

2022, Vol. 3(1), 201-222  
© The Author(s) 2022  
Article reuse guidelines:  
<https://dergi.bilgi.edu.tr/index.php/reflektif>  
DOI: 10.47613/reflektif.2022.65  
Article type: Research Article

Received: 16.10.2021  
Accepted: 07.12.2021  
Published Online: 01.02.2022

Furkan Çay\*

## Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Distinctive Populist Discourse: Content Analysis<sup>1</sup>

### Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'ın Özgün Popülist Söylemi: İçerik Analizi

#### Abstract

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is a very significant political figure in Turkey, but his political success cannot be fully grasped without detailed analysis of his political campaign speeches in which he embodies the masses and defies his political enemies. This study reveals the most populist words used by Erdoğan through content analysis of his speeches held in general (2007, 2011, 2018) and local elections (2004, 2009, and 2014). The study investigates how distinctive populist words, such as brothers and sisters (*kardeş\**) and the people (*millet*), manifest in Erdoğan's speeches. This paper provides illustrative examples of Erdoğan's populist discourse.

#### Öz

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan gerçekten Türkiye'de çok önemli bir siyasi figür. Erdoğan'ın siyasi başarısı, kitleleri somutlaştırdığı ve siyasi düşmanlarına meydan okuduğu miting konuşmaları üzerinde ayrıntılı analiz yapılmadan tam olarak kavranamaz. Bu çalışma, Erdoğan'ın genel seçimlerde (2007, 2011, 2018) ve yerel seçimlerde (2004, 2009 ve 2014) yaptığı konuşmalar üzerinden içerik analizi yaparak Erdoğan'ın kullandığı en popülist kelimeleri ortaya koyuyor. Çalışma, popülist kelimeler olan kardeş ve milletin Erdoğan'ın popülist diskurunda ne anlam ifade ettiğini araştırıyor. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma Erdoğan'ın popülist söyleminin açıklayıcı örneklerini sunuyor.

#### Keywords

Populism, content analysis, Turkish politics, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, political campaigns

#### Anahtar Kelimeler

Popülizm, içerik analizi, Türk siyaseti, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, siyasi kampanyalar

\* University of Szeged, cay.furkan@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-6834-3753.

## Introduction

Over the last decade, studies on populism have extended and became very popular due to the contemporary rise of populist parties and leaders, including Donald Trump, Victor Orban, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. These politicians have various similarities ranging from exploiting the “people versus elites” populist discourse to creating enemies and political appeal to the people (Müller, 2017). Despite these similarities, populist leaders around the world also show certain differences based on the very distinct characteristics of political culture, history, and social dynamics in the countries in which these leaders are active. Each populist leader uses a very distinctive type of populist discourse.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is the longest-standing political leader of Turkey. During his long incumbency, he has left his mark on Turkish politics while becoming the colossus of Turkish populism. His exploitation of populism is unique, which gives him a significant place not only in the study of Turkish populism but also that of populism across the world. Indeed, Erdoğan’s political success lies in his relationship with his voters merely because of his capability to communicate with electorates as he if is one of them (Türk, 2018). During political campaigns, his distinct personal relationship with the electorate as assisted him to remain in power.

The study investigated two main questions: First, what are Erdoğan’s distinct populist discourses? Second, how do populist words, such as the people (*millet*) and brothers and sisters (*kardeş\**), manifest in his speeches. The present study applied a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) content analysis of Erdoğan’s political campaign speeches from elections in 2004, 2007, 2011, 2014, and 2018. The study used a computer-aided approach to content analysis because this made it possible to analyze the very large amount of data in a brief time. In total, 42 speeches of Erdoğan were analyzed and the target terms were extracted from his speeches by the software program Qualcoder. Identifying patterns were then found to provide illustrative examples of Erdoğan’s distinct populist discourse.

## Populism: A Theoretical Framework

There are many approaches to populism because an official definition is still lacking. The most famous approach comes from Cas Mudde, a Dutch political scientist, who argues that there are two main understandings of populism. In the first understanding, “populism refers to the politics of the Stammtisch (the pub), i.e., a highly emotional and simplistic discourse that is directed at the ‘gut feelings’ of the people.” In the second understanding, “populism is used to describe opportunistic policies with the aim of (quickly) pleasing the people/voters – and so ‘buying’ their support – rather than looking (rationally) for the best option.” Mudde refers to the first understanding as “demagogy” while the second is “opportunism.” While noting that these two understandings do not clarify the concept of populism, he ultimately defines pop-

ulism as “an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people.” Here, we have two core elements: “the people” and “the elites” (Mudde, 2004, pp. 542-544).

Other approaches—stretching from populism as a communication style, particular logic, and ideology to discourse and political strategy—are also well-known in academia. For instance, in populism as a political strategy, leaders seek to rule and chase power through their supporters. Populism is thus considered a strategy to build and maintain power. Indeed, the term was, conceptually, developed in Latin America while becoming a very common interpretation for understanding populism around the world, except for Western populism (Barr, 2018, 44). Similar to the idea of political strategy, populism as particular logic has focused on Latin American countries and found that it gives people social and political freedom. Hence, radical “democracy” is urged to achieve such freedoms (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, pp. 3-4); however, as Mudde and Kaltwasser point out, the political strategy approach and others pay no attention to the demand side of populism (pp. 19-20).

Jan-Werner Müller (2017) has conceptualized populism as “people against elites who are deemed corrupt or in some other way morally inferior.” Indeed, he views populism as a “moralistic imagination of politics”—that is, the argument based on pure people against corrupt elites is not sufficient to label someone populist. Although Müller does not refute the necessity of these two core elements—the pure people against the corrupt elites—he adds a third element: anti-pluralism. To be a populist, there should be a claim that only “a part of the people is the people” and the populist undoubtedly “represents this real people” (2017, p. 22-23). For Mudde,

underlying difference between populism and other ideologies stems from how populism construct people versus elites rhetoric. For example, socialism views elites from point of “concept of class” whereas populism views it from moral point of view. For populists people are pure because they represent morality whereas elites are corrupt, therefore, they represent immorality (Mudde, 2017, p. 49).

Apart from Mudde and Müller, Jagers and Walgrave (2007) have suggested three core elements of populism: reference to the people, anti-elitism and populism as a “monolithic group” except for the foes of the nation. Within these three core elements, division is made between thin and thick populism. “Thin populism” is a “political communication style of political actors that refers to the people.” In this communication style, the “popular will” is addressed not only by political actors but also the media and leaders of the movements. The main aim of populism here is the mobilization of supporters and, thus, the concept of the people occupies a central role. Thick populism covers the “people,” “anti-elitism” and “exclusion

of certain population categories.” Concerning anti-elitism, populists often create enemies and regard those enemies as elites; such “elites” do not necessarily stem from political spheres such as opposition parties and government. They may also come from the sphere of print media, academic circles or the financial sector. Populists consider people as “homogenous” groups, and those who do not fit into such groups are defined as enemies who should be excluded and regarded as evil (2007, p.3-5).

In this article, I rely on the argument of Müller (2017), who stressed that anti-pluralism with a moralistic discourse is a very decisive feature for differentiating populists from others. In addition to people-centrism and anti-elitism, I add a third core point to our definition: a moralistic imagination of politics.

## Data

Election campaigns are a very significant component of contemporary democracies. Not only do these campaigns allow political leaders to launch debates and “legitimize” their policies but they also provide a chance to strengthen the leader’s voter base. The practice of election campaigns are as important as the election campaign itself, because the practice can “empower” the electorate. The characteristics of such campaigns are determined by various factors, including history, political culture, the personality of the leader, and the current situation (Mancini & Swanson, 1996).

In contemporary democracies, we no longer see the dominance of parties. Instead, political candidates are elected based on their profound connection with voters rather than complex party-voter links. Thus, the conventional role of parties is disappearing while the vacuum is being filled by candidates with considerable charisma (Swanson & Mancini, 1996, p. 14). Concerning Turkish election campaigns, Erdoğan’s close relationship with Turkish electorates is a famous phenomenon. H. Bahadır Türk (2018, p. 158), for instance, claims that Erdoğan’s great achievements derive from his exceptional and “erotic” relationship with his electorates. Pretending he is “one of them” is a prime quality of his populist oratory. Indeed, election campaign speeches provide the best platform for Erdoğan to embrace his electorates and unearth his populist rhetoric. I have therefore chosen election campaign speeches as the primary data source for this study.

The quantity of election campaign speeches made by Erdoğan is very high, so I have decided to choose the speeches held in the largest cities in Turkey’s seven regions. The main sample consisted of data from İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Antalya, Samsun, Van, and Diyarbakır.<sup>2</sup> When Erdoğan had not spoken in the largest regional city, I selected the second-largest city, and if a speech was not made in either the largest or second largest city, I chose the speech from the third-largest city.<sup>3</sup> In total, I collected 42 election campaign speeches, with seven speeches gathered from each election year (general elections of 2007, 2011, and 2018 and local elections of 2004, 2009, and 2014).<sup>4</sup> The speeches were accessed from the official website

of the Presidential Library (Cumhurbaşkanlığı Millet Kütüphanesi).<sup>5</sup> Because the Presidential Library does not provide the speeches in chronological order, I have sorted the speeches and put them in order for analysis.

## Methodology

In political studies, researchers can easily access insightful information from many sources including the speeches of political leaders, personal documents, brochures from the governing body, and newspapers (Halpherin & Heath, 2012, p. 309). There are many methods for analyzing these sources, but content analysis offers a very systematic approach. Indeed, its strength lies in its capability to overcome the problems of “biases and prejudices” due to the lack of personal interaction between the researcher and the “decision makers” (p. 318). There are many issues with the measurement of populism in contemporary populism studies due to the lack of a well-organized approach. Even so, content analysis has been conducted by many researchers (i.e., Elçi, 2019; Jagers & Walgraves, 2007; Pauwels, 2011; Rooduijn & Teun Pauwels, 2011) to overcome the matter of measurement (Rose et al., 2015). Researchers have either applied qualitative (e.g., Kantar, 2017) or quantitative methods (e.g., Elçi, 2019; Pauwels, 2011), while mixed methods have also been used.

Qualitative methods have mostly been applied to investigate the real “motives” and “purposes” behind a given text, video, or picture, whereas quantitative method analysis deals with numbers and statistics while being considered more systematic (Halpherin & Heath, 2012, p. 319). Each approach has weaknesses and strengths. Qualitative content analysis, for example, is regarded time consuming, while quantitative content analysis lacks thoroughness (Rooduijn & Pauwels 2011, pp. 1272-1273). To overcome these weaknesses, I have applied a mixed method approach. Two methods were used to investigate the data: classic content analysis (manual coding) and computer-aided content analysis. The former is regarded very time consuming, while computer-aided content analysis allows researchers to analyze a very large amount of data in a brief time. Regardless of the data type (qualitative or quantitative), computer-aided content analysis can be used to find common patterns and populist words.

There are very few empirical studies on populism in Turkey (e.g., Aytaç & Elçi, 2019; Elçi, 2019; Öney, 2018). Ezgi Elçi (2019), for example, conducted a quantitative content analysis of parliamentary speeches by Turkish political leaders, and the findings revealed that Erdoğan scores a higher level of populist rhetoric than other leaders, while Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, leader of CHP, is the least populist leader. It also described how Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP) exploits a Manichean discourse, whereas the Peoples’ Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi, HDP) stands as an anti-elitist party. Elçi’s paper emphasizes the idea that Turkish democracy is being damaged by continuous populism exploited by political leaders.

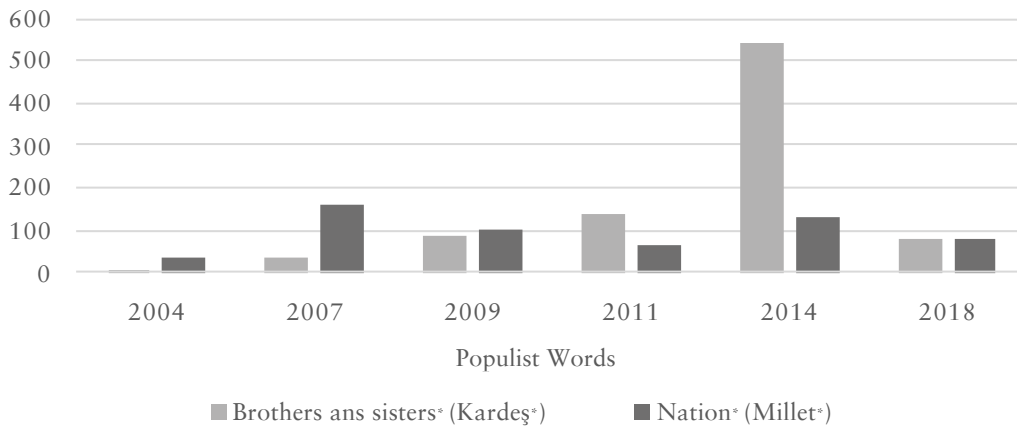
Because I have selected the unit of measurement (coding unit) as words rather than paragraphs, a dictionary was needed for the quantitative analysis. Due to concerns about subjectivity, validity, and reliability, I have avoided dictionary building, so I needed a very reliable dictionary that would reflect the traits of populism in general and Turkish populism in particular. I therefore chose Ezgi Elçi's dictionary,<sup>6</sup> which is not only a combination of dictionaries from the forefront researchers such as Rooduijn and Pauwels (2011), Pauwels (2011), and Espinal (2015), but also contains the populist words common to Turkish populism. Elçi's dictionary is thus a key guide for this study. I selected the time frame from 2004 to 2018, because Erdoğan came to power in 2003, so 2004 marked his first political campaign speech while in power. The endpoint is 2018 because it is the last year in which Erdoğan gave speeches during political campaigns.

**Table 1**  
Dictionary for content analysis.

Anti-elitism		People-centrism		Moralistic Imagination of Politics	
Turkish	English	Turkish	English	Turkish	English
Darbe	Coup*	Egemenli*	Sovereignty*	Tehdit*	Threat*
Egemenler*	Hegemons*	Ezilen*	Opsessed*	Tezgah*	Set up*
Elit*	Elite*	Halk*	People*	Hain*	Traitor*
Oligar*	Oligarch*	Irade*	Will*	Ihanet*	Betray*
Seçkin*	Notable*	Millet*	People*	Kirli*	Dirty*
Lobi	Lobby*	Referandum*	Referendum*	Odak*	Power*
Vesayet*	Tutelage*	Sandık*/ sandığ*	Ballot box*	Taviz	Compromise
Yolsuzlu*	Corrupt*	Kardeş*	Brother/sister*	Yalan*	Lie*

Source: List of words is adopted from Elçi (2019, p.16)

Due to high number of populist words in the dictionary, I had to be very selective for the qualitative analysis. First, I systematically investigated the top 50 words and how they appeared in Erdoğan's speeches. Surprisingly, only two populist words - nation (*millet*) and brothers and sisters (*kardeş*) - appeared alongside others. Second, I applied a summative approach to investigate how these two words were used in the given content. I therefore extracted entire paragraphs containing *millet* and *kardeş* and reviewed them; I then identified common patterns (themes) and put them into predetermined categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283-1285). I then relied on quotations to reveal what Erdoğan means when using these two terms.



Source: Author

### Graph 1

Comparison of *Kardeş* and *Millet* in Political Campaign Speeches

## The People as Political Construct

The term populism derives from Latin word *populus* (the people), so we cannot think about populism without reference to the people. Thus, we can claim that, first and foremost, the core element of populism is the people. Because populism is a political construction, however, and its meaning stretches broadly, there may be some confusion as to what populists mean by “the people.” To clarify this point, Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017) suggest that the term refers to three distinctive connotations: “the people as sovereign, as the common people, and as the nation.” While the people as sovereign refers to the idea that people have the final “source of political power,” which derives from the political ideas of American and French revolutions, the idea of the common people is linked with groups that are excluded from political power due to their distinct “sociocultural and socioeconomic and status.” In last connotation, the people as the nation, populists use the term to address the members of the nation, which can be meant in ethnic or civic terms, such as the Turkish people or the people of Turkey. Because the margins of the nation are very far-reaching—and different ethnic groups and communities are live in the same country—it can be difficult to grasp which members of the country the populists are addressing (pp. 9-11).

### Concept of the People<sup>7</sup> in Turkey

Turkish national consciousness or the search for a Turkish identity dates to end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Turks were far behind their counterparts, as other nations began to discover national identities in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The reason behind this has been argued by Ziya Gökalp, a theorist of Turkish nationalism, as follows:

The ideal of nationalism appeared (in the Ottoman Empire) first among the non-Muslims, then among the Albanians and Arabs, and finally among the Turks. The fact that it appeared last among the Turks was not accidental: the Ottoman State was formed by the Turks themselves...Thus, Turkish thinkers believed not in Turkism but in Ottomanism. (Gökalp, 1959, pp. 71-72)

When the Republic of Turkey was declared on October 29, 1923, a very significant question emerged about whether the new regime would follow the legacy of the Ottoman Empire. Because Turkey's founding fathers considered the Ottoman legacy an anomaly, the new regime chose to break from it. When building the modern nation, the multi-ethnic and Islamic heritage of the Ottoman Empire was disregarded and ultimately built up to the construction of single identity shaping the Turkish nation (Gülalp, 2002, p. 28; Zürcher, 2011, p. 211). The new identity aimed to remove Islamist references from the public sphere while replacing it by secularism. For example, the abolition of the caliphate and the sending of the Ottoman dynasty into exile were initial policies, while later the Kemalist regime implemented other policies to cut off Islam entirely from the public sphere (Gülalp, 2002, p. 28).

Similar to the Kemalist concept of modernization, Islamists have aimed to modernize the country while replacing secularism with Islam, and they have considered Islam a flawless fit for modernization. For example, a forefront advocate of political Islam, Necmettin Erbakan, founder of the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*, MNP), became an open speaker for Islamist modernization throughout the 1970s. While agreeing with the concept of the Turkish nation<sup>8</sup>, Erbakan did not approve of its secular traits, because, as Gülalp put it, the Kemalist concept of modernization refused Islam as a supra "civilizational project" (2002, pp. 30-31). While arguing that Kemalist modernization detached the Turks from their origin, Erbakan said that:

Following the National Liberation movement, which represents the rise of the Turkish Nation with the will of immortality coming from God, it was aimed to completely cut off our roots and to dry out our spiritual roots, contrary to the will of the real heroes who carried out the movement. The leader of the movement to root out the soul of the Turk is the Republican People's Party. (cited in Arpacı, 2020, p. 22)<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, Erbakan imagined the people as *Umma*,<sup>10</sup> which has several characteristics (among others): continuing the Ottoman Empire legacy and fighting imperialism through Islamist jihad. While carrying out his policies, Erbakan aimed to guide the umma through Turkey's leadership (Arpacı, 2020, pp. 19-20). Alongside the formation of national consciousness, Erbakan warned against the negative Western influence on Turkish consciousness. He argued that Western powers presented themselves as "superior" to Turkish national identity while aiming to put an end to the Turkish national consciousness: "Turkey cannot abandon its national identity and dissolve into Western countries" (Erbakan, n.d.).<sup>11</sup>



When Erbakan's Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP) became part of government in 1996, the concept of umma as reflected in his foreign policy decisions. While maintaining closer ties with Muslim countries—particularly with Iran, Syria, and Libya—Erbakan's "anti-Semitic," and "anti-Israeli" political discourse as unveiled. His government nevertheless did not last long due to the February 28 Process and, after a brief time, he gave his resignation in June 1997. RP was shut down by Constitutional Court of Turkey due to its anti-secular activities, and the National Vision began to be represented by the newly founded Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*, FP). FP shared the same destiny as its predecessor and was shut down in 2001. Following the termination of FP, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, alongside his comrades, Abdullah Gül and Bülent Arınç, decided to found a new party with the name "Justice and Development Party" (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP). Although the AKP leadership claimed they no longer represented the National Vision approach, similarities became apparent later. In the first years of government, Erdoğan abandoned the anti-Western, anti-Israeli National Vision stance due to concerns that Kemalist elites in Turkey would take a stand against AKP (Aydın & Çakır, 2007, p.1). In the coming years, however, the situation would change.

### **A Nation (the People) in Erdoğan's Imagination**

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was born in 1954 when the Kemalist version of a secular Turkish national identity was slowly shifting towards a more Islamic worldview. Indeed, supporters of the Kemalist designed Turkish national identity resisted any change while claiming that it was all-embracing, although it remained highly connected with "Turkish ethnicity" (Karaveli, 2016). As the presence of National Vision (*Millî Görüş*) increased in the 1970s, the concepts of Ottoman heritage and Islam began to gain more ground among the Anatolian masses, who came to rely more on Islam and the Ottoman heritage rather than Kemalist secularism to define their national identity (White, 2013, pp. 38-39).

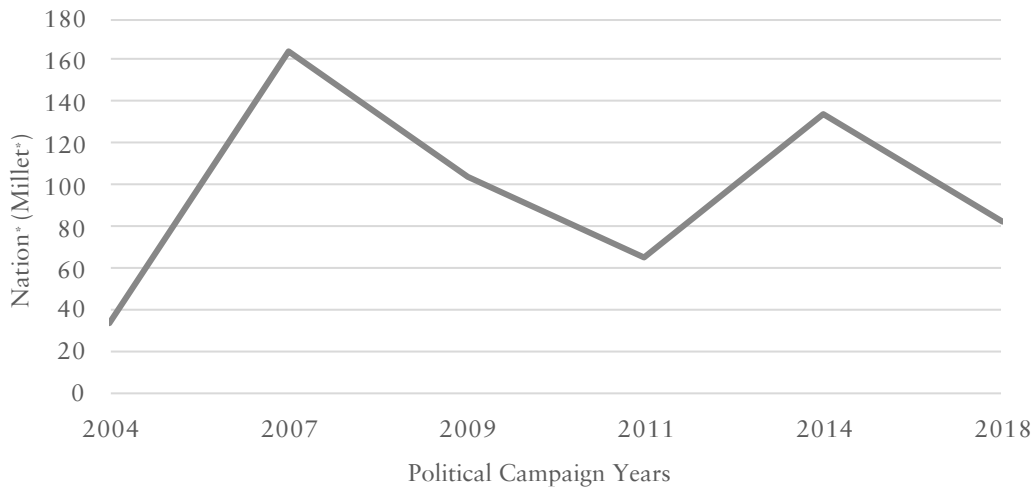
Until the rise of AKP, two strong powers—secularism and Islam—contested to shape the Turkish national identity. While in certain periods significant conflicts occurred between these two views, in other they were content to collaborate. In contemporary Turkey, due to the long-standing rule of Erdoğan, Islam has come to apparently dominate the Turkish national identity and become inseparable from the definition of the Turkish people (Yavuz & Öztürk, 2019, p. 1). On this matter, Jenny White (2013), former president of the Turkish Studies Association, has argued that the Turkish national identity is characterized by two facts: "Turkish Islam"—that is, to be defined as Turkish, someone should have Turkishness and believe in Islam—and a belief in the superiority of Turkishness, such that Turks should lead other nations due to that superiority (p. 48). This has some similarities with the Kemalist concept of the nation, although it differs on the point of including the Ottoman heritage and becoming expansionist, as in the view of National Vision (p. 50).

As Erdoğan consolidated his power, the National Vision heritage became more noticeable in his speeches. While unearthing his objectives to raise a more devout generation, he planned to “Islamicize Turkish society.” To carry out this plan, he relied on an elaborate image of the Ottoman Empire with particular reference to the glories of the caliphate and Sultanate. The failed coup attempt in 2016 was followed by the adoption of National Vision’s anti-Western discourse (i.e., Christians against Muslims; Yilmaz & Bashirov, 2018, pp. 1822-1823).

### Findings 1: The Concept of Nation (the People) in Erdoğan’s Speeches

The term of “nation” appears many times in Erdoğan’s speeches, but as Sevük and Aydın (2020) point out, he does not use the term in the sense of “a nationalist ideology.” Rather, he uses it to refer to the people (p. 35). While analyzing his speeches, the term “nation” was considered as a synonym for “the people”. I first extracted sentences containing the word nation from Erdoğan’s speeches. Due to the complexity of the term, I used three pre-defined categories to categorize the relevant speeches: people-centrism (our people, all of us, whole society); anti-pluralism (majority, we against them); and moralized politics (betrayal, fairness, illegality, and suffering, game; Yaoyao, 2018, p. 17).

210



Source: Author

#### Graph 2

Use of Nation (*millet*) in Erdoğan’s Political Campaign Speeches

## **People-Centrism**

In the first category, people-centrism, I had to find common themes for the people, and this yielded three identifying themes: greatness of the people, unity of the people, and intimacy with the people.

### ***Greatness of the People***

Erdoğan refers many times to the greatness and holiness of the Turkish people, which he attributes to history, feelings of sadness, and the will of the nation. Erdoğan believes that the greatness behind the Turkish people lies in its Ottoman heritage. Images of a past filled with magnificence pave the way for making a similar history today: “Let’s write together one of those glorious pages of history with many examples in our nation’s past.”<sup>12</sup>

Regarding the feeling of sadness, Erdoğan attributes this sorrow to a “heartbroken” Turkish people. He believes that Turkey needs a civilizational project, which, for him, can only be implemented by those who understand the “language of the people”:

First, you will have an image of the civilization for this country, for this is a great people whose heart has been broken for years. You will have a vision of a country, a vision of a city. You will use the same language as the people, you will understand what the people are saying. Before giving a message to the people, you will receive the message that the people have given you. People are waiting in these squares to find out what your plans are for Turkey, what solutions you will bring to the problems, what kinds of projects you have done that will carry this country into the future.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, the people are great because of the rock-solid will of the people. Erdoğan believes that no one can be above people’s will: “Because you cannot steal the will of this people, there is no will in the human plan above the will of this people. No one can mortgage the rock-solid will of this people.”<sup>14</sup>

### ***Unity of the People***

There three core themes related to the unity of the people in Erdoğan’s speeches: people as one unity, people united in feelings and desire, and a strong connection between the state and the people. The plainest pattern in Erdoğan’s speech is his desire to see the Turkish people as one unity and this appears in many of his speeches. While using the famous phrase, “one people, one flag, one homeland and one state,”<sup>15</sup> Erdoğan invites all ethnic groups in Turkey into this unity. Although he accepts the diversity of the Turkish people, the people should come together under one umbrella: “OK? One people with its Arabs, Turks, Kurds, Albanians, Bosnians, Romans, Circassians, and Georgians.”<sup>16</sup> The nation unites around the same feelings and desires. In Erdoğan’s view, Turkey is bright because people are united in their feelings:

“This is Turkey, the bright Turkey where our nation unites in the same feeling from seven to seventy.”<sup>17</sup> The people also come together and desire the same thing: “However, this nation, from Ergani to Kesana, from Bismil to Üsküdar, from Lice to Çankaya, is the same nation and wants the same things.”<sup>18</sup>

Erdoğan assumes that the people cannot be separated from the state itself because the strength of the state is attributed to the people: “We say that the state will get stronger with the nation.”<sup>19</sup> This incorporation of the people into state will improve the quality of both: “Our people are interested in how to enlarge the goals achieved through state-nation integration, how to raise the bar.”<sup>20</sup>

### ***Intimacy***

When using the term “the people”, Erdoğan aims to build a very intimate relationship with his electorate. The nation, in his rhetoric, corresponds to three core points: possession, love, and public service. Erdoğan frequently uses possessive pronouns when referring to the nation: my nation (*milletim*) and our nation (*milletimiz*). This indicates his intention to construct a strong intimacy with the nation.

212

... My issue is the issue of my nation’s rights; my issue is the nation’s legal issue. We stand up against those who want to break the law. We stand up against those who want to stage a judicial coup, we stood up for 12 years against the theft of the nation’s property, we stand against the theft of the national will.<sup>21</sup>

Erdoğan builds a very strong relationship with his voters, as though he loved them or were their lover, which makes this relation more solid. Love of the nation and Turkey is emphasized in his speeches: “There is nothing in our hearts other than the love of the nation and other than the love of Turkey that would make us run away from these squares, from this nation.”<sup>22</sup>

Erdoğan also demonstrates his commitment to public service. While emphasizing the significance of service to the nation, he criticizes others who act as a master of the nation rather than its servant:

This election offers a new opportunity for Turkey. Those who do not trust the nation, those who look down on the nation, will experience a leaf fall in this election. Those who are in the right direction, those who keep their accounts properly, those who faithfully carry the trust of the nation will win. Yes, those who serve the nation will win, not those who claim to be masters of the nation.<sup>23</sup>

## Anti-Pluralism

In the populist context, anti-pluralism refers to an us-versus-them mentality. As such, I have chosen Erdoğan's speeches on the nation in which a solid dichotomy between the people and its enemies is constructed, which is a noticeable tactic in Erdoğan's speeches. In his view, enemies of the people do not have a genuine connection with the people and can even attempt to use violence:

... They are so foreign to the people, society, and cities, they are so disconnected from the nation. They are trying to gather votes by intimidating and menacing. They are doing this in İzmir right now, I know, now they have taken the matter to violence. When you look at the candidates in İstanbul, they punch the citizens. Does the mayoral candidate punch the citizen? Someone in the citizenry does not applaud while listening to him, he says why you are standing here like a lump, go away...<sup>24</sup>

Second, displaying the enemies of the people as attackers against the will of the nation is very visible in Erdoğan's rhetoric. He not only considers the enemies of the people as attacking democracy but also as attacking the people as a whole:

... They have a problem with the people, and they have a problem with democracy. My brothers, that's why they always object to the ballot box and the nation. They've been playing a song for quite some time, what are they saying? What they say, democracy is not just the ballot box... What does it consist of? Is it because of your reign, your money, your stamp? Never. It's true, they got used to it like that, and that's how the big brothers in the world set a dish for them. But it is not like that: we have never accepted a democracy without ballot box, and we never will. Democracy would not be the place to go by belittling the ballot box. To belittle the ballot box is to belittle the people...<sup>25</sup>

In Erdoğan's view, enemies of the people have fundamental problems with the people. While speaking about this issue, he supports his arguments by addressing how the "enemies" try to challenge the legitimacy of the elections:

.. They have a problem with the nation, they have problems with the will of the nation, the dreams of the nation, the sacred values of the nation, their moral values. That's why they attack the ballot box and try to devalue the ballot box.<sup>26</sup>

## Moralized Politics

Generally speaking, moralized politics refers to “moral convictions in politics” (Garrett, 2019). As Yaoyao Dai has argued, moralized politics is mainly associated with “suffering”, “illegality”, “fairness”, and “betrayal” (2018, p. 17). In Erdoğan’s populist rhetoric, moralized politics occupies a central place. He weighs in heavily to demonstrate the immoral attitudes of opposition parties while exposing their wickedness:

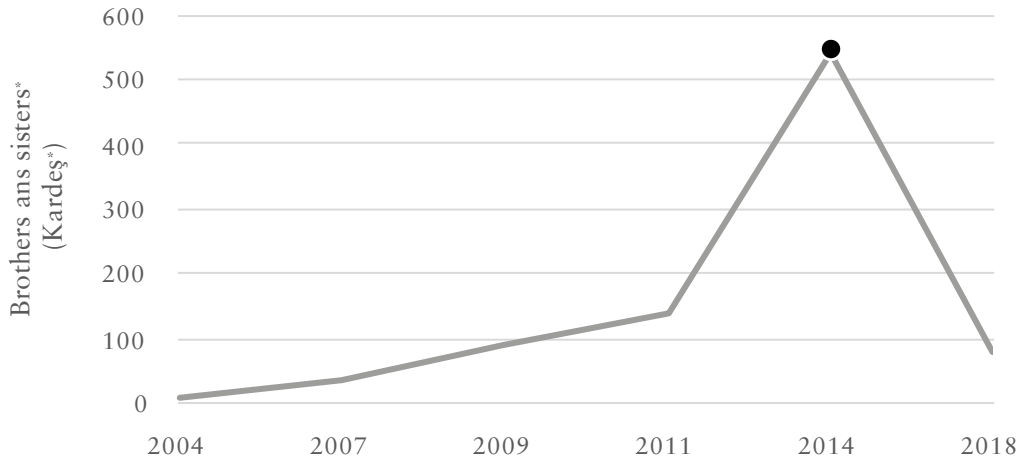
My brothers, politics cannot be done by relying on Pennsylvania, on Assad like Kılıçdaroğlu, on terrorist organizations and gangs; politics is done with the nation, done with the nation, done for the nation. It is done by leaning on the nation; this CHP, this MHP, this BDP, instead of doing clean politics, instead of doing moral politics, unfortunately they are trying to do politics with the crumbs they took from Pennsylvania.<sup>27</sup>

The concept of betrayal is also associated with the activities of the Gülen Movement. Indeed, Erdoğan claims that the movement is not only betraying Turkey but also collaborating with opposition parties:

...While trying to throw Turkey into the fire, they unfortunately drag the CHP, MHP, and BDP behind them as wagons to create chaos here. Are you ready to put a stop to this immoral politics? Are you in? Let’s not let this immoral politics pass. I believe you will put an end to the politics made with tapes, montages, and slander on March 30.<sup>28</sup>

## Findings 2: Brothers and Sisters (*Kardeş\**)

In Turkish, *kardeş* (sibling) generally refers to a younger brother or sister, while on some occasions, it refers to brothers and sisters in general. Nigar Değirmenci (2017) has argued that Erdoğan intentionally uses certain words in the populist dictionary, including *kardeşim* (my brother and sister) and *kardeşlerim* (my brothers and sisters). The reason for this lies in Erdoğan’s aim to make audiences feel that he is their “big brother,” which allows him to connect to his audience (pp. 160-161).



Source: Author

### Graph 3

Appearance of Brothers and Sisters by Years

In total, I have identified five patterns in the use of the term *kardeş* in Erdoğan's speeches. In the first pattern, by using the words "beloved" (*sevgili*) and "dear" (*değerli*) alongside *kardeş*, Erdoğan builds a deep connection with his electorate. By emphasizing how precious the members of the electorate are, he consolidates their trust and loyalty:

...O dear Antalya, I greet you wholeheartedly, Antalya. Akseki, Aksu, Alanya, Demre, Döşemealtı, Elmalı, Finike, Gazipaşa; Gündoğmuş, Ibradı, Kaş, Kemer, Kepez, Konyaaltı: I greet you wholeheartedly. Gündoğmuş, Ibradı, Kaş, Kemer, Kepez, Konyaaltı: I greet you from the heart. Korkuteli, Kumluca, Manavgat, Muratpaşa, Serik: I greet you with love. Young people from Antalya, I greet you, ladies from Antalya: I greet you. My brothers from Antalya: I greet you; my farmer brother from Antalya, my tradesman brother from Antalya, my tourism and industrialist brother: I greet you. Nomads, my brothers, I greet you, too. I greet you, my transporter brothers, my trucker brothers, who attended our rally...<sup>29</sup> (March 15, 2014, Antalya)

The names of the cities appear right after the phrase "dear or beloved brothers" in the same segment of the speech; as H. Bahadır Türk (2018) argues, appealing to the people with the name of the cities is a mark of Süleyman Demirel.<sup>30</sup> Demirel often praised the contribution of cities to the consolidation of democracy in his speeches; for example, while talking about the special place of Afyonkarahisar, a city in western Turkey, Demirel said that, "since the multi-party democratic life began, our Afyon has had a special place in the history of our democracy"<sup>31</sup> (as cited in Türk, 2018, p. 75). Although Erdoğan expressed his displeasure with Demirel many times, he still follows in Demirel's footsteps:

My brothers... dear İzmirians...

Do you know what this magnificent view reminds of? The year is 1947, tens of thousands of people from İzmir are waiting for an important person from Basmane Station to Çankaya. The train arrives at Basmane station. The late Adnan Menderes and late Celal Bayar are getting off the train: there is such congestion that they can hardly reach Konak Square. They greet tens of thousands of İzmir residents on the balcony in Konak Square. Adnan Menderes is smiling. Tears are falling on the cheeks of those next to him. Suddenly, the police intervene in the crowd, who embrace Menderes with love. They shoot bullets into the air, the bullets come to the balcony where Menderes is, but Menderes does not bend. His eyes are teary, his eyes are misty, but he continues to greet the nation with a smile. Celal Bayar tugs on his jacket and tells Menderes to bend over. Menderes says, "Bullet will not hurt us in the face of the love of this great people."<sup>32</sup>

In the second pattern for using the term *kardeşlik* (brotherhood), Erdoğan associates it with the unity. He invites the entire people to gather around in brotherhood to prevent enemies from destroying Turkey:

Dear brothers and sisters...

It is a day of unity and togetherness. We should never give an opportunity to those who try to cast a shadow on our unity, brotherhood, and conversation, and sabotage our peace and well-being, and we should stick together more than ever before. We love this beloved nation, we love this beautiful country, we embrace this country and this flag with the same feeling. We love you; we trust you. Trust us too...<sup>33</sup>

A similar sense of unity against foes was expressed at his Elazığ speech on March 21, 2009:

As long as we can be one heart against those who try to bring discord between us and set us against each other; as long as we stand together against those who try to disturb the peace and brotherhood of this land that has been going on for thousands of years; as long as we use a unifying language, a unifying style, not a separating language.<sup>34</sup>

In the third pattern, *hanım* (lady, miss) appears in in Erdoğan's speeches alongside *kardeşlerim*. In Turkish, hanım or *hanımefendi* (madam) is used to address women respectfully (Imamova, 2010); thus, to display his respect for the women, Erdoğan uses hanım frequently with *kardeşlerim* :

... Today, I would like to greet our ladies and sisters from Antalya. Today, I especially greet all our ladies in Turkey, because today is March 8... Today is International Women's Day. From here, from this warm city on the Mediterranean, I greet with gratitude the devoted and hard-working women, mothers, housewives, and working women of my country, whose "hearts are as wide as the Mediterranean Sea, and whose breath is as warm as Africa" ...<sup>35</sup>



In cases of injustice against the *hanım kardeşler*, Erdoğan exhibits his sensitivity:

What are the decisions of the court? Extremely low tweets are being made on Twitter about one of our citizens, our sister-in-law, extremely mean, extremely indecent, and indecent tweets are being made. Apart from that, very intense attacks are made on the personalities of individuals through fake accounts. In other words, there is an event called the protection of private life, there is no such thing. These people apply to the court and demand the removal of these insults, this insulting, disturbing the family order... Media, listen carefully, for days, you've been making false comments in your columns and on TV. But Twitter doesn't care about that, and it comes down to me. When it comes to me, I say, we will cut our own belly, do whatever it takes.<sup>36</sup>

In the fourth pattern for using *kardeşlik*, (brotherhood) Erdoğan associates the term with fraternalism; he assumes that, despite CHP efforts, the Turkish nation will protect fraternalism:

This great nation will defend its eternal brotherhood. I can tell you frankly, this nation, this country, this homeland has started to rise from where it fell. There will never be a way back from here. We trust our nation and, thank God, our nation also trusts us. We will give credit to this trust. We are a nation whose Turks, Kurds, Lazis, Circassians, and Bosnians are citizens of the Republic of Turkey. We will open our hands and arms to all those who reject violence, terrorism, and all crimes against humanity.<sup>37</sup>

In the fifth pattern, Erdoğan presents himself as if he were one of the electorate. When he says he is their brother (*kardeşinizim*), he aims to create a strong sense of belonging: “This brother of yours from Rize, with the energy he received from you, the enthusiasm he received from you, the blessings he received from you, he did not embarrass you.”<sup>38</sup> While creating a sense of belonging, he also presents himself as a victim: “Just as they attacked this brother of yours today, they attacked in the same way.”<sup>39</sup>

In the sixth pattern, Erdoğan makes particular reference to Muslims living in abroad. This pattern demonstrates Erdoğan's perception of a brotherhood based on Islam: “This warmth radiating from Turkey, this climate of brotherhood cools the hearts of friendly and brotherly nations from Northern Iraq to the Balkans, from the Caucasus to Gaza”<sup>40</sup> and “Kotini, Tirana, Thessaloniki, Kardzhali, Deliorman, Razgrad, Ruse, Plovdiv: We will not bow your head.”<sup>41</sup>

**Table 2**

Average use of brothers and sisters\* (kardeş\*)

Row Labels	Number of brothers and sisters* (kardeş*)
2004	7
2007	37
2009	90
2011	136
2014	541
2018	78
Total	752

Source: author

## Conclusion

Erdoğan has a very distinct place in Turkish and global politics. What differentiates him from other political leaders is perhaps his ability to embrace the people and connect and communicate with them as though he were one of them. On this point, political campaigns have provided him the most suitable spaces to strengthen his relationship with the people using a heavy populist rhetoric.

In the first section, while analyzing references to the people in his speeches, I found that Erdoğan frequently points to three main themes: the greatness of the Turkish people (Ottoman past), the strong unity among the people, and a sense of intimacy (possession of and love for the people). I also found that, while using the people in his rhetoric, Erdoğan also uses a very anti-pluralist approach that divides society into two main groups: the people and its enemies. Such enemies are disconnected from the people, and they are also attackers of the people. The “will of the people” is the focus of his attention as he claims that attackers do not respect the people’s decisions at the ballot box.

In the second section, while addressing the electorate with the term, *kardeş*, Erdoğan aimed to create a deep sense of connection. This sense of connection is strengthened in his speeches by a rhetoric of brotherhood, fraternity, and sense of belonging.

Based on the results of this research, I propose that Erdoğan’s distinct populism cannot be fully grasped without a detailed analysis of his political campaign speeches. The study raises important questions about Erdoğan’s idea of the people and how the term *kardeş\** manifests in his rhetoric. This study is a key step forward in becoming familiar with Erdoğan’s populist discourse, although further research is needed to provide a comprehensive analysis of his populist speeches.

- 1 A preliminary finding of this paper was presented at “New Populism and Responses of the 21st Century,” September 24-25, 2021. This study is substantially extended and revised.
- 2 Turkey is geographically divided into seven regions, so I supposed that the largest city in each region would represent the best sample, except for Southeastern Anatolia Region. I have chosen Diyarbakır for this region because it is regarded most influential in the region.
- 3 For example, in 2007 I chose Ağrı instead of Van, whereas in 2009, Bursa, Elazığ, and Konya were selected instead of İstanbul, Van, and Ankara, respectively
- 4 I did not start with 2002 because Erdoğan was then subject to a political ban, so he could not make political campaign speeches the ban was lifted in 2003
- 5 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Yayınları.” Millet Kütüphanesi. Accessed June 3, 2021. <https://mk.gov.tr/koleksiyonlar/CBYayinlar/liste>
- 6 False positive words, as in Elçi’s study: halkalı\*, halkapınar\*, halkbank\*, milletler\*, milletli\*, milletvekil. Because they were unnoticed by Elçi, I have added other false positive words: Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (Grand National Assembly of Turkey); Birleşmiş Milletler (United Nations); Millet Bahçesi (The National Garden), millet kuraathane (the nation’s coffee); darbesavar (the anti-coup); halkbank, halk ekmek fabrikası (the nations’ bread factory); dostluk halkası (the friendship ring); halka (ring), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP); halkoylaması\* (referendum); hava kirliliği (air pollution); kirli hava (dirty air); odakli (oriented); and odaklanmak-odaklamak (focus).
- 7 In the speeches of Turkish political actors, the terms “the people” and “the nation” are often used interchangeably. Put another way, while mentioning “the people”, politicians sometimes use the term “nation”. Throughout this article, nation and people are used as synonyms for the Turkish political context.
- 8 By “Turkish nation”, Erbakan means Islam designed as a the nation’s supra-identity.
- 9 Translation is done by author. Original text: Türk Milleti’nin Allah’tan gelen ölümsüzlük iradesiyle şahlanışını temsil eden Millî Kurtuluş hareketinin peşisıra, hareketi gerçekleştirmiş hakiki kahramanların iradesine zıt olarak kök alakamız büsbütün kesilmek, ruh kökümüz kurutulmak istenmiştir. Türkün ruh kökünü çürütme hareketinin önderi Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi’dir.”
- 10 The whole community of Muslims bound together by ties of religion.
- 11 “Milletlerin varlıklarının devamı, dinî, tarihî, iktisadî ve kültürel unsurların müşterek millet şuurunu meydana getirmesiyle mümkündür. Bu ortak bilince, millî şuur diyoruz. Millî şuur, milleti yaşatan güçlerin kaynağıdır. Noksanlığı hâlinde madî ve manevî varlığı yıpranacağından millet zayıf düşer. Azız milletimiz, iki yüz yıldır dış güçler tarafından millî şuur yok edilerek kendisine yabancı kılınmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu yüzden, Batı ülkelerinin âdet ve göreneklerini taklit eden ve o ülkeleri kendi ülkemizden üstün gören Batıcılığa karşıyız. Türkiye, millî benliğim bırakıp Batı ülkeleri içinde eriyemez. Buna, bizim milletimizin bünyesi ve tarihi müsait değildi.”
- 12 Gelin, milletimizin geçmişinde pek çok örneği bulunan o şanlı tarih sayfalarından birini hep birlikte yazalım” (July 14, 2007 Antalya).
- 13 “Her şeyden önce bu ülke için, yıllar yılı gönlü kırılmış bu büyük millet için bir medeniyet tasavvurunuz olacak. Bir ülke tasavvurunuz, bir şehir tasavvurunuz olacak. Milletle aynı dili kullanacak, milletin ne söylediğini anlayacaksınız. Millete mesaj vermekten önce, milletin size verdiği mesajı alacak, içinize sindirecek, gereğini yapacaksınız. Bu meydanlarda insanlar Türkiye için planlarınızın ne olduğunu, problemlere hangi çözümleri getireceğinizi, bu ülkeyi geleceğe taşıyacak ne gibi projeler yaptığınızı öğrenmek için bekliyor.” (March, 8, 2004, Ankara)
- 14 “Çünkü bu milletin iradesini çalamazsınız, bu milletin iradesinin üzerinde beşer planında bir irade yoktur. (G) Kimse, bu milletin kaya gibi sağlam iradesini, ipotek altına, rehin altına alamaz” (March 23, 2014, İstanbul).
- 15 “Tek millet, tek bayrak, tek vatan ve tek devlet” (June 16, 2018, Antalya).
- 16 Tamam? Arap’ıyla, Türk’üyle, Kürt’üyle, Arnavut’uyla, Boşnak’ıyla, Roman’ıyla, Çerkez’üyle, Gürcü’süyle tek millet” (March, 16, 2014, İzmir).
- 17 “Bu Türkiye milletimizin yediden yetmişe aynı duyguda birleştiği aydınlık Türkiye.”
- 18 “Oysa bu millet, Ergani’den Keşana, Bismil’den Üsküdar’a, Lice’den Çankaya’ya, aynı millettir ve aynı şeyleri istiyor” (June 24, 2007, Diyarbakır).
- 19 “Biz diyoruz ki, devlet milletle birlikte güçlenecek” (July 14, 2007, Ankara).
- 20 “Halkımız, devlet millet bütünleşmesiyle yakalanan hedeflerin, nasıl büyütüleceğiyle, çitanın nasıl yükseltileceğiyle ilgileniyor” (July 14, 2007, Ankara).
- 21 “Benim meselem milletimin hak meselesidir, benim meselem milletin hukuk meselesidir. Biz, hukuku çiğnemek isteyenlere karşı dik duruyoruz. Biz, yargı darbesi yapmak isteyenlere karşı dik duruyoruz, milletin malının çalınmasına karşı 12 yıl dik durduk, millî iradenin de çalınmasına karşı dimdik duruyoruz” (March 23, 2014, İstanbul).

- 22 “Bizim gönlümüzde millet sevgisinden, Türkiye sevdasından başka bir şey yok ki, bu meydanlardan kaçalım, bu milletten kaçalım” (July 14, 2007, Ankara).
- 23 “Bu seçim Türkiye için yeni bir imkan sunuyor. Millete güvenmeyenler, millet yukarıdan bakanlar bu seçimde bir yaprak dökümü yaşayacaklar. Doğru istikamette olanlar, hesaplarını düzgün tutanlar, milletin emanetini sadakatle taşıyanlar kazanacak. Evet, millete efendilik iddiasında olanlar değil, millete hizmet edenler kazanacak” (June 24, 2007, Diyarbakir).
- 24 “Bunlar halka, topluma, şehirlere bu kadar yabancı, bunlar milletten işte bu kadar kopuklar. İstismarla korkutarak, sindirerek oy toplamaya çalışıyorlar. Şu anda İzmir’de de bunu yapıyorlar, haberim var, artık işi şiddete götürdüler. İstanbul’daki adayları bakıyorsunuz vatandaşı yumrukluyor ya. Belediye başkan adayı vatandaşı yumruklar mı? Vatandaşın içinde birisi onu dinlerken alkışlamıyor, teneke gibi burada ne duruyorsun diyor, çek git. Ya bir belediye başkan adayı vatandaşına bunu söyler mi?” (March 16, 2014, İzmir).
- 25 “Bunların milletle, bunların demokrasiyle sorunu var. Kardeşlerim, o yüzden sandığa ve millete sürekli itiraz ediyorlar. Epeyi zamandır bir şarkı tutturdular, ne diyorlar? Ne diyorlar, demokrasi sandıktan ibaret değildir... Nereden ibaret? Sizin saltanızdan öyle mi, paranızdan, pulunuzdan öyle mi? Asla. Doğru, bunlar öyle alışlar, dünyadaki ağa babaları da bunlara böyle çanak tuttu. Ama böyle değil, biz sandıksız bir demokrasiyi asla kabul etmedik ve etmiyoruz. Sandığı küçümseyerek varılacak yer demokrasi olmaz. Sandığı küçümsemek bu milleti küçümsemektir” (March, 23, 2014, İstanbul).
- 26 “Bunların milletle sorunu var, milletin iradesiyle, milletin hayalleriyle, milletin kutsal değerleriyle, manevi değerleriyle sorunları var, sandığa saldırımları, sandığı değersizleştirme çalışmaları işte bu yüzden” (March 23, 2014, İstanbul).
- 27 “Kardeşlerim, siyaset sırtını Pensilvanya’ya, Kılıçdaroğlu gibi Esad’a, sırtını terör örgütlerine, çetelere dayayarak yapılmaz, siyaset milletle yapılır, milletle yapılır, millet için yapılır. Sırtını millete dayayarak yapılır; işte bu CHP, bu MHP, bu BDP temiz siyaset yapmak yerine, ahlaklı siyaset yapmak yerine sırtlarını maalesef Pensilvanya’ya dayayıp oradan aldıkları kırıntılarla siyaset yapmaya çalışıyorlar” (March 25, 2014, Samsun).
- 28 Türkiye’yi ateşin içine atmaya çalışırken burada kaos oluşturmaya maalesef CHP’yi, MHP’yi, BDP’yi de arkasına vagon olarak sürüklüyorlar. İşte bu ahlaksız siyasete dur demeye var mısınız? Var mısınız? Bu ahlaksız siyasete geçit vermeyelim. Kasetlerle, montajlarla, iftirayla yapılan siyasete siz inanıyorum ki 30 Mart’ta son vereceksiniz” (March 25, 2014, Samsun).
- 29 “Ey sevgili Antalya, seni yürekten selamlıyorum Antalya. Akseki, Aksu, Alanya, Demre, Döşemealtı, Elmalı, Finike, Gazipaşa; sizleri gönülden selamlıyorum. Gündoğmuş, İbradı, Kaş, Kemer, Kepez, Konyaaltı; sizi kalpten selamlıyorum. Korkuteli, Kumluca, Manavgat, Muratpaşa, Serik; sizleri muhabbetle selamlıyorum. Antalyalı gençler, sizleri selamlıyorum, Antalyalı hanımefendiler, sizleri selamlıyorum. Antalyalı kardeşlerim, sizleri selamlıyorum, Antalyalı çiftçi kardeşim, Antalyalı esnaf kardeşim, turizmci, sanayici kardeşim; sizleri selamlıyorum. Yörükler, kardeşlerim sizleri de selamlıyorum. Mitingimize katılan nakliyesi kardeşlerim, kamyoncu kardeşlerim, sizleri de selamlıyorum” (March 15, 2014, Antalya).
- 30 Turkish political leader who served as the 9th President of Turkey from 1993 to 2000.
- 31 “Çok partili demokratik hayat başladığından beri, Afyon’umuzun demokrasi tarihimize müstesna bir yeri olmuştur.”
- 32 Kardeşlerim... sevgili İzmirli... şu muhteşem manzara neyi hatırlatıyor biliyor musunuz? Yıl 1947, Basmane İstasyonundan Çankaya’ya kadar onbinlerce İzmirli önemli bir kişiyi bekliyor. Tren Basmane istasyonuna geliyor. Merhum Adnan Menderes, merhum Celal Bayar trenden iniyor, öyle izdiham var ki Konak Meydanına zor ulaşıyorlar. Konak Meydanında balkonda onbinlerce İzmirliyi selamlıyorlar. Adnan Menderes tebessüm ediyor. Yanındakilerin yanaklarına gözyaşları dökülüyor. Birden polis Menderes’i aşkla bağrına basan kalabalığa müdahale ediyor. Havaya kurşunlar sıkıyorlar, kurşunlar Menderes’in bulunduğu balkona geliyor, fakat Menderes eğilmiyor. Gözleri yaşlı, bakışları buğulu, ama tebessüm içinde milleti selamlamaya devam ediyor. Celal Bayar, ceketini çekerek Menderes’e eğilmesini söylüyor. Diyor ki Menderes; “bu büyük milletin muhabbeti karşısında kurşun bize işlemez” (March 16, 2014, İzmir).
- 33 Değerli kardeşlerim...Gün, birlik ve beraberlik günüdür. Birliğimize, kardeşliğimize, muhabbetimize gölge düşürmeye, huzurumuzu, selametimizi sabote etmeye çalışanlara asla fırsat vermemeli, bugün her zamankinden daha çok birbirimizle kenetlenmeliyiz. Biz bu aziz milleti seviyoruz, bu güzel ülkeyi seviyoruz, bu vatani, bu bayrağı aynı hisle bağrımıza basıyoruz. Biz sizi seviyoruz, biz size güveniyoruz. Siz de bize güvenin” (June 24, 2007, Diyarbakir).
- 34 “Yeter ki aramıza nifak sokmaya çalışan, bizi birbirimize düşürenlere karşı tek yürek olalım. Yeter ki bu toprakların binlerce yıldır devam eden kardeşliğini, huzuru bozmaya çalışanlara karşı yekvücut olalım. Yeter ki, ayırıcı bir dil değil, birleştirici bir dil, birleştirici bir üslup kullanalım” (March 21, 2009, Elazığ).
- 35 “Bugün Antalyalı hanım kardeşlerimizi hassaten selamlıyorum. Bugün tüm Türkiye’deki hanım kardeşlerimizi özellikle selamlıyorum. Çünkü bugün 8 Mart... Bugün Dünya Kadınlar Günü. Buradan, Akdeniz’in bu sıcak şehriden, “Yüreklere Akdeniz gibi geniş, soluğu Afrika gibi sıcak” ülkem, vefakar, cefakar, kadınlarım, annelerimizi, ev hanımlarını, çalışan kadınları şükranla, minnetle selamlıyorum” (March 8, 2009, Antalya).

- 36** Yargının aldığı kararlar nedir? Bir vatandaşımız bir hanım kardeşimizle ilgili Twitter'da son derece alçakça tweetler atılıyor, son derece alçakça, son derece edepsizce ve hayasızca tweetler atılıyor. Onun dışında, sahte hesaplar üzerinden bazı şahısların kişilik haklarına çok yoğun saldırılarda bulunuluyor; yani özel hayatın korunması diye bir olay var, bunlarda böyle bir şey yok. Ve bu şahıslar mahkemeye başvuruyor, bu hakaretlerin, bu rencide edici, aile düzenini sarsıcı içeriklerin kaldırılmasını istiyor... Medya, bunu iyi dinle, günlerdir, affedersin, köşelerinizde, televizyonlarda yalan yanlış yorumlar yapıyorsunuz. Ama Twitter bunu umursamıyor ve olay bana geliyor. Bana geldiğinde ben de diyorum ki, kendi göbeğimizi biz kendimiz keseceğiz, ne gerekiyorsa bunu yapın diyorum (March 23, 2014, İstanbul).
- 37** Bu büyük millet, ebedi kardeşliğine sahip çıkacaktır .Açık söylüyorum, bu millet, bu ülke, bu vatan düştüğü yerden doğrılmaya başlamıştır. Buradan geriye asla gidilmeyecektir. Biz, milletimize güveniyoruz ve Allah'a şükürler olsun ki milletimiz de bize güveniyor. Bu güvenin hakkını vereceğiz. Türküyle, Kürdüyle, Lazıyla, Çerkeziyle, Boşnakıyla Türkiye Cumhuriyeti devletin vatandaşları olan bir milletiz. Şiddeti, terörü ve bütün insanlık suçlarını reddeden herkese, değil elimizi kucağımızda sonuna kadar açacağız (February 21, 2009, Diyarbakir).
- 38** "Bu Rizeli kardeşiniz, sizden aldığı enerjile, sizden aldığı coşkuyla, sizden aldığı hayır dualarıyla mahcup olmadı, sizleri mahcup etmedi" (March 5, 2009, Rize).
- 39** "Aynen bugün bu kardeşinize nasıl saldırıyorlarsa, aynı şekilde saldırdılar" (March 22, 2014, Ankara).
- 40** "Türkiye'den yayılan bu sıcaklık, bu kardeşlik iklimi Kuzey Irak'tan Balkanlara, Kafkasya'dan Gazze'ye kadar dost ve kardeş milletlerin yüreğini serinletiyor" (February 21, 2009, Diyarbakir).
- 41** "Üsküp'teki, Priştina'daki, Saraybosna'daki, Kosova'daki, Gümülcine'deki, Tiran'daki, Selanik'deki, Kırcalı'deki, Deliorman'daki, Razgrad'daki, Rusçuk'daki, Filibe'deki kardeşlerimizin, soydaşlarımızın da başını öne eğdirmeyeceğiz" (March 14, 2009, Bursa).

## References

- Arpacı, I. (2020). Söylemden ideolojiye Erbakan ve Milli Görüş. *Uluslararası Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Dergisi*. Vol.3, issue 1. 16-37.
- Aydın, S. and Çakır, R. (2007). Political Islam in Turkey. CEPS Working Document No. 265, April 2007. [Working Paper].
- Barr, R. R. (2018). Populism as a political strategy. In *Routledge Handbook of Global Populism*. Routledge. Accessed on: May 12, 2021. <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315226446-4>
- Dai, Y. (2018). *Measuring populism in context: A supervised approach with word embedding models*. Pennsylvania State University, [https://yaoyaodai.github.io/files/Dai\\_Populism.pdf](https://yaoyaodai.github.io/files/Dai_Populism.pdf)
- Değirmenci, N. (2017). Referendum process in the era of personalization of politics: a descriptive case study of constitutional referendum in 2010, Turkey. *The Studies in Communication Journal*, no:24. DOI: 10.20287/ec.n24.a08.
- Elçi, E. (2019). The rise of populism in Turkey: A content analysis. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*: 1-22.
- Erbakan, N. (n.d.) *Davam*. retrieved from: <https://trmilligoruscu.tr.gg/ERBAKAN-K-Ue-T-Ue-PHANES%26%23304%3B.htm>
- Garrett, K. (2019). *The Moralization of Politics: Causes, Consequences, and Measurement of Moral Conviction*. Doctoral dissertation, <https://doi.org/10.17615/q27m-db3>.
- Gökalp, Z. (1959). *Turkish nationalism and Western civilization: Selected essays of Ziya Gökalp*. Columbia University Press.

- Gülalp, H. (2002) Using Islam as political ideology: Turkey in historical perspective. *Cultural Dynamics*, 14, no. 1: pp. 21–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09213740020140010201>.
- Heath, O. and Halperin, S. (2012). *Political research: Methods and practical skills*. Oxford University Press.
- Hsieh, H.F. and Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol. 15 No. 9, 1277-1288.
- Imamova, H. (2010). Türkiye Türkçesi ile Özbek Türkçesinde nezaket anlamı taşıyan seslenmeler. *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, vol:17, no:42, p. 1-10.
- Jagers, J. & Walgrave, S. (2007). Populism as political communication style An empirical study of political parties' discourse in Belgium. *European Journal of Political Research*, 46, 319-345.
- Kantar, G. (2017). Türk siyasetinde politik dil kullanımı: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'ın "Ak Parti 1. ve 3. olağan üstü kongrelerindeki konuşmalarının içerik ve söylem analizi. *Balkan Journal of Social Sciences / Balkan Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*.
- Karaveli, H. (2016). Erdogan's journey conservatism and authoritarianism in Turkey. *Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved from: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/turkey/2016-10-17/erdogan-s-journey>
- Mudde, C. (2004). The populist zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition*, 39(4): 541-563.
- Mudde, C. (2017). The Oxford Handbook of Populism. In Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy (Eds.) *Populism: An Ideational Approach*. Oxford University Press.
- Mudde, C. and Kaltwasser, C. R. (2017). *Populism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Müller, J. W. (2017). *What is Populism?*. Penguin Random House.
- Pauwels, T. (2011). Measuring populism: A quantitative text analysis of party literature in Belgium. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 21(1), 97-119.
- Rooduijn, M. and Pauwels, T. (2011). Measuring populism: Comparing Two methods of content analysis. *West European Politics*, 34(6):1272-1283.
- Rose, S., Spinks, N. and Canhoto, A. I. (2015). *Management Research Applying the Principles*. Routledge.
- Sevük, T. and Aydın, O. Ş. (2020). The rising discourse of political language in Turkey. *Imgelem*. vol.4. issue, 7.
- Swanson, D. L. and Mancini, P. (1996). *Politics, media, and modern democracy: An international study of innovations in electoral campaigning and their consequences*. Greenwood Publishing Group
- Türk, H. B. (2018). *Muktedir Türk sağ geleneği ve Recep Tayyip Erdoğan*. İletişim.
- Türk, H. B. (2018). Populism as a medium of mass mobilization: The case of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. *International Area Studies Review*, 21(2): 150-168.
- White, J. (2013). *Muslim Nationalism and the New Turks*. Princeton University Press.
- Yavuz, M. H and Öztürk, A. E. (2019). Turkish secularism and Islam under the reign of Erdoğan. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*. Vol. 19, issue 1.
- Yilmaz, I. and Bashirov, G. (2018). The AKP after 15 years: Emergence of Erdoganism in Turkey, *Third World Quarterly*, 39(9), p. 1812-1830, DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2018.1447371
- Zürcher, E. J. (2011). *Turkey: A Modern History*. I.B.Tauris.