

Reflections of Historical Figures in Political Speeches (2014-2018)

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INTRODUCTION

In this project, our objective is to analyse the historical figures in the speeches of famous Turkish politicians in 5 different publication organs including the corporate websites, *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Diken* and *Ensonhaber*; covering the five-year period, starting from the first presidential election in 2014 to the second presidential election in 2018.

To delve into the subject in a more artistic way, our objective is to do an extensive rhetoric analysis of the speeches of prominent politicians. Rhetoric is a speech intended to persuade audience by using language effectively.

Classical Tradition of Aristotle's views:

- **ETHOS:** Taking a stance that is morally worthy. (moral credibility)
- **LOGOS:** Proofs to support argument (logical content).
- **PATHOS*:** This is the part which interests us the most since it refers to arouse the feelings of audience. In order to do that, an orator could use historical figures to appeal its audience's national and moral values. So, it could also be considered as a strategic action if a politician wants to make its mass to take a collective action on his/her behalf.

METHODOLOGY

4 significant political figures who are Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Devlet Bahçeli, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, and Selahattin Demirtaş mention historical figures in their political speeches. 342 speeches were examined in 5 news which have different standpoint in order to understand reflections of historical figures in political speeches (2014-2018).

The speeches were categorized within the subtitles which cover the date, the location, the context and the audience of the speech.

The historical figures were analyzed as sub-categories:

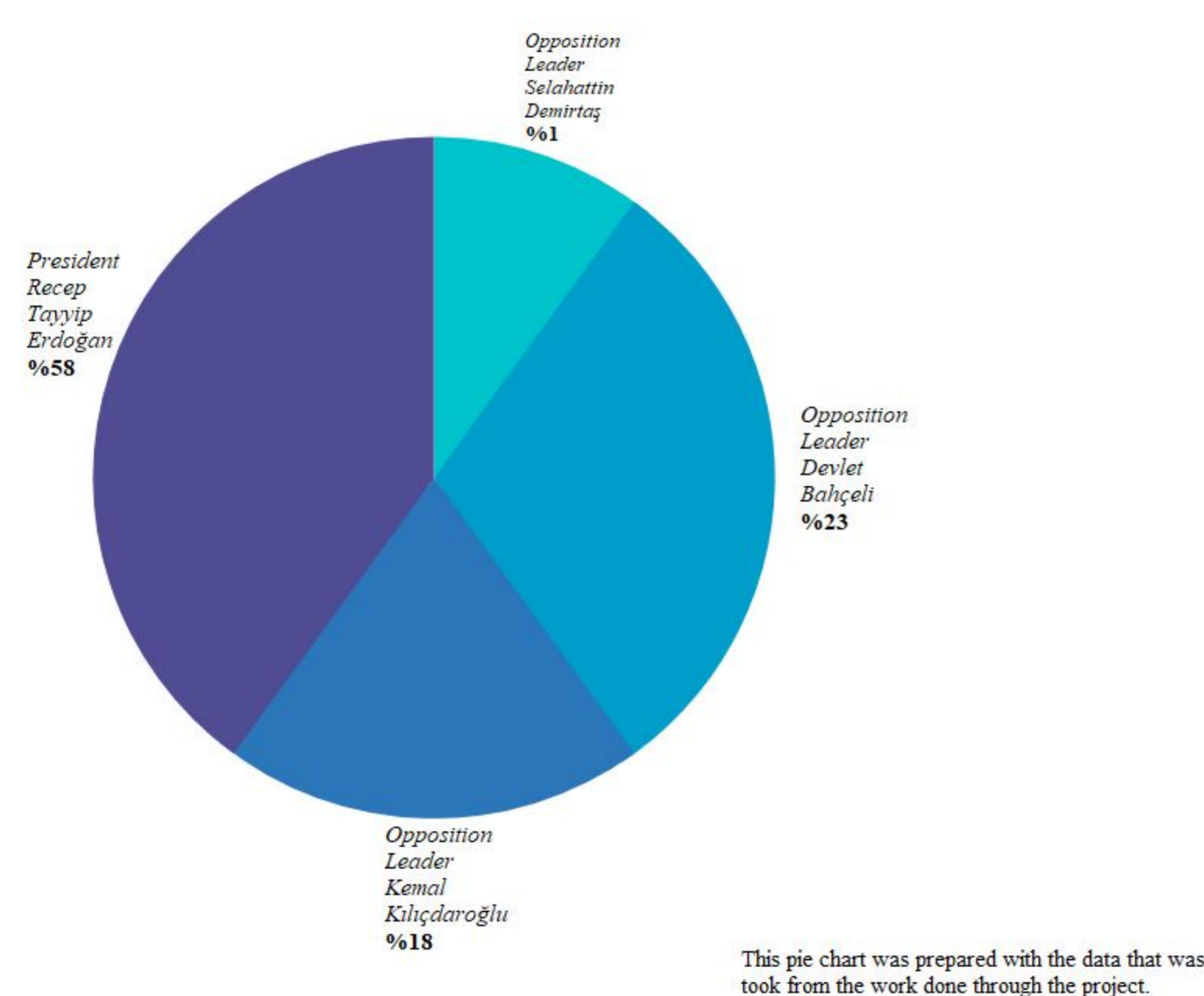
- Statesman
- Emperor
- Religious figures
- Prophet
- Writers, poets and artists.

The media sources: *Sabah*, *Hürriyet*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Diken*, *Ensonhaber* and Official Websites.

Online archives of the media sources were investigated to determine the historical figures within the speeches were included on the news or not and how did reporters approach the historical figures.

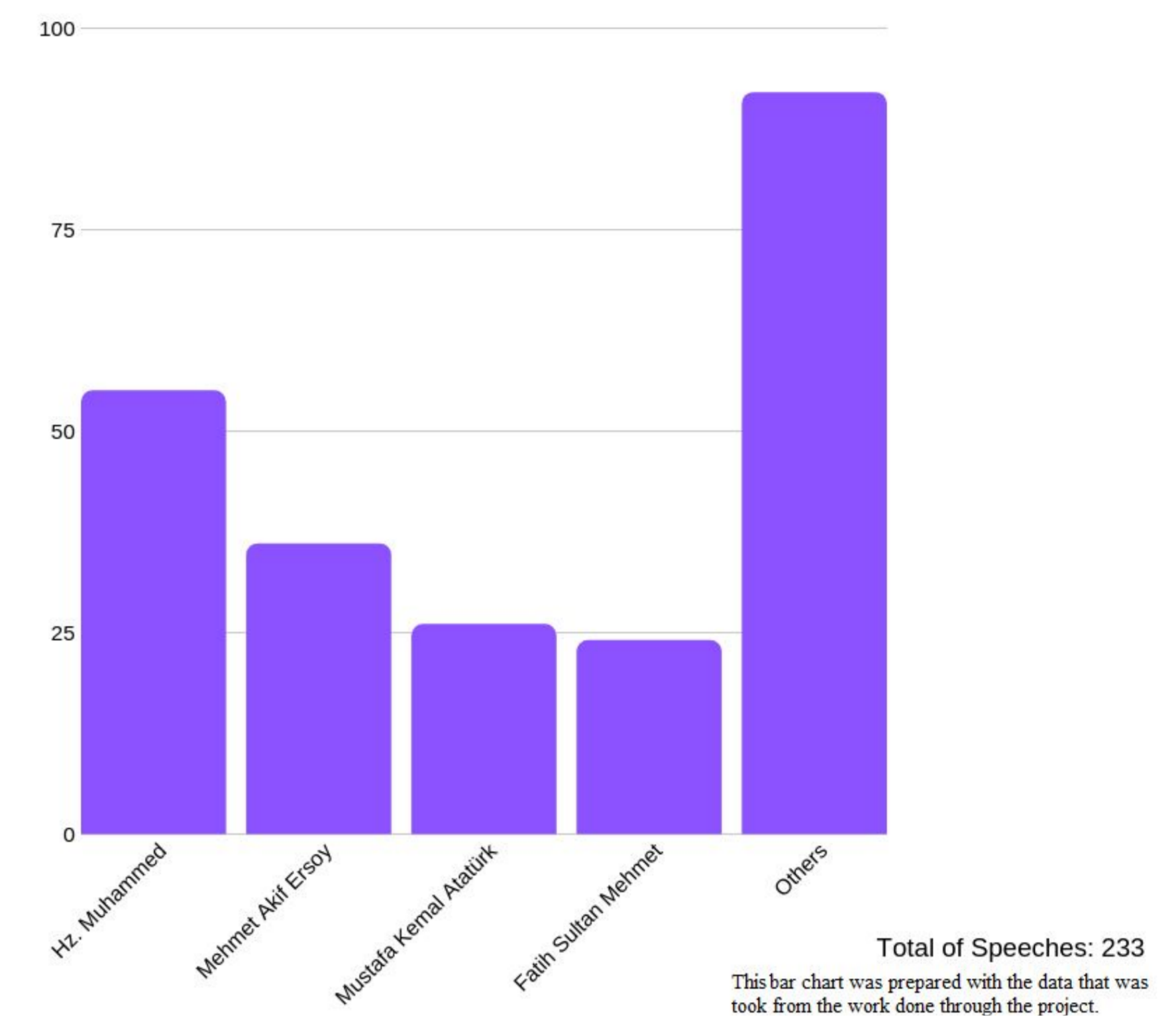
PROJECT DETAILS

Leaders in News (2014-2018)



- President Erdoğan's speeches were mostly featured in the news.
- In our analysis, the change in Erdoğan's speeches over time is a remarkable point.
- Demirtaş's speeches could not be analyzed properly because of the inaccessibility of his speeches.
- Also it was significant to see that Bahçeli's speeches were more featured than Kılıçdaroğlu's speeches in the news.

FIGURES USED BY PRESIDENT ERDOĞAN



- Muhammed the prophet was the figure that was mostly used by Erdoğan.
- Mehmet Akif Ersoy and Atatürk were also the figures that were usually preferred by Erdoğan based on the goal and audience of the speech.
- Erdoğan usually identified himself with Fatih Sultan Mehmet in 2015. However, over the time it changed and Atatürk took the Fatih's place in 2018 as a reflection of the figures.



The four historical figures that are most used by political leaders in Turkey

CONCLUSION

- Politicians seem to change the references of historical figures on their speeches depend on their goal and the audience to affect them better.
- Media organs select different parts of the same speeches to publish depend on their point of view. Sometimes, they don't even publish the speech if it does not fit their ideology.
- Politicians, especially Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, seem to change their references of historical figures in time depend on the conjuncture.

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