

Discourse of Foreign Digital Media: Analysis of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election Coverage

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Abstract: This study examines the complex dynamics of communication in the changing field of journalism influenced by the use of media. It specifically focuses on how thoughts and perceptions are expressed in this evolving landscape. Information and communication technologies significantly influence journalism by rapidly disseminating news, updates, and societal impacts. Utilizing critical discourse analysis, the study aims to reveal systematic language usages and uncover latent meanings beyond news texts. Focused on the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election, news texts from four prominent international newslets Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN, and Euronews are analyzed. The comprehensive analysis of international media coverage investigates the interplay of linguistic and thematic choices in shaping narratives. With a dual focus on macro and micro levels of discourse, the study uncovers diverse approaches among foreign media outlets. Each outlet adopts a distinctive thematic approach at the macro level, emphasizing key figures and sociopolitical contexts. Al Jazeera spotlights competition, BBC underscores post-election polarization, CNN focuses on Erdogan's victory, and Euronews provides insights into national challenges. Visual elements, like photographs, contribute significantly to framing events, offering nuanced political messaging. Micro-level analysis explores linguistic choices, syntax, and rhetoric, emphasizing the active voice to underscore leaders' agency. Deliberate use of the passive voice in presenting election results maintains a neutral tone. The way sentences are structured and the cause-and-effect connections help readers understand political developments by providing context. The study underscores the importance of media literacy in decoding political event representations, emphasizing the multifaceted complexities of media discourse.

Keywords: Digital Media, Elections, News Coverage, News Discourse, Foreign Media

Introduction

The role of the media in modern democracies holds significant importance in terms of the proper functioning of elections and the formation of an informed electorate. Media not only provides critical information to the public by observing, analyzing, and interpreting the election processes, but it also influences the public opinion by conveying the messages of political actors (McCombs, 2008). Therefore, the impact of the media on the democratic nature of elections and the political decision-making processes cannot be denied. Media plays a significant role in shaping public perception and attitudes during elections through its comprehensive news coverage and broadcasts. The information, narratives, and framing presented by the media can greatly influence how voters perceive candidates, parties, and key issues.

The events portrayed by the media can influence voter preferences, contribute to the formation of opinions, and even shape the overall political discourse (Rita et al., 2023, 4). Consequently, the activities of the media and the presentation of candidates can have profound effects on decisions made by voters, ultimately impacting election outcomes. Using certain analysis methods is beneficial in understanding how the media reflects the election process, how news affects political campaigns, candidates, and

parties, how the media can influence public opinions, and the importance of employing these methods to comprehend the democratic nature of elections.

In this context, the study aims to investigate how significant political events, such as the 2023 Turkish Election, are reflected in the international media and how the media's perception management influences both foreign and Turkish public opinion. To achieve this, Teun van Dijk (1983)'s discourse analysis, which aims to understand how texts operate within social, cultural, and political contexts, has been employed. This analysis method is used to comprehend the power and influence of language, to understand how messages are constructed, and how perception is managed. Discourse analysis helps in understanding the internal composition of texts, the connections between texts, and the societal consequences of texts (Aydın-Düzgit & Rumelili, 2019, 293). In this study, discourse analysis has been utilized to accurately understand the role of media on public opinion in elections. Thus, the study attempts to uncover the meanings and messages underlying the language, expressions, and symbols used in election news, as well as the emphasis and framing within the news. By examining these aspects, it seeks to reveal how the media attempts to present certain events.

The 2023 Turkish Presidential Election is an election that took place in the first round on May 14, 2023, and in the second round on May 28, 2023, to determine the President of Türkiye. Due to President Erdogan's candidacy for the third time in the presidential system, these elections were not only being closely followed nationwide in Türkiye, but also with curiosity around the world. In the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election, in order to increase their vote percentages, certain political parties formed two separate alliances by uniting: The People's Alliance and the Nation Alliance. The AK Party, which is the leading party, formed the People's Alliance with the MHP, BBP, New Welfare Party, and HUDA PAR, while the Nation Alliance consisted of the main opposition party CHP along with İYİ Party, SP, GP, DEVA, and DP (See Table 1). In addition, the Homeland Party participated in the election, along with an independent candidate (See Table 2). However, the candidate of the Homeland Party, Muharrem İnce, withdrew from the race three days prior to the election. In the first round of the election held on May 14, 2023, the presidential candidates were as shown in Table 2. Following the first round, none of the three candidates managed to secure a majority, leading to the election advancing to the second round on May 28, 2023. The second round took place between Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Kemal Kilicdaroglu, with Erdoğan emerging as the victor, as the two candidates received the highest number of votes. Sinan Ogan announced his support for the People's Alliance in the second-round election.

Table 1

The Alliances Formed in the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election

The People's Alliance	Justice and Development Party (AK Party), Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), Great Unity Party (BBP), New Welfare Party, Free Cause Party (HUDA PAR)
The Nation Alliance	Republican People's Party (CHP), Good Party (İYİ Party), Felicity Party (SP), Future Party (GP), Democracy and Progress Party (DEVA), Democratic Party (DP)

Source: (2023 Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçimi, 2023)

Table 2*The Candidates of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election (The First Round)*

Party/Alliance	Candidate
The People's Alliance	Recep Tayyip Erdogan
The Nation Alliance	Kemal Kilicdaroglu
The Homeland Party	Muharrem Ince
The Independent Candidate	Sinan Ogan

Source: (2023 Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanlığı Seçimi, 2023)

Several studies have been carried out concerning previous elections in Türkiye (Sine-Nazlı & Kalafat-Çat, 2019; Tauscher, Erdogdu & Korkmaz, 2019; Güneş, 2018). However, no national or international articles have been identified that address the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election and their outcomes. The elections, located in a geopolitically significant region, have been closely monitored both domestically and internationally. In this context, conducting a critical analysis of the discourse constructed in the foreign media regarding the two-round Presidential Election held on May 14 and May 28, 2023, holds significance as a subject of investigation. Since there have been no previous instances of a two-round Presidential election in Türkiye, this study has substantial importance.

1. Scope and Purpose of the Study

Within the scope of this study, the news about the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election published by the e-newspapers of four important news agencies on a global basis were examined by critical discourse analysis. The study aims to elucidate how these selected news agencies from different countries discuss the presidential candidates, the election results, and the reactions of both the Turkish public and other countries' populations.

2. Study Design and Problem

According to van Dijk (2015, 352), Critical Discourse Analysis is a research approach that focuses on exploring how text and speech in social and political contexts are utilized to carry out, sustain, or challenge acts of social power abuse, dominance, and inequality. Dijk (1985), furthermore, establishes news analyses in written news texts upon thematic and schematic structures where micro and macro structures are significant. Thematic structures involve a hierarchical framework. This hierarchical structure includes elements such as the main headline, sub-subheadings, captions, and lead paragraphs, where the chain of stories and events follows each other in a hierarchical manner within news narratives. Micro structures encompass journalists, demonstrators, and minorities, while various institutions and organizations that are interrelated with these micro structures also constitute macro structures (Sözen, 2017, 128).

In this context, news articles containing the election results from the e-newspapers of the news agencies, selected as samples, after the first round of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election held on May 14, 2023, and after the second round held on May 28, 2023, have been analyzed within the framework of the discourse analysis method. The article seeks to answer the question of how the e-newspapers comprising the sample developed discourse regarding the two-round 2023 Turkish Presidential Election, the presidential candidates, and the election results.

3. Limitations of the Study

The 2023 Turkish Presidential Election were held on May 14, 2023. Nevertheless, since none of the three candidates obtained an adequate majority in the first round, the election advanced to a second round on May 28. Therefore, the research is limited to the news coverage of the sample e-newspapers about the

election results immediately after the first round of the election on May 14, 2023, and the election result reports right after the second round on May 28, 2023.

4. Method

The study's methodology encompasses the study's population and sample, as well as the processes of data collection and data analysis.

4.1. Population and sample

The research encompasses the global foreign media as its universe. However, due to the impractical scope of investigating the entire universe within this study, a purposive sampling approach has been employed. Therefore, four internationally recognized news agencies based in countries occupying significant and diverse geographical regions, and maintaining close relations with Türkiye, have been selected. The study's sample group consists of election news coverage from Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN, and Euronews — four renowned news agencies representing four distinct countries (See Table 3). These news agencies published the election news following the announcement of the results of the two-round 2023 Turkish Presidential Election on May 14 and 28, 2023. Additionally, the analysis aims to explore the roles these prominent global media platforms play, the emphasis they place, and the perspectives they offer in their coverage of the election process.

Table 3

The Sample Group of the Study

	News Agency	Country	Established in	Broadcast Languages
1	Al Jazeera ¹	Qatar	1996	2
2	BBC ²	The United Kingdom	1922	41
3	CNN ³	The United States	1980	17
4	Euronews ⁴	Headquartered in France	1993	14

4.2. Data collection and analysis

According to Karasar (2016, 248), because the initial data collection yielded somewhat unintelligible results, the research should incorporate details about the data collection methods employed, as well as the techniques applied for data analysis and interpretation. In this study, an examination has been conducted on the web content related to the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election, specifically the coverage published by Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN, and Euronews on their websites after the two-round elections held on May 14 and May 28, 2023. This analysis involves employing both web content analysis (Web Content Analysis; WebCA) and discourse analysis, both of which are qualitative research methodologies. Discourse analysis, encompassing an all-encompassing comprehension of communication incorporating interpretive perspectives like hermeneutics and humanities, provides insights into the dynamics of knowledge, power, politics, and ideological interactions (Bell, 2011). This is achieved by addressing inquiries about how individuals express themselves, engage in listening or silence, and partake in reading or writing (Luo, 2019). Whenever there is a requirement for the interpretation and elucidation of new data, shorter texts become particularly fitting for the application of discourse analysis. This method is especially adept at dissecting brief texts and dialogues. Within the realm of discourse analysis, the data primarily consists of the researcher's explications (Gökçe, 2006, 44). Through discourse analysis, the research reveals how the coverage of the elections is presented in

¹ Al Jazeera (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved August 14, 2023, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Jazeera

² BBC (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved August 16, 2023, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC_World_Service

³ CNN (n.d.). About CNN International. *CNN International*. Retrieved August 16, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3QGHsG8>

⁴ Euronews (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved August 9, 2023, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euronews>

the e-newspapers of the four sample news agencies, which feature election news in their agendas within a day or two after the two-round elections.

5. Findings

Newspaper articles have been examined at macro and micro levels in accordance with Özer's (2022, 44) adaptation of Teun A. van Dijk's (1983; 1988; 1991) critical discourse analysis model (See Table 4). Thematic and schematic analyses have been conducted within the macro structure. Thematic analysis encompasses sections such as news headlines, introductions, highlights, and photographs, while schematic analysis focuses on the presentation of the main event, conclusions, and commentary. At the micro level, syntactic analysis, regional coherence, word choices, and rhetorical analyses have been utilized. Syntactic analysis has been carried out by analyzing the sentence structures. The examination of word choices in the news texts has revealed the beliefs and political opinions of social actors. One of the micro-level analyses, regional coherence analysis, involves efforts to uncover causal, functional, and referential relationships established between consecutive sentences in news texts.

Table 4

Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis Model

A) Macro Level Analysis		
1. Thematic Analysis	a) Headline/s	
	b) News Lead	1. Subheading/s 2. When there is no subheading, the first paragraph of the news article should be taken. If the news consists of a single paragraph, the first sentence can be used as the news lead.
2. Schematic Analysis	c) Photograph	
	a) Situation	1. Presentation of the Main Event 2. Results 3. Background Information (Including Previous Events) 4. Contextual Information
	b) Commentary	1. New Sources 2. Comments from Involved Parties
B) Micro Level Analysis		
1. Syntactic Analysis	a) Whether sentence structures are active or passive	
	b) Whether sentence structures are simple or complex	
2. Local Coherence	a) Casual relationships	
	b) Functional relationships	
	c) Referential relationships	
3. Word Choices		
4. News Rhetoric	a) Photograph	
	b) Credible information	
	c) Testimonies of eyewitnesses	

5.1. Critical discourse analysis of news

The discourse analysis has been applied to the election result news published in the e-newspapers of the media agencies Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN, and Euronews, which were identified as the sample. This analysis covers the news published in the issues following the first round on May 14, 2023, and the second round on May 28, 2023. The analysis has been conducted within the framework of critical discourse analysis at the fundamental discourse level.

5.1.1. Macro level analysis

The news texts analyzed in terms of macro propositions in Table 4 are structured by forming a set of themes and considering macro rules. Within the macro structure, the sub-elements of the thematic and schematic main structures include elements such as headlines, news leads, highlights, and photographs. Later in the commentary, the main event, results, background information, and contextual details are

explained, and news sources and comments from the parties involved in the event are examined within the macro structure.

5.1.1.1. Thematic analysis of round one: Headlines, news leads and photographs

Below is an analysis composed of the headlines and news leads related to the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election news published by the sample e-newspapers prior to the first round of the election, as provided in Table 5. These headlines offer diverse international perspectives on the election results and process. Each headline and news lead reflects the priorities and interpretations of the respective news sources regarding the election. The analysis of these headlines and news leads will contribute to a better understanding of the election outcomes, expectations before the second round of the election, and the international reverberations. On the other hand, photographs are carefully chosen to complement and reinforce the themes present in the news texts. They are not only visual aids but also powerful tools that contribute to conveying the intended message effectively. By selecting specific images, news outlets can enhance the impact of their coverage and create a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. This study examines digitally produced newspapers. In digital newspapers, visuals that offer new perspectives are fewer in number compared to print media (Guallar, 2011, 394). In these types of newspapers, texts are shorter, and instead of lengthy articles, there is a focus on incorporating multimedia content with concise and direct narratives (Thurman & Lupton, 2008).

Table 5

Headlines and News Leads Appeared in the Sample E-Newspapers after the First Round of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election

E-newspaper	Date	a) Headlines and b) News Leads
Al Jazeera⁵ (First Round)	May 15, 2023	a) "What's a run-off? All to know about Türkiye election results" b) "This is the first time Erdogan faces a second-round run-off vote as a presidential candidate"
BBC⁶ (First Round)	May 15, 2023	a) "Türkiye's presidential race to be decided in run-off" b) "Türkiye's powerful president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will go head to head with his opposition rival in a run-off vote, the supreme election council has confirmed"
CNN⁷ (First Round)	May 14, 2023	a) "Türkiye's Erdogan heading for a runoff in knife-edge elections" b) "Türkiye's fiercely contested presidential election appears likely to go to a second round after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan failed to secure 50% of votes cast to decisively extend his 20-year rule"
Euronews⁸ (First Round)	May 15, 2023	a) "Turkish election: Five things we learned from the vote" b) "From positions of power to kingmakers, the parties that did well, and the politicians fighting for survival in the second round of voting at the end of the month"

Upon reviewing the headlines related to the first round results presented in Table 5, it becomes apparent that they all have a common theme, centering around the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election and the concept of a "run-off" election. These headlines all delve into the scenario where a second round of voting is required due to the absence of a clear majority winner in the first round. This recurring

⁵ What's a run-off? All to know about Türkiye election results. (2023, 15 May). *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved September 5, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/44hVD7D>

⁶ Kirby, P. (2023, May 15). Türkiye's presidential race to be decided in run-off. *BBC*. Retrieved September 5, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65600585>

⁷ Qiblawi, T., Karadsheh, J. & Tuysuz, G. (2023, May 15). Türkiye's Erdogan heading for a runoff in knife-edge elections. *CNN*. Retrieved September 6, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3P69VUG>

⁸ Turkish election: Five things we learned from the vote (2023, May 15). *Euronews*. Retrieved September 6, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3YHGCL6>

theme unites them in their coverage. When examined for similarities, the headlines all point out the Turkish presidential election and the participation in a “run-off” or second round of voting. They collectively suggest that the initial round did not yield a definitive winner. The headlines underscore the significance of the “run-off” round in determining the election's outcome.

However, there are differences among the headlines in terms of the details they emphasize and the angles they take. Al Jazeera focuses on explaining the concept of a run-off election and understanding the election results. BBC highlights that the presidential race's final result will be determined through the run-off. CNN, on the other hand, emphasizes Erdogan's involvement and the close nature of the election, suggesting a competitive scenario leading to a run-off. Euronews concentrates on the insights gained from the election, likely discussing broader takeaways beyond just the need for a run-off.

Upon examining the headlines in a metaphorical context, Al Jazeera's “What’s a run-off?” headline implies that the election did not lead to the election of a president, suggesting instead that the election advanced to a second round. The BBC's headline, “Türkiye's presidential race to be decided in run-off”, employs the phrase “to be decided” in a potential metaphorical manner to convey result uncertainty and the potential resolution in the run-off round. CNN's “Türkiye's Erdogan heading for a runoff in knife-edge elections” employs “knife-edge elections” to possibly metaphorically emphasize the closely contested and uncertain nature of the results. Euronews's phrase, “Turkish election: Five things we learned from the vote”, likely carries a metaphorical undertone while indicating broader insights gleaned from the election. These underlying metaphors contribute to highlighting the unique tone and meaning inherent in each headline.

The news leads of the first-round election, as reported in the e-newspapers shown in Table 5, provide different perspectives on Türkiye's presidential election. Al Jazeera's news lead states, “This is the first time Erdogan faces a second-round run-off vote as a presidential candidate”. Al Jazeera's report highlights the historical significance of the election, as it marks the first time President Erdogan faces a second-round run-off vote as a presidential candidate. It underscores the unique nature of this situation, emphasizing the electoral challenge Erdogan is now confronting. The BBC's news lead “Türkiye's powerful president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will go head to head with his opposition rival in a run-off vote, the supreme election council has confirmed” centers on President Erdogan's influential position in Turkish politics. It also confirms the official announcement of a run-off vote against his opposition rival by the supreme election council. The news lead underscores the tremendous significance of this election for Erdogan and its potential impact on his political future. CNN's news lead “Türkiye's fiercely contested presidential election appears likely to go to a second round after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan failed to secure 50% of votes cast to decisively extend his 20-year rule” emphasizes the intense competition in the presidential election, with the likelihood of a second round. It mentions Erdogan's failure to secure 50% of the votes, suggesting the possibility of a shifting political landscape after his two decades in power. Euronews with its news lead “From positions of power to kingmakers, the parties that did well, and the politicians fighting for survival in the second round of voting at the end of the month” adopts a broader perspective, moving beyond the candidates themselves. It focuses on the parties and politicians participating in the upcoming second round of voting at the end of the month. The report suggests that the election has created opportunities for some and challenges for others, potentially resulting in a reshaped political landscape. Each news lead provides a unique angle on the same event, offering varying levels of detail and context. Al Jazeera and BBC focus on Erdogan's position and the run-off confirmation, while CNN delves into the competitive nature of the election, and Euronews looks at the broader political implications beyond just the candidates.

All four newspapers have utilized visual elements alongside news articles both after the first round and after the second round election. When analyzing images related to the news published by newspapers after the first round of the election, the following assumptions can be drawn: Newspapers reporting on

the first-round election results have shared photographs related to their headlines. Al Jazeera, BBC, and CNN have included visuals of Erdogan in their coverage. In the visuals from Al Jazeera and BBC, there are groups of women supporting Erdogan. In both images, women are actively using their mobile phones, capturing pictures or videos of their pro-Erdogan demonstrations. CNN Türkiye has featured an image that juxtaposes Erdogan with the journalist Christiane Amanpour, who is evaluating Erdogan. In this image, Erdogan is seen giving a speech during an election campaign, with an aggressive facial expression that draws attention. Euronews, in its visual, has depicted the front pages of some Turkish newspapers that are visibly displayed for sale in a kiosk. Unlike the other outlets, Euronews did not feature any specific candidate in its visual coverage.

5.1.1.2. Thematic analysis of round two: Headlines, news leads and photographs

In this section, the headlines of the news articles published by the sample e-newspapers have been examined, regarding the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election after the second round. Newspaper headlines serve as tools for maximizing relevance, meticulously crafted to ensure that their stories align closely with the interests and needs of their readers and provide an effective way to convey essential information to readers before they even read an article (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). The headlines of the sample e-newspapers, following the second round of the election, offer a quick overview of the election results and the significance of the event. They serve as a concise introduction, giving readers a glimpse into the outcomes and importance of the election. Table 6 displays the headlines and news leads published by these newspapers immediately after the second round of the election. In the thematic analysis of the second round of the election on May 28, 2023, the headlines, the news leads and the photographs published in the sample e-newspapers have been interpreted.

Tablo 6

Headlines and News Leads Appeared in the Sample E-Newspapers after the Second Round of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election

E-newspaper	Date	a) Headlines and b) News Leads
Al Jazeera⁹ (Second Round)	May 29, 2023	a) "Five key takeaways from Türkiye's pivotal election" b) "Erdogan a political survivor, Kurds put off by nationalist rhetoric and other reflections"
BBC¹⁰ (Second Round)	May 29, 2023	a) "Turkish election victory for Erdogan leaves nation divided" b) "Recep Tayyip Erdogan's supporters are celebrating after Türkiye's long-time president won Sunday's vote, securing another five years in power"
CNN¹¹ (Second Round)	May 29, 2023	a) "Erdogan wins Turkish election, extending rule to third decade" b) "President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has won Türkiye's presidential election, defeating opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu in Sunday's runoff vote and stretching his rule into a third decade"
Euronews¹² (Second Round)	May 28, 2023	a) "Turkish presidential election: Erdogan win leaves country divided" b) "Türkiye's president defeated secular challenger Kemal Kilicdaroglu in the second round of voting on Sunday"

⁹ Al Jazeera Staff (2023, May 29). Five key takeaways from Türkiye's pivotal election. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3E56Duk>

¹⁰ Kirby, P. & Goksedef, E. (2023, May 29). Turkish election victory for Erdogan leaves nation divided. *BBC*. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65743031>

¹¹ Tuysuz, G., Gezer, Y. & Qiblawi, T. (2023, May 29). Erdogan wins Turkish election, extending rule to third decade. *CNN*. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/44jZhho>

¹² Askew, J. (2023, May 30). Turkish presidential election: Erdogan win leaves country divided. *Euronews*. Retrieved September 8, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3QP8Ku4>

As seen in Table 6, the e-newspapers published news about the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election results soon after it was over. While Euronews reported the results immediately after the election concluded, Al Jazeera, BBC, and CNN covered the election on May 29, 2023. Al Jazeera's headline, "Five key takeaways from Türkiye's pivotal election", suggests that the election is a pivotal moment for Türkiye, and Al Jazeera aims to present five essential takeaways from this election, emphasizing a focus on the key outcomes of the news. The BBC's headline, "Turkish election victory for Erdogan leaves nation divided", states that Erdogan's election victory has left Türkiye divided. This headline highlights how the election results reflect different opinions and reactions within the country. CNN's headline, "Erdogan wins Turkish election, extending rule to third decade", emphasizes that Erdogan has won the Turkish election, extending his rule for a third decade in Türkiye. This headline highlights Erdogan's long-lasting leadership. Euronews headline, "Turkish presidential election: Erdogan win leaves country divided" indicates that Erdogan's victory in the Turkish presidential election has left the country divided. This headline underscores how the election results have affected the unity and cohesion of the nation.

All headlines mention Erdogan's victory in the election as a central theme. Each headline indicates a degree of division or polarization within Türkiye as a result of the election. All headlines touch upon Erdogan's victory and the division in Türkiye; however, they differ in their primary focus, tone, and level of detail. While they all touch on Erdogan's victory and the division, the headlines differ in their primary focus. Al Jazeera emphasizes key takeaways, BBC focuses on the divisive aspect, CNN highlights the extension of Erdogan's rule, and Euronews underscores the polarization. The headlines vary in tone, with some being more neutral (Al Jazeera and CNN) and others carrying a more explicit tone (BBC and Euronews) in portraying the division in Türkiye. Al Jazeera's headline suggests a more in-depth analysis with 'five key takeaways,' while the others provide briefer summaries of the situation.

On the other hand, these headlines employ metaphorical language to provide a symbolic perspective on the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election. Al Jazeera's "Five key takeaways from Türkiye's pivotal election" portrays the election as a door to an important room, offering readers essential insights as keys to unlock a deeper understanding. The BBC's "Turkish election victory for Erdogan leaves nation divided" likens the election to a bridge that, despite its unifying potential, has resulted in a divisive aftermath. CNN's "Erdogan wins Turkish election, extending rule to third decade" metaphorically extends Erdogan's rule as a long journey, with each election serving as a milestone. Euronews's "Turkish presidential election: Erdogan win leaves country divided" envisions the election as a critical decision point for the nation, yet Erdogan's victory has left the nation as a puzzle with missing pieces, fostering division and uncertainty. In a metaphorical context, this headline envisions the election as a decision point for the nation. Erdogan's win, however, has left the nation as a puzzle with missing pieces, causing division and uncertainty.

In this section, a thorough analysis of the news leads for the second round is conducted, as they have been presented in Table 6. These news leads from Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN, and Euronews offer valuable insights into the evolving dynamics and significance of the 2023 Turkish presidential election, providing a multifaceted view of this pivotal moment. Al Jazeera's news lead, 'Erdogan a political survivor, Kurds put off by nationalist rhetoric and other reflections,' highlights Erdogan's resilient political career. It suggests his ability to overcome challenges and its potential negative impact on relations with the Kurdish population in Türkiye, indicating possible disapproval within the Kurdish community. The BBC news lead states that Erdogan's supporters are celebrating his victory in Sunday's vote, securing his presidency for another five years, highlighting the significance of his win and the joy among his supporters. CNN reports Erdogan's victory in Türkiye's presidential election, defeating opposition leader Kilicdaroglu in Sunday's runoff, extending his rule into a third decade. Euronews' news lead states that Türkiye's president defeated his secular challenger, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, in the second round of voting on Sunday. This summarizes the president's election victory and the outcome of the second round

succinctly. In sum, these news leads collectively underscore the intricacies and significance of this electoral juncture in Türkiye's political arena.

In this section, the images found just beneath the headlines of four sample e-newspapers have been examined in the reporting of the results of the second round of the election. The description of the image beneath the headline in Al Jazeera's e-newspaper suggests that supporters of the AK Party are celebrating their victory in the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election. These supporters can be seen outside the AK Party office in Istanbul, proudly waving Turkish flags and carrying torches. Many are using their mobile phones to capture photos and videos of the celebration. Additionally, it's noted that some individuals are making a hand gesture symbolizing nationalism, known as the wolf sign of the MHP supporters. The caption below the image indicates that the celebration is taking place after the AK Party's victory in the run-off election, and it specifies that these individuals are supporters of President Erdogan. This overall description provides insight into the atmosphere and reactions surrounding the election results, suggesting a jubilant mood among AK Party supporters.

In the BBC's election results coverage on May 29th, two screenshots from videos are shared beneath the description of Erdogan's victory speech, labeled as "Erdogan victory speech: Today nobody has lost". The second image screenshot was taken from a video of the opposition party leader Kilicdaroglu giving a speech, accompanied by the caption "Kilicdaroglu gives fiery speech after Erdogan claims victory". These images capture the Turkish public's reaction to the election results. In the first picture, Recep Tayyip Erdogan is seen wearing a navy blue suit, a white shirt, and a navy blue patterned tie, projecting a formal and serious appearance. He is delivering a post-election victory speech to the public at a podium adorned with the Presidential seal in the Presidential Palace. His right hand is slightly raised, with his index and middle fingers touching, suggesting that he is likely conveying an important statement or emphasizing a message. This gives the impression of a strong and resolute leader during his speech. In the other picture, Kemal Kilicdaroglu is seen delivering a post-election speech. He is dressed in a black suit with a white shirt and a red tie, with a Turkish flag pin on his lapel. His face carries a somber expression, and he holds papers containing his speech in his hands. Kilicdaroglu's appearance and demeanor seem to reflect the stance and emotional state of a candidate who has lost the election. While dressed sharply in a black suit, white shirt, and a red tie, the Turkish flag pin on his lapel emphasizes his respect and commitment to the national symbol. The somber expression on his face suggests that the election result may not have been as expected or as desired. Holding the papers containing his speech indicates his intention to deliver a prepared and contemplative statement. This reflects his aim to convey an emotional and serious message while addressing the election results and his supporters. This picture captures emotionally charged moments in the post-election political atmosphere, reflecting the process of a political leader dealing with a setback and responding emotionally to supporters. In the last picture, it shows the Presidential Palace where Erdogan delivered his victory speech, while the crowd celebrates the victory with great enthusiasm. In one touching moment, a father is pictured carrying his daughter on his shoulders, with the girl holding a flag, creating a heartwarming and emotional scene. This image portrays a sense of unity and shared celebration among families and individuals in attendance. The caption below the image reads, "Supporters gathered outside the palace from all over Ankara to hear Mr. Erdogan".

The picture shown under the headline of CNN e-newspaper following the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election holds significant importance as the person depicted in the image is none other than the then-incumbent President of that time, Erdogan, who also ran as a candidate in the 2023 elections. His choice of a black suit and white shirt conveys a formal and serious demeanor. The presence of the Turkish flag and the Presidential seal in the background confirms that this image was taken in the Presidential office. The wedding ring on his right hand appears as a personal touch, possibly hinting at a more personal aspect of the interview or message being conveyed. Raising his right hand to shoulder level and moving his index and middle fingers while giving the interview likely serves to emphasize an important

statement or message. The second picture captures a jubilant individual, presumably an AK Party supporter, with a beaming smile and outstretched arms. In the background, Turkish flags and AK Party banners are visible, emphasizing the person's dedication and happiness. The caption beneath the image mentions that Sehat Pak, an individual, stated that Muslims should celebrate Erdogan's victory. This image illustrates diverse emotional responses to the election results and how people passionately celebrate their political leaders and parties.

The picture displayed under the headline of Euronews portrays Recep Tayyip Erdogan and contains significant symbols. Erdogan is seen wearing a black suit, a white shirt, and a predominantly blue tie in the picture, indicating a formal and serious demeanor. The background features the Presidential seal and two Turkish flags, underscoring his role as the President. The most prominent detail is Erdogan's use of the "R4BIA" sign with both hands. Initially used to protest the 2013 Egyptian military coup by supporters of Egypt's elected president, Mohammed Morsi, and the Muslim Brotherhood, Erdogan has also employed it to convey the message of "One Nation, One Flag, One Homeland, One State" (Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, 2017). This symbol reflects the unity of Erdogan and his supporters and conveys a specific political message. Additionally, the use of this symbol is significant for interpreting political events and movements on the international stage, representing a particular situation or viewpoint in Turkish politics.

5.1.1.3. Schematic analysis of the Two-Round election

At the macro structural level, the next step in the critical discourse analysis model involves the schematic structure. Within this schematic stage, news articles are analyzed in terms of how they present the main event, its outcomes, background information, and the context. This section examines news texts within the framework of the narrative pattern. It assesses whether the information provided in the text is comprehensive. Moreover, it evaluates how the main event is portrayed in the news and determines the conclusions drawn. Following this, the analysis shifts its focus towards the social and political aspects of the events (Güneş, 2018).

All four newspapers are presenting the main event in the introductions of their news articles regarding the results of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election's first and second rounds. Elections hold a significant place in society, and the presentation of the main events in newspapers helps us understand the political developments and election results in Türkiye. Contextual information is structural and historical, reflecting the social and political aspects of events (Özer, 2022). In Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN, and Euronews, it has been observed that discourses have been made regarding the reasons for the elections. In terms of contextual information, all four newspapers focus on election results, the performance of candidates, and the upcoming second-round election in their texts.

Here are some examples from all four newspapers about the first round election results. 1) About the results of the elections: "With 99 percent of domestic ballot boxes counted, Erdogan had 49.92 percent of votes, with Kilicdaroglu trailing closely with 44.95 percent of votes" (Al Jazeera), "Mr Erdogan led the first round with 49.51% of the vote, its chairman said" (BBC), "With 97.95% of votes counted, state-run Anadolu news agency reported Erdogan had 49.34% of votes, compared to 44.99% for his main opponent, Kemal Kilicdaroglu – meaning neither could claim an outright win" (CNN), "This is the first presidential election where Erdogan hasn't won in the first round. That's already a shock for the Turkish political system" (Euronews).

2) About the performance of candidates: "Some people find it surprising, but he (Erdogan) apparently delivered what they expected of him and promises that he will deliver even better in the aftermath of the election..." (Al Jazeera), "Mr Erdogan has been in power in Türkiye for more than 20 years, first as prime minister and then as president..." (BBC), "Kilicdaroglu, a mild mannered 74-year-old former bureaucrat, has promised to fix Türkiye's faltering economy and restore democratic institutions

compromised by a slide to authoritarianism during Erdogan's tenure" (CNN), "Kilicdaroglu, the leader of the Republican People's Party (CHP), said he was certain of a second-round victory, but Sunday's results indicate he could struggle to attract enough votes even though he was the candidate of the six-party Nation Alliance" (Euronews).

3) About the upcoming second-round election: "A run-off vote is a second round of voting that takes place when no candidate receives more than half of the presidential vote" (Al Jazeera), "A second round will go ahead on 28 May, with Mr Erdogan the clear favourite" (BBC), "If our nation says second round, we gladly accept it. We will absolutely win this election in the second round. Everyone will see that," he (Kilicdaroglu) said, of the runoff, slated for May 28" (CNN), "Supporters of both leading candidates wasted no time in launching their campaign for votes in the second round election on 28 May" (Euronews).

Here are some examples from all four newspapers about the second round election results. The sentence from Al Jazeera, "Erdogan received 52.2 percent of votes in the second round of the presidential election on Sunday, beating his rival Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who won 47.8 percent, according to preliminary results", discusses the election results and the performance of the candidates in the second round. The sentence from BBC, "President Erdogan ended with just over 52% of the vote, based on near-complete unofficial results. Almost half the electorate in this deeply polarized country did not back his authoritarian vision of Türkiye", provides information about the election results, the performance of President Erdogan. Here is a sentence from CNN that discusses election results and the performance of candidates: "With 99.43% of the votes counted, preliminary official results announced by Türkiye's Supreme Election Council (YSK) on Sunday showed Erdogan winning with 52.14% of the votes. Kilicdaroglu received 47.86%". "He defeated rival Kemal Kilicdaroglu in the second round of voting, after coming just short of an outright victory first time around on 14 May". This sentence from Euronews provides information about the election results and the performance of President Erdogan and opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu.

5.1.2. Micro level analysis

The micro structure analysis of the news texts involves syntactic analysis, regional coherence, word choices, and analysis of news rhetoric. In the syntactic analysis part, the active or passive and simple or complex structures of sentences are examined, while in the regional coherence part, the connections between sentences presented in the news texts, causal relationships, coherence, and complementary features are identified.

5.1.2.1. Syntactic analysis

In the four sample e-newspapers, it has been observed that sentences related to leaders/candidates are in the active voice, whereas sentences related to the election results are in the passive voice. In this context, here are sample sentences from the news articles that contain first-round election results:

Sentences related to leaders/candidates (Active voice):

- Al Jazeera - "Despite all of his lies and attacks, Erdogan did not receive the desired outcome," said Kilicdaroglu (Round 1). "All the means of the state were mobilized for one political party and laid at the feet of one man," the Republican People's Party (CHP) leader said (Round 2).
- BBC - "we (CHP) will absolutely win in the second round" (Kilicdaroglu's statement) (Round 1). "The entire nation of 85 million won," he (Erdogan) told cheering crowds outside his enormous palace on the edge of Ankara (Round 2).
- CNN - "If our nation says second round, we gladly accept it. We will absolutely win this election in the second round. Everyone will see that," he (Kilicdaroglu) said, of the runoff, slated for May 28 (Round

1). “We are not the only winners; the winner is Türkiye. The winner is all parts of our society, our democracy is the winner,” Erdogan said. (Round 2).

- Euronews - “We have no doubt that the preference of our nation, which gave the majority in parliament to the People’s Alliance, will be in favor of trust and stability in the (second round),” the president (Erdogan) told his supporters in Ankara (Round 1). “We will continue to be at the forefront of this struggle until real democracy comes to our country”, he (Kilicdaroglu) said in Ankara (Round 2).

Sentences related to the election results (Passive voice):

- Al Jazeera: The final results from Sunday’s vote are expected to be announced by 3pm (12:00 GMT) on Monday, Al Jazeera’s Farah al-Zaman Shawki said from Ankara, with votes from abroad yet to be fully counted (Round 1). But ahead of the May 14 first round, the polls were widely billed as the toughest Erdogan had ever faced... (Round 2).
- BBC – Mr Yener said all of the ballot boxes from Sunday's vote had been opened and turnout in Türkiye was 88.92% (Round 1). Although the final results were not confirmed, the Supreme Election Council said there was no doubt who had won (Round 2).
- CNN - On Thursday, Kilicdaroglu was boosted further by the late withdrawal from the race of a minor candidate, Muharrem Ince (Round 1). A catastrophic quake could have ended Erdogan's rule. He's now poised to win the election (Round 2).

5.1.2.2. Local syntactic coherence

In local syntactic coherence, sentences that make up news texts are evaluated within the framework of causal, referential, and functional relationships. The way in which the emphasized individual or topic in news presentation is defined is highlighted in terms of political framework and neutrality. The words used or preferred in this section play a significant role in the process of meaning formation. In this part, causality relationships in the news leads of sample newspapers have been examined (Doruk, 2013). It has been observed that there is a causal relationship in one of the news headlines and news leads.

“This is the first time Erdogan faces a second-round run-off vote as a presidential candidate” (Al Jazeera R 1): ‘This is the first time’ emphasizes a causal relationship, and the part “Erdogan faces a second-round run-off vote as a presidential candidate” explains this causal connection. The sentence conveys that Erdogan is facing a second-round run-off vote for the first time, and this is being presented as a reason or cause for the situation.

5.1.2.3. Word choices

Word choice plays an important role in determining the meaning of the news and reflecting the beliefs and opinions of the journalists. Within the news text, describing the same individual as a terrorist or a freedom fighter, for example, reveals the ideological atmosphere to which reporters and newspapers are committed. Word choice influences the way news is presented and helps readers gain a better understanding of events (Özer, 2022).

In evaluating the neutrality or tendency to emphasize a polarized political atmosphere of the headlines, it can be said that some of the headlines are more neutral, but such assessments are also subject to readers' interpretations. In this context, here are some possible inclinations of neutrality and polarization in the headlines:

Neutral Headings:

“Five key takeaways from Türkiye’s pivotal election” (Al Jazeera – R2)

“Turkish election: Five things we learned from the vote” (Euronews – R1)

These headlines use a more neutral language and primarily refer to the election results and information.

Headlines Emphasizing a Polarized Political Atmosphere:

“Turkish election victory for Erdogan leaves nation divided” (BBC – R2) – The word 'victory' has a positive implication for Erdogan; however, it highlights a divided nation.

“Türkiye's Erdogan heading for a runoff in knife-edge elections” (CNN – R1) – Erdogan’s runoff in Türkiye's closely contested elections implies a tough challenge.

5.1.2.4. Rhetoric of the news

In the micro-level rhetoric of news, elements like photos, graphics, and quotations enhance credibility and help convey the news theme. Selected photos and visuals shape audience perception, playing a vital role in news rhetoric to establish credibility and persuade (Güneş, 2018).

“What’s a run-off? All to know about Türkiye election results” (Al Jazeera R1): This headline uses news rhetoric to stimulate the reader's interest.

“Türkiye's presidential race to be decided in run-off” (BBC R1): This headline employs rhetoric by emphasizing that the presidential race in Türkiye will be determined in a run-off election.

“Türkiye's Erdogan heading for a runoff in knife-edge elections” (CNN R1): The phrase Heading for a runoff emphasizes this uncertainty, capturing the reader's attention.

“Turkish election: Five things we learned from the vote” (Euronews R1): This headline aims to pique the reader's interest in learning about the insights gained from the vote.

“Five key takeaways from Türkiye’s pivotal election” (Al Jazeera R2). The news rhetoric highlights five crucial insights derived from Türkiye's pivotal election, aiming to capture the reader's attention.

“Turkish election victory for Erdogan leaves nation divided” (BBC R2): This headline utilizes news rhetoric by emphasizing that Erdogan's victory in the Turkish election has resulted in a divided nation.

“Erdogan wins Turkish election, extending rule to third decade” (CNN R2): This headline uses news rhetoric to underscore Erdogan's victory in the Turkish election, highlighting the extension of his rule into a third decade.

“Turkish presidential election: Erdogan win leaves country divided” (Euronews R2): It highlights the polarization and differing sentiments within the country following the election, underlining the impact of the election outcome on national unity

Conclusion and Recommendation

The analysis of media coverage of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election in the first piece provides a multifaceted view of how international media outlets framed and reported on this significant political event. The examination of the macro and micro levels of discourse sheds light on the complex interplay of linguistic and thematic choices in shaping news narratives.

At the macro level, it is evident that each media outlet adopts a distinct thematic approach in presenting the elections. Al Jazeera highlights the competition between Erdogan and Kilicdaroglu, emphasizing their roles as key figures in the election. In contrast, BBC underscores the polarization and division within Türkiye following the election, providing a deeper sociopolitical context. CNN chooses to focus on Erdogan's historic victory, portraying the event as a pivotal moment in Turkish politics. Euronews, on the other hand, offers insights into the challenges that Türkiye faces as a nation. These thematic variations reflect the diverse editorial policies and preferences of these outlets.

Visual elements, such as photographs, further contribute to the overall framing of the event. The analysis of Erdogan's choice of attire, the presence of national symbols, and even subtle details like a wedding

ring, highlights the potential for conveying nuanced political and personal messages through visual content. The use of the "R4BIA" hand sign in the photograph accompanying Euronews' coverage is particularly noteworthy, signifying a powerful symbol with distinct political significance. These visual elements not only complement the textual content but also provide readers with additional layers of meaning.

The micro-level analysis delves into linguistic choices, sentence structures, and the use of rhetoric. The consistent use of the active voice when discussing political leaders, such as Erdogan and Kilicdaroglu, underscores their agency and significance. In contrast, the passive voice is employed when presenting election results, maintaining a more neutral tone. This deliberate syntactic choice ensures that political leaders are cast in a more dynamic and active light compared to the election results.

Local syntactic coherence and causal relationships are established to provide context and reasons for the events reported. This approach helps readers navigate the complex web of political developments leading up to and following the election. Additionally, the analysis of word choices reveals how language can influence reader perceptions. The headlines, whether neutral or polarized, serve as gateways to the articles, impacting how readers interpret and engage with the news. Rhetorical elements, such as headlines and subheadings, are strategically used to capture readers' attention and frame the news theme effectively.

In conclusion, the analysis of media coverage of the 2023 Turkish Presidential Election underscores the critical role of linguistic and thematic choices in shaping news narratives. The macro and micro-level analysis reveals the diversity in how international media outlets framed the event and how visual and textual elements work in harmony to construct these narratives. This study offers valuable insights into the complexities of media discourse and highlights the importance of media literacy in decoding news representations of political events.

Based on this study, we suggest that future research should focus on specific areas. Firstly, a comparative analysis of more media outlets can be conducted to better understand media diversity and different perspectives. Additionally, there is a need for psycholinguistic examinations; studies that delve deeper into how specific words or expressions influence reader perception. The impact of headlines is crucial, so research into how headlines affect media literacy could be beneficial. Furthermore, more research is needed to examine the relationship between media literacy education and news representation and the understanding of political events. Finally, the analysis of visual elements is also important, thus, more research should be conducted on how symbols and visual imagery convey and are perceived in conveying political messages. These recommendations are presented to guide future research in the fields of media representation and media literacy.

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