

REFLECTIONS OF HISTORICAL FIGURES IN POLITICAL SPEECHES BY OPPOSITION LEADERS (2015 – 2018)

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ABSTRACT



Aim of the project of 'Reflections of Historical Figures in Political Speeches by Opposition Leaders' is finding the reflections of historical figures in Turkish politicians' speeches and determine if and how place, time and context of the speech effects the preference of the touch on historical figures, between the time period of 2015 and 2018 (till the June 24th General Elections). As the final purpose, this research aims to cover five leading politicians' (speeches) of Turkey. This phase of the project covers MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli's and CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's speeches that was retrieved from the official websites of the MHP and CHP.

Project aims to finding the reflections of historical figures through examining the politicians' speeches between the dates of 2015 and 2018 (till the June 24th Elections) and understanding the reasons of why and how they referred that historical figures.

Due to the excessive volume of data, research divided into parts at the beginning, in the first phase President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's speeches examined. As the second phase of the research, this project covers the MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli's and CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's speeches that was retrieved from the official websites of the MHP and CHP.

OBJECTIVES

Data retrieval from official websites of CHP and MHP

Analysis of retrieved data to understand the employment of historical figures in speeches

Exploring continuities and disruptions in speeches

DATA RETRIEVAL AND ANALYSIS



An important part of this project is the data entrance to Google Forms, which was created in the first phase. Data entry, approximately, took 3 months. Forms includes date of the speech, city where the speech held, event that speech held, person who made the speech, type of the speech if it was first or answer, context, historical figures who were mentioned, category of the historical figures, quotations from the related parts of the speech, link of the source, date of the source, type of the source and finally notes of the person who examined the speech. Historical figures categorized in seven contexts: monarch, statesman, reverend, prophet, author or poet, polymath and others.

SPEECHES AT AN INSTANCE



In 2015 two elections held in Turkey, June 7th General Election, then November 1st Early Election, because of the failure of establishing a government that could have receive 'vote of confidence'. In this politically active area, the context of speeches mostly was 'Elections and Referendums'. Total of 113 speeches were examined in 2015, from the official MHP and CHP websites, 74 of them made by MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli and 38 of them made by CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. It has detected that 51 speeches out of 113 contains 'historical figures'. 44 from Bahçeli's speeches and 7 from Kılıçdaroğlu's speeches. Here, the usage of historical figures analyzed based on the context of speeches.

2016 was an eventful year in terms of politics and debates which affected the framework of the speeches significantly. Chronologically, on April 29 president of AKP, Ahmet Davutoglu left his position to Binali Yıldırım. Terror attacks and alterations in the political scene had a huge impact on the speeches, especially coup attempt was a turning point because opposition leaders became more moderate and less criticizing against government. Especially Devlet Bahçeli/MHP became more supportive to government party compared to situation before the coup attempt. For MHP, 17 speeches were examined and 13 of them contained historical figures. For CHP, 84 speeches were examined and 13 of them contained historical figures. About Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's speeches which contained historical figures, 3 were in Istanbul, 5 in Ankara, 2 in Izmir, 1 in Yozgat, 1 in Adana. About Devlet Bahçeli's speeches which contained historical figures, 6 speeches occurred in Ankara, 2 in Istanbul, 1 in Adana, 1 in Kayseri, 1 in Kocaeli, 1 in Hatay and 1 in Konya.

2017 was a politically complex and intense year from the opposition's perspective bearing in mind the fact that Devlet Bahçeli and MHP completely changed their side and started supporting with the current government rather than being an opposition party. In 2017, 20 speeches of Bahçeli were analyzed and he used at least one historical figure in 18 of them. 72 speeches of Kılıçdaroğlu were analyzed and he used at least one historical figure in 25 of them. In total, 92 speeches were examined, and the reflection of a historical figure is observed in 43 of them.

In 2018, speeches that were given by MHP and CHP leaders, before the June 24th Presidential and General Elections, were examined. Total of 96 speeches were examined in 2018, from the official MHP and CHP websites, 44 of them made by MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli and 7 of them made by CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. It has detected that 37 speeches out of 51 contains 'historical figures'. 17 from Bahçeli's speeches and 20 from Kılıçdaroğlu's speeches. Here, the usage of historical figures analyzed based on context of the speeches.

CONCLUSION

This phase of the study, which analyzed the speeches of the opposition leaders Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Devlet Bahçeli is the continuation of Reflection of Historical Figures in Political Speeches project. The project comprised the years 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 until presidential election that took place on 24th of June. The speeches of Kılıçdaroğlu and Bahçeli followed a similar structure as Erdoğan's. Usage of historical figures varies according to location, type of historical figure and current situation of the politics on national and international level.

In the future, we are planning to work on the next phases of our project by analyzing the different perspectives in media. The comparison of pro-government and opposite media sources are going to be examined in order to understand how events are reflected in media. To conclude, this study tried to explain the tendency in the usage of reflections of historical figures and why they were preferred in which context.

REFERENCES

Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Resmi Web Sitesi www.chp.org.tr
Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi Resmi Web Sitesi www.mhp.org.tr