

The Analysis of Statements in Political Meetings Through Cultural Codes Including Patterns of Turkish-Islamic Notion ^(*)

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Abstract: The statements in political arena have been evaluated as one of the eloquences that were categorized by Aristotle as judicial, ceremonial and political rhetoric. As a deduction from the first model of communication; as the “word” is the message and the teller and listener are the parties, the word should be constructed in a way of special fiction. The message, transferred by Source, is formed by his/her own experiences, cultural values and body language. In the course of communication, while the larding addresses the characteristics of target audience, i.e. the listener or receiver, it also includes the characteristics of the source, i.e. transmitter. The saying of Mevlana, “Whatever you say, what you say is as much understand as what the other understands”, shows the importance of the perception of receiver on understanding the message. The cultural values of transmitter and receiver, in other words, material and moral values like language, life style, religion, ethnicity, arts, ethics, tradition supports the statements through written and verbal means. In this context, within this study, examples of political statements in Turkey and the Davos Economic Forum (event), between 2008 to 2012, which include cultural values, will be analyzed through “constructivist” tradition, using a selective methodology, and by examining from surface structure to underlying structure in syntactic, pragmatic, semantic and thematic planes.

Keywords: cultural codes, meetings, events, turkish – islamic notion.

Siyasal Arenada Söylem Örneklerinin Türk-İslam Düşünce Motiflerinin de Bulunduğu Kültürel Kodlar Üzerinden Analizi

Öz: Siyasi alandaki söylemler, Aristoteles’in adli, törensel ve politik retorik olarak sınıflandırdığı güzel söz söyleme sanatlarından birisidir. İletişimin ilk modelinden çıkışla; “söz” ün mesaj olarak yer aldığı, söyleyen ve dinleyenin taraflar olarak rol oynadığı göz önüne alındığında; söz’ün iletilirken özel bir kurguyla yapılandırılması gerekmektedir. Mesaj, ileten yani kaynak tarafından kendi yaşanmışlıklarıyla, kültürel değerleriyle ve beden diliyle biçimlenerek iletilmektedir. İletim esnasında, yapılan bezemeler, hedef kitlenin yani dinleyenin, alıcının özelliklerine de hitap ederken, içerisinde kaynak yani vericinin de özelliklerini barındırmaktadırlar. Mevlana “Sen ne söylersen söyle, söylediğin, karşındakinin anladığı kadardır” diyerek; alıcının algısının iletiyi anlamlandırmada ne kadar önemli olduğunu göstermektedir. Alıcı ve vericinin kültürel değerleri yani; dil, yaşam biçimleri, din, etik, sanat, ahlak, gelenekler gibi maddi manevi değerleri, söylemlerini yazılı ya da sözlü biçimde desteklemektedirler. Bu bağlamda; çalışmada 2008-2012 yılları arasında Türkiye ile Davos’ta yapılan, kültürel değerler barındıran siyasi söylem örneklerinin dilbilimin “yapısalcılık” geleneği üzerinden seçmeci bir yöntemle yüzeysel yapıdan derin yapıya doğru edim-bilimsel, anlambilimsel ve tematik boyutlarda incelenerek bir çözümlemesi yapılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kültürel kodlar, toplantılar, etkinlikler, türk-islam motifleri.

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Introduction

We live in an intense competition era, in which the quality of the products and services are provided in certain standards by the suppliers. In this context, everything we do would aim to make our target group, as a message transmitter, to react in accordance with our predetermined goal, change their behaviors, employ a new behavior or leave the old one.

We see that political parties use posters, have fliers printed, dress the streets with flags, use banners on their web sites and give speeches larding with beliefs, to promote their ideologies, change or recreate the impressions.

The very first corporate identity signs of the political parties, which distinguish them from the other political parties, are of course the “logo” s and the “visual” s. Because, whether they include inscriptions on or not, the logos and the visuals can represent a political party in an area, where rate of literacy is low. When we check TDK’s definition of political parties, we see “A party, which is the most important element of political life, and represents a specific political view, bloc” (<http://www.tdk.gov.tr/TR/SozBul.aspx?>) definition. In this case, when the politicians give speech in front of logos and visuals, they don’t just remind the voters of their political parties, but they also remind them of the actions, the political view and the promises of their parties.

Attention is the first stage of perception. Emphasizes on beliefs in the speeches and on the posters distinguishes the institutions from each other. These contrasts let the institutions gain value. According to Ferdinand De Saussure, to determine the value of an element, its contradictory correlation with other elements that share the same plane, should be taken into account (Vardar, 1998: 70).

According to Saussure, the principles that create the value are “a dissimilar element of which value is determined by exchanging with an entity and a similar element of which value is determined by comparing with the entity” (Saussure, 2001: 168). Therefore, the existence of value depends on these two principles: to exchange a dissimilar thing, and to compare similar thing.

In this context, via the emotional and intellectual bonds that voters establish to have the right to live in a society, ruled by their own philosophy, they want to see their ideology, i.e. the signs of their ideology on the logos and posters of a party, thus they fell themselves integrated with the party. Therefore, posters, web site banners and visuals are important tools that we as researchers will evaluate within the extent of political visuality. Political visuality is the visual face of politics, representation tool of political parties and their strength. Visual signs that are amongst the components of corporate image that forms the reputation management, helps the voters to become integrated with the political party that they have established an emotional bond with. According to Saussure’s point of view, “There is an essential coherency among the tools used and the goals pursued” in the evaluation of relationship between signs and goals” (Saussure, 2001: 120). In this

context, it is possible to examine texts like posters, logos and announcements through “a selective method; on pragmatic level, syntactic level, semantic level and ideological level”(Zeybek, 2004).

From the perspective of political parties, in a visual message, color, form, lines, typography and emblems are the instruments that are used to mold the perception of the target group. The logo have five instruments: *Color*: Within a logo, color is not used for drawing attention only. For political parties, the color of the logo should have parallelism with the ideology of the party. *Form*: They are the surfaces that are formed of lines, colors, light-dark. *Line*: “In graphical aspect, line is formed by a moving dot’s tendency on one direction”(Tanrıbilir, 2006: 22). In addition of them, *Emblem* (pictogram): “Emblem consists of visual forms” Güz, at al. (2002: 51) and *Typography*: “The style and appearance of printed matter”(<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/typography>).

1. Reflection of the Relation Between Poster, Advertisement and PR Within Political Parties

Marketing is based on four components. These components are identified as product, price, promotion and place. Public Relations and Advertisement are included within the Promotion element (Elden, Ulukok & Yeygel, 2005: 17-21).

In general terms, public relations, one of the parts of this component, which is called the marketing mix, is:

The most important function of the public relations concept is an art of management that helps individuals or institutions to establish an honest and lasting bonds with their target groups and by developing these bonds, helps them to direct their target groups with positive beliefs and actions, and by evaluating the reactions, helps them to shape their attitudes, and thus makes them to keep mutualistic relationships going, is being an art of recognition and promotion (Bulbul, 2000: 2-4).

By depending on the above mentioned properties, besides being an art, public relations should also be defined as a strategic practice, which has a proactive planning function and is needed to be involved in management directly.

“The public relations is an organizational task that helps the organization to reach its goals, to promote its theoretical philosophy and to implement organizational changes”(Oktay, 2002: 53). Therefore, “for political scientists, the public relations is a political control mechanism”(Bulbul, 2000: 234).

1.1. Reading the Signs

According to Erkman (1986: 8-10), “The thing, which provides communication by reminding of something different, while it’s not actually that thing, is a sign.” “The thing that replaces another”(Colapietro, 1993:179-180), like symbols, icons, myth and texts,

etc. are all signs or sign systems. By analyzing linguistics and semiotics, Mehmet Rifat defines the stages of semiotics (Rifat, 1990: 83-130):

While Saussure was spreading the Semiotics in Europe, an American semiotician and philosopher Charles W. Morris has studied signs on three areas, as he mentioned in his book, "Foundation of the Theory of Signs". Respectively these are: *Syntactic*: Studies the mergence law of signs. It examines how signs join together to form combined signs and declarations. *Semantics*: Studies the meaning of the signs and the relation between the sign and signified. *Pragmatics*: Studies the source, usage and effects of signs in a behavioral frame. In his studies, he enhanced the ideas of Peirce. In Europe, Linguistic Circle of Prague focused their studies on Semiotics towards literary and artistic subjects. J. Mukarovsky, who carried out his studies in that direction, focusing towards art, has approached art as a semiotic notion and defined *Aesthetical Function* and *Informative Function*. After founding the Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen, L. Hjelmslev has focused his future studies on bilateral sign systems. By adapting the rules of logic to the semiotics he put the basis of semiotics on solid ground. Hjelmslev discusses on *Denotation* and *Connotation* terms, and, differing from Saussure, identifies sign systems as substance of expression, form of expression, substance of content and form of content planes.

2. Visual Reading and Analysis Method

In the meeting of the political parties, to determine which of the common values are used to transmit the messages is as important as showing great performance in front of target audience.

In this respect cultural values become strong factors between the receiver and the transmitter. The cultural values of transmitter and receiver, in other words, values like language, life style, religion, ethnicity, arts, ethics and tradition supports the statements through written and verbal means. In this study, it is aimed to analyze some examples which are considered as causes célèbres in political arenas where the cultural values are clearly presented. In this context, within this study, examples of political statements in Turkey and the Davos Economic Forum (event), between 2008 and 2012, which includes cultural values, will be analyzed through "constructivist" tradition, using a selective methodology, examining from surface structure to underlying structure in syntactic, pragmatic, semantic and thematic planes.

2.1. On Pragmatics Plane: The extratextual features are studied; contents of the features of transmitter, receiver, reference, place, time and tool are studied. In the light of this information, if we accept the pragmatics plane is shared: The communication process with political promotion intent:

Source: Political Party, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

Receiver: Voters, 2009 Davos Economic Forum audience,

Message: Ideology,

Code system (code-tool): Specific languages of country of origin of all parties and visual tools, logo, narrative messages, etc.

Channel: Visual perception, TV channels

Feedback: Consists of ideological system, perceived through audiovisual tools and/or votes.

2.2. On Syntactic Plane: According to Teker (2003), structural elements of the components of text are studied. Typography, line, color, form, emblem, logo, etc., each of these elements have their own functions; in this context, generic semantic and linear readings of elements are made. Emphasis is identified and, in a context, configuration of visual context within the text is determined. The relations between elements, signs and symbols with other signs and symbols are examined.

2.3. Semantics Plane: Tanribilir's point of view, on this plane, during the interpretation of signs, starting from the emblem, which has a symbolic value, semiotic meanings of every element and text, through which it can be possible to reach conceptual value, will be reached; because the meaning is a notion that is linked to sign. In this context, distinguishing contents that dominate the visual text are identified by their meanings. In the semantic dimension of the sign systems, semantic relations between signs and the objects and notions that these signs define are studied.

2.4. Ideological Plane: on this plane, ideology of the party is identified and the integrity of visual elements and ideology is emphasized. Mostly, the suitability relation of the party and the signs are examined (Tanribilir, 2006: 43).

3. Analysis of Political Samples

In this context, before analyzing some examples of political party posters and speech, it would be better to indicate which parties have participated in the election in 2009.

Supreme Committee of Elections had decided which parties were entitled to participate in the general local elections on Sunday, March 29th, 2009. These parties were Justice and Development Party, Republican People's Party, National Party, Nationalist Movement Party and Felicity Party (<http://www.ysk.gov.tr/ysk/index.html/01/01/1009>).

3.1. Justice And Development Party



Figure 1: AKP Bayram Kutlama Görseli http://www.denizticaretgazetesi.org/haberResimleri/04012007_b_55338.jpg/ 03/01/2009

“KURBAN OLAM AYINA YILDIZINA” (May I Be Sacrificed to Your Moon and Star):

As a communication medium, posters can also be examined by rivals, i.e. the other parties carefully. The aims of the political parties are to refresh their images in voters' minds, affiliating new members and turning the negative images in voters' minds into positive. In this case, it would be natural for a political party to use its rivals' weaknesses for its own benefit. The aim of this poster, in which nationalist and religious elements are combined, can be making more effect on voter's mind by touching their feeling. Here, with moon and star, party is staked a claim on national values of Turkish Republic, and with the image, where hands are open like praying to God, party is emphasized on religion and strengthened the message. In the poster, along with the visual message, there is also a verbal message. By using big fonts, creating a dominance could be aimed; writing Turkey in red, can refer to patriotism and nationalism; using a text as “Kurban olam...” (May I be sacrificed), which includes religious notions like sacrifice and offering, can be seen as an expression of the party to show its religion based expansionist ideology. As we see from the poster's design; “rhetorical images are ubiquitous, powerful, and important” (Hill, 2004: 38).

3.2. Felicity Party

“İNANCA SAYGI ZALIMLERE LANET MITINGİ” (RESPECT TO THE BELIEF, CURSE THE TYRANTS PUBLIC MEETING):

The public meeting, which took place in Istanbul on February 19th, 2006, was a tour de force against the comics, which were mocking with Islam and Muslims. On the poster, usage of red and white gets the attention. On the poster, the national and religious feelings can be considered as marching elements. There is also integrity through Felicity Party's

colors, which are also red and white. Also, the color, red can symbolize dynamism and mobility, which tries to indicate that it's time to take action. The increase in the sizes of the fonts from top to bottom evokes crying out.



Figure 2: SP İnanca Saygı Zalimlere Lanet Mitingi Görseli <http://www.milligazete.com.tr/index.php?action=show&type=news&id=17680-16.02.2006>

3.3. Davos Economic Forum

Another example with full of Turkish-Islamic notion has been recorded in Davos Economic Forum in 2009. In the forum, which was administered by a moderator, President of Turkish Republic, Recep Tayyip Erdogan had a short time limit to talk, where Shimon Peres had longer time to make his talk, which Erdogan believed it was biased, so he had convinced the moderator to give him extra time and had given the following speech addressing Peres and then he left the conference hall.

“Mr. Peres, **you are older than me**. Your voice comes out in a very loud tone. And the loudness of your voice has to do with a guilty conscience. My voice, however, will not come out in the same tone. When it comes to killing, you know well how to kill. I know well how **you kill children on beaches, how you shoot them**. I remember two former prime ministers in your country who said they felt very happy when they were able to enter Palestine on tanks. I also condemn those who applaud for this cruelty (for Peres). Because applauding those people killing children is a crime against humanity, I would say two things. **The Old Testament's sixth amendment says “Thou shalt not**

kill". There is murder here. (to Ignatius)Thank you very much, thank you very much. Davos comes to an end for me from now on. I will not come to Davos ever again. Know this in that way. You do not let me speak. You allow him to speak for 25 minutes, me for 12 minutes. (Erdogan stands, collects his things and leaves)"

First phrase of **Erdogan's** speech, "you are older than me" has a special meaning. According to Turkish family pattern, manners and customs, it's a "disgrace" to talk against to an elder person, interrupt his/her speech and continue talking. However, because of the importance of the subject and injustice, Erdogan has broken these rules as a president by himself to protest "pogrom and the efforts for self justification" due to the idea of Islamic brotherhood. In accordance with this study, to examine the Islamic-Turkish-Religion-Law patterns of the text, our second exemplary sentence will be: "**When it comes to killing, you know well how to kill. I know well how you kill children on beaches, how you shoot them.**" As in *jus in bello*, hurting children is not acceptable. Besides, not hurting women and not damaging health facilities and religious buildings were the rules stated by religions first and was tried to be guaranteed under the rule of law. By stating that, there is a crime committed by killing children in international arena, Erdogan tried to point out that there was a wrongdoing according to law and religion. By mentioning the beaches, it can be seen that he tried to emphasize that the children belong to playgrounds like beaches, and that they were killed while playing or wandering with their families on the beach. Our third sentence is: "**The Old Testament's sixth amendment says "Thou shalt not kill"**. As Erdogan knows that using Islamic statements in political arena has a great effect, while he was talking in an international forum, he decided to address Mr. Peres addressing him using a statement from his own beliefs, the sixth amendment of the Old Testament: "You shall not kill". His aim was to draw attention to the pogrom against the Palestinian people and to show that there's no valid reason for this bloodshed and that it also is not what religions order.

This study analyzes an example about the cultural values used in political events and expressions. In this analysis, expressions larded with beliefs examined in terms of both visual and auditory elements. Communication tools consist of cultural codes analyzed within eclectic method as from surface structure to underlying structure. "Davos Economical Forum Speech of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", visual of "Saadet Partisi Respect to the Belief, Curse the Tyrants Public Meeting", visual of AKP Celebrating the Bairam" are chosen for being the examples of using the cultural values clearly in the means of semiotics. Besides the events like public meetings, other public relation tools like posters and billboards play a key role to determine the last decisions of voters. In some newspapers, Public Meeting of Saadet Partisi which has a high level of participation, took place as a public meeting for showing respect to the beliefs not for political reasons. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with his verbal and visual expressions is the current Prime Minister of Republic of Turkey within the 59., 60 and 61. Government of Turkey.

Conclusion

It's quite obvious that, in communication, signs are unavoidable features of visual and verbal statements. Whether they are used to complete the verbal message or increase the effect of the verbal message, or they are used in messages, where there are no verbal texts included, visuals are very important for comprehension and recollection. The most common reasons that signs are used in messages are their durability in minds and the potential to be comprehended in no time. Political parties also use visuals as a part of their corporate identity and use posters, banners and web sites to create new dynamics in their works.

To have the right to live in a society, ruled by their own philosophy, a voter would prefer a political party which has the same or similar ideology with himself/herself. This way, he/she will be a part of the system. He/she wants to see the visual traces, i.e. signs of the ideology of the political party, which he wants to be involved. Therefore, usage of visual materials like banners and posters are crucial for the political parties. Presenting political statements on printed materials or during a speech is a very common practice. If we recall the Political Statement of Aristotle: "In this kind of statement, either we try to persuade other party to do or not to do something. From the point of political rhetoric, one side opposes against it or defends it" (Aristotle, 2006: 44) In this case, what Erdogan did at Economic Forum was a technique and by using religious values he has given dynamism to his speech. The banners of the political parties, the colors that are used, usage of bigger fonts, i.e. letters, combinations of small and big fonts, religious statements added into the texts and lots of other examples are for strengthening, recreating or changing the effect on target group.

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