

Hate Speech in Reader Comments Made on News Regarding the Turkish General Elections of 2015

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Abstract

The main problematic of this study is to reveal how the political hate speeches directed to a political opinion or to its supporters are regenerated through reader comments, and to make the analysis of discursive practices generating the hate speeches in reader comments made on the news. In order to reveal the way in which political hate speeches are regenerated in reader comments, this study focuses on the election period which is asserted to be a period in which people become politicized more and in which they are more open to political news. Analyzed in this study are the reader comments that were made within 15 days before and after June 7, 2015, the day of elections, taken as the median point. The reader comments are selected from the Internet versions of the daily newspapers Milliyet, Sabah and Hürriyet published in Turkey. Although the Internet is effectively used by social and political movements in a positive manner, it also serves an abusive platform where such forms of hate speeches and hate crimes as defaming, denigration, disregarding, and disparagement towards certain political opinions and the supporters thereof are easily committed. In this study, the method of critical discourse analysis is used in order to reveal the hate speeches which have gotten into circulation through discourses grounded in the language and to also be able to read the situation in a multidimensional way.

Keywords: Hate speech, reader comments, general elections, the Internet, critical discourse analysis.

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Introduction

This study has as its subject matter the hate speech, which is a concrete expression of discrimination, particularly the hate speech that targets a political view and its followers. Hate speech and hates crimes, which began to be discussed in mid-1980s, have become a major category in popular and scientific discourses as an expression of discrimination.

Involving in itself negative emotions, hate speech is essentially recognized as the ostracism, derogation and hostility among societal groups. The kind of crimes directed in a range of threatening ways to one individual or one group on the basis of identity, piety, political stance, gender, and sexual orientation are generically titled as “hate crimes” (Göregenli, 2013b: 57, 67).

While hate speech is spread via media this new media has emerged as a critical foundation for the application and popularization of language practices. Interaction properties of the new media (Howard and Chadwick, 2009: 424; Akdoğan, 2014: 52) actualized via distribution capacity; network topology and idea of sharing have distinguished the new media from conventional media.

In light of such properties of new media, traces of political hate have been sought in new media. By analyzing the comments communicated in the news, key domains that generated hate language have been attempted to identify.

Hate Speech

It is recognized that hate crime actions of which historical background has been long established (Ataman, 2012: 37) are one manifestation of discrimination. It also refers to unequal or dissimilar treatment, with no valid excuse such as public benefit or any logical cause, towards one individual compared to other individuals living in the same conditions and circumstances (Çelenk, 2010: 211).

Irrespective of its broad use “hate speech” does not yet possess a globally-recognized definition. Although a number of countries already banned “hate-speech” implicating expressions, there still exists minor divergences in spotting the exact item that was banned (Weber, 2009: 3).

Although it was argued that discrimination, which is widely acknowledged to possess a public background set by social rules, institutions and dominant ideologies (Göregenli, 2013a: 39), is indeed a process that relies upon the global standardization of all communities, it is also reported to reveal itself in the physical and mental construction of community and institutional organization (Göregenli, 2013c: 23).

Göregenli noted that despite the historical divergences in experiencing segregation among several groups, discrimination has till present day existed as a “process of ostracism” (2013c: 24), Çelenk stated that as the most antiquated forms of discrimination, racism and xenophobia have been practiced in the forms of slavery, ethnic cleansing, genocide, carnage, forced migration, starvation, systematic rape and miscellaneous acts of violence (2010: 212).

Being the tangible statements of discrimination, “hate speech” and hate crimes are widely recognized as “dislike” and “hate” towards the addressed individual or individuals of hate speech and crimes that manifest such negative feelings. Hate speech, irrespective of involving negative feelings, is also related to ostracism, derogation and hostility ideology that indicates a systematic hierarchy among the societal groups (Göregenli, 2013b: 57).

The prevalence of prejudice and discrimination in any given society or culture and alternately the groups that are prone to violence and hate crimes are closely interrelated to the historical, social and political system of one particular society. On that account the target groups of hate speech and crimes vary in a number of communities although the construction and key dynamics of hate speech are intertwined with universal ideological processes (Göregenli, 2013a: 39; 2013b: 57). These target groups can be ordered as woman-oriented hate speech; foreigners and migrants oriented hate speech; sexual-orientation based hate speech; faith and sect based hate speech; disability and disease oriented hate speech (Çomu ve Binark, 2013: 209-210). Hate speech is decisively involved with specific comments directed to any particular individual or any group (Weber, 2009: 3).

Within this framework the kind of hate speech that addresses to opponent parties, opponent electorates or opponent leaders and political cadres is treated within the scope of political hate speech which is in truth a social phenomenon. Indeed the events that may befall on the addressed individual can very reasonably be experienced by any member of society since the victim was selected as the target not due to his/her individual qualities but due to his/her group membership alone (Ataman, 2012: 75). Yüksel argues that the factors determining an individual’s position and importance in political life are not personal relations and processes but social relations and processes at most (2014: 256).

Ascend of hate as the dominant discourse is spotted as a threat against the foundation and organization of democratic and pluralist societies. As the launching point against prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes and behaviors that stimulate hate, egalitarianism concept (Ataman, 2012: 75-78) has been defined within the framework of granting each human being the basic human rights as well as electing the rulers pursuant to the principle of equal rights and decrees (Ayhan, 2009: 45).

Hate Speech and the New Media

In hate speech the application and the environments that language practices are popularized hold significant importance. Conventional media and new media are such environments utilized in popularizing hate speech (Binark, 2010: 11). Media conveys information to change the way individuals shape the order and functioning of the world (Altheide, 2007: 287), but what demands to be further analyzed is the way discourse in general and hate speech in particular is structured in the media (Göregenli, 2013b: 58).

Advancements having risen in the communication technologies as of 1970s introduced new topics to communication tools and democratic participation discussion. Utilizing new-model communication tools based on computer substructure into everyday life introduced with itself a new discourse arguing that changes are on

the rise in the conventional habits of collecting, storing, and circulating the information gathered by mass communication tools (Timisi, 2003: 9; Dahlgren, 2005: 148). With the utilization of information and communication technologies, participating in political activity became easier, faster and universal (van Aelst and Walgrave, 2002: 466). It has been stated that social transformation is inevitable thanks to this technology, which would also escalate political activities and resulting radical changes in class distinction between political authority and social groups and the divergence between agricultural and industrial societies (Akdoğan, 2014: 52).

New media is radically different from conventional media tools such as newspaper-journal publication, radio-television broadcasting, or movies. What specifically distinguishes the Internet is its interactive network that is established upon the notion of non-personalized sharing among readers (Akdoğan, 2014: 52; Çomu and Binark, 2013: 200). New media comes to the fore with features such as digitality, interactivity, hyper-textuality, dissemination, virtuality and multimedia (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant and Kelly, 2009: 13). Poe notes that the Internet is, in that sense, realization of a four-hundred year dream enabling simple, effective and limitless collection and processing of information (2015: 345). In the democratic process new media has profound effects on the role of media. The Internet, via its global web (www) and new interactive media technologies, provides wider and cheaper access for all communities (Pavlik, 2013: 197; Törenli, 2005: 206).

Developments in new communication technologies; erasing the typical practices of conventional media and increasing the voice of the individuals and readers have gradually shifted the order of the world (Paktin, 2015: 314; Livingstone, 2012: 126). Internet news or on-line broadcasting are still in pursuit of much different and relevant approaches, hence attempts to build a new environment are still in progress (Törenli, 2005: 208).

There are conflicting definitions on the Internet. On one hand it is construed as a technology that further digs already-available inequalities in the new world-order (Timisi, 2003: 211). On the other hand it is argued that technology offers a problem-free presentation of technologic structuring in terms of participatory democracy. All citizens equipped with new technology can integrate into the democratic process by virtue of accessing information easily (Tunç, 2005: 139). The right to obtain information and expressing opinion, free access to communication and information channels constitutes one aspect of democratic communication and the other aspect is involved with participating in public-relevant decisions, or in other terms the right to speak out loud in the management of communication tools (Timisi, 2003: 10). O'Loughlin demonstrated that the Internet is doubtlessly no savior for democracy, but still it offers a myriad of options for public discourse and discursive democracy (2001: 598). Communication and information is the pivotal element for full and efficient citizenship. By broadcasting all potential information it can enable finding out the alternatives related to political options in particular, but what matters even more is that the media would function as a forum in which public-relevant discussions are held (Jakubowicz, 1994: 83).

New media environment has gained increased popularity among social and political opposition movements in order to organize, debate and publicize their activities and discussions, and political resolutions. Nevertheless hate speech has also rapidly

spread, disseminated and been recognized as a normal practice due to such attributes of new media environment whereby any discriminatory and ostracizing discursive practices are internalized in due course. Different identities and existential practices in society are not only exposed to othering process but they may even transpose into destructive actions or hate crimes in other terms (Binark, 2010: 11, 30; Silva, 2013: 180; McNair, 2009: 224). As reported by O'Loughlin on the Internet environment what matters is not the person but the thing written by this person (2001: 603).

It has been witnessed that while media, as the ideological tool of the state, creates its own agenda it transforms into a medium through which, both implicitly and explicitly, hate is remanufactured through concepts such as racism, ethnic prejudice, xenophobia (fear-hate towards non-natives). İnceoğlu argues that as the media “otherizes” and “targets” specific groups via employing negative, humiliating, degrading expressions and exaggeration it manages to present these groups as potential risks and threats against public safety whereby increasing the prejudices against other groups and causing the target groups to feel insecure and unguarded (2013: 76).

Methodology

This study delves into the concept of hate speech. Hate speech has been examined with respect to readers' views on political, economical and social news, which also set the scene for the political atmosphere, before and after the Parliamentary Elections in Turkey (07 June 2015).¹

With the aim of facilitating readers' comments, the study has been executed on the internet pages of newspapers and one-month period has constituted the main scope. In this research Milliyet, Sabah and Hürriyet newspapers issued in Turkey have been scanned and election – politics based comments posted between 22 May 2015 and 22 June 2015 have been analyzed.² Considering the facts that censures were imposed in posting the comments and lack of non-censured communication of entire comments, the total number increased or decreased, thus the first 20 comments for each single news have been included in the analysis.

Between the particular dates 900 news were detected in Milliyet newspaper. Of all these news, 211 news which integrated readers' views were examined for this study. Of all the 966 comments on 211 news, a total of 931 were included into the analysis. In Sabah newspaper, of the total 926 news, 1995 comments were shared for 410 news and among these comments, 1876 were analyzed for the purposes of this study. 4 news in Sabah newspaper could not be accessed. Lastly in Hürriyet newspaper 688 news were deemed to be relevant to the topic of present study. 609 news received 61.994 comments in sum. As the very first 20 comments were considered in the sum beyond 20, a total of 9 thousand 114 comments constituted the foundation in Hürriyet newspaper.

¹ After the elections parliamentary seat distribution of parties are: Justice and Development Party (AKP), Republican People's Party (CHP), Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP).

² According to the data of the Internet Measurement Investigation by the IAB Turkey, each of the three newspapers was ranked in the first 20 in both PC-Number of Page Views and the PC-Number of Real Users in April-May-June 2015 (<http://www.iabturkiye.org>).

In this study, critical discourse analysis method has been employed to the end of manifesting hate speech circulated via language-structured discourses and to facilitate a multi-dimensional reading. Comments have been identified within the scope of hate themes that occurred in the form of negative generalizations, bad and offensive language, hostility, identity or personality insult towards a particular political stance and its followers. The comments have been interpreted pursuant to critical discourse analysis inasmuch as critical discourse analysis primarily focuses on specific issues dominating the spheres of discourse, language and communication and abuse of power through authority, ideology, exploitation, manipulation and so on (van Dijk, 2010: 10).

van Dijk asserted that humans adopt certain insights, attitudes and ideologies via discourse which translates into the fact that once one can control discourse, one can also achieve to control not merely the newspapers but readers' minds as well (2010: 13). Within that framework ideal world of the readers can also be illustrated through comments.

Findings

Negative Generalizations

When reader comments on the news are examined, it is observed that commentators with certain political views broadly share negative views for the opponent politicians, advocates of opponent party and political events as well as all citizens sharing opposite views. In the comments underlining the adversity of current conditions, it is possible to see many comments on a variety of topics ranging from the ruling party and its practices to the advocates of any particular party.

When we take a look at reader comments regarding the "ruling party", for instance, in a comment on the news stating that AKP's "We are manufacturing national Warcraft" banner was removed, there is discontent with the governing party which allegedly lacked a robust attitude and conveyed varying messages to different social groups (Milliyet, 2015.05.25) on the one hand and, in another comment regarding the news related to the opening of the world's second largest canyon, it is shared that instead of prioritizing investments as top-notch target of the governing party increased attention should be paid to resolve basic living issues. Another comment on the same news attempts to point to a criticism towards the opposition wings by saying: "Some people just talk while some act" (Milliyet, 2015.05.22).

It can be said that a secondary group of comments are related to "political manners and conducts". Although such statements are mostly directed to governing party, it can be seen that the advocates of the ruling party make the opposition wing their target in their evaluations. Criticism leveled against the members of the governing party target the manner of the person rather than the content of the explanation - "What an outrageous manner! He must resign right away" (Milliyet, 2015.05.23)-. And the comments on the security of election label governing party's attitude as "fraud" and "vote-stealing".³

³ "If only there would be no fraud!" (Milliyet, 2015.05.28); "Protect your votes, don't let them steal your votes" (Milliyet, 2015.06.04); "I will just say don't steal our votes, but who would expect such honesty from shameless thieves?" (Hürriyet, 2015.06.02).

Comments that make negative inferences about national political parties and party advocates run like this: While government is associated with “favoritism” and “terrorism”, opposition parties are criticized on accounts of their political views and lack of communication with their voters.⁴

As seen several comments on this news display post-election political picture. On one hand it is advocated that one-party rule is problematic, -“Let there be coalition rather than such one-party rule, the country could not get any worse” (Milliyet, 2015.05.23)- on the other hand there is discontent on the parliamentary seats of HDP.⁵

Offensive Language/ Insult

News-related comments are predominantly categorized under offensive language/insult. These comments heavily employ such expressions; “subservient”, “bonehead”, “bad seed”, “fickle”, “liar”. Offensive descriptions are directed to commentators who criticize the government, opposition party and advocates of a different political view.

As regards the news titled ““Entrusted votes’ reaction from PKK to HDP” the comment is: “You forcefully collected all votes with guns, you wantons” (Sabah, 2015.06.09). As for the news related to employing different discourses by HDP in the West and East of Turkey, the comment is “Human in daylight, bonehead at night” (Sabah, 2015.05.29). The comment on HDP co-chair Demirtaş’s claim that all problems are finally resolved is, “You! You are the root of problem itself. You, the parasites, sucking our blood. All you have are illicit, all are illegal” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.27).

For the news titled as “Critical statements from President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan” the comment is “Rascal!” (Hürriyet 2015.05.26) and the insults towards ruling party (AKP) and its supporters use adjectives “liar”, “vandal” and “ignorant”.⁶

Similar insults can also be traced in the expressions towards opposition parties; “Dear President, CHP has been hibernating for the past 90 years” (Sabah, 2015.05.23). The comment on the news titled as “Heavy insults from CHP-voters to women with scarfs” is, “The guy is a real monkey, no doubt... we don’t need a Turk like you” (Sabah, 2015.05.30). The comment on the news “Chaos Plan of Cihan News Agency”

⁴ “AKP advocates know one language only: beating people all the time and favoritism” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.22); “ISIS and AKP, both tarred with the same brush. Both are religionist, both are money-lovers, both are oppressive, both are a bunch of ignorants” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.22); “They (AKP) only care about realizing their dream” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.03); “Even the voters of main opposition party no longer believe the pledges of their own party” (Milliyet, 2015.05.23); “Bahçeli, how will you rule this country with racism when in power, are you going to make the people of this country fight each other again?” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.03).

⁵ “Those who cried that AKP should not come to power alone, are you happy now?” (Milliyet, 2015.06.08); “Let the tripartite alliance form the government. Let this people see whom they voted for” (Milliyet, 2015.06.07).

⁶ “These banners are sham... Only pro-AKP knuckleheads naturally buy these lies” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.24); “Dude, these men are all up to monkey business” (Milliyet, 2015.05.25); “Weasel İBB (İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality). They all are vandals” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.23); “Moron AK-troll... So long as morons like you exist, Tayyip will remain as your shepherd...” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.25); “Those shameless robbers lead armies of immoral gorillas” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.26).

is, “You can expect anything from those bad seeds” (Sabah, 2015.06.04). CHP is defined as “fickle” and MHP as “ignoble”.⁷

The point to make hereby is that insults are not merely directed towards a political party or advocates of a political stance but also aimed at commentators who share their views on the media news in favor of a definite political view. These are a few of the specimen comments: “If Sözcü newspaper has any decency left, let them come forward and speak honestly” (Sabah, 2015.06.07); “Berk Pir, I believe there is an AKP advocate in your family, who fooled you into believing that Turkey’s treasure is full. Or you must have lost your senses by watching those liar media organs all day long. They use this nonsense to fool you and other idiots just like you” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.02).

Hostility

As reader comments on the news depicting the political scenery created before and after the election are examined there is an evident rise in hostility-discourse involving comments. The most noticeable statements within hostility-discourse category are imbued with threatening messages: The comment on the news titled as “No permission for HDP’s Kazlıçeşme meeting” points to the very first day of election to take revenge, “You will pay back on the 8th of June” (Milliyet, 2015.05.26) to imply that a lot would change after the election and much worse days would come. The comments on HDP’s new deputy are such; “You all wait. Worse days are to come” (Milliyet, 2015.06.09); “Fool me, how come HDP can ever be all Turkey’s party; just push a little harder, who knows you may even score 50% :) that is no surprise if you fool around so much” (Milliyet, 2015.06.09). The news titled as “Bloodshed in Diyarbakır! 4 casualties” also received similar comments: “Worse days are to come; I am afraid these days are the last happy days for us” (Milliyet, 2015.06.09). In a number of comments the supporting statements for the attacks towards opposite views evidence the extreme grudge and hatred; Comments on the attack to pro-AKP woman, “Well done! I am so relieved, this is the payback of Gezi” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.31); “Now is the time to pay back, you zealots” (Hürriyet 2015.05.25) clearly reveal the extreme hatred, and the comment on HDP as, “Dude, why didn’t you beat the hell out of that HDP guy?” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.01) indicates the way violence is promoted.

The news “HDP threatening the voters in the East” is commented as, “Those can do anything vile! They’re gone crazy” (Sabah, 2015.05.23), and some comments note the party and its advocates as “murderers” whose “butts should be kicked”.⁸

⁷ “What happened now you flakes, are you scared? You are incapable of putting one stone on another, but all you can ever do is to destroy what has been built!” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.22); “If there is someone vile and despicable, it is the puppet MHP” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.02).

⁸ “You thugs! How dare you steal my vote, come and try to get it. They ate our food and stabbed our forefathers in hard times. And now they are truckling to this [man]!” (Sabah, 2015.05.23); “Thugs cannot rule the world with their threats” (Sabah, 2015.05.29); “You murderers!” (Sabah, 2015.05.31); “You low murderers, you will drown in the blood you shed, sooner or later” (Sabah, 2015.06.01); “Shame on those who will vote for them!” (Sabah, 2015.05.28); “God willing, the terrorist HDP will not pass the treshold” (Sabah, 2015.05.29); “Kurds sold us out despite all that has been done.” (Sabah, 2015.06.08); “Of course you know well, you all are terrorists, God damn you” (Sabah, 2015.06.09); “80% of those Kurds are terrorist PKK, kill them all” (Sabah, 2015.06.10); “He who votes for this party is a traitor. Martyrs are ever-living, Turkey will not be divided. This country is not left

Insults are not merely directed towards a political party or advocates of a political stance but also aimed at commentators who share their views on the allegedly in favor of one political view. These are a few of the specimen comments: “Babykiller and Doğan Media are perfect match” (Sabah, 2015.06.05); “HDP propaganda on Israel national channel; HDP and Israel are blood suckers supporting one another. They smell like human blood” (Sabah, 2015.06.04). The comments produce a hostile opposition by forcing the readers to pick their side. Comment on the news titled as “CHP voter insulting scarfed women” is “Beware of the side you pick” (Sabah, 2015.01.06) and the news as “CHP’s new city project fueled polemics” received this comment: “Those criticizing Mega project are no different than baby murderers wanting to kill an unborn child” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.23).

Hatred Towards Identity or Persons

Hate speech is not merely directed towards a political party or political stance. Hate is also reflected on the comments for the candidate homosexuals from parties, or through pious identities of party members or through race hence hate secures its position via words.

“Hardest question to HDP Co-chair Demirtaş advocating gay marriage!”; “Contemptible propaganda by HDP’s gay candidate” news about HDP’s homosexual candidate received comments that questioned sexual choices and labeled homosexuals as “perverts”.⁹

The comment on the news titled as “HDP thanking DHKP-C” is; “Both are profane terrorist groups. They should all go to hell”; “We should execute them all, leaving none behind”; “HDP, you cannot fool us, one is no better than the other, both are terrorists. May God smite you all” (Sabah, 2015.05.23).

The news titled as “FETÖ’s (Fethullah Gülen Sect) final kamikaze attack! Sabotage to the ballot box” received the comment, “They even dared to sell the country once their plan was spoiled. Such hornets’ nest. They infiltrated everywhere. Those traitors can do anything” (Sabah, 2015.06.03); to imply Kurds, “Shame on the Kurds” (Sabah 2015.06.08); “You all are ungrateful, you sold the nation to an Armenian party” (Sabah, 2015.06.13) and another commentator said, “I feel ashamed to be an Easterner” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.15).

Discriminatory hate speech is not only directed to identities but also to individuals. The expressions used within this framework are primarily directed to political party leaders and politicians.

unattended. Know your boundaries! Governing is not your thing. Will someone please let them know their place?” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.25); “Do not free the baby-killer! You Turkish people, vote for any party but HDP” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.27).

⁹ “Gays at Anıtkabir huh!, I wonder how low you can go! May God smite you. Who would vote for them... They all are perverts in the Book ... You’ll burn in hell you perverts” (Sabah, 2015.05.22); “Such an unchaste man cannot be a candidate in may decent country... There may be thieves or frauds, but gay, no way”; “It all fits this party, you scoundrels”; “HDP has become a party of sodomites”; “Just what is normally expected from Demirtaş. He has no share in humanity at all. Make your own family gay. Get your hands off the Turkish youth, you sacrilegious atheist”; “I vehemently condemn these despicable men and their party HDP” (Sabah, 2015.05.23).

A commentator shared his reaction as, “Because of such politicians who never quit politics, I quit. Respectfully yours. A citizen quitting politics:)” (Milliyet, 2015.06.04). Individual-oriented discriminatory hate speech exposes itself as; “Wolf in sheep’s clothing”, “rascal”, “ignorant”, “sheep”. Concerning President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his advocates, “May the devil take you, you shepherd your own herd, no one else would ask for you...” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.29).

HDP Co-chair Selahattin Demirtaş is humiliated as “Selocan, you really are super”; “Selocan it’s time for you to go home:)” mimicking a comic figure endorsed by a Turkish GSM Company to imply that he would lose the election (Milliyet, 2015.05.25). HDP’s ideology is criticized and party is labeled as “untrustable”; “I support CHP. I told everyone not to vote for HDP. I warned them they would stab us in the back. That is their basic mindset” (Milliyet, 2015.06.09); To imply HDP co-chair Selahattin Demirtaş, “Demirtaş is a wolf in sheep’s clothing” (Sabah, 2015.05.26); “May God smite those who voted for you terrorists, spies, murderers” (Sabah, 2015.05.27); “Mr. Demirtaş we all know you are just a puppet” (Sabah, 2015.06.05) are some sample comments.

AKP politicians are labeled as, “Rascal; You ignorant not knowing why he asks for votes” (Hürriyet, 2015.05.25). The comment on the news titled as “Davutoğlu: We will take all the measures to secure the election process” is, “Even dried beans are more useful than that guy” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.02) which evidently devalues the targeted politicians.

As party leaders and members are harshly criticized, the expressions worded evidently imply humiliation and mocking; MHP Leader Devlet Bahçeli is commented as, “What a terrific leader! I wouldn’t wish him on my worst enemy” (Milliyet, 2015.06.08); “If only Türkeş were alive. He would spit on Bahçeli’s face and kick him out of the party; Bahçeli, you suck” (Sabah, 2015.05.25). CHP Leader is similarly insulted; “When has this fake Gandi ever kept his promises? Why would he now?” (Sabah, 2015.06.08); “Belly-dancer, revolutionist Kemal” (Sabah, 2015.06.08); “Kılıçdaroğlu is no good for anything” (Sabah 2015.06.22) to demean their personalities. Even there are certain prejudices on some politicians, “I am leaving comment without reading the news because Haluk Koç wouldn’t say anything useful” (Hürriyet, 2015.06.16).

Hate words are also directed to a specific media, not only the politicians, that allegedly supports one political group. The owner of Doğan Media Group is humiliated on the basis of his physical outlook, “His face is as dark as coal”; “He is the black sheep of Turkey”; “He must be the beast with only one tooth left”; “He is a public enemy, impious guy” (Sabah, 2015.05.24) that decisively label him as the “enemy”. Reporter Ahmet Hakan in the same media group is insulted such: “An Armenian egghead threw a fatty bone to Ahmet Hakan. What a good licker he is!” (Sabah, 2015.06.18).

Conclusion

The Internet offers its users an environment to make comments and discuss their views in any given topic. With a crucial function in generating political discourse, the Internet is correspondingly a powerful medium in fabricating and rapidly

disseminating political hate speech. In this study it was aimed to demonstrate the way political hate speech was regenerated in readers' comments. To that end election news were specifically analyzed. Through internet versions of scanned newspapers, hate speech in this study was examined with respect to readers' views on political, economical and social news, which also set the scene for the political atmosphere before and after June 07, 2015 Parliamentary Elections in Turkey.

In these comments, featured themes were identified as negative generalizations, bad and offensive language, hostility, hatred towards identity or persons. As the comments within the framework of such categories were investigated it surfaced that hate was directed towards particular political parties, the leaders and members. In the comments having generated hate words a number of comments on state administration, the actions of ruling party or party members are apparent. As bad/offensive statements form an evident hate language in those comments, it is witnessed that insults are aimed at governing party, opposition parties and commentators with opposite political views. Comments imbued with hostility remarks are routinely directed to members of opposing political parties. Hate speech is not merely directed to any political party or political stance, but can also be generated on the basis of sexual orientations of the candidates, pious identities of party members or race.

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