. 2002. "The Republican People's Party", *Turkish Studies*, 3(1): 102 122.

- Ayata, Sencer, and Ayşe G. Ayata. "The Center Left Parties in Turkey", *Turkish Studies*, 8 (2): 211-232.

- Aziz, Aysel. 2011. *Siyasal İletişim*, Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtımı.

- Başkan, Filiz. 2005. "At the Crossroads of Ideological Divides: Cooperation between Leftists and Ultranationalists in Turkey", *Turkish Studies*, 6 (1): 53-69.

- Başusta, Hasan. 2009. "Obama'nın Sosyal Medya Kampanyasının Sonuçları", *Webrazzi*, 13 November 2009, Consulted in 17 July 2012, <http://www.webrazzi.com/2009/11/13/obamanin-sosyal-medya-kampanyasinin -sonuclari/>

- Barrett, Kaitlyn M. 2011. "Political Communication in a Digital Age: 2011 Tea Party Senators and Social Media", *University of Tennessee Honors Thesis Projects*.

- Baym, N., Y. Zhang and M. Lin. 2004. "Social Interactions Across Media: Interpersonal Communication on the Internet, Telephone and Face-to-Face", *New Media & Society Sage Publications 6, Consulted in 5 June 2012,* <http://nms.sagepub.com/content/6/3/299>

- Berelson, Bernard. 1960. Communication and Public Opinion, Urbana University of Illinois Press.

- Berlo's Model of Communication. 2012. *Management Study Guide*, Consulted in 25 July 2012, <http://www.managementstudyguide.com/berlo-model-of-communicati on.htm>

- Berlo's SMCR Model of Persuasion. 2012. *Communication Theory*, Consulted in 25 July 2012, <http://communicationtheory.org/berlos-smcr-model-of-communicati on/>

- Bilgi Toplumu İstatistikleri, 2012. *Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu*, Consulted in 15 July 2012 <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=60>

- Blondel, Jean. 1987. *Political Leadership*, London: Sage Publications.

- Borins, Sanford. 2009. "From *Online Candidate* to *Online* President," *International Journal of Public Administration* 32 (9): 753-758.

- Bradac, J.J., J.W. Bowers and J.A. Courtright. 1979. "Three Language Variables in Communication Research: Intensity, Immediacy, and Diversity", *Human Communication Research*, 5: 257–269.

- Brooks, R. D. 1970. "The Generalizability of Early Reversals of Attitudes towards Communication Sources", *Speech Monographs*, 37: 152-155.

- Bryer, Thomas and Staci Zavattaro. 2011. "Social Media and Public Administration: Theoretical Dimensions and Introduction to the Symposium", *Administrative Theory and Praxis*, 33 (3): 325–340.

- Burbarry, Ken 2011. "Facebook Demographics Revisited", *Web Business by Ken Burbarry*, 7 March 2011, Consulted in 12 June 2012, < http://www.kenburbary. com/2011/03/facebook-demographics-revisited-2011-statistics-2/ >

- Burgoon, M., S. B. Jones and D. Stewart. 1975. "Toward a Message-Centered Theory of Persuasion: Three Empirical Investigations of Language Intensity", *Human Communication Research*, 1: 240-256.

- Burgoon, M. and G. R. Miller. 1985. "An Expectancy Interpretation of Language and Persuasion", H. Giles and R. N. St. Clair (eds.) *Recent Advances in Language Communication and Social Psychology*, London: Lawrence Erlbaum, 199-229.

- Burgoon, M. 1990. "Language and Social Influence", H. Giles and P. Robinson (eds.) Handbook of Language and Social Psychology, London: Wiley, 51-72.

- Burgoon, M., F. Hunsacker and E. Dawson. 1994. "Approaches to Gaining Compliance", *Human Communication*, CA: Sage Publications, 203-217.

- Burgoon, M. 1995. "Language Expectancy Theory: Elaboration, Explanation and Extension", C.R. Berger and M. Burgoon (eds.) *Communication and Social Influence Process*, East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 29-52.

- Carlson, Nicholas. 2010. "At Last – The Full Story Of How Facebook Was Founded". *Business Insider*, 5 March 2010, Consulted in 2 August 2012, < http://www.businessinsider.com/how-facebook-was-founded-2010-3#we-can-talk-about-that-after-i-get-all-the-basic-functionality-up-tomorrow-night-1 >

- Carter, Lewis. 2008. "Web could collapse as video demand soars". *The Daily Telegraph*, 7 April 2008, Consulted in 9 July 2012, < http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/?xml=/news/2008/04/07/nweb107.xml >

- Chapman, Glenn. 2010. "YouTube serving up two billion videos daily". *AFP*, 16 May 2010, Consulted in 28 May 2012, < http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jK4sI9GfUTCKAkVGhDzpJ1ACZm9Q >

- Cheng, Alex and Mark Evans. 2009. "Inside Twitter – An In-Depth Look Inside the Twitter World". Sysomos, June 2009, Consulted in 24 June 2012, < http://www.sysomos.com/insidetwitter/ >

- CHP Official Webpage. Consulted in 15 August 2012, <http://www.chp.org.tr>

- CHP Parti Programı, Consulted in 15 August 2012, <http://www.chp.org.tr/?page_id=70>

- Çınar, Alev, and Burak Arıkan. 2002. "The Nationalist Action Party**:** Representing the State**,** the Nation or the Nationalist?" *Turkish Studies*, 12 (1): 83-105.

- Devlet Bahçeli, 2008. *New Internationalist*, 408: 35.

- Devran, Yusuf. 2011. *Seçim Kampanyalarında Geleneksel Medya, İnternet ve Sosyal Medyanın Kullanımı*, İstanbul: Başlık Yayın.

- Dillard, James Price and Michael Pfau. 2002. *The Persuasion Handbook: Developments in Theory and Practice*, California: Sage Publications.

- D'Monte, Leslie. 2009. "Swine Flu's Tweet Tweet Causes Online Flutter". *Business Standard*.", 29 April 2009, Consulted in 2 June 2012, < http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/swine-flu%5Cs-tweet-tweet-causes-online-flutter/356604/ >

- Durmuş, Remzi. 2011. "Siyaset ve Sosyal Medya İlişkisi", *TUİÇ Akademi*, 23 December 2011, Consulted in 27 June 2012, http://www.tuicakademi. org/index.php/yazarlar1/101-remzi-durmus-tum-yazilari/2537-siyaset-ve-sosyal-medya-iliskisi

- Edosomwan, Simeon; Sitalaskshmi Kalangot Prakasan, Doriane Kouame, Jonelle Watson, and Tom Seymour. 2011. "The History of Social Media and Its Impact on Business". *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, 16(3): 79-91.

- Eldon, Eric. 2008. "2008 Growth Puts Facebook In Better Position to Make Money". *VentureBeat*, 18 December 2008, Consulted in 16 August 2012, <http:// venturebeat. com /2008 / 12 / 18 / 2008 - growth - puts - facebook - in -   better-position-to-make-money/>

- Erdem, Tarhan, Mehmet Kabasakal, Ömer Faruk Gençkaya. 2000. *Siyasi Partilerde Reform*, İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları.

- Erdoğan Facebook'u Bitirdi: Çirkin, Berbat, *CNN Turk,* 12 May 2011. Consulted in 25 March 2012 <https://www.cnnturk.com/2011/bilim.teknoloji/teknoloji/05/12/ erdogan.facebooku.bitirdi.cirkin.berbat/616489.0/index.html>

- Facebook, Consulted in 31 June 2012, < www.facebook.com>

- Facebook Statistics. 2012. *Facebook*, Consulted in 14 August 2012, <http:// newsroom.fb.com/>

- Fox, Jeffrey. 2011. "Five million Facebook users are 10 or younger". *Consumer Reports.org*. 10 May 2011, Consulted in 8 August 2012, < http://news.consumer reports.org/ electronics/2011/05/five-million-facebook-users-are-10-or-younger. html >

- Gervai, Anna. 2011. "Twitter Statistics – Updated Stats for 2011", *MarketingGum*, 7 July 2011, Consulted in 14 July 2012, <http://www.marketinggum.com/twitter-statistics-2011-updated-stats/>

- Giraldi, Philip. 2008. "Turkey and the Threat of Kurdish Nationalism", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 19 (1): 33-41.

- Hale, William. 2010. "Hristyan Demokrasi ve AKP, Benzerlikler ve Zıtlıklar", Yavuz, Hakan (eds.) *Ak Parti: Toplumsal Değişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi.

- Heper, Metin, and Başak İnce. 2006. "Devlet Bahçeli and 'far right' politics in Turkey, 1999–2002", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 42 (6): 873-888.

- Hilbert, Martin and Priscilla Lopez. 2011. "The World's Technological Capacity to Store, Communicate, and Compute Information", *Science*, 332 (6025): 60-65.

- Hits 900 million Users, Values $ 77 billion, 2012. *The Nation*. 25 April 2012, Consulted in 15 August 2012, <http://www .nation. com. pk/ pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/ entertainment/25-Apr-2012/hits-900m-users-values-77b>

- Hoffman, Stefanie. 2009. "Twitter Quitters Outnumber Those Who Stay, Report Finds". *United Business Media,* 29 April 2009, Consulted in 2 June 2012, < http: //www.crn.com/blogs-op-ed/the-channel-wire/217200834/twitter-quitters-outnumber-those-who-stay-report-finds.htm >

- Hopkins, Jim. 2006. "Surprise! There's a third YouTube co-founder". *USA Today,* 11 October 2006, Consulted in 14 July 2012, < http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/ tech/ news/2006-10-11-youtube-karim_x.htm >

- Huntington, Samuel and Jorge Dominguez. 1985. *Democracy and Development*, Ankara: Siyasal İlimler Derneği Yayınları.

- Infante, D. A. and C. J. Wigley. 1986. "Verbal Aggressiveness: An Interpersonal Model and Measure", *Communication Monographs*, 53(1): 61-69.

- Information For Parents and Educators, 2012. *Facebook*, Consulted in 16 August 2012, < https://www.facebook.com/help/441374602560317/ >

- Internet World Stats, Consulted in 31 March 2012. <http://www.internetworldstats. com/stats.htm>

- Jones, Ron "Social Media Marketing 101, Part 1", *About.com*, February 16, 2009. Consulted in 05 August 2012 <http://sbinfocanada.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi= 1/XJ&zTi=1&sdn=sbinfocanada&cdn=money&tm=32&f=00&su=p284.13.342.i p_&tt=8&bt=1&bts=1&zu=http%3A//searchenginewatch.com/3632809>

- Johnson, Steven. 2009. "How Twitter Will Change the Way We Live". *Time*, 5 June 2009, Consulted in 14 June 2012, < http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/ 0,9171,1902818,00.html >

- Junco, R., G. Heibergert, G. and E. Loken. 2011. "The Effect of Twitter on College Student Engagement and Grades", *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 27: 119-132.

- Kalender, Ahmet. 2000. *Siyasal İletişim: Seçmenler ve İkna Stratejileri*, Konya: Çizgi Kitabevi.

- Kapani, Münci. 1992. *Politika Bilimine Giriş*, Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi.

- Kapferer, Jean. 1978. *Les Chemins de la Persuasion*, Paris: Bordas.

- Kaplan, Andreas M. and M. Haenlein. 2010. "Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media". *Business Horizons*, 53 (1): 59-68.

- Kaya, A. Raşit. 1985. *Kitle İletişim Sistemleri*, Ankara: Teori Yayınları.

- Kazeniac, Andy 2009. "Social Networks: Facebook Takes Over Top Spot, Twitter Climbs". *Compete Pulse Blog*, 9 February 2009, Consulted in 3 August 2012, < http://blog.compete.com/2009/02/09/facebook-myspace-twitter-social-network/>

- Kentel, Ferhat. 1991. "Demokrasi, Kamuoyu ve İletişime Dair", *Birikim Dergisi*, 30: 40.

- Koester, Sierra. 2004. "The Types of Verbal Abuse", *Yahoo!Voices*, 6 August, Consulted in 15 September 2012 ‹http://voices.yahoo.com/the-types-verbal-abuse-473142.html›

- Kietzmann, Jan H., K. Hermkens, Ian McCarthy and Bruno Silvestre. 2011. "Social media? Get serious! Understanding the Functional Building Blocks of Social Media". *Business Horizons* 54 (3): 241–251.

- Köker, Eser. 1998. Politikanın İletişimi, İletişimin Politikası, Ankara: Vadi Yayınları

- Kuru, Ahmet T. 2010. "Laikliğin Yeniden Yorumlanması: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi Örneği", Yavuz, Hakan (eds.) *Ak Parti: Toplumsal Değişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi.

- Kutsal, Arda. 2011. "16.6% Turkish Internet Users are on Twitter", *Webrazzi*, 30 May 2011, Consulted in 22 June 2012, <http://en.webrazzi.com/2011/05/30/turkish-twitter-user/>

- Lane, Robert. 1959. *Political Life*, Glencoa: The Free Press.

- Masciulli, Joseph; V. Molchano, A. Mikhail, and Andy W. Knight. 2009. "Political Leadership in Context", *Ashgate Research Companion*, 1: 3-27.

- McCarthy, Caroline. 2010. "Who will be Facebook's next 500 million?" *CNET*, 21 July 2010, Consulted in 16 August 2012, < http://news. cnet.com/8301-13577_3-20 011158 -36.html >

- McGrath, Kristin 2010. "Status Update: Facebook Logs 500 Million Members". *USA Today*, 22 July 2010, Consulted in 25 July 2012, < http://usatoday30.usatoday.com /tech/news/2010-07-21-facebook-hits-500-million-users_N.htm >

- McNair, Brian. 1995. *An Introduction to Political Communication*, London and New York: Routledge.

- McPeek, R. W. and J.D. Edwards. 1975. "Expectancy Disconfirmation and Attitude Change", *Journal of Social Psychology*, 96: 193-208.

- MHP Parti Programı, Consulted in 15 August 2012, <http://www.mhp.org.tr/html docs/mhp/program/mhp/ mhp_tarihcesi.html>

- Miller, Claire Cain. 2008. "How Obama's Internet Campaign Changed Politics", *New York Times Blogs*, 7 November 2008, Consulted in 15 June 2012, <http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/11/07/howobamas-internet-campaign-changed-politics/?pagemode=print%20>

- Miller, Claire Cain. 2009. "Who's Driving Twitter's Popularity? Not Teens". *The New York Times*, 25 August 2009, Consulted in 18 June 2012, < http://www.nytimes. com/2009/08/26/technology/internet/26twitter.html?_r=1& >

- Miller, G. R. and J. Lobe. 1967. "Opinionated Language, Open and Close Mindedness and Response to Persuasive Communications", *Journal of Communication*, 17(4): 333.341.

- Miller, G.R. 1980. "On Being Persuaded: Some Basic Distinctions", M.E. Roloff and G.R. Miller (eds.) *Persuasion: New Directions in Theory and Research*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 11-28.

- Murinson, Alexander. 2006. "The Strategic Depth Doctrine of Turkish Foreign Policy", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 42 (6): 945-964.

- Nimmo, D. 1970. *The Political Persuaders*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

- Nimmo, D. 1978. *Political Communication and Public Opinion in America*, California: Goodyear Publications.

- Oktay, Mahmut. 2002. *Politikada Halkla İlişkiler*, İstanbul: Derin Yayınları.

- Oktay, Mahmut. 1993. "Demokratik Sürecin Sağlıklı İşleyişi Açısından Siyasal İletişimde Sosyal Sorumluluk Meselesi", *Marmara Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, 2: 77.

- Onar, Nora. F. 2009. "Neo-Ottomanism, Historical Legacies and Turkish Foreign Policy", *Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies*, Discussion Paper Series 3: 1-16.

- Oreskovic, Alexei. 2012. "YouTube hits 4 billion daily video views". *Reuters*, 23 January 2012, Consulted in 20 June 2012, < http://www.reuters.com/article/ 2012/01/23/us-google-youtube-idUSTRE80M0TS20120123 >

- Öniş, Ziya. 2010. "Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin Ekonomi-Politiği", Yavuz, Hakan (eds.) *Ak Parti: Toplumsal Değişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi.

- Özkan, Abdullah. 2004. *Siyasal İletişim*, İstanbul: Nesil Yayınları.

- Peele, Gillian. 2005, 'Leadership and Politics: A Case for a Closer Relationship?' *Leadership*, 1 (2): 187–204.

- Ramage, John D. and John C. Bean. 1998. *Writing Arguments* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 81-82.

- Ranney, Austin. 1990. *Governing: An Introduction to Political Science*, New Jersey.

- Relenet. 2012. "Social Network Communities for Politicians and Campaigns", Consulted in 6 August 2012, < http://relenet.com/Social_network_ politicians_ political_campaigns.html>

- Richmond, Shane. 2011. "YouTube users uploading two days of video every minute". *The Daily Telegraph*, 26 May 2011, Consulted in 28 May 2012, < http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/google/8536634/YouTube-users-uploading-two-days-of-video-every-minute.html >

- Rimskii, V. 2011. "The influence of the Internet on active social involvement and the formation and development of identities", *Russian Social Science Review*, 52 (1): 79-101.

- Ritholz, B. "History of Social Media". *The Big Picture*, 2 December 2010, Consulted in 16 May 2012, <http://www.ritholtz.com/blog/2010/12/history-of-social-media/>

- Rondeau, Sarah. "Social Media in Politics: Spinning a New Political Web", *Social Turbine*, November 14, 2011. Consulted in 05 August 2012 <http://www. socialturbine.com/2011/11/14/social-media-in-politics/>

- Schonfeld, Erick. 2010. "Privacy, Schmivacy: Facebook Is Attracting Near-Record Numbers Of New Visitors". *TechCrunch*, June 7, 2010, Consulted in 1 September 2012, <http://techcrunch.com/2010/06/07/privacy-facebook-visitors/>

- Seabrook, John. 2011. "Streaming Dreams". *The New Yorker*, 16 January 2011, Consulted in 18 July 2012, < http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/01/16/ 120116fa_fact_seabrook?currentPage=all >

- Seiter, Robert H. and John S. Gass. 2010. *Persuasion, Social Influence, and Compliance Gaining* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

- Shirky, Clay. 2011. "The Political Power of Social Media". *Foreign Affairs*, Consulted in 18 June 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67038/clay-shirky/the-political-power-of-social-media>

- Şimşek, Yurdagül. 2010. "Başbakan: Twitter boş tezek kokusu gerçek", *Radikal*, 26 November 2010. Consulted in 25 March 2012 http://www.radikal.com.tr/ Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=1030303&CategoryID=78

- Smith, Kristian. 2011. "Social Media and Political Campaigns", *University of Tennessee Honors Thesis Project*, p.12-16.

- SocialGO. 2012. "Politics & Social Media", Consulted in 6 August 2012, < http://help.socialgo.com/attachments/token/bf9q5or5zs86yd7/?name=Politics+%26+Social+Media+Whitepaper.pdf>

- Taylor, Chris. 2011. "Twitter has 100 million active users". *Mashable*, 8 September 2011, Consulted in 3 July 2012, < http://mashable.com/2011/09/08/twitter-has-100-million-active-users/ >

- Tepe, Sultan. 2010. "İslami Eğilimli Bir Parti Olarak Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin Değişim Vaatleri, Çelişkileri ve Sınırları", Yavuz, Hakan (eds.) *Ak Parti: Toplumsal Değişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi.

- Top YouTube Channel Gainers in Turkey, 2012. *Social Bakers*, Consulted in 19 July 2012, <http://www.socialbakers. com/youtube-statistics/country/turkey/page-1/>

- Tosun, Tanju. 2010. "The New Leader for the Old CHP: Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu", *Insight Turkey*, 12 (4): 31-42.

- Turan, İlter. 1977. *Siyasal Sistem ve Siyasal Davranış*, İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Yayınları.

- Turan, İlter. 1996. *Türkiye'de Demokrasi Kültürü*, İstanbul: Aybay Yayınları.

- Turkey Facebook Statistics, 2012. *Social Bakers*, Consulted in 22 July 2012, http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/turkey/last-week

- Turgut, Pelin. 2010. "Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", *Time International* (Atlantic Ed.), Consulted in 12 May 2012, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1985978,00.html>

- TUSİAD, 2001. *Seçim Sistemi ve Siyasi Partiler Araştırması*. İstanbul: TÜSİAD Yayınları.

- Twitter Top Gainers in Turkey, 2012. *Social Bakers*, Consulted in 18 July 2012, http://www.socialbakers.com/ twitter/country/turkey/page-1/

- Twitter Turns Six, 2012. *Twitter Blog,* 21 March 2012, Consulted in 18 August 2012, < http://blog.twitter.com/2012/03/twitter-turns-six.html >

- U.S. Online Video Rankings, 2010. *comScore*, 24 June 2010, Consulted in 25 May 2012, <http://www.comscore.com/Insights/Press_Releases/2010/6/comScore_Releases_May_2010_U.S._Online_Video_Rankings >

- Uslu, Zeynep Karahan. 1996. "Siyasal İletişim ve 24 Aralık 1995 Genel Seçimleri", *Yeni Türkiye Dergisi*, 11: 790-791.

- Uztuğ, Ferruh. 2004. *Siyasal İletişim Yönetimi*, İstanbul: MediaCat Kitapları.

- Vural, Beril Akıncı and Mikail Bat. 2010. "Yeni Bir İletişim Ortamı Olarak Sosyal Medya: Ege Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesine Yönelik Bir Araştırma". *Journal of Yaşar University*, 20 (5): 3348-3382.

- Ward, Susan, 2009. "Social Media Definition", *About.com,* Consulted in 04 August 2012 http://sbinfocanada.about.com/od/socialmedia/g/socialmedia.htm

- Wasserman, Todd. 2012. "Twitter Says It Has 140 Million Users" *Mashable*, 21 March 2012, Consulted in 13 June 2012, <http://mashable.com/2012/03/21/twitter-has-140-million-users/>

- Web Server Survey, Consulted in 15 May 2012, <http://news.netcraft.com/archives/category/web-server-survey/>

- Weber, Tim. 2007. "BBC strikes Google-YouTube deal". *BBC*, 2 March 2007, Consulted in 11 June 2012, < http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/6411017.stm >

- Wolton, Dominique 1991. "Siyasal İletişim: Bir Model Yaratmak", *Birikim Dergisi*, 30: 24-53.

- Yarrow, Jay. 2012. "There's Only One Place In The World Where Twitter Is Bigger Than Facebook", *Business Insider*, 6 January 2012, Consulted in 16 June 2012, < http://www.businessinsider.com/ theres-only-one- place-in-the- world-where-twitter-is -bigger-than-facebook-2012-1 >

- Yavuz, Hakan (eds.) 2010. *Ak Parti: Toplumsal Değişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi.

- Yazıcıoğlu, Recep. 1997. "Türkiye Nereye Gidiyor? İdari ve Siyasi Yozlaşma", *Yeni Türkiye*, 3 (13): 262-263.

- Yılmaz, Yıldırım. 2012. "Political Communication in The Light of Theory of Communicative Action and the case of AK Party" *Journal of Academic Inquiries* 7 (1): 195-226.

- YouTube serves up 100 million videos a day online. 2006. *USA Today*. 16 July 2006, Consulted in 15 June 2012, < http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/2006-07-16-youtube-views_x.htm >

- YouTube's website redesign puts the focus on channels. *BBC*. 2 December 2011, Consulted in 2 June 2012, < http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-16006524 >

APPENDIX A

CODING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This appendix is composed of the detailed explanations of featured characteristics that are used during the content analysis. Sequential lists of the all research slots with their main folders can be observed below. Detailed information about each unit will be given further. As both of the social media tools have infrastructural differences, their patterns of analysis show significant resemblance except for some unique characteristics absent in different tools.

FACEBOOK:

A) Details:
01) Post Number
02) Date
03) Headline
04) Post

B) Subject:
05) Subject 1
06) Subject 2
07) Subject 3

C) Mentioned Unit:
08) Collocutor
09) Tone

D) Language Intensity:
10) Intensity Level
11) Tone

E) Other Message Variables:
12) Opinionated Language
13) Verbal Aggression

F) Feedback:
14) Likes
15) Shares
16) Total Comments
17) Positive Comments
18) Negative Comments

TWITTER:

A) Details:
01) Tweet Number
02) Date
03) Tweet

B) Subject:
04) Subject 1
05) Subject 2
06) Subject 3

C) Mentioned Unit:
07) Collocutor
08) Tone

D) Language Intensity:
09) Intensity Level
10) Tone

E) Other Message Variables:
11) Opinionated Language
12) Verbal Aggression

F) Feedback:
13) ReTweets
14) Favorites
15) Total Comments
16) Positive Comments
17) Negative Comments

Table Example for the Content Analysis of Facebook

DETAILS				SUBJECT			MENTIONED UNIT		LANGUAGE INTENSITY		OTHER MESSAGE VARIABLES		FEEDBACK				
Post #	Date	Headline	Post	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Collocutor	Tone	Intensity Level	Tone	Opinionatedness	Verbal Aggression	Like	Share	Comment #	Positive	Negative

Table Example for the Content Analysis of Twitter

DETAILS			SUBJECT			MENTIONED UNIT		LANGUAGE INTENSITY		MESSAGE VARIABLES		FEEDBACK				
Tweet #	Date	Tweet	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Collocutor	Tone	Intensity Level	Tone	Opinionatedness	Verbal Aggression	ReTweet	Favorite	Comment #	Positive	Negative

FACEBOOK

A) DETAILS

This part constitutes detailed information about the social media messages, including the number, the date and the message delivered in the headlines and posts. This part is necessary in order to keep the existing data for further researches. The posts that will be researched consist of written messages or videos. Pictures and other non-written documents are excluded from the analysis.

Field No.1 – Post Number

Must be filled in all columns. Name of the posts will be written as using both the codenames of the political leaders and the sequential message number. Codenames determined for the post number slot are:

FBRTE: Facebook page of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

FBKK: Facebook page of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu

The codename and number which have four digits will be written together (e.g., FBRTE2134, FBKK0078).

In order to realize this study, 264 posts from the Facebook page of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and 356 posts from the Facebook page of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu have been analyzed.

Field No.2 – Date

Must be filled in all columns. It will consist of the date of the post (e.g., 04.06.2011).

Field No.3 – Headline

Must be filled if the post has a headline. For Facebook, the titles in blue color which are written over the posts are accepted as the titles.

Field No.4 – Post

Must be filled if there is a post. Some Facebook messages only consist of headlines. In these cases, this slot must be left empty.

B) SUBJECTS

First slot must be filled, however the additional slots will be filled only if there exist multiple subject fields within the post. The slots in this category will be filled with code numbers, generated through the issues and statements mentioned in Facebook.

Field No.5 - 7 – Subject 1, Subject 2, Subject 3

All the categories and code numbers can be reshaped or changed for new researches. In this study, one of these codes for every available slot has been used:

	Code
<u>Political Units</u> – Themes concerning the units of political agents, leaders, groups, organizations and / or institutions	
AKP / Government – Subject issues related with the party and government	1
CHP – Subject issues related with the CHP	2
MHP – Subject issues related with the MHP	3
BDP – Subject issues related with the BDP	4
Opposition – Subject issues related with the mentioning of the terms of opposition without giving any additional details	5
Turkey - Subject issues related with the mentioning of Turkey as a country including the Turkish people	6
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - Subject issues related with the mentioning of the Prime Minister of Turkey and / or his acts	7
Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu - Subject issues related with the mentioning of the CHP leader and / or his acts	8
Devlet Bahçeli - Subject issues related with the mentioning of the MHP leader and / or his acts	9
Deniz Baykal - Subject issues related with the mentioning of the former CHP leader and / or his acts	10
Refugees – Subject issues related with any type of refugees who suffered from domestic and /or international conflicts	56
State Institutions – Subject issues related with any type of state institutions and / or foundation	59

<u>Politics</u> – Themes concerning the abstract and factual policies, norms, ideologies and / or values discussed and operated in politics.

Democracy – Subject issues related with the concept of democracy, and / or its

representation in the country's socio-political system 11

Liberty - Subject issues related with the concept of liberty, and / or its

representation in the country's socio-political system 22

Leftist Policies - Subject issues related with concepts including leftist

policies, values, norms and / or ideologies 25

Nationalism - Subject issues related with nationalist values 31

Power - Subject issues related with the existence and / or implementation

of the concept as a strength 61

Unity - Subject issues related with the existence and / or implementation of

union, solidarity, cooperation and brotherhood 53

Governance - Subject issues related with the management and / or

administration of the state and all kinds of political entities 55

Elections - Subject issues related with the elections or electoral periods

but not campaigns 48

Politics in General - Subject issues related with unspecified and / or

generalized themes and / or topics about the political framework 27

Debate / Conflict - Subject issues related with the unspecified and / or

generalized political dilemmas that political agents confront 17

Protests - Subject issues related with the defiance and / or opposition

acts of the agents towards policies that they stand against 21

Bans - Subject issues related with all types of prohibitions occurred in

history, and / or restriction which still continue 24

Corruption / Bribery - Subject issues related with all type of immoral acts

That the agents involved in order to obtain political benefit 51

Socio-political Problems - Subject issues related with any types of economic,

political and / or social problems that the people suffer 69

Crime / Violence - Subject issues related with any type of illegal acts that

accused entities perform 20

Campaigns – Themes concerning any type of practice, operation and / or material

used for the aim of gaining public support within campaign periods

Referendum Campaigns - Subject issues related with any type of advertorial

practices performed during referendum campaign periods 28

143

Election Campaign - Subject issues related with any type of advertorial

practices performed during electoral campaign periods   29

Aid Campaign - Subject issues related with any type of advertorial practices

performed in order to realize socio-political awareness   67

Economy – Themes concerning the implicational, situational and / or problematic
characteristics of Turkish economy

Unemployment - Subject issues related with the unemployment rates,

conditions and / or examples that mentioned in the messages   23

Economy - Subject issues related with the situation of Turkish economy

and / or additional statistical examples or data   26

Economic Growth - Subject issues related with the growth in Turkish

economy and / or additional statistical examples or data   33

Religion – Themes concerning religion as a feature which is being used as a political
communication unit through acts and / or occasions

Religion - Subject issues related with the religion itself, and / or its usage

within messages as a supportive feature   30

Religious Commemoration- Subject issues related with the memorial

acts of political agents about religion towards specific occasions   46

Socio-Cultural Norms – Themes concerning the references to specific topics besides
political, economic and / or religious frameworks

Biography - Subject issues related with the share and / or mentioning of

the lives or memories of specific people or entities   16

Joke / Satire - Subject issues related with the share and / or mentioning

of any type of satiric elements in order to stealthy criticize people   19

Nature - Subject issues related with either positive and / or negative

Statements about the existing condition of the nature   18

Gender Issues - Subject issues related with the condition, representation

and / or problems of gender differences, especially concerning

women   39

Media - Subject issues related with the condition, representation and / or

problematic features of the Turkish media   40

Health - Subject issues related with policies towards public healthcare

  and / or its problematic features   41

Education - Subject issues related with policies towards public educational

  System and / or its problematic features   42

Art / Architecture - Subject issues related with references to artistic

  and / or architectural objects, events, agents or policies   43

Sports - Subject issues related with reference to any type of sportive

  events, sportsmen and / or policy issues   44

Ethic / Moral Values - Subject issues related with abstract ethical and

  moral characteristics that are shared and / or wished by the agents   66

<u>Judiciary</u> –Themes concerning the references about Turkish judicial system along with its agents

Judiciary - Subject issues related with the judicial policies, acts, condition

  and / or problematic issues about Turkish judicial system and

  personnel   37

Constitutional Change - Subject issues related with the necessity for

  a new constitution and / or their positive and negative impacts   38

<u>Specific Events</u> – Themes concerning any type of specific or unspecified socio-political event related with the political agents

Coups in General - Subject issues related with unspecified and / or

  generalized military coups, which occurred throughout history   64

1980 Coup - Subject issues related with the September 12 military coup,

  and / or references to specific supportive events, issues, agents   57

February 28 Process - Subject issues related with this specific political

  process, and / or references of specific supportive issues and agents   65

Arab Spring - Subject issues related with this specific socio-political process,

  and / or references of specific supportive issues and agents

  60

Natural Disaster - Subject issues related with specific reference to local or

  global disasters and / or references to the acts of political agents   47

Wedding - Subject issues related with the wedding ceremonies that political

  agents participate and / or give speeches   49

<u>**Security**</u> – Themes concerning militaristic issues, operations, specific organizations, and / or terrorism issues along with their agents

War - Subject issues related with military combats and / or the statements
about the act of war   15

Military - Subject issues related with the army entity and / or the military
Personnel of the Turkish state   36

Terrorism - Subject issues related with any type of terrorism act and / or
the statements of political agents towards those features   34

Kurdish Question - Subject issues related with the current Kurdish
Question, the statements of the political agents, problematic issues
and / or suggestions for a solution   35

Ethnicity Issues - Subject issues related with any type of ethnic
differences and / or the statements of political agents which either
have positive or negative content   52

<u>**Public Services**</u> – Themes concerning the realization of specific public services and / or the statements of political agents towards those features either in positive or negative manners

Services in General - Subject issues related with unspecified and / or
generalized public policies realized by the political entities   70

Logistics / Transportation - Subject issues related with the accomplished
public services concerning logistics and transportation systems   71

Technology - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
concerning technological advances   72

Energy - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
concerning energy innovations and / or systematic developments   73

Education - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
concerning the education system   74

Health - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
concerning public health issues and / or system   75

Housing - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
concerning housing opportunities   76

Military Technology - Subject issues related with the accomplished public
          services concerning innovations and / or developments on military
          technology   77

Agriculture - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
          concerning the innovations and / or developments on the existing
          agricultural system   78

Tourism - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
          concerning tourism sector   79

Disabled - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
          concerning disabled citizens   80

Religion - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
          concerning religious practices and / or services   81

Employment - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
          in favor of the unemployed people   82

Judiciary - Subject issues related with the accomplished public services
          concerning the judicial system   83

<u>**Foreign Relations**</u> – Themes concerning the acts of foreign policy relations with
specific states, institutions, organizations and / or statesmen

Foreign Policy in General - Subject issues related with the unspecified
          and / or generalized acts of foreign policy framework   99

Foreign Leaders - Subject issues concerning the relations with unspecified
          and / or generalized foreign leaders   103

United Nations - Subject issues concerning the relations with the United
          Nations and / or its personnel   119

NATO - Subject issues concerning the relations with NATO
          and / or its personnel   105

Middle East & Africa - Subject issues concerning the relations with
          unspecified and / or generalized parts of the regions   100

Israel - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
          its politicians   104

Lebanon - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state
          and / or its politicians   107

Russia - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   132

Bosnia - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   133

Germany - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   123

Cyprus - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   120

KKTC - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   117

Georgia - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   124

Azerbaijan - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state
and / or its politicians   121

Kyrgyzstan - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state
and / or its politicians   109

Pakistan - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   111

Japan - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state and / or
its politicians   112

South Korea - Subject issues concerning the relations with this state
and / or its politicians   126

C) MENTIONED UNIT

Collocutors consist of the mentioned people, entities, agents, organizations or institutions
within the social media messages of the political leaders. This part defines the categorization
of mentioned and/or addressed units with their tonality.

Field No. 8 – Collocutor

Must be filled. The slot in this category will be filled with code numbers, which are
generated through the issues mentioned within Facebook. All the categories and code
numbers can be reshaped or changed for new researches. In this study, one of these
codes for the slot has been used:

	Code
<u>**None -**</u> Themes in which no specific person, or entity has been mentioned	0

<u>**Political Parties & Members**</u> - Consist of agents who / which belong to a specific political entity, organization and / or institution.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan – Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about Recep Tayyip Erdoğan   1

AKP / Government - Will be selected if there is a generalized reference
     and / or addressing about AKP and the Turkish Government   15

Bülent Arınç - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about Bülent Arınç   13

Family Members of RTE - Will be selected if there is a reference
     and / or addressing about the family members of the Prime
     Minister Erdoğan   24

AKP Crew / Member - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about the members of AKP   48

Abdullah Gül - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about the President of Turkey and former AKP leader   12

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about the CHP leader   2

Status Quo Supporters - Will be selected if there is a generalized reference
     and / or addressing about the people who are defined as status quo
     defenders   4

Deniz Baykal - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about the former CHP leader   11

CHP - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about the main opposition party   16

CHP Crew / Member - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about the members of CHP   49

Devlet Bahçeli - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
     addressing about the MHP leader   3

Nationalist Political Groups - Will be selected if there is a generalized
     reference and / or addressing about the people who are defined
     as nationalists   5

MHP - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
addressing about the main nationalist party within Turkish
Government   17

Family Member(s) of MHP Crew - Will be selected if there is a reference
and / or addressing about the family circle of the members of MHP   26

MHP Crew / Member - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
addressing about the members of MHP   50

Alparslan Türkeş - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
addressing about the founder of MHP   71

BDP - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
BDP and / or its members   40

Welfare Party - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing
about the Welfare Party and / or its members   31

Necmettin Erbakan - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
addressing about the former Prime Minister of Turkey   41

Numan Kurtulmuş - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
addressing about the former leader of the Welfare Party   57

Opposition in General - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or
unspecified reference to the opposition   7

<u>**Socio-Cultural Figures**</u> – The mentioned agents who / which are part occupational
branches outside politics, religion and economics

Turkish People - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or
unspecified reference about Turkish people   9

Turkey - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or unspecified
reference about Turkish state   54

Media / Media Workers - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
addressing about general or specific Turkish media personnel   6

Sportsmen - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing
about general or specific Turkish sportsmen   33

Artists - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
general or specific artists   38

Artistic / Architectural Objects - Will be selected if there is a reference
and / or addressing about specific art and / or architectural works   58

Women - Will be selected if there is a general and / or unspecific reference
      About women   53

Disabled People - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
      addressing about general or specific disabled people   51

Followers / Fans / Subscribers - Will be selected if there is a generalized
      and / or unspecified reference about the social media supporters
      of the political leaders   20

Students - Will be selected if there is a generalized and unspecified
      reference about the Turkish students   42

Academicians / Teachers - Will be selected if there is a generalized and
      unspecified reference about the Turkish academic and education
      personnel   66

<u>Specific Turkish Figures</u> – Consist of the units who / which have historical
significance and importance for the political leaders

Historical Turkish Figures - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
      addressing about the people who lived and died before the foundation
      of the Turkish Republic, and possessed respective significance   27

Deceased Public Figures - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
      addressing about any type of public figures who lived and died
      during the Turkish Republic, and possessed respective significance   29

Ottoman Roots - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or
      unspecified reference to the Ottoman Empire and its legacy   45

Adnan Menderes - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
      addressing about the for former Prime Minister   35

Ataturk - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
      the founder of Turkish Republic   36

Nazım Hikmet - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing
      About him and / or his works   61

Türkan Saylan - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing
      About her and / or her social responsibility projects   62

Fethullah Gülen - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
      addressing about him   64

Rauf Denktaş - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

      addressing about the first President of KKTC   69

State Figures – Consist of units who / which are the part of Turkish political and governance system, don't belong to political parties

Turkish Political System - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or

      unspecified reference to the existing political system   76

State Institutions / Members - Will be selected if there is a reference

      and / or addressing about general or specific bodies of state

      institutions besides political parties   44

Constitution - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

      addressing about the organic law of the Turkish Republic   10

Judges / Justice - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

      addressing about the judicial system and / or personnel   72

Economy – Consist of the units who / which institutionally or personally belong to the Turkish economical system

Turkish Economy - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or

      unspecified reference to the current economic situation   34

Firms / Businessmen - Will be selected if there is a generalized

      and / or unspecific reference to the private companies and / or their

      workers   56

Workers - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or unspecified

      reference to the working class

Farmers - Will be selected if there is a general and / or unspecified reference

      To the people who works in the agricultural sector   77

Poor People - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or unspecific

      reference to the people who are financially broke   78

Guest Workers - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or

      unspecified reference to the people who live and work abroad   47

Religion – Consist of the units who / which have the common denominator of believing in Islam

Muslims in General - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or

unspecified reference to the Muslim people in the world   59

Religious Radicals - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

addressing about general or specific groups who / which

realize their activities within a radically religious framework   63

Prophet Muhammad - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

addressing about the prophet of Islam   73

Imam Hatip Schools - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

addressing about those specific educational institutions   74

<u>**Illegal Organizations**</u> – Consist of the units who / which belong to the organizations, which are considered illegal

PKK - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about the

general entity and / or the members of this terrorist organization   32

Provocateurs / Traitors - Will be selected if there is a general and / or

unspecified reference to the enemies of the state   18

Protesters - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or unspecified

reference to the units who / which stand against specific issues   67

<u>**Security**</u> – Consist of the units who / which belong to any typed of armed forces of the Turkish State

Martyrs & Their Families - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

addressing about general or specific people who died during

military combats and / or their families   28

Security Forces / Police - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

addressing about the local security forces and / or the police officers 39

Army / Military Personnel - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

addressing about general or specific military staff   8

<u>**Specific Events**</u> – Consist of the general or specific incidents which have respective political significance

Turkish Independence War - Will be selected if there is a reference

and / or addressing about the Turkish Independence War   60

Specific Events - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or
        unspecific reference to the incidents which have significant
        political importance   75

International Figures – Consist of the units who / which are being interacted through
foreign policy and international relations acts

Whole World - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or unspecific
        reference to the entire world   79

Foreign Leaders - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or
        unspecific reference to the foreign statesmen who can affect
        the global policy issues   103

International Powers - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or
        unspecific reference to the international entities and / or institutions
        which shape the global policies, excluding individuals   70

United Nations - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
        addressing about UN as an entity and / or its personnel   119

NATO - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or
        addressing about NATO as an entity and / or its personnel   105

Middle East - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or unspecified
        reference to that specific region and / or their politicians   100

Israel - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
        this specific country and / or its statesmen   104

Palestine - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
        this specific country and / or its statesmen   110

Libya - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
        this specific country and / or its statesmen   114

Syria - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
        this specific country and / or its statesmen   115

Egypt - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
        this specific country and / or its statesmen   118

Iraq - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
        this specific country and / or its statesmen   122

Iran - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about
        this specific country and / or its statesmen   127

Somalia - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   130

Western World - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or

    unspecified reference to that feature and / or their politicians   113

USA - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   101

EU / Europe - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing

    about this specific entity and / or its statesmen   102

France - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   106

Bosnia - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   133

KKTC - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   117

Georgia - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   124

Azerbaijan - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   121

Kyrgyzstan - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   109

Pakistan - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   111

Japan - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing about

    this specific country and / or its statesmen   112

International Victims - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or

    addressing about the general or specific units who / which suffered

    from various types of disasters, wars, conflicts and / or crisis   52

Refugees - Will be selected if there is a generalized and / or unspecific

    reference to the local or international units who / which left their

    countries in order to obtain shelter   30

Specific Foreign Leaders – Consist of the political units whose identities are (unlike the ones with the previous subject feature) determined and specialized by the message sources

Barack Obama - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing

about the President of the United States   43

Hillary Clinton - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing

about the United States Secretary of State   46

Bessar Esad - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing

about the President of Syria   55

Hosni Mubarak - Will be selected if there is a reference and / or addressing

about the former President of Egypt   68

Field No.9 – Tone

Must be filled with using codes. It determines the tone towards the mentioned collocutors within the communicative units. There are three coding options for the sentimental tones of collocutors:

                                                                                      Code

Positive – Will be selected if sentimental tone towards mentioned people

and / or entities is positive   1

Negative - Will be selected if sentimental tone towards mentioned people

and / or entities is negative   2

Neutral - Will be selected if sentimental tone towards mentioned people

and / or entities is either neutral, or both positive and negative

sentiments are combined and constituted a balanced stance   3

D) LANGUAGE INTENSITY

The framework consists of the description of the language intensity levels of the social media messages and their sentimental tones. Language intensity refers to the degree to which sentimental stance of the message and its language deviates from neutrality. The selections of words which are emotionally extensive differences create the degree of intensity within a message. The deviation of intensity may also be positive or negative. In this sense, the selection of specific words and specific tonality determines the characteristics of the language intensity. Some examples are listed below:

Low Intensity	Moderate Intensity	High Intensity
Concerned	Anxious	Distressed
Inclined	Persuaded	Prejudiced

Please	Satisfy	Thrill
Fine	Healthy	Vigorous
Good	Excellent	Perfect
Scared	Afraid	Horrified

Field No. 10 – Intensity Level

Must be filled using codes. This feature determines the level of the intensity of the delivered messages. There are three coding options for determining the intensity levels of the messages:

	Code
Low Intensity – Will be selected if the message's language intensity level is low	1
Moderate Intensity - Will be selected if the message's language intensity level is moderate	2
High Intensity - Will be selected if the message's language intensity level is high	3

Field No.11 – Tone

Must be filled using codes. This feature signifies the sentimental tone of the whole message which has been used within social media. There are three coding options for determining the sentimental tone of the messages:

	Code
Positive - Will be selected if sentimental tone of the whole message is positive (no matter what the tone of the collocutor(s) is/are)	1
Negative - Will be selected if sentimental tone of the whole message is negative (no matter what the tone of the collocutor(s) is/are)	2
Neutral - Will be selected if sentimental tone of the whole message is either neutral or both positive and negative sentiments are combined and constituted a balanced stance (no matter what the tone of the collocutor(s) is/are)	3

E) OTHER MESSAGE VARIABLES

These features consist of the use of opinionated language and verbal aggression. Both of these norms are the parts of the message variables concerning the language characteristics.

Field No.12 – Opinionatedness

Non-opinionated statements deliver information related to the communicator's attitude towards a particular idea or belief. Sentences like "I believe that the United States should withdraw its troops from Vietnam" or "I think Taiwan should be admitted to the United Nations" are examples of non-opinionated language use. On the contrary, opinionated statements can be placed mainly in the categories of opinionated rejection, which refers to the statements that imply the rejection of a given belief and also rejection of those who accept the belief (e.g., "Only a warmonger would oppose the withdrawal of United States troops from Vietnam"); and opinionated acceptance, which refers to the statements implying the acceptance of a particular belief and those who accept that specific belief (e.g., "Any intelligent person knows that the United States should withdraw its troops from Vietnam"). Messages containing opinionated rejection and acceptance are considered as messages which accommodate opinionatedness. The slot must be filled using codes. There are two coding options for determining the existence of opinionatedness in the messages:

	Code
Yes – Will be selected if the message contains the usage of opinionated language	1
No - Will be selected if the message contains the usage of non-opinionated language	2

Field No.13 – Verbal Aggression

The concept has been defined as a destructive form of communication, while using aggressive methods as personality traits which allow people to attack the self-concepts of other people instead of and (or in addition to) their positions on topics of communication. A message which contains one of the characteristics including accusing, blaming, character attacks, competence attacks, physical appearance attacks, insults, malediction, scolding, teasing, mockery, profanity, verbal abuse, nonverbal emblems, name calling, denial, trivializing, withholding, discounting, judging, criticizing, undermining, ordering, diverting, countering and threatening has been

considered as a verbally aggressive communication unit. The slot must be filled using codes. There are two coding options for determining the existence of the verbal aggression in the messages:

	Code
Yes – Will be selected if the message contains verbal aggression	1
No - Will be selected if the message doesn't contain verbal aggression	2

F) FEEDBACK

Feedback in Facebook consists of the options of likes, share and comments. All those materials determine the participation in and support rates of the messages. This part is especially necessary in order to determine favored characteristics of the online users towards the social media accounts of the political leaders.

Field No.14 – Likes

Must be filled. The slot consists of the quantitative amount of the likes that the page followers/subscribers inserted for a Facebook post.

Field No.15 – Shares

Must be filled. The slot consists of the quantitative amount of the shares that the page followers/subscribers realized for a Facebook post.

Field No.16 – Total Comments

Must be filled. The slot consists of all the quantitative amount of the comments that the page followers/subscribers wrote for a Facebook post.

Field No.17 – Positive Comments

Must be filled. The slot consists of all the quantitative amount of the positive comments that the page followers/subscribers wrote for a Facebook post. A comment can be accepted as positive if the commenter is either:

- agreeing with the content of the post, and writing messages based on this purpose
- showing similar values and ideas with the political leader that owns the page, through his/her shared comments
- verbally attacking messages and users who/which create counter-arguments to the page, by defending the post contents or the ideas that the political leader possess

- showing his/her gratitude by thanking the collocutor of the post, the party members (including the leaders) and/or its policies

Field No.18 – Negative Comments

Must be filled. The slot consists of all the quantitative amount of the negative comments that the page followers / subscribers wrote for a Facebook post. A comment can be accepted as negative if the commenter is:

- not agreeing with the content of the post, and writing messages based on this purpose
- showing different values and ideas than the political leader that owns the page, through his/her shared comments
- agreeing with the people who negatively evaluate the post, the political leader or the party that he represents
- blaming and accusing the collocutor of the post, the party members (including the leaders) and/or its policies

Other than these types of interpretations, there also exist neutral and irrelevant comments, which are not included in the slots and the research. The definition of these comment types is given below in order to successfully select or exclude them from the content analysis.

Neutral comments are the messages in which there either exist an evaluation which possesses a neutral sentimental state or there occurs a combination of both supportive (positive) and accusing (negative) statements, which eventually creates a neutral content.

Irrelevant comments consist of the advertisements realized by external sources which have completely different substances, the comments whose content(s) don't correspond with the post that are delivered by the source, and/or the messages which have no meaning at all.

TWITTER

A) DETAILS

This part consists of detailed information about the social media messages, including the number, the date and the messages delivered in the tweets. This part is necessary in order to keep the existing data for further researches. The posts that will be researched consist of written messages or videos. Pictures and other non-written documents are excluded from the analysis.

Field No.1 – Post Number

Must be filled in all columns. Name of the posts will be written as using both the codenames of the political leaders and the sequential message number. Codenames determined for the post number slot are:

TWRTE: Twitter account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

TWKK: Twitter account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu

TWDB: Twitter account of Devlet Bahçeli

The codename and number which have four digits will be written together (e.g., TWRTE1285, TWKK0063, TWDB0497).

In order to realize this study, 140 tweets from the Twitter account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, 146 tweets from the Twitter account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, and 118 tweets from the Twitter account of Devlet Bahçeli have been analyzed.

Field No.2 – Date

Must be filled in all columns. It will consist of the date of the post (e.g., 10.05.2008).

Field No.3 – Tweet

Must be filled. Whole message delivered with the tweet must be copied into this slot.

B) SUBJECTS

This part possesses same characteristics regarding the subject features argued in Facebook analysis.

C) MENTIONED UNIT

This part possesses same characteristics regarding the collocutor features outlined in Facebook analysis.

D) LANGUAGE INTENSITY

This part possesses same characteristics regarding the features of language intensity outlined in Facebook analysis.

E) OTHER MESSAGE VARIABLES

This part possesses same characteristics regarding the message variables outlined in Facebook analysis.

F) FEEDBACKS

Feedbacks in Twitter are composed of the options of likes, shares and comments. All those materials determine the participation in and support rates of the messages. This part is especially necessary in order to determine favored characteristics of the online users towards the social media accounts of the political leaders.

Field No.13 – ReTweets

Must be filled. The slot consists of the quantitative amount of the retweets that the Twitter followers inserted for a tweet.

Field No.14 – Favorites

Must be filled. The slot consists of the quantitative amount of the favorites that the Twitter followers realized for a tweet.

Field No.15 – Total Comments

Must be filled. The slot consists of all the quantitative amount of the comments that the followers wrote for a tweet.

Field No.16 – Positive Comments

Must be filled. The slot consists of all the quantitative amount of the positive comments that the followers for a tweet. A comment can be accepted as positive if the commenter is either:

163

- agreeing with the content of the tweet, and writing messages based on this purpose
- showing similar values and ideas with the political leader that owns the account, through his / her shared comments
- verbally attacking messages and users who create counter-arguments to the page, by defending the tweet contents or the ideas that the political leader possess
- showing his/her gratitude by thanking the collocutor of the tweet, the party members (including the leaders) and/or its policies

Field No.17 – Negative Comments

Must be filled. The slot consists of all the quantitative amount of the negative comments that the followers wrote for a tweet. A comment can be accepted as negative if the commenter is:

- not agreeing with the content of the tweet, and writing messages based on this purpose
- showing different values and ideas than the political leader that owns the account, through his/her shared comments
- agreeing with the people who negatively evaluate the tweets, the political leader or the party that he represents
- blaming and accusing the collocutor of the post, the party members (including the leaders) and/or its policies

Other than these types of interpretations, there also exist neutral and irrelevant comments, which are not included into the slots and the research. The definition of these comment types is given below in order to successfully select and exclude them from the content analysis.

Neutral comments are the messages in which there either exist an evaluation which possesses a neutral sentimental state or there occurs a combination of both supportive (positive) and accusing (negative) statements, which eventually creates a neutral content.

Irrelevant comments are consisting of the advertisements realized by external sources which have completely different substances, the comments whose content(s) don't correspond with the post that are delivered by the source, and / or the messages which have no meaning at all.

APPENDIX B

STATISTICAL DATA LIST

1) Subject Percentages of the Posts

This data gives information about statistical percentages of the subject contents used within the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the Turkish political leaders. The data sets have been constructed based on the subjects signified within Appendix A.

In these tables, white columns consist of the quantitative subject amounts researched through the posts; on the other hand blue columns represent the statistical percentages of these contents used the social media accounts of each political leader.

Political Units	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
AKP / Government	9	2	18	4	6	3	10	5	0	0
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	11	3	15	3	2	1	4	2	0	0
CHP	12	3	33	7	15	8	14	7	0	0
Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	10	3	21	5	1	1	1	0	0	0
Deniz Baykal	3	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
MHP	3	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Devlet Bahçeli	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BDP	4	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Opposition	19	5	1	0	4	2	0	0	0	0
State Institutions	8	2	4	1	0	0	3	1	0	0
Refugees	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
Turkey	3	1	6	1	9	5	12	6	3	2
TOTAL	84	22	104	23	40	22	46	21	3	2

Politics	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Democracy	4	1	9	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Liberty	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
Leftist Policies	0	0	10	2	0	0	6	3	0	0
Nationalism	5	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	7	5
Power	1	0	4	1	4	2	5	2	4	3
Unity	6	2	7	2	8	4	8	4	10	7
Governance	6	2	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0
Elections	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	4
Politics in General	2	1	27	6	3	2	12	6	3	2
Debate / Conflict	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	8	6
Protest	0	0	13	3	0	0	2	1	1	1

	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Bans	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	7	**3**	0	**0**
Corruption / Bribery	0	**0**	26	**6**	2	**1**	7	**3**	2	**1**
Socio-Political Problems	0	**0**	10	**2**	1	**1**	2	**1**	12	**9**
Crime / Violence	0	**0**	7	**2**	1	**1**	4	**2**	4	**3**
TOTAL	25	**6**	116	**26**	26	**14**	59	**28**	57	**43**

Campaigns	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Referendum Campaign	10	**3**	6	**1**	0	**0**	2	**1**	0	**0**
Election Campaign	11	**3**	19	**4**	3	**2**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Aid Campaign	0	**0**	9	**2**	3	**2**	0	**0**	2	**1**
TOTAL	21	**5**	34	**8**	6	**3**	2	**1**	2	**1**

Economy	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Unemployment	0	**0**	7	**2**	0	**0**	3	**1**	0	**0**
Economy	0	**0**	10	**2**	0	**0**	9	**4**	1	**1**
Economic Growth	20	**5**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	**20**	**5**	**17**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**12**	**6**	**1**	**1**

Religion	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Religion	20	**5**	5	**1**	14	**8**	5	**2**	14	**10**
Religious Commemoration	4	**1**	6	**1**	5	**3**	1	**0**	7	**5**
TOTAL	**24**	**6**	**11**	**2**	**19**	**11**	**6**	**3**	**21**	**16**

Socio-Cultural Norms	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Biography / Memory	0	**0**	4	**1**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Joke / Satire	0	**0**	5	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Nature	0	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**
Gender Issues	2	**1**	6	**1**	2	**1**	2	**1**	5	**4**
Media	5	**1**	16	**4**	4	**2**	4	**2**	0	**0**
Health	0	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	3	**1**	0	**0**
Education	4	**1**	17	**4**	7	**4**	8	**4**	5	**4**
Art / Architecture	6	**2**	5	**1**	4	**2**	6	**3**	2	**1**
Sports	6	**2**	8	**2**	1	**1**	2	**1**	0	**0**
Ethic / Moral Values	2	**1**	6	**1**	7	**4**	3	**1**	11	**8**
TOTAL	**25**	**6**	**69**	**16**	**26**	**14**	**28**	**13**	**24**	**18**

Judiciary	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Judiciary	7	**2**	17	**4**	4	**2**	6	**3**	2	**1**
Constitutional Change	9	**2**	6	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	**16**	**4**	**23**	**5**	**4**	**2**	**6**	**3**	**2**	**1**

Specific Events	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Coups in General	1	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**
1980 Coup	1	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
February 28 Process	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**

Arab Spring	4	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Natural Disaster	6	**2**	6	**1**	0	**0**	1	**0**	5	**4**
Wedding	1	**0**	3	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	**14**	**4**	**11**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**5**	**4**

Security	FBRTE	**%**	FBKK	**%**	TWRTE	**%**	TWKK	**%**	TWDB	**%**
War	0	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	2	**1**	2	**1**
Military	9	**2**	5	**1**	5	**3**	6	**3**	4	**3**
Terrorism	29	**7**	17	**4**	13	**7**	10	**5**	5	**4**
Kurdish Question	4	**1**	0	**0**	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Ethnicity Issues	2	**1**	1	**0**	4	**2**	0	**0**	2	**1**
TOTAL	**44**	**11**	**24**	**5**	**24**	**13**	**18**	**8**	**13**	**10**

Services	FBRTE	**%**	FBKK	**%**	TWRTE	**%**	TWKK	**%**	TWDB	**%**
Services in General	9	**2**	3	**1**	0	**0**	3	**1**	0	**0**
Logistics / Transportation	9	**2**	1	**0**	1	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**
Technology	1	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Energy	4	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Education	9	**2**	0	**0**	1	**1**	2	**1**	0	**0**
Health	5	**1**	0	**0**	1	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**
Housing	2	**1**	1	**0**	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Military Technology	2	**1**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Agriculture	1	**0**	2	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Tourism	5	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Disabled	1	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Religion	1	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Employment	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	**49**	**13**	**8**	**2**	**9**	**5**	**7**	**3**	**0**	**0**

Foreign Relations with	FBRTE	**%**	FBKK	**%**	TWRTE	**%**	TWKK	**%**	TWDB	**%**
Foreign Policy in General	0	**0**	2	**0**	0	**0**	4	**2**	0	**0**
Foreign Leaders	3	**1**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
United Nations	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
NATO	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Middle East & Africa	8	**2**	3	**1**	2	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**
Israel	6	**2**	2	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Lebanon	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Kuwait	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Palestine	5	**1**	0	**0**	2	**1**	2	**1**	0	**0**
Libya	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Syria	4	**1**	4	**1**	3	**2**	3	**1**	0	**0**
Egypt	2	**1**	0	**0**	1	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**
Iraq	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Iran	1	**0**	0	**0**	2	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**
Somalia	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**

Tunisia	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Afghanistan	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
USA	4	**1**	2	**0**	0	**0**	2	**1**	1	**1**
EU / Europe	3	**1**	3	**1**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
France	2	**1**	1	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Greece	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Finland	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Italy	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Russia	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**
Bosnia	1	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Germany	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	3	**1**	0	**0**
Cyprus	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
KKTC	2	**1**	1	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Georgia	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Azerbaijan	2	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Kyrgyzstan	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Pakistan	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Japan	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**0**	1	**1**
South Korea	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	**64**	**16**	**19**	**4**	**17**	**9**	**19**	**9**	**2**	**1**

2) Collocutor Percentages of the Posts

This data gives information about statistical percentages of the collocutor units mentioned within the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the Turkish political leaders. The data sets have been constructed based on the subjects signified within Appendix A.

In these tables, white columns consist of the quantitative mentioning amounts researched through the posts; on the other hand blue columns represent the statistical percentages of these contents used in the social media accounts of each political leader.

None	FBRTE	**%**	FBKK	**%**	TWRTE	**%**	TWKK	**%**	TWDB	**%**
None	12	**5**	5	**1**	6	**4**	3	**2**	11	**9**
Political Parties & Members	FBRTE	**%**	FBKK	**%**	TWRTE	**%**	TWKK	**%**	TWDB	**%**
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	35	**13**	38	**11**	7	**5**	19	**13**	0	**0**
AKP / Government	15	**6**	34	**10**	13	**9**	20	**14**	3	**3**
Bülent Arınç	0	**0**	3	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Family members of RTE	4	**2**	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
AKP Crew / Member	6	**2**	7	**2**	3	**2**	1	**1**	0	**0**

	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Abdullah Gül	1	0	2	1	0	0	3	2	0	0
Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	13	5	49	14	7	5	3	2	0	0
Status Quo (CHP) Supporters	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Deniz Baykal	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHP	5	2	25	7	15	11	16	11	0	0
CHP Crew / Member	0	0	24	7	2	1	7	5	0	0
Devlet Bahçeli	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4
Nationalists Political Groups	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MHP	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	8
Family member(s) of MHP Crew	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
MHP Crew / Member	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Alparslan Türkeş	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
BDP	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Welfare Party	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Necmettin Erbakan	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Numan Kurtulmuş	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Opposition in General	18	7	0	0	7	5	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	115	44	185	52	57	41	69	47	20	17

Domestic Figures	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Turkish People	18	7	4	1	20	14	9	6	28	24
Turkey in General	7	3	1	0	4	3	10	7	4	3
Media / Media Workers	3	1	6	2	2	1	2	1	1	1
Sportsmen	1	0	5	1	0	0	2	1	0	0
Artists	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Artistic / Architectural Objects	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Women	1	0	2	1	2	1	2	1	4	3
Disabled People	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Followers / Fans / Subscribers	22	8	64	18	2	1	8	5	11	9
Student(s)	3	1	1	0	0	0	3	2	2	2
Academicians / Teachers	0	0	2	1	3	2	0	0	3	3
TOTAL	58	22	87	24	35	25	37	25	53	45

Specific Turkish Figures	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Historical Turkish Symbols	1	0	5	1	4	3	0	0	3	3
Deceased Public Figures	7	3	9	3	1	1	5	3	0	0
Ottoman Roots	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Adnan Menderes	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Atatürk	1	0	13	4	1	1	6	4	0	0
Nazım Hikmet	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Türkan Saylan	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fethullah Gülen	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rauf Denktaş	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	12	5	31	9	8	6	11	8	5	4

State Figures	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Turkish Political System	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	2	**1**	0	**0**
State Institutions / Members	6	**2**	12	**3**	2	**1**	8	**5**	0	**0**
Constitution	3	**1**	4	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Judges / Justice	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	2	**1**	0	**0**
TOTAL	9	**3**	16	**4**	3	**2**	12	**8**	0	**0**

Economy	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Turkish Economy	3	**1**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Firms / Businessmen	1	**0**	0	**0**	3	**2**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Workers	0	**0**	10	**3**	1	**1**	2	**1**	0	**0**
Farmers	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**
Poor People	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	3	**3**
Guest Workers	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**
TOTAL	4	**2**	11	**3**	4	**3**	2	**1**	5	**4**

Religion	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Muslims in General	0	**0**	2	**1**	2	**1**	1	**1**	0	**0**
Religious Radicals	0	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**
Prophet Muhammad	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	4	**3**
Imam Hatip Schools	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	0	**0**	3	**1**	4	**3**	1	**1**	5	**4**

Illegal Organizations	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
PKK	2	**1**	0	**0**	2	**1**	1	**1**	1	**1**
Provocateurs / Traitors	1	**0**	3	**1**	3	**2**	0	**0**	4	**3**
Protesters	0	**0**	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	3	**1**	5	**1**	5	**4**	1	**1**	5	**4**

Military	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Martyrs & Their Families	6	**2**	5	**1**	4	**3**	4	**3**	0	**0**
Security Forces / Police	1	**0**	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Army / Military Personnel	8	**3**	1	**0**	4	**3**	1	**1**	1	**1**
TOTAL	15	**6**	8	**2**	8	**6**	5	**3**	1	**1**

Specific Events	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Turkish Independence War	0	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**
Specific Events	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	6	**5**
TOTAL	0	**0**	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	7	**6**

International Figures	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Whole World	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**
Foreign Leaders	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**
International Powers	0	**0**	0	**0**	3	**2**	1	**1**	0	**0**
United Nations	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**

	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Middle East	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Israel	4	**2**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Palestine	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**
Libya	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Syria	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Egypt	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Iran	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Somalia	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Western World	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
USA	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**
EU / Europe	3	**1**	2	**1**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
France	1	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Bosnia	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
KKTC	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Georgia	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Azerbaijan	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Kyrgyzstan	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Pakistan	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Japan	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**
International Victims	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Refugees	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**
TOTAL	28	**11**	2	**1**	10	**7**	5	**3**	2	**2**
Specific Foreign Leaders	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Barack Obama	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Hillary Clinton	1	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Bessar Esad	2	**1**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
Hosni Mubarak	0	**0**	0	**0**	1	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**
TOTAL	5	**2**	0	**0**	2	**1**	0	**0**	0	**0**

3) Message Variables Percentages of the Posts

This data gives information about statistical percentages of the message variables and specific language characteristics mentioned within the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the Turkish political leaders. The data sets have been constructed based on the features signified within Appendix A.

In these tables, white columns consist of the quantitative amounts researched through the posts; on the other hand, blue columns represent the statistical percentages of the features used through the social media accounts of each political leader.

Message Tone	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Positive	90	34	39	11	30	21	25	17	29	25
Negative	44	17	62	17	82	59	49	34	27	23
Neutral	128	49	255	72	69	49	72	49	62	53

Collocutor Tone	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Positive	111	42	91	26	51	36	47	32	40	34
Negative	68	26	107	30	48	34	46	32	10	8
Neutral	83	32	158	44	41	29	53	36	68	58

Intensity Level	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Low	164	63	191	54	51	36	55	38	47	40
Medium	76	29	145	41	68	49	78	53	64	54
High	22	8	20	6	21	15	13	9	7	6

Opinionated Language	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Yes	40	15	42	12	45	32	35	24	23	19
No	222	85	314	88	95	68	111	76	95	81

Verbal Aggression	FBRTE	%	FBKK	%	TWRTE	%	TWKK	%	TWDB	%
Yes	26	10	34	10	32	23	23	16	6	5
No	236	90	322	90	108	77	123	84	112	95

4) Feedback Proportions of the Posts

Feedback ratios have been prepared in order to determine the participation and support rate of the online users regarding the transmitted units based on chronological sequence and the language characteristics that the messages possess. Feedback proportions based on subjects and collocutors have been manually realized and referred to the thesis. In the tables that will be presented separately, the existing rows will refer in an orderly fashion to these features:

- Quantitative amount of the likes/favorites with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Statistical percentages of the likes/favorites with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Quantitative amount of the shares/retweets with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Statistical percentages of the shares/retweets with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Quantitative amount of the total comments with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Statistical percentages of the total comments with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Quantitative amount of the positive comments with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Statistical percentages of the positive comments with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Statistical percentages of the positive comments of one selected column, with respect to total comments of that specific column

- Quantitative amount of the negative comments with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Statistical percentages of the negative comments with their respective distribution through chronological data and message variables

- Statistical percentages of the negative comments of one selected column, with respect to total comments of that specific column

Feedback Proportions of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Facebook Page

FBRTE	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Apr-Jun 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0	0,00	0,00
Jul-Sep 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0	0,00	0,00
Oct-Dec 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0,00	0	0,00	0,00
Jan-March 2010	8727	2	0	0	2159	4	2092	3,72	96,90	19	0,03	0,88
Apr-Jun 2010	35249	7	2491	8	6460	12	6196	11,03	95,91	56	0,10	0,87
Jul-Sep 2010	19754	4	57	0	4187	7	3992	7,11	95,34	87	0,15	2,08
Oct-Dec 2010	18137	3	3	0	4332	8	4164	7,41	96,12	41	0,07	0,95
Jan-March 2011	33859	7	5	0	6436	11	6243	11,11	97,00	79	0,14	1,23
Apr-Jun 2011	52911	10	0	0	10271	18	9804	17,45	95,45	82	0,15	0,80
Jul-Sep 2011	59028	11	1515	5	7683	14	7456	13,27	97,05	50	0,09	0,65
Oct-Dec 2011	45363	9	5681	19	4482	8	4345	7,74	96,94	32	0,06	0,71
Jan-March 2012	76422	15	5818	20	4032	7	3863	6,88	95,81	47	0,08	1,17
Apr-Jun 2012	61070	12	4357	15	2359	4	2157	3,84	91,44	47	0,08	1,99
Jul-Sep 2012	110374	21	9386	32	3772	7	3194	5,69	84,68	57	0,10	1,51
TOTAL	**520894**		**29313**		**56173**		**53506**	**95,25**	**95,25**	**597**	**1,06**	**1,06**

Message Tone	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Positive (34%)	181031	35	9755	33	20029	36	19140	36	95,56	238	40	1,19
Negative (17%)	63133	12	3030	10	10707	19	10295	19	96,15	110	18	1,03
Neutral (49%)	276730	53	16528	56	25437	45	24071	45	94,63	249	42	0,98

Collocutor Tone	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Positive (42%)	226624	44	13408	46	23554	42	22400	42	95,10	297	50	1,26
Negative (26%)	110614	21	4851	17	17038	30	16234	30	95,28	171	29	1,00
Neutral (32%)	183656	35	11504	39	15581	28	14872	28	95,45	129	22	0,83

Intensity	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Low (63%)	323866	62	17351	59	34482	61	33005	62	95,72	367	61	1,06
Moderate (29%)	160109	31	9481	32	16266	29	15216	28	93,54	192	32	1,18
High (8%)	36919	7	2481	8	5425	10	5285	10	97,42	38	6	0,70

Opinionated Language	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Yes (15%)	69346	13	5590	19	7302	13	6689	13	91,61	124	21	1,70
No (85%)	451548	87	23723	81	48871	87	46817	87	95,80	473	79	0,97

Verbal Aggression	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Yes (10%)	38906	7	2436	8	7292	13	6992	13	95,89	65	11	0,89
No (90%)	481988	93	26887	92	48881	87	46514	87	95,16	532	89	1,09

Feedback Proportions of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's Facebook Page

FBKK	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Apr-Jun 2009	3411	1	0	0	834	2	789	1,52	94,60	2	0,00	0,24
Jul-Sep 2009	2292	1	0	0	526	1	503	0,97	95,63	3	0,01	0,57
Oct-Dec 2009	5000	1	0	0	779	1	735	1,41	94,35	6	0,01	0,77
Jan-March 2010	7990	2	41	0	1554	3	1487	2,86	95,69	6	0,01	0,39
Apr-Jun 2010	23589	6	48	0	3836	7	3716	7,14	96,87	18	0,03	0,47
Jul-Sep 2010	52012	12	4	0	7453	14	7191	13,81	96,48	47	0,09	0,63
Oct-Dec 2010	28574	7	0	0	3789	7	3575	6,86	94,35	41	0,08	1,08
Jan-March 2011	21011	5	0	0	2243	4	2151	4,13	95,90	18	0,03	0,80
Apr-Jun 2011	102283	24	7	0	16168	31	15398	29,57	95,24	78	0,15	0,48
Jul-Sep 2011	22884	5	360	1	3323	6	2913	5,59	87,66	38	0,07	1,14
Oct-Dec 2011	30489	7	4317	12	3141	6	2941	5,65	93,63	42	0,08	1,34
Jan-March 2012	33212	8	6441	17	3300	6	3169	6,09	96,03	30	0,06	0,91
Apr-Jun 2012	40296	9	11477	31	2544	5	2450	4,70	96,31	11	0,02	0,43
Jul-Sep 2012	55772	13	14172	38	2588	5	2403	4,61	92,85	59	0,11	2,28
TOTAL	**428815**		**36867**		**52078**		**49421**	**94,90**	**94,90**	**399**	**0,77**	**0,77**

Message Tone	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Positive (11%)	67259	16	2384	6	7944	15	7705	16	96,99	37	9	0,47
Negative (17%)	67234	16	6504	18	9477	18	9030	18	95,28	96	24	1,01
Neutral (72%)	294322	69	27979	76	34657	67	32686	66	94,31	266	67	0,77

Collocutor Tone	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Positive (26%)	142640	33	8268	22	14500	28	13741	28	94,77	91	23	0,63
Negative (30%)	109922	26	8275	22	15474	30	14788	30	95,57	135	34	0,87
Neutral (44%)	176253	41	20324	55	22104	42	20892	42	94,52	173	43	0,78

Intensity	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Low (54%)	227110	53	22025	60	28922	56	27283	55	94,33	233	58	0,81
Moderate (41%)	180901	42	11753	32	20479	39	19585	40	95,63	153	38	0,75
High (6%)	20804	5	3089	8	2677	5	2553	5	95,37	13	3	0,49

Opinionated Language	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Yes (12%)	52119	12	4459	12	5256	10	4998	10	95,09	41	10	0,78
No (88%)	376696	88	32408	88	46822	90	44423	90	94,88	358	90	0,76

Verbal Aggression	Like	%	Share	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per row)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per row)
Yes (10%)	46382	11	7094	19	5129	10	4911	10	95,75	29	7	0,57
No (90%)	382433	89	29773	81	46949	90	44510	90	94,81	370	93	0,79

Feedback Proportions of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Twitter Account

TWRTE	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Jul-Sep 2009	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Apr-Jun 2010	20	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jul-Sep 2010	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2010	57	0	60	1	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2011	98	0	53	1	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Apr-Jun 2011	113	1	81	1	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jul-Sep 2011	1726	8	796	14	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2011	541	2	131	2	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2012	4811	22	1166	20	1	2	0	0	0,00	1	2	100,00
Apr-Jun 2012	7126	32	1642	28	7	17	1	14	14,29	4	10	57,14
Jul-Sep 2012	7827	35	1846	32	34	81	6	86	17,65	20	48	58,82
TOTAL	**22326**		**5781**		**42**		**7**	**17**	**16,67**	**25**	**60**	**59,52**

Message Tone	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Positive (21%)	4631	21	1385	24	11	26	2	29	18,18	7	28	63,64
Negative (59%)	6762	30	1700	29	24	57	3	43	12,50	14	56	58,33
Neutral (49%)	10707	48	2531	44	7	17	2	29	28,57	4	16	57,14

Collocutor Tone	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Positive (36%)	9776	44	2395	41	16	38	4	57	25,00	9	36	56,25
Negative (34%)	7263	33	1884	33	6	14	0	0	0,00	3	12	50,00
Neutral (29%)	5061	23	1337	23	20	48	3	43	15,00	11	44	55,00

Intensity	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Low (36%)	5021	22	1473	25	1	2	0	0	0,00	1	4	100,00
Moderate (49%)	12655	57	3134	54	37	88	6	86	16,22	22	88	59,46
High (15%)	4424	20	1009	17	4	10	1	14	25,00	2	8	50,00

Opinionated Language	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Yes (32%)	9241	41	2173	38	10	24	1	14	10,00	8	32	80,00
No (68%)	12679	57	3443	60	32	76	6	86	18,75	17	68	53,13

Verbal Aggression	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Yes (23%)	6645	30	1558	27	5	12	0	0	0,00	4	16	80,00
No (77%)	15455	69	4058	70	37	88	7	100	18,92	21	84	56,76

Feedback Proportions of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's Twitter Account

TWKK	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Jul-Sep 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Apr-Jun 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jul-Sep 2010	139	1	15	1	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2010	369	3	189	10	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2011	174	1	94	5	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Apr-Jun 2011	247	2	80	4	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jul-Sep 2011	804	7	171	9	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2011	445	4	126	7	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2012	1677	14	188	10	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Apr-Jun 2012	3668	31	389	22	8	11	2	17	25,00	5	7	62,50
Jul-Sep 2012	4453	37	554	31	64	89	10	83	15,63	28	39	43,75
TOTAL	**11976**		**1806**		**72**		**12**	**17**	**16,67**	**33**	**46**	**45,83**

Message Tone	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Positive (17%)	2494	21	452	25	21	29	3	25	14,29	9	27	42,86
Negative (34%)	4745	40	532	29	10	14	2	17	20,00	3	9	30,00
Neutral (49%)	4737	40	822	46	41	57	7	58	17,07	19	58	46,34

Collocutor Tone	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Positive (32%)	4784	40	809	45	27	38	5	42	18,52	12	36	44,44
Negative (32%)	3751	31	490	27	9	13	3	25	33,33	3	9	33,33
Neutral (36%)	3441	29	507	28	36	50	4	33	11,11	18	55	50,00

Intensity	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Low (38%)	3639	30	593	33	31	43	6	50	19,35	15	45	48,39
Moderate (53%)	6281	52	986	55	40	56	6	50	15,00	17	52	42,50
High (9%)	2056	17	227	13	1	1	0	0	0,00	1	3	100,00

Opinionated Language	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Yes (24%)	2256	19	317	18	22	31	1	8	4,55	10	30	45,45
No (76%)	9720	81	1489	82	50	69	11	92	22,00	23	70	46,00

Verbal Aggression	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Yes (16%)	2752	23	333	18	1	1	0	0	0,00	1	3	100,00
No (84%)	9224	77	1473	82	71	99	12	100	16,90	32	97	45,07

Feedback Proportions of Devlet Bahçeli's Twitter Account

TWDB	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Jul-Sep 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Apr-Jun 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jul-Sep 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2010	136	1,9	236	11	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2011	369	5,1	250	12	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Apr-Jun 2011	602	8,4	408	20	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jul-Sep 2011	781	11	274	13	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Oct-Dec 2011	591	8,2	58	2,8	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Jan-March 2012	1023	14	181	8,8	1	3	1	8	0,00	1	3	0,00
Apr-Jun 2012	1765	24	339	16	9	27	4	31	44,44	0	0	0,00
Jul-Sep 2012	1940	27	320	15	23	70	8	62	34,78	5	15	21,74
TOTAL	**7207**		**2066**		**33**		**13**	**39**	**39,39**	**6**	**18**	**18,18**

Message Tone	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Positive (25%)	1139	16	525	25	0	0	0	0	0,00	0	0	0,00
Negative (23%)	997	14	305	15	5	15	0	0	0,00	2	33	40,00
Neutral (53%)	5071	70	1236	60	28	85	13	100	46,43	3	50	10,71

Collocutor Tone	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Positive (34%)	1812	25	640	31	8	24	4	31	50,00	1	17	12,50
Negative (8%)	911	13	210	10	4	12	1	8	25,00	0	0	0,00
Neutral (58%)	4484	62	1216	59	21	64	8	62	38,10	4	67	19,05

Intensity	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Low (40%)	3351	46	1086	53	13	39	6	46	46,15	1	17	7,69
Moderate (54%)	2743	38	741	36	10	30	5	38	50,00	1	17	10,00
High (6%)	1113	15	239	12	10	30	2	15	20,00	3	50	30,00

Opinionated Language	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Yes (19%)	2432	34	580	28	13	39	6	46	46,15	0	0	0,00
No (81%)	4775	66	1486	72	20	61	7	54	35,00	5	83	25,00

Verbal Aggression	ReTweet	%	Favorite	%	Comment #	%	Positive	% (per total)	% (per unit)	Negative	% (per total)	% (per unit)
Yes (5%)	755	10	181	8,8	4	12	1	8	25,00	0	0	0,00
No 95%)	6452	90	1885	91	29	88	12	92	41,38	5	83	17,24