Chapter 10
The Use of Facebook by Political Parties and Leaders in the 2011 Turkish General Elections

Quantitative and Qualitative Content Analysis

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Abstract This paper, mainly accepting that web 2.0 has a contribution to the development of citizenship culture, examines the uses of Facebook by Turkish political parties and their leaders during the 2011 Turkish General Elections. By examining the relationship through the discursive practices of social media interface, this study reveals the possible converting effects of those practices of political parties by the usage of social media in the process of political communication. During the study, 9 Facebook accounts have been recorded for 3 months and analyzed by means of the quantitative and qualitative content analysis technique. Qualities of the accounts, such as customizations, information shared on the accounts, and the numbers of posts, have been examined for each account; topics,

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themes, styles, linguistic practices etc. have been examined for each post. Hence, this paper focuses on the opportunities offered by web 2.0 that have been used for election campaigning in Turkey, the mutual and interactive communication between the party and/or the candidate and the voters forming during the campaigning period, and the qualities of the online communications between the candidate and his/her competitors throughout the analysis of Facebook usage by both the party and the leaders.

10.1   Introduction

Social media, which play an important role in the development of civic citizenship due to the manifestation of speech-act activism in the digital public space, has become, in our days, an increasingly visible area in the evaluation and assessment of political developments. It is one of the main means used by political parties and leaders for expressing, reinforcing and spreading political preferences. Due to its multi-layered structure, the usage of social media for political communication leads to results and experiences that differ from one another. To be able to define the "successful" and "effective" use of the social media as a means of political communication, it is necessary to understand the specific conditions that fashion the experiences and results pertaining to the use of the social media, and to investigate how the features of these new media environments are utilized by both the followers and the account holders on the social media.

However, the role of social media in political communication is not free of its relation with the Internet. Therefore, while treating social media as part of political communication processes, the use of the Internet for political purposes should be briefly examined. In the study of Davis et al. (2009), the role of the Internet in the US election campaigns is analyzed in three periods, the *first* is discovery, the *second* is maturity and the *third* is post-maturity. The use of the Internet in the discovery period started with the operations carried out by George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton in 1992 election campaigns. In the first years, the main purposes of using the Internet involved exchanging e-mails and being present on computerized information systems, but by 1998, several candidates and parties had already opened websites. During the discovery period, which continued up to 2000, the Internet was used in order to exhibit the informational content which was not updated so often. The maturity period marked by the interaction function started with the launch of political campaign websites improved with advanced features. It can be put forth that the ideas which were put into practice through the websites of that period have laid the foundations of the social media practices in today's world. The support of the Internet to the election campaigns in the maturity period can be categorised into four groups: *campaign activities*, *communication*, *mobilization*, *source creation*. Campaign activities can be associated with data collection and distribution of election materials; communication can involve giving an advertisement, reaching certain communities and collecting e-mail addresses; motivation

may be connected to the involvement of electors in the election process more; and source creation can be linked to the strategies targeting to generate income out of several sources in little amounts. The post-maturity period corresponds to the period when election campaigns spread to the Internet as a whole instead of being limited to the corporate websites. The fact that the websites do not suffice to reach electors triggers the process during which two types of political communication come into the play: *media-controlled online communication tools* under third parties' thumb are the information transmission channels that reach more electors compared to news websites or campaign websites such as blogs. *User-controlled online communication tools*, however, involve social networks including Facebook and Twitter. Thus, the category to which social media belong is constituted by user-controlled online communication tools.

It can be said that the first time Turkish political parties prepared websites was in 2002 early general elections (Aktaş 2004; Öksüz and Turan-Yıldız 2004), and social media practices were first apparent in the 2009 local elections. In the 2009 local elections, it was observed that the youth branches of political parties intensively used social networks like Facebook for the purposes of explaining the party policy and announcing their activities, and some mayor candidates preferred to address their electors on their Facebook accounts. The study of Toprak et al. (2009) revealed that there were more than 500 groups which were launched in the name of the Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP) (Justice and Development Party in English) and appeared in the search results on Facebook by the summer of 2009. In the light of this, it was foreseen that political parties and their leaders would use social media more in the 2011 General Elections. In reality, both political parties and deputy candidates used social media a lot more in the 2011 General Elections compared to the previous elections. The fact that Turkey ranks the fourth in the world in terms of Facebook use has lead many political parties to open and set up hundreds of pages and groups on this interface. Twitter also became widespread in Turkey as of 2009–2010, and many young members of the parliament with high digital literacy levels in particular have gained thousands of followers on their Twitter accounts. It was observed that political party leaders began to use Twitter actively especially during election periods. Thus, the transition to web 2.0 from web 1.0 during political communication campaigns in Turkey was completed. This study describes how the leaders and members of these parties defined democracy, explained the meaning of democratic participation, produced and disseminated their own ideological positions and values and interacted with citizens by using their official accounts on Facebook during the elections. Within this perspective, we seek answers to the following questions: how and to what extent did political parties and their leaders use Facebook during the 2011 General Elections? What were the differences and similarities in the practices involved in the use of Facebook? How do the interaction and participation in the social media, as well as features such as the production of user-generated content, affect the political communication process and the discursive practices of the political party leaders?

10.2   Method

In this study, the accounts of political parties (or their representatives) on the social media in question were followed, their posts/sharings were examined from a thematic perspective, and they were put to quantitative and qualitative content analysis. Orhan Gökçe states that the objective of content analysis is "to analyse the texts produced and designed for public use" (2006: 20).

According to Paul Skalski, the points to be considered in content analysis within interactive media are content creation, content search, content archive and content coding. During the coding process, the code should absolutely be tested and put to a reliability test. Just like in empirical researches, "code" is the most fundamental unit in Internet research, too (Jensen 2011: 52). Gökçe points out that if the search categories are clearly formulated and properly adapted to the problem and content, the search can be productive (2006: 57). Christopher Weare and Wan-Ying Lin underline the importance of sampling unit, capturing and context unit in a content analysis to be carried out on web interface (2000: 272–292). It is especially demanding to code a material on web. It requires archiving as well as a high storage capacity. In this research, archiving and capturing are particularly emphasized.

In qualitative content analysis, the frequency of the use of certain themes, subjects and phenomena is examined (Mayring 2011: 116). Mayring states that qualitative and quantitative content analyses do not oppose each other, but on the contrary, they support each other. He adds that "classical quantitative research is a preliminary research for qualitative research…" (2011: 149). In this research, quantitative and qualitative content analyses are used in a way to complement each other.

At this point, we should explain how the sampling was taken out from the research population. In this research, "sampling for the purpose" as mentioned in the article entitled "Content Analysis in Political Communication" by William L. Benoit was used (2011: 272). Therefore, the official accounts of political parties, leaders and the members of their central boards of directors that gained the right to form a group in the Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (TBMM) (in English, Grand National Assembly of Turkey) according to the results of 12 June 2011 General Elections were captured in pdf format[1] by using a web interface (we reached the web pages through an internet browser without using a special application). The sampling consisted of the official accounts reached between April 1st, 2011 and June 30th, 2011. We accessed the accounts shown in Table 10.1 respectively.

The restrictions we encountered while creating a database in the sampling result from the fact that the account owners might have deleted some of their posts on Facebook. The official Facebook accounts of political parties and leaders were

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[1] It is recommended to use the "print screen", "save as file" or "convert to file" features in capturing social media from the web (Skalski 2012). For Facebook accounts, the PDF converters doPDF and CutePDF Writer were used, whereas PDF was used in storing Twitter accounts. Separate files were created for each political party and candidate.

Table 10.1 Turkish and English names of the parties and the accounts

Account	Account name in english	Party	Party name in english
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	[Person]	AKP	Justice and Development Party
AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	We Love AK Party	AKP	Justice and Development Party
Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	Republican People's Party	CHP	Republican People's Party
Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	[Person]	CHP	Republican People's Party
Sakin Güç	Calm Power	CHP	Republican People's Party
SesVerTürkiye	SpeakUpTurkey	MHP	National Movement Party
BDP BARIŞ VE DEMOKRASİ PARTİSİ	BDP PEACE AND DEMOCRACY PARTY	BDP	Peace and Democracy Party
A. Levent Tüzel	[Person]	Independent	Labour, Democracy and Freedom Block
Ertuğrul Kürkçü	[Person]	Independent	Labour, Democracy and Freedom Block

captured. However, if there was no official account owned by the party or political leader, the accounts which had more than 1,000,000 "likes" and looked like an official account and where there was a continuous flow were captured. After Facebook launched its page account application, opening a page account became more widespread than opening a group account. As there was no active group account created for political parties and leaders, we did not include group accounts in the sampling.

10.3 Facebook Experience by Political Parties and Leaders in the 2011 General Elections: Quantitative and Qualitative Content Analysis

This research involves sample units from four political parties which joined the 2011 General Elections in Turkey: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP), (Justice and Development Party) Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP) (Republican People's Party), Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP) (National Movement Party) and Emek, Demokrasi ve Özgürlük Bloku (EDOB) (Labour, Democracy and Freedom Block).

In this research, we followed the official Facebook accounts of the leaders of these four political parties (and/or other real persons representing the parties in question on social networks), their members of the central boards of directors as well as the deputy candidates who are media professionals (e.g. journalists,

Table 10.2 The Facebook accounts followed and captured

Party	Account	Facebook address (URL)
AKP	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	http://www.facebook.com/RecepTayyipErdogan
AKP	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	http://www.facebook.com/AkPartiyiSeviyoruz
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	http://www.facebook.com/herkesicinCHP
CHP	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	http://www.facebook.com/K.Kilicdaroglu
CHP	Sakin Güç	http://www.facebook.com/sakingucuz
MHP	SesVerTürkiye	http://www.facebook.com/svturkiye
BDP	BDP BARIŞ VE DEMOKRASİ PARTİSİ	http://www.facebook.com/BDPMERKEZ
Independent	A. Levent Tüzel	http://www.facebook.com/abdullahleventtuzel
Independent	Ertuğrul Kürkçü	http://www.facebook.com/ertugrulkurkcu

columnists, etc.). Data from 9 Facebook accounts were captured in the study. The details of the accounts in question can be seen in Table 10.2.[2]

We need to provide brief information about the parties whose Facebook accounts we examined in the 2011 General Elections. **AKP**[3] was founded in 2002. The leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected as the founding president by the founders' committee. Defining its ideology within the frame of conservative democracy, AKP came to power alone in all the general elections (2002, 2007 and 2011) and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan took charge of the premiership. He has been serving as Turkish Prime Minister since 2002. **CHP**[4] was founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923. The ideology of CHP is formed with regard to the principles of Kemalism and social democracy. CHP, also known as the party which has established the republic, was in power alone for 23 years until 1946 when the first general elections were held in Turkey. Today CHP is the main opposition party in the parliament. Its current president Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu has been on duty since 2010 as the 7th chairman of the party. The period beginning with the Millet Partisi (MP) (in English, Nation Party) and continuing with the Cumhuriyet Köylü Millet Partisi (CKMP) (in English, Republican Villagers National Party) represents the prehistory of **MHP**.[5] The party participated in 1969 general elections with its leader Alparslan Türkeş. Devlet Bahçeli was elected

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[2] The official Facebook accounts owned by the political parties were taken into account in the selection of Facebook accounts. If the parties had no Facebook accounts, the pages liked by more than 500,000 people were included in the sampling. Among independent candidates, the ones with web pages liked by more than 8,000 people were included in the sampling. The accounts we captured cover both "Personal accounts (profiles)" and Page Accounts (previously known as Fan Page), but we could find no data available for analysis in the personal accounts. Thus, the analysis was purely based on the data retrieved from "page accounts".

[3] Official website: http://www.akparti.org.tr/english [Accessed 25 November 2012].

[4] Official website: http://www.chp.org.tr/en [Accessed 25 November 2012].

[5] Official website: http://www.mhp.org.tr [Accessed 25 November 2012].

as the second leader after the demise of Türkeş and he is currently in office. Positioning itself within the framework of Turkish nationalism and Islam, MHP has had a significant role in the politics of Turkey since its foundation. The new Kurdish political movement, which began with the Halkın Emek Partisi (HEP) (in English, People's Labour Party) in 1990, is now represented by Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (BDP) (in English, the Peace and Democracy Party). **BDP** was founded in 2008 in preparation for the possibility of closure of the Demokratik Toplum Partisi (DTP) (in English, the Democratic Society Party) and actually took over its place when it was closed by the Constitutional Court in 2009.[6] Unlike in other parties, the co-presidential system is applied in BDP instead of the general presidency. The co-presidents of the party are Gültan Kışanak and Selahattin Demirtaş. BDP did not join the 2011 General Elections but supported the independent candidates that were reunited under the roof of the **EDÖB** (Labor, Democracy and Freedom Block). EDÖB has a very important place in the new Kurdish political movement. Within this block, 65 people from 41 cities announced their candidature. Supporting its independent candidates, BDP used the following slogans: "Democratic Republic", "Freedom and Democracy for Democratic Autonomy". In the meantime, independent candidates A. Levent Tüzel and Ertuğrul Kürkçü entered the election as the candidates of EDÖB.

The table below shows the number of "likes" as of February 18th, 2012 on the accounts included in our analysis (Table 10.3). The accounts with the highest number of likes were owned by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (1,397,220 "likes") and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (1,258,412 "likes"). It should be noted that neither of these accounts were official accounts of political parties. They were both opened in the name of their leaders.

It is observed that all of the pages included in the analysis, except for the one owned by A. Levent Tüzel, were managed by a social media expert, which is ordinary when it comes to the Facebook pages that represent the entire party. However, it is interesting that the accounts owned by the leaders, who are individuals, were also managed by social media experts.

The only user who did not provide any link address (URL) under the profile information of the accounts covered in the analysis was A. Levent Tüzel. All of the remaining accounts had a link to a Facebook page or to other website. As to the content position of the link addresses provided, it is seen that the page of CHP, "Calm Power" (original account name in Turkish: Sakin Güç) and the page of MHP, "Speak up, Turkey" (original account name in Turkish: SesVerTürkiye) are both available on and off Facebook. The links provided by other account owners were related to content outside Facebook; such addresses were mainly the official website addresses of the political party or the user him/herself. Table 10.4 shows the link addresses provided by the accounts.

An examination of the link addresses to websites other than the parties' official websites shows that the accounts of CHP, SesVerTürkiye and Ertuğrul Kürkçü

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[6] Official website: http://bdp.org.tr [Accessed 25 November 2012].

Table 10.3 Number of "likes"

Party	Account	Account management	Number of likes
AKP	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	by a social media expert	1.258.412
AKP	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	by a social media expert	548.920
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	by a social media expert	19.593
CHP	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	by a social media expert	1.397.220
CHP	Sakin Güç	by a social media expert	43.169
MHP	SesVerTürkiye	by a social media expert	62.953
BDP	BDP BARIŞ VE DEMOKRASİ PARTİSİ	by a social media expert	113.707
Independent	A. Levent Tüzel	by himself	8.375
Independent	Ertuğrul Kürkçü	by a social media expert	25.006

Table 10.4 Link addresses

Party	Account	Link address shared[a]
AKP	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	http://www.rte.gen.tr
AKP	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	http://akpartiyiseviyoruz.blogspot.com
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	https://twitter.com/herkesicinCHP http://www.chp.org.tr
CHP	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	http://www.kemalkilicdaroglu.com
CHP	Sakin Güç	www.facebook.com/sakinguc www.facebook.com/sakingucuz http://www.facebook.com/K.Kilicdaroglu http://www.chp.org.tr
MHP	SesVerTürkiye	http://www.sesverturkiye.com.tr http://www.twitter.com/sesverturkiye http://www.facebook.com/svturkiye http://www.youtube.com/svturkiye http://www.mhp.org.tr http://www.sesverturkiye.com.tr
BDP	BDP BARIŞ VE DEMOKRASİ PARTİSİ	http://bdpblog.wordpress.com
Independent	A. Levent Tüzel	NONE
Independent	Ertuğrul Kürkçü	http://twitter.com/#!/ekurkcu http://www.ertugrulkurkcu.org

[a]Quoted directly from the Facebook interface

Table 10.5 The features of profile visuals

Party	Account	Profile visuals		
		Represented by	Use of background[a]	Use of logo
AKP	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	Himself	None	None
AKP	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	None	None
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	Party Logo	Not Coded	Existing
CHP	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	Himself (With other people)	Existing	Existing
CHP	Sakin Güç	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	None	Existing
MHP	SesVerTürkiye	Devlet Bahçeli	None	Existing
BDP	BDP BARIŞ VE DEMOKRASİ PARTİSİ	Party Logo	Not coded	Existing
Independent	A. Levent Tüzel	Himself (With other people)	Existing	None
Independent	Ertuğrul Kürkçü	Himself	Existing	None

[a]The term "background" refers to a photograph which was taken when the candidate was in a meeting or was giving a speech giving an idea about the candidate's place

provided a link to their Twitter accounts; SesVerTürkiye provided a link to YouTube and BDP provided a link to Wordpress, which is a blog application.

The only account which provided content/information in a language other than Turkish was the account of BDP. The account information was provided in Kurdish and English as well as in Turkish.

Table 10.5 shows the features in the profile visuals of the accounts.

The representations in the profile visuals show that the accounts connected to the party (Sakin Güç, We love AK Party—original name in Turkish: AK Partiyi Seviyoruz-, SesVerTürkiye) used the visuals of leaders. BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi used just the party logo in their accounts. As to the representation of individuals in profile visuals, it was seen that Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and A. Levent Tüzel preferred to be represented with other people. An examination of the use of party logo reveals that CHP, MHP and BDP used party logos. A. Levent Tüzel and Ertuğrul Kürkçü, however, preferred not to use party logos in their accounts, a standard procedure for independent candidates. However, it is interesting that AKP did not use the party logo in its profile visuals, while all other political parties did.

The accounts of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Sakin Güç, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, and Ertuğrul Kürkçü were all mentioned to be "official accounts" (Table 10.6). Yet, there is no information about whether the accounts of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu Ses Ver Türkiye, and A. Levent Tüzel were official. Some of the accounts (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Ses Ver Türkiye) shared certain rules for the prospective users. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Sakin Güç, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, A. Levent Tüzel and Ertuğrul Kürkçü, however, preferred not to set any "page rule".

Table 10.6 Page type and rules

Party	Account	Official page	Page rules
AKP	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	No	Yes
AKP	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	No	Yes
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	Yes	No
CHP	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	No	Yes
CHP	Sakin Güç	Yes	No
MHP	SesVerTürkiye	No	Yes
BDP	BDP BARIŞ VE DEMOKRASİ PARTİSİ	Yes	No
Independent	A. Levent Tüzel	No	No
Independent	Ertuğrul Kürkçü	Yes	No
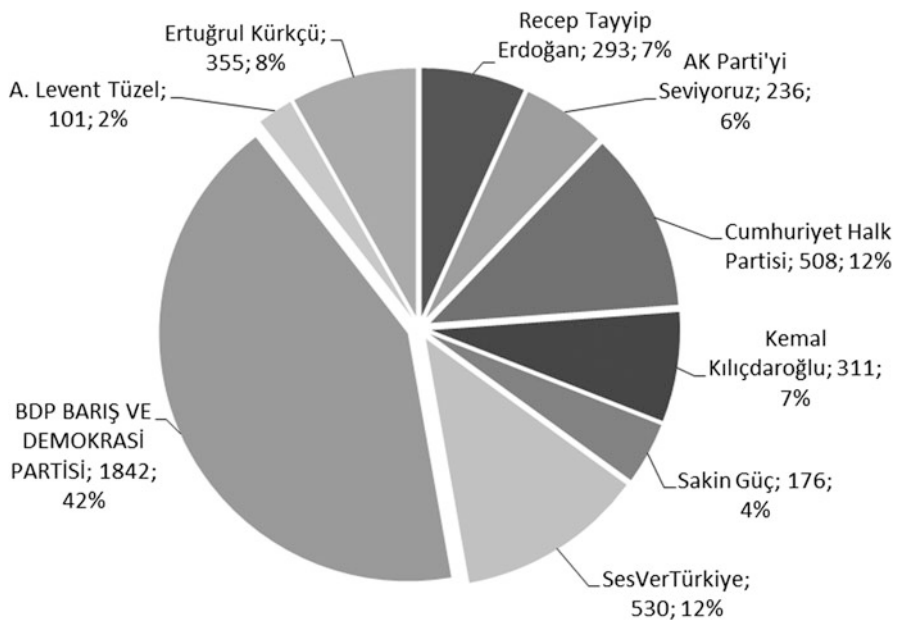
Fig. 10.1 Sampling—number of posts sent

The number and distribution of posts sent by the accounts analysed within this research during the sampling period (April 1st, 2011–June 30th, 2011) can be seen below (Fig. 10.1):

Among the accounts analysed in the sample, BDP, with 1,842 posts, is the party which used Facebook more intensively than the others. The numbers of posts sent by the other accounts are respectively as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—293, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—236, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—508, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—311, Sakin Güç—176, Ses Ver Türkiye—530, A. Levent Tüzel—101, and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—355. Among the accounts related to CHP, the official account named
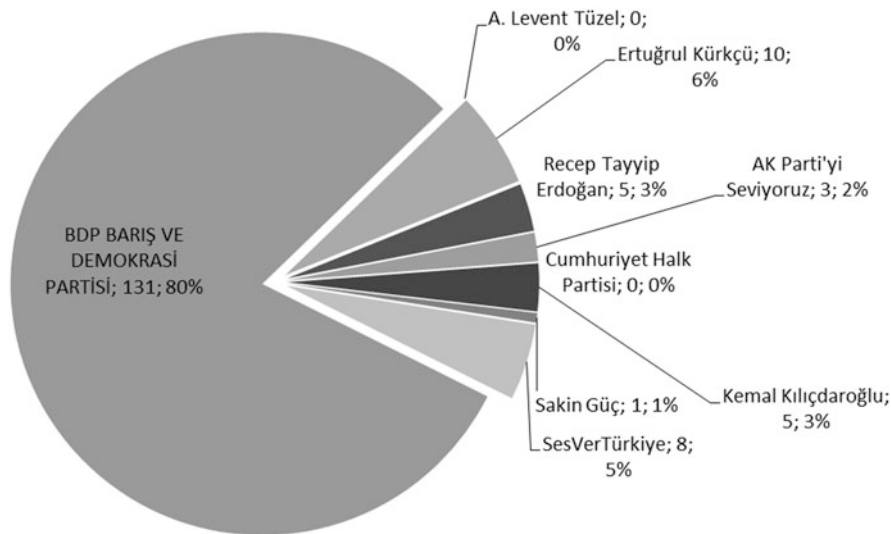
Fig. 10.2 Number of posts sent on June 12th

"Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi" used Facebook more intensively than the others did. The number of posts sent by this account is much higher than the other CHP accounts.

Figure 10.2 shows the posts sent on June 12th, the Election Day. The posts sent on the Election Day are of great importance because in Turkey the conventional media are banned from publishing or broadcasting anything related to the elections until the end of voting. However, there is no such ban on social media.

Since the frequency of posts changes, the daily post number in each account is divided by the total post number within the sample and converted to percentage.

The outlook of AKP posts on daily basis can be seen in Fig. 10.3.

An examination of the frequency of posts sent by AKP accounts shows that, during the election week, the number of posts sent by the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz exceeded the average number of posts sent by these accounts. It is seen that the number of posts sent by the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is higher on the following days; April 22nd; May 1st, 18th, 15th, 19th and 30th; June 7th, 8th and 11th. The number of posts sent by AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz increased on the following days: April 5th; May 25th and 30th; June 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9, 10th and 26th. No posts were sent by the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on April 6th, May 3rd and June 18th. The account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz did not send any posts on April 21st and 29th; May 10th; June 14th, 15th and 29th.

Figure 10.4 shows the daily number of posts sent by CHP accounts.

An examination of the frequency of posts sent by CHP accounts show that the accounts of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi and Sakin Güç were used much more frequently towards the end of May. The frequency of the posts sent by these accounts is at its peak between May 31st and June 12th. The account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu
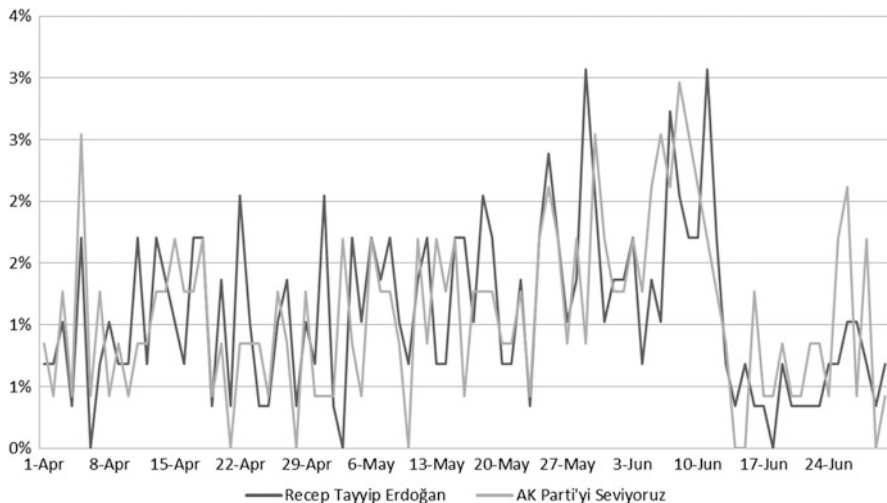
Fig. 10.3 AKP accounts daily post rates
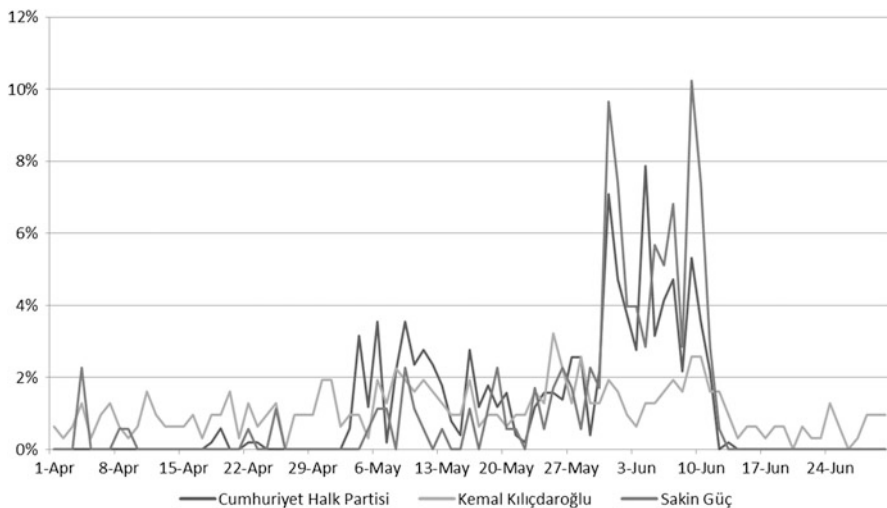
Fig. 10.4 CHP accounts daily post rates

is, however, used in a more stable way. Some posts are circulated over this account nearly every day. It is seen that during some days no posts are sent by the accounts of Sakin Güç and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi in April and after June 12th.

The daily post rates of MHP and BDP accounts are shown in Fig. 10.5.

It is observed that there is a rather fluctuating trend in the SesVerTürkiye account representing MHP in the sample. On some days, there are no posts, but on some others, very many posts are circulated one after another. BDP Barış ve Demokrasi
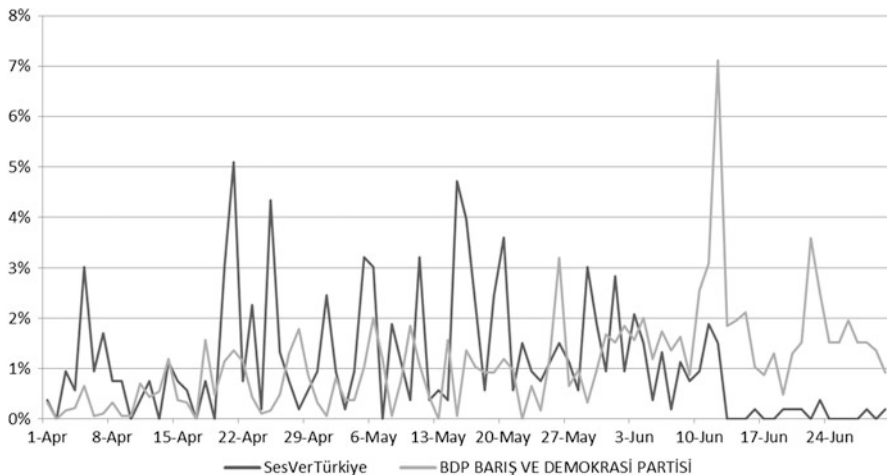
**Fig. 10.5** MHP and BDP accounts daily post rates

Partisi, however, used its account quite frequently. There are only a few days when no post is sent by the account of Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi. The day when BDP used the account the most frequently is June 12th, 2011, the Election Day. The accounts are used a lot more on May 26th, June 10th, 11th, 15th, 22nd and 23rd compared to other days.

Figure 10.6 shows the daily practices of the independent candidates.

There are many days when A. Levent Tüzel did not send any posts. It is also observed that during some days lots of posts were consecutively circulated by the same account. May 31st, 2011 is the day when the account is used the most. There are no posts sent by the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü on April 2nd, 4th, 8th and May 3rd and 6th. On other days, there is at least one post sent by Ertuğrul Kürkçü. Therefore, it can be said that this account is used in a stable way. This account is used the most on June 2nd, 2011. The account is used a lot also on June 12th, the Election Day and June 11th, the day before the election.

Below is the use of visual aids in the accounts (Fig. 10.7).

Visual aids in Facebook posts are used the most by the account of BDP Barış Ve Demokrasi Partisi with a ratio of 17.26 % (3,128). BDP is followed by AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz with a ratio of 14.41 % (34) and Sakin Güç with a ratio of 14.20 % (25). Another account where visuals are used on a large scale is the account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. 12.54 % of the posts in this account (39) covered visuals. The proportion of the posts which covered visuals and are sent by the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is, however, 6.48 % (19). The use of visuals in other accounts included in the sampling is below 5 %. The proportions of the posts with visuals sent by these accounts are as follows: Ertuğrul Kürkçü—3.38 % (12), A. Levent Tüzel—2.97 % (3), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—2.56 % (13) and SesVerTürkiye owned by MHP 1.70 % (9).
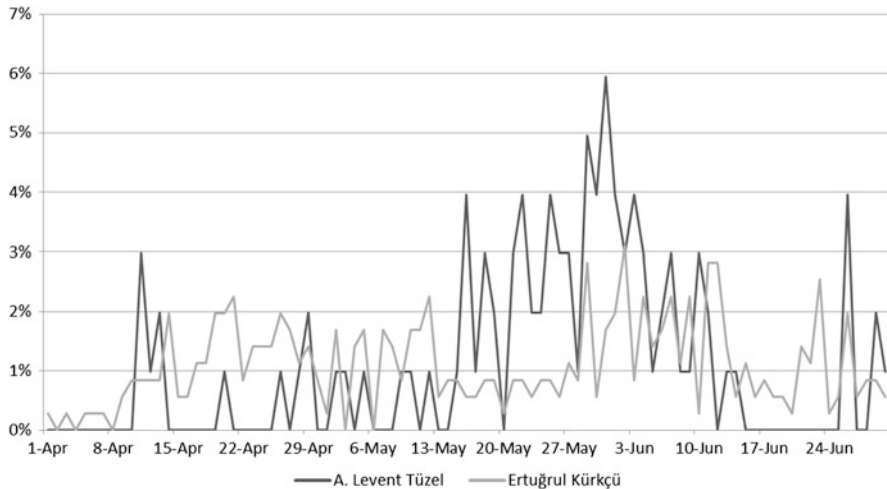
Fig. 10.6 Daily post rates of the accounts owned by independent candidates
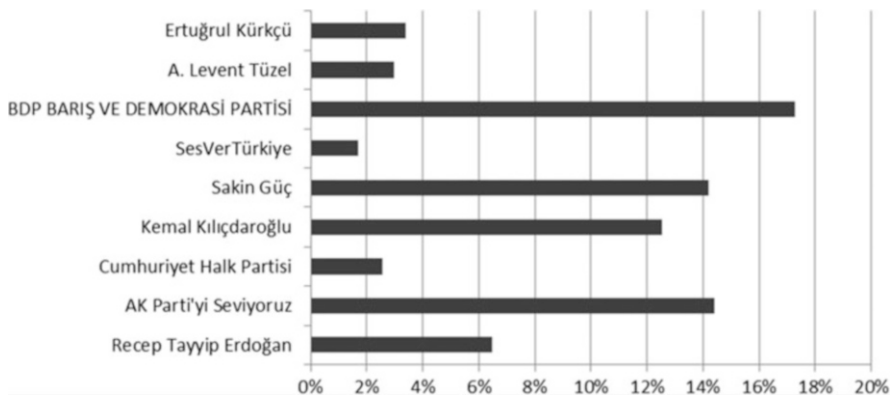
Fig. 10.7 Use of visual aids in the posts

It is detected that the content circulated by the accounts in question are specifically produced for Facebook (Fig. 10.8).

The ratio of contents specially produced for Facebook is clearly high in all accounts except the accounts of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi owned by CHP and SesVerTürkiye owned by MHP. The numbers of the content specially produced for Facebook are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—247, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—210, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—48, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—239, Sakin Güç—149, SesVerTürkiye—217, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—1,757, A. Levent Tüzel—70 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—327. 455 of the contents (89.57 %) in the account of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi are shared on Facebook over Twitter. 13 contents from the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and 1 content from the
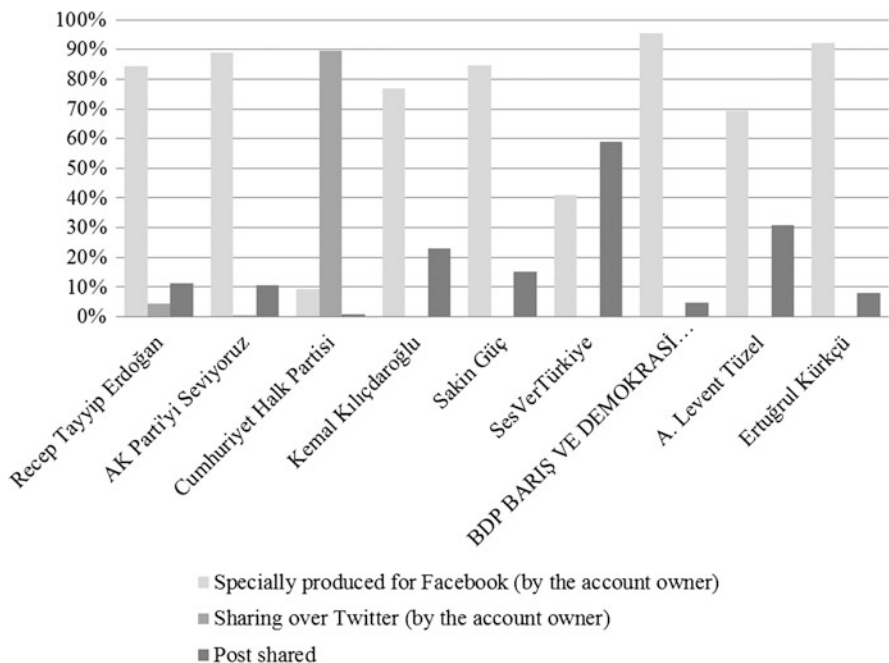
Legend:
■ Specially produced for Facebook (by the account owner)
■ Sharing over Twitter (by the account owner)
■ Post shared

Fig. 10.8 Source of post

account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz are forwarded to Facebook in the same manner. The other accounts do not cover any contents shared on Facebook through Twitter. An examination of the posts sent by the accounts reveals that some part of the content circulated by all accounts consists of the posts shared. The post shared refers to the content that is shared and thus re-circulated by a Facebook user (over his/her account) within the Facebook network or another position on the Internet. The account that used this method the most is the account of SesVerTürkiye with 313 posts. The numbers of posts shared by the accounts are as follows: A. Levent Tüzel Facebook—31, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—72, Sakin Güç—27, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—33 and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—25. The posts shared by other accounts are below 10 % of all the contents. The numbers of posts shared by these accounts are as follows: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—5, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—85, and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—28.

Figure 10.9 shows the themes of the posts sent from Facebook accounts.

The theme "his/her own party" is present in most of the posts. This theme is preferred by A. Levent Tüzel the most with a ratio of 98.02 % (99). He is followed by Ertuğrul Kürkçü with a ratio of 92.68 % (329) and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu with a ratio of 91.32 % (284). The ratios of the posts covering "his/her own party" theme as per the other accounts in the sampling are as follows: SesVerTürkiye 85.28 % (452), BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi 82.52 % (1,520), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi
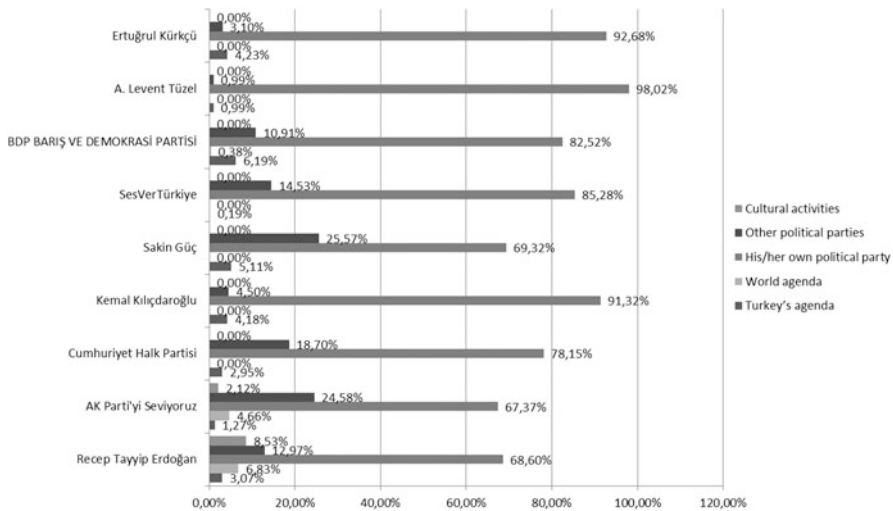
Fig. 10.9 Themes of posts

78.15 % (397), Sakin Güç 69.32 % (122), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan 68.60 % (201), and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz 67.37 % (159).

The second most preferred theme in Facebook posts is "other political parties". The account which preferred this theme the most is Sakin Güç with a ratio of 25.57 % (45). It is followed by AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz with a ratio of 24.58 % (58). The account with the lowest number of the theme "other political parties" is that of A. Levent Tüzel with a ratio of 0.99 % (1). The distribution of the theme "other political parties" as per the accounts is as follows: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—18.70 % (95), SesVerTürkiye—14.53 % (77), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—12.97 % (38), BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—10.91 % (201), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—4.50 % (14), and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—3.10 % (11).

The other themes used in Facebook accounts are "Turkey's agenda", "World Agenda" and "Cultural Activities". The theme "World Agenda" is used by 6.83 % (20) in the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, (20), by 4.66 % (11) in the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz and by 0.38 % (7) in the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi. The other accounts did not cover any contents related to the theme "World Agenda". It is seen that the theme "Cultural Activities" is used only in two accounts, which are the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan by 8.53 % (25) and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz by 2.12 % (5).

It is observed that there are other types of links in Facebook posts (Fig. 10.10).

A great majority or the posts sent by the accounts of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi and A. Levent Tüzel did not cover any link address and were specifically written for Facebook. The number of such posts is 1287 (69.87 %) in the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi and 62 (61.39 %) in the account of A. Levent Tüzel. The numbers of Facebook posts without any link addresses are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—59, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—58, Cumhuriyet Halk
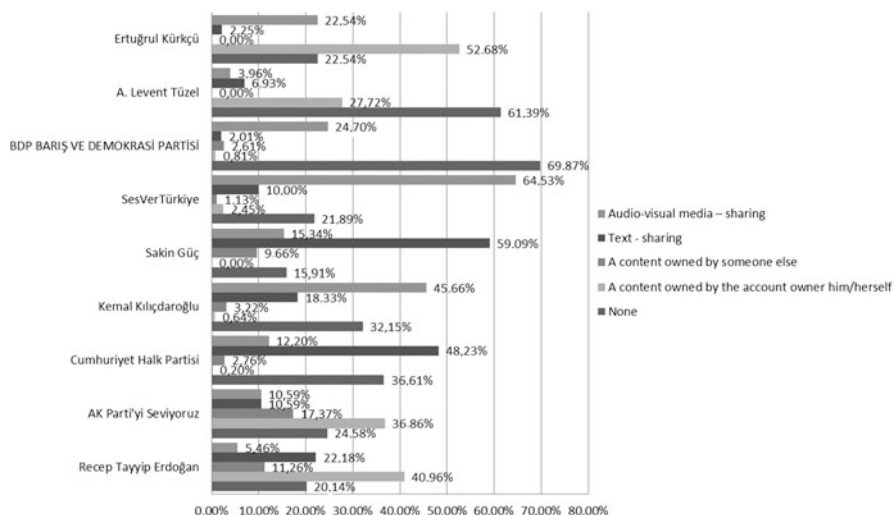
Fig. 10.10 Use of links within posts

Partisi—186, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—28, Sakin Güç—28, SesVerTürkiye—116 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—80. In most of the posts sent by the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Ertuğrul Kürkçü, a link address to a Facebook content that belongs to the account owner was shared. The numbers of posts with such a link address are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—120 (40.96 %), Ertuğrul Kürkçü—187 (52.68 %), AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—87, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—1, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu-2, SesVerTürkiye -13, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—15 and A. Levent Tüzel—28. The account of Sakin Güç did not include any link address to a Facebook content that belongs to the account owner. The number of link addresses to a Facebook account owned by someone else is low in all accounts, and A. Levent Tüzel and Ertuğrul Kürkçü did not share such a link address at all. The account with the highest number of link addresses to a Facebook content owned by another user is AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz with 41 posts (17.37 %). Although BDP account seems to take the lead with 48 posts including a link to another content, such posts constitute 2.61 % of their posts. The numbers of posts with a link address to a Facebook content owned by another user are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—33, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—14, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—10, Sakin Güç—17, SesVerTürkiye—6. Recirculation of a Facebook post belonging to the account owner or another user through other posts is significant in that discourse and expressions created on Facebook can, thus, be spread to a higher number of users. At this point, the posts sent by another person's Facebook account may make up the opinion of candidates, supporters and electors.

An examination of the sharings of the web-content apart from the Facebook posts reveals that there are two types of content, which are web-based text and audio-visual media. Under both groups are the digital copies of the traditional media productions and user-derived contents. The sharing of web-based content
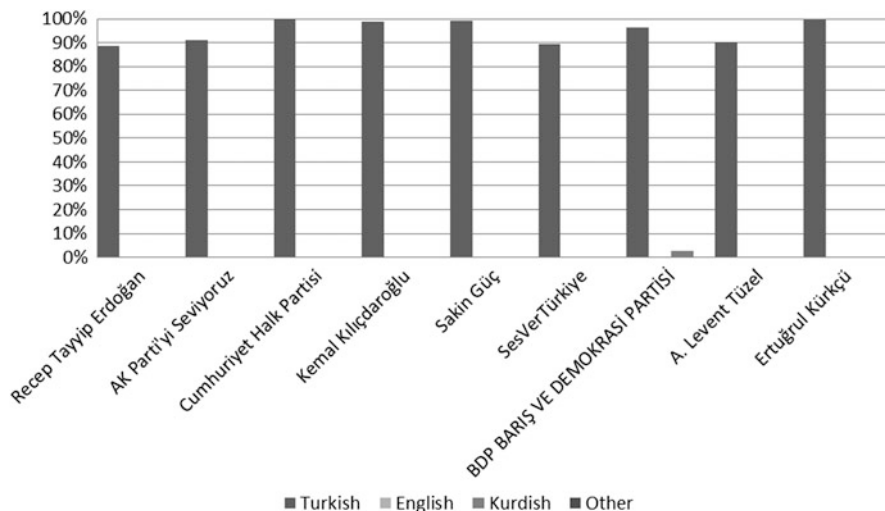
Fig. 10.11 Language of the post

such as blog articles or the news on news websites is seen in the account of Sakin Güç the most with a ratio of 59.09 % (104), which is followed by the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi with a ratio of 48.23 % (245). The number of the web-based content on Facebook recirculated by other accounts on Facebook are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—65, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—25, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—57, SesVerTürkiye—53, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—37, A. Levent Tüzel—7 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—8. The sharing of audio-visual web content such as videos is seen the most in SesVerTürkiye account with a ratio of 64.53 % (342), followed by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu account with a ratio of 45.66 % (142). The highest sharing in number belongs to BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi with 455 posts (24.70 %). The numbers of the posts including audio-visual content are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—16, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—25, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-62, Sakin Güç—27, A. Levent Tüzel—4 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—80.

An examination of the language used in the Facebook accounts within our sampling shows that nearly all of the posts are in Turkish (Fig. 10.11).

260 posts in the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, 215 posts in the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, 508 posts in the account of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 307 posts in the account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, 175 posts in the account of Sakin Güç, 474 posts in the account of SesVerTürkiye, 1,777 posts in the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, 91 posts in the account of A. Levent Tüzel and 354 posts in the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü are in Turkish. A language other than Turkish is very rarely used in the posts. 1 post is in English in the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi sent 5 posts in English in addition to 47 posts sent in Kurdish. The posts which are not composed as a text but appeared as a result of the activities on the interface can be displayed in other languages
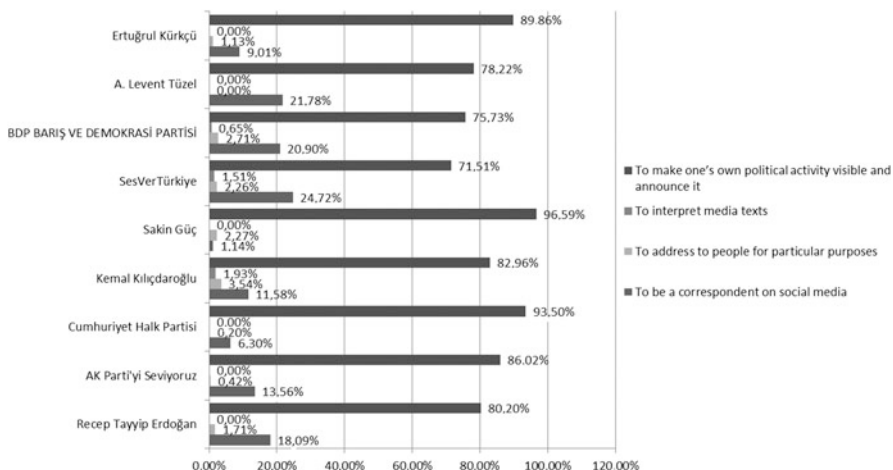
Fig. 10.12 Purposes of sending posts

supported by the interface. Such posts (e.g. the posts signalling that a photo is added to the album) are not coded in any language.

An examination of the purposes of sending posts through the Facebook accounts in our sampling shows that the most common purpose is to "make one's own political activity visible and announce it" (Fig. 10.12).

The graphic shows that the usage ratios of Facebook posts for the purpose of "making one's own political activity visible and announcing it" as per the accounts as follows: Sakin Güç—96.59 % (170), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—93.50 % (475), Ertuğrul Kürkçü—89.86 % (319), AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—86.02 % (203), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—82.96 % (258), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—80.20 % (235), A. Levent Tüzel—78.22 % (79), BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—75.73 % (1,395) and SesVerTürkiye- 71.51 % (379).

The account which used Facebook posts for the purpose of "being a correspondent on social media" the most is SesVerTürkiye with a ratio of 24.72 % (131), followed by the account of A. Levent Tüzel 21.78 % (22) and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi with a ratio of 20.90 % (385). The purpose of being a correspondent on social media is below 20 % in other accounts. The ratios of posts sent for the purpose of being a correspondent on social media are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—18.09 % (53), AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—13.56 % (32), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—11.58 % (36), Ertuğrul Kürkçü—9.01 % (32) and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—6.30 % (32). The lowest ratio in this category belongs to the account of Sakin Güç, which is 1.14 % (2).

In the accounts apart from that of A. Levent Tüzel, we detected posts serving the purpose of "addressing to people for particular purposes". This purpose is most visible in the account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. 3.54 % (11) of the posts in this account covered a special address to people. The ratio of posts with a special address to people varies from 0.20 % to 2.27 %.

Different from other accounts in our sampling, the accounts of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, SesVerTürkiye and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi shared posts for the purpose of "interpreting media texts". The ratios of posts sent for this purpose are as follows: Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—1.93 % (6), SesVerTürkiye—1.51 % (8) and Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—0.65 % (12).

An examination of the target group of the posts on Facebook accounts reveals that the target group is mainly composed by "general electors".

The number of posts targeting the general voters as per the accounts are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—273, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—215, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—495, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—284, Sakin Güç—175, SesVerTürkiye—464, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—1,553, A. Levent Tüzel—77 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—330. In all accounts included in the sampling, the second target group of the posts is the party's own electors, though the number of posts may vary. The numbers of posts targeting the party's own electors are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—4, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—4, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—9, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—23, Sakin Güç—1, SesVerTürkiye—66, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—258, A. Levent Tüzel—24 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—25. There are posts targeting "other electors", too: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—11, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—10, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—2 and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—15. An examination of other categories shows that only in the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, there is 1 post targeting the "party members and delegates". The accounts targeting international public opinion and organisations and the number of posts aimed at them are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—5, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—6, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—14, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—14. In the accounts of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi 3 and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi 2, some posts are also targeting individuals with whom there is a private conversation.

An examination of words and word groups used in the posts shows that the posts sent by the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi and Ertuğrul Kürkçü mainly cover connotations (Fig. 10.13). The words are used with their connotations in 62 posts sent by the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, 91 posts sent by the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, 194 posts sent by the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi and 83 posts sent by the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü. The number of idioms used in the posts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is equal to the number of posts with connotations. In that account, idioms are frequently used. The numbers of posts covering idioms as per the accounts are as follows: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—160, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—79, Sakin Güç—68, SesVerTürkiye—76, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—175 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—30. In these accounts, idioms constitute the most frequently used words and word groups. In the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, there are 50 posts with idioms constituting one third of the most frequently used word group in this account. The second most frequently used word group in the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz is metonymy, with 52 posts in this category. The numbers of posts with metonymy as per the accounts are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—41, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—61, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—4, Sakin Güç—3,
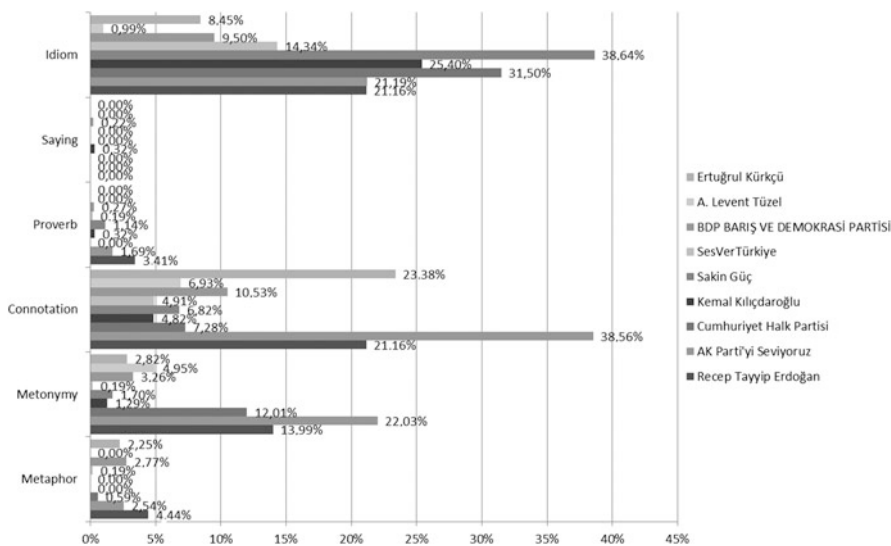
Fig. 10.13 Words and word groups in the posts

SesVerTürkiye—1, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—60, A. Levent Tüzel—5 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—10. The use of metaphors in the posts is as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—13 posts, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—6 posts, SesVerTürkiye—1 post, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—51 posts and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—8 posts. The use of proverbs in the posts is low. 10 posts in Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's account, 4 posts in AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz account, 1 post in Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's account, 2 posts in Sakin Güç account, 1 post in SesVerTürkiye account and 5 posts in BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi account contain proverbs. An examination of sayings in the posts shows that Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu used a saying in 1 post and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi used a saying in 4 posts.

The style of the posts is coded as reproach, mockery, teasing, despising, extolling, praising, provocation and settlement. All options available for each post are marked in the coding table (Fig. 10.14).

The analysis revealed that the most preferred style in the posts is "praising". The numbers of posts including "praising" as per the accounts are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—208, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—149, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—345, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—232, Sakin Güç—107, SesVerTürkiye—273, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—1,085, A. Levent Tüzel—99 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—235. With the exception of the account of SesVerTürkiye, the second most preferred style in posts is teasing. The numbers of posts including "teasing" as per the accounts are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—82, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—89, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—166, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—77, Sakin Güç 65, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—516, A. Levent Tüzel—2 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—87. The second most frequently used style in the account of SesVerTürkiye is provocation with a ratio of 27.92 % (148). Provocation is followed by teasing with a ratio of
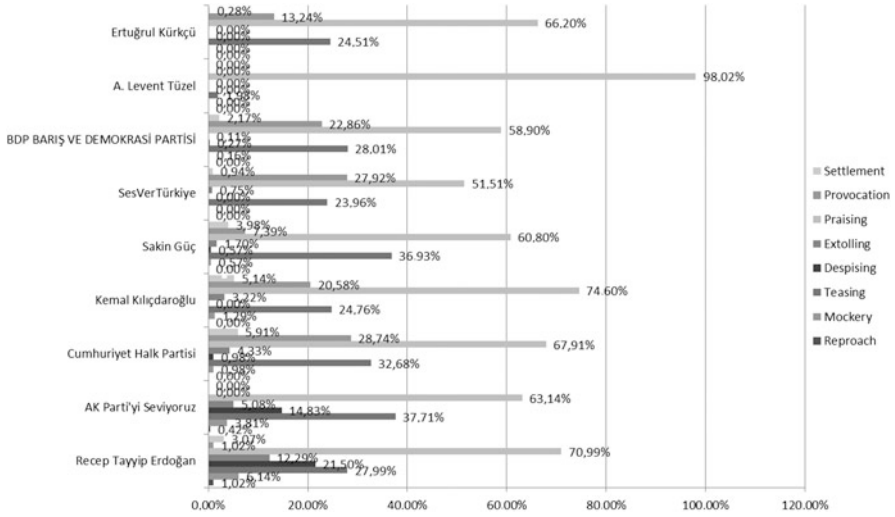
Fig. 10.14 Style of posts

23.96 % (127). The third most preferred style in the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz is "despising" with a ratio of respectively 21.50 % (63) and 14.83 % (35). "Provocation" is the third most preferred style in the accounts of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—28.74 % (146), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—20.58 % (64), Sakin Güç—7.39 % (13), BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—22.86 % (421) and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—13.24 % (47). The other posts which gave place to despising are the accounts of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (5 posts), BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (5 posts), Sakin Güç (1 post). The accounts which gave place to "extolling" are the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (36 posts), AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz (12 posts), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (22 posts), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (10 posts), Sakin Güç (3 posts), SesVerTürkiye (4 posts) and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (2 posts).

The numbers of posts giving place to "settlement" as per the accounts are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—9, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—30, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—16, Sakin Güç—7, SesVerTürkiye—5, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—40 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—1. The numbers of posts giving place to "mockery" as per the accounts are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—18, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—9, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—5, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—1 and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—3. Although the number of posts giving place to reproach is low, 3 posts sent from the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and 1 post sent from the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz were marked by reproach as a style.

The most widely used subject in the posts is "his/her own party" (Fig. 10.15). It is observed that the same title is applicable to the posts of independent candidates, as well. The title of "his/her own party" refers to the independent candidates' own campaign activities.
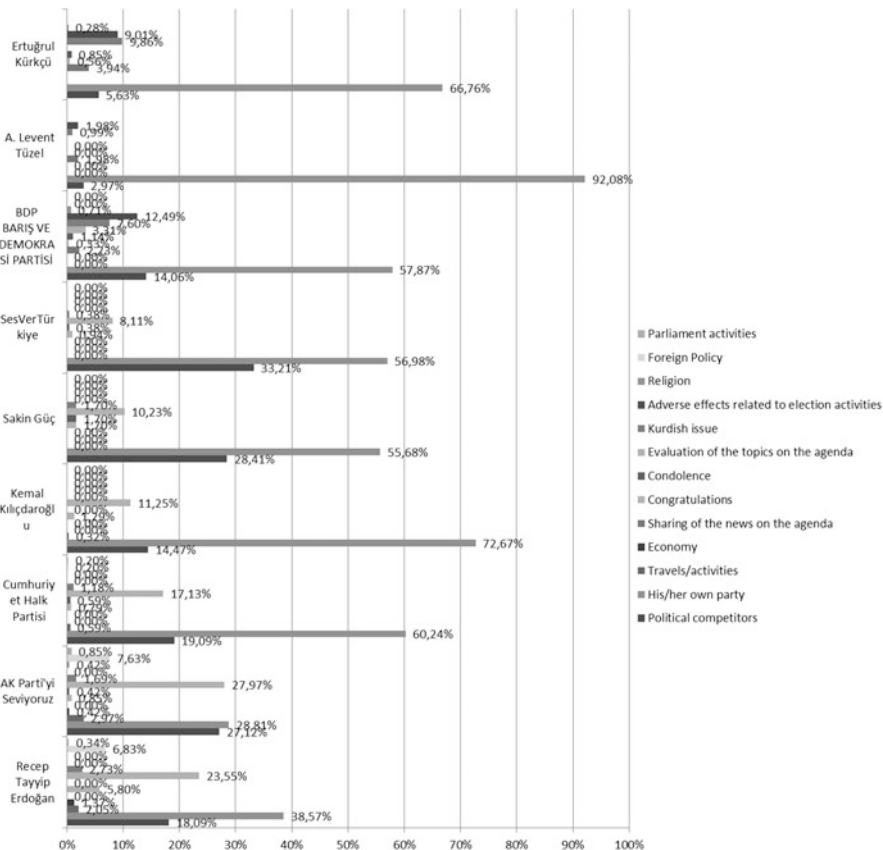
Fig. 10.15 Subject of the post

The numbers of posts giving place to the subject of "his/her own party" as per the accounts are as follows: A. Levent Tüzel—93, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—226, Ertuğrul Kürkçü—237, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—306, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—1,066, SesVerTürkiye—302, Sakin Güç—98, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—113 and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—68. The second most widely used subject in the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (69) and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz (66) is the "evaluation of the topics on the agenda". The third most widely used subject in these accounts is "political competitors". 53 posts sent from the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and 64 posts sent from the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz are marked by the subject of "political competitors". The posts coded under the subject of "political competitors" constituted the second most widely used subject in the sharings of the following accounts: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (97), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (45), Sakin Güç (50), SesVerTürkiye (176), BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (256) and A. Levent Tüzel (3). The second most widely used subject in the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü is the Kurdish problem with 35 posts. It is followed by "adverse

effects related to election activities" (32). The fourth most widely used subject in this account is "political competitors" (20). The subject of "adverse effects related to campaign activities" can be seen in the accounts of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (230) and A. Levent Tüzel (2) in addition to the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü, while the other accounts examined within this research did not give place to this subject. The subject of "adverse effects related to campaign activities" constituted the third most widely used subject in the posts of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi. The subject of "evaluation of the subjects on the agenda" was the third most widely used subject in the accounts of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (87), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (35), Sakin Güç (18) and SesVerTürkiye (43). 61 posts sent from the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi gave place to the subject of "evaluation of the subjects on the agenda", which constituted the fourth most widely used subject in the posts of this account. The posts coded under "Kurdish issue" can be seen in all accounts except for the account of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, though not so high in number. The account that gave place to this subject the most is the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi with 140 posts. The numbers of posts which covered this subject are as follows as per the accounts: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan— 8, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—4, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—6, Sakin Güç—3, SesVerTürkiye—2 and A. Levent Tüzel—1.

The accounts which shared posts related to the parliament activities are Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (1), AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz (2) and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (1). The posts covering the subject of foreign policy were sent from the accounts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (20), AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz (18) and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (1). Other accounts did not use this subject at all. The accounts which gave place to the subject of religion and the number of posts are as follows: BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—13, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—1, Ertuğrul Kürkçü—1. All accounts, excluding that of A. Levent Tüzel, gave place to the subjects of congratulation and condolence, though not so much. The number of posts with the subject of applause are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—17, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—2, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—4, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—4, Sakin Güç—3, SesVerTürkiye—5, BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—6 and Ertuğrul Kürkçü—2. The numbers of posts with the subject of condolence are as follows: AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—1, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—3, Sakin Güç—3, Ertuğrul Kürkçü -3, SesVerTürkiye—2 and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—21. A. Levent Tüzel gave place to neither condolence nor applause. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu did not give any place to condolence in their posts. The subject of sharing the news on the agenda was present in 41 posts sent by the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, 2 posts sent by the account of A. Levent Tüzel and 14 posts sent by the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü. The other accounts did not cover this subject. The subject of economy is seen only in the following accounts: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (4 posts) and AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz (1 post). The accounts which gave place to travels and activities are as follows: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (6), AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz (7), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (3) and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (1).

There are also other subjects that are included in the coding, but they are not covered in the graphic because they are observed only in a few posts. The subjects
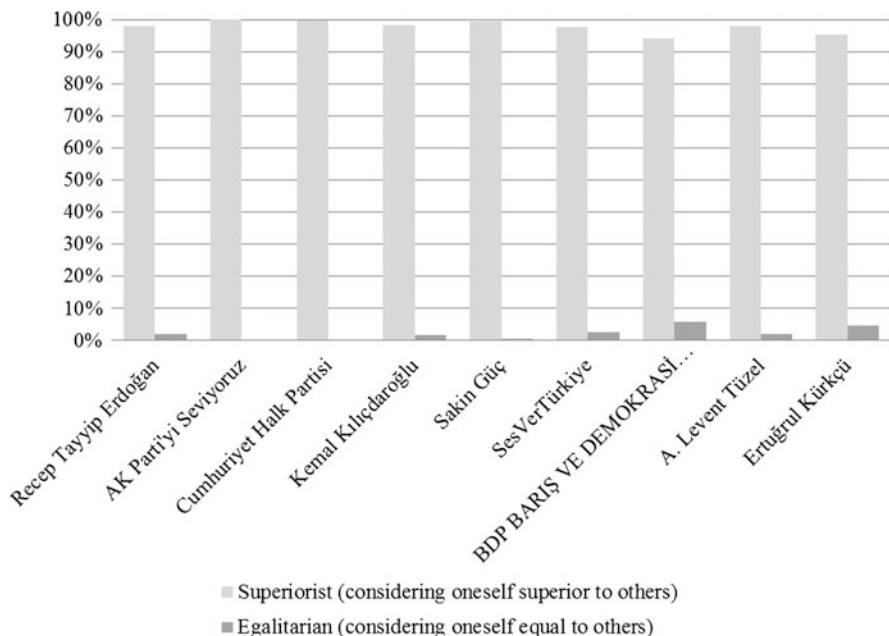
Fig. 10.16 Perspective of the language

in question and the number of posts covering them are as follows: "Use of traditional media for political identity" is present in 2 posts sent by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and 3 posts sent by BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi. "Opening an institution and activity of the local institution" is present in 7 posts sent by Ertuğrul Kürkçü. "Personal agenda" is present in 1 post of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi. "Thanks for the election result" is present in 3 posts sent by the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü. "Sports events" was present in 1 post of Sakin Güç. "Request from the electors" is present in 1 post of Ertuğrul Kürkçü. "Turkish Armed Forces" is present in 2 posts sent by AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz. There are also other subjects which are included in the coding table but are not covered by any posts. These are: "EU-related issues", "Election campaign announcements", "Wishes about the elections", "Local agenda of the polling district" and "Social events".

An examination of the perspective in the language of posts on Facebook accounts has revealed that nearly all of the posts had a "superiorist" perspective, i.e., not "egalitarian" (Fig. 10.16).

The ratios of the Facebook posts written with a superiorist standpoint are as follows per accounts: AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz—100 % (236), Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—99.61 % (506), Sakin Güç—99.43 % (175), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—98.39 % (306), A. Levent Tüzel—98.02 % (99), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan- 97.95 % (287), SesVerTürkiye—97.55 % (517), Ertuğrul Kürkçü—95.21 % (338) and BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi—94.25 % (1,736). The accounts, excluding those of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, shared some posts with an egalitarian standpoint, though not so
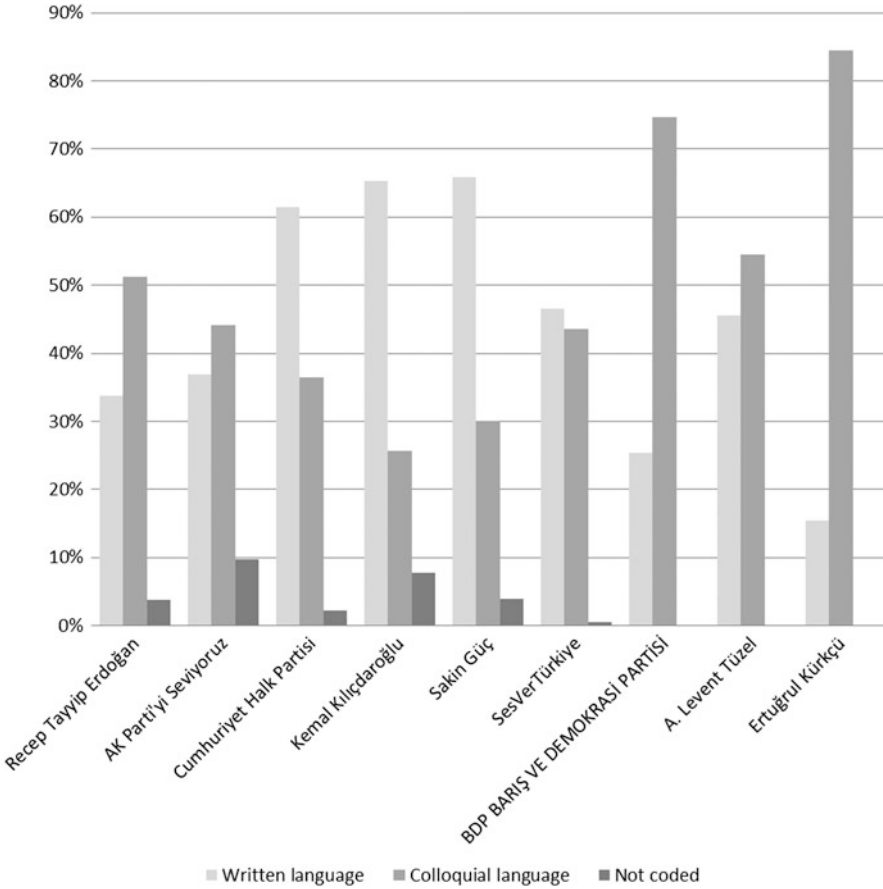
Fig. 10.17 Register of language

many. The account which adopted the egalitarian standpoint the most is BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi with a ratio of 5.75 % (106 posts). The account which adopted the egalitarian standpoint the least is the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi with a ratio of 0.39 % (2). The use of egalitarian language is as follows in other accounts: Ertuğrul Kürkçü—4.79 % (17), SesVerTürkiye—2.45 % (13), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—2.05 % (6), A. Levent Tüzel—1.98 % (2), Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu—1.61 % (5) and Sakin Güç—0.57 % (1).

An examination of the register of language used in the posts shows that Ertuğrul Kürkçü usually preferred the colloquial language (Fig. 10.17).

The ratio of colloquial language used in the posts of Ertuğrul Kürkçü is 84.51 % (300), while the ratio of written language in the same account is 15.49 % (55). From this perspective, it can be said that the account which used the written language the least is Ertuğrul Kürkçü. The second account with a high ratio of colloquial language is the account of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (74.65 %) with 1,375

Table 10.7 The most frequently repeated words as per the accounts

Word	The number of accounts where the word is repeated	The account	Number of repetition
Seçim (Election)	7	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	201
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	52
		Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	25
		SesVerTürkiye	22
		Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	19
		Sakin Güç	11
		A. Levent Tüzel	10
Türkiye (Turkey)	6	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	80
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	40
		SesVerTürkiye	38
		Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	37
		Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	24
		Sakin Güç	17
Genel (General)	6	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	107
		Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	34
		SesVerTürkiye	33
		Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	27
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	18
		Sakin Güç	9
Demokrasi (Democracy)	5	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	512
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	74
		A. Levent Tüzel	31
		Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	21
		Sakin Güç	8
CHP	5	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	108
		Sakin Güç	58
		Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	37
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	29
		Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	20
Yeni (New)	5	SesVerTürkiye	77
		Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	47
			40

(continued)

Table 10.7 (continued)

Word	The number of accounts where the word is repeated	The account	Number of repetition
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	
		Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	30
		A. Levent Tüzel	23
İstanbul (Istanbul)	4	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	21
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	18
		Sakin Güç	13
		A. Levent Tüzel	7
Kendi (Own)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	258
		SesVerTürkiye	38
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	18
Özgürlük (Freedom)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	159
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	89
		A. Levent Tüzel	29
Milletvekili (Deputy)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	230
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	34
		A. Levent Tüzel	6
Kürt (Kurdish)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	201
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	38
		A. Levent Tüzel	5
Kemal	3	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	144
		Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	53
		Sakin Güç	31
Emek (Labour)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	108
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	61
		A. Levent Tüzel	27
Kılıçdaroğlu	3	Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	110
		Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	51
		Sakin Güç	18
AKP	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	151
		Sakin Güç	13
		SesVerTürkiye	13
Blok(u) (Block)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	112
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	56
		A. Levent Tüzel	8

(continued)

Table 10.7 (continued)

Word	The number of accounts where the word is repeated	The account	Number of repetition
Bağımsız (Independent)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	127
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	31
		A. Levent Tüzel	7
Oy (Vote)	3	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	104
		Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	25
		Sakin Güç	8
Biz (We)	3	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	52
		Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	51
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	31
Recep	3	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	69
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	21
		Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	18
Erdoğan	3	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	60
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	22
		Sakin Güç	9
Halk (Public)	3	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	51
		A. Levent Tüzel	16
		Sakin Güç	13
Barış (Peace)	2	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	377
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	36
Saat (Hour)	2	BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi	117
		SesVerTürkiye	12
Ak[a] (Clean)	2	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	59
		Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	53
Tayyip	2	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	72
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	20
Mayıs (May the month)	2	SesVerTürkiye	38
		A. Levent Tüzel	22

Table 10.7 (continued)

Word	The number of accounts where the word is repeated	The account	Number of repetition
Bin (Thousand)	2	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	34
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	23
Rahat (Comfortable)	2	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	35
		Sakin Güç	22
Haziran (June)	2	Ertuğrul Kürkçü	32
		SesVerTürkiye	23
Parti (Party)	2	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	34
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	20
Nefes (Breath)	2	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	31
		Sakin Güç	18
2011	2	SesVerTürkiye	41
		A. Levent Tüzel	5
Bizim (Our)	2	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	27
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	19
O (He/She/It)	2	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	25
		AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	21
Halkın (The public's)	2	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	28
		Sakin Güç	16
Karşı (Against/ Opposing)	2	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	21
		Ertuğrul Kürkçü	20
Herkes (Everybody)	2	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	26
		Sakin Güç	14
Sandık[ğa] ([to the] ballot box)	2	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	24
		Sakin Güç	14
Büyük (Big)	2	AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz	21
		Sakin Güç	12
Gücünü (His/her/its power)	2	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi	20
		Sakin Güç	11
Devlet (State)	2	SesVerTürkiye	16
		Sakin Güç	9

Table 10.7   (continued)

Word	The number of accounts where the word is repeated	The account	Number of repetition
12	2	SesVerTürkiye	12
		Sakin Güç	9

^aA homonymic word meaning "clean" or the shortened form of AKP

posts. The ratio of written language in this account is 25.35 % (467). The Facebook account with the highest ratio of written language is that of Sakin Güç (65.91 %) with 116 posts. Sakin Güç is followed by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu with a ratio of 65.27 % (203) and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi with a ratio of 61.42 % (312 posts).

The ratios of colloquial language and written language are very close to each other in the account of SesVerTürkiye. 43.58 % (231) of the posts sent from this account are typed with colloquial language, while 46.60 % (247) of the posts are typed in written language.

The register of language in the other 3 accounts examined in this research is as follows: colloquial language in the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with a ratio of 51.19 % (150 posts), written language in the account of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with a ratio of 33.79 % (99 posts); colloquial language in the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz with a ratio of 44.07 % (104 posts), written language in the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz with a ratio of 36.86 % (87 posts); colloquial language in the account of A. Levent Tüzel with a ratio of 54.46 % (55 posts), written language in the account of AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz with a ratio of 45.54 % (46 posts).

The most frequently repeated 25 words in each account are examined in this research. Table 10.7 shows the list of the most frequently repeated words in different accounts.

While calculating the number of repeated words, we looked at each recurring word. Then, we omitted the words such as prepositions and conjunctions that are meaningless when used alone and finally detected the 25 words that were repeated the most.

An examination of the use of these words revealed that the words "Kemal" and "Kılıçdaroğlu" are used only by the CHP accounts, but they are used several times. The word "Tayyip", which is a part of the name Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is used a lot only by the accounts of AKP. The words "Recep" and "Erdoğan" are, however, used a lot in two accounts representing CHP in addition to the accounts of AKP. It is observed that the names of other parties are not mentioned a lot in the posts of AKP accounts, whereas the posts of CHP accounts frequently gave place to words referring to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the leader of AKP.

It is interesting that the two accounts representing AKP as well as 3 accounts representing CHP used the word CHP more than the others did. BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, Sakin Güç, SesVerTürkiye accounts frequently gave place to the word "AKP". Yet, in AKP posts, the words "Ak" and "Party" (not AKP) ranked among the most frequently used words.

The word "Kurdish" is used the most by the accounts of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, Ertuğrul Kürkçü and A. Levent Tüzel, who entered the elections as the independent candidates of EDÖB. The word "Kurdish" is not used a lot in the accounts of AKP, CHP and MHP.

10.4 Commentary

The research revealed that the political parties, which invested in web 1.0 technology and used it efficiently in a period when web proved to be a political communication tool, developed relatively successful applications and strategies in their social media experience. Especially AKP, which is one of the first parties to invest in web 1.0, has applied successful strategies on social media. The social media practices of the political parties in the 2011 General Elections showed that social media constitute a "new power" for all political parties.

It was observed that all of the political parties whose Facebook accounts are examined within this research have a common objective: to make announcements and explanations. In this regard, the social media opportunities that the politicians can enjoy and frequently have recourse to can be listed as follows:

- to present their political parties, leaders and discourses;
- to continuously update such information;
- to inform the electors about the activities through a regular information flow;
- to compile/observe electors' opinions about certain topics;
- to provide support and find audience for the offline activities of the political parties and leaders.

The main purpose of using posts on Facebook is to "make the political activity visible and to announce it". With the exception of Sakin Güç, the second most widespread purpose of using posts is "to be a social media correspondent" with a ratio of 20 %. BDP and MHP cannot find a place to spread their discourse on mainstream media, which forces them to turn to Facebook for sharing their own agenda. Several research studies have revealed that the Turkish mainstream media are going through an evolution in favour of AKP and they do not share the discourse of opponent parties (Kurban and Sözeri 2012, 2013; Çaylı and Depeli 2012). Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that social media accounts will increasingly be used by other political parties and social movements. For instance, the deputies of BDP and MHP are currently using their Twitter accounts for citizen journalism practices and posting hashtags intended for supporting the ideology of their own parties. Twitter accounts are often integrated into the Facebook page of the parties.

A brief evaluation of the parties in this research shows that BDP is the party that used Facebook more than the others did. The share of BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi in all the accounts examined is more than 40 %. It is followed by MHP, with a share of 12 %. The total share of two different AKP accounts included in the sampling is more or less the same. The total share of three accounts representing

CHP is 23 %. The share of the account of Ertuğrul Kürkçü is 8 %. Given that, it can be said that BDP, which looks disorganised in the political milieu, is more cohesive on Facebook than other parties are.

Compared to other parties, AKP and CHP arouse much more interest with their leaders. The accounts with the highest number of "likes" are the accounts opened in the name of "Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu" and "Recep Tayyip Erdoğan". These two unofficial pages have fewer sharings but more "likes" than others. Thus, it can be stated that they draw attention because they represent political leaders.

It is also observed that the number of posts sent on Facebook is higher than the number of posts shared through Twitter.[7] This difference can be explained by the fact that, technically, Facebook overlaps with multi-media content better than Twitter does. As Facebook posts cover visuals, they need to be analyzed separately. The accounts that shared visuals the most are BDP Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, AK Parti'yi Seviyoruz, Sakin Güç and Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. The use of visuals in the accounts of MHP and BDP is relatively lower. On the other hand, it should be noted that Twitter accounts are usually operated by the users themselves, whereas Facebook accounts are managed by the social media experts of the parties and leaders.

On Facebook, all accounts except for those of AKP and "A. Levent Tüzel" used logos and shared links to various addresses. It is also seen that AKP and MHP did not use backgrounds images/decorations on their Facebook accounts, while independent candidates did. It is observed that CHP did not have a coherent approach to its accounts. None of the pages examined on Facebook were opened as official accounts. Despite this, certain rules were set and elements of political representation were shared on these pages.

Regarding Facebook, there is one more point to be considered: the source of posts. The contents circulated on Facebook were mainly produced especially for Facebook. There are two exceptions to this use: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi and SesVerTürkiye. In the former, the content was forwarded from Twitter to Facebook, whereas in the latter prevailed other types of online sharings. The difference in the use of links is associated with the quality of the material shared on the media. For instance, conversations and texts were more prominent on Twitter, while links to other contents came to the forefront on Facebook. Besides, the fact that Facebook is a multilateral medium makes it more available for sharing links within itself.

The continuity of the political campaigns' run on social media is significant. It is important that the people or groups working in this field are members, or at least sympathisers of the party, so that there is no interruption or any other similar problem. When a professional group leads the political communication campaign

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[7] In this research, the Twitter accounts of the political parties and leaders were also captured and examined during the sampling period. For the analysis of Twitter usage see Bayraktutan et al. (2014), "Siyasal İletişim Sürecinde Sosyal Medya ve Türkiye'de 2011 Genel Seçimlerinde Twitter Kullanımı", in Bilig, 68, 59–96 (Online edition: http://www.yesevi.edu.tr/yayinlar/index.php?action=show_article&bilig_id=57&article_id=923).

of a political party, it means that there is a contract between the party and the professional group and, at the end of contract period, this communication channel will be closed. It is necessary that the number of followers on social media should be kept and not decreased. The followers should be channelled to new political campaigns. While the Facebook accounts of AKP and MHP were managed by social media experts, CHP hired a professional firm. BDP, however, preferred volunteers to manage its social media accounts. The social media accounts of a party should be managed by the party itself. The policies and discourses of the party should be supported and circulated by the official account of the party or various accounts of its voters of sympathisers. The need for this was detected as a result of the elaboration of the social media practices in the 2011 General Elections.

Political leaders should take into consideration the fact that the social media users in Turkey are mainly young people. Therefore, leaders should revise their social media strategies according to the features of this target group. Political parties should take advantage of the opportunity of the way young people carry out interpersonal communication. From the perspective of political actors, the phenomenon of interpersonal communication, as mentioned by Castells, has a hidden power in terms of creating an army of volunteers in the election campaign. The army of volunteers proves that social media play the role of a controlled online communication tool in the political communication process. It would not be wrong to say that political parties will continue to use social media more interactively by promoting user-generated content production. Such features of new media will help to involve personal mass communication in political communication processes.

Finally, social media practices of Turkish political parties and leaders are unilateral and do not support interaction. In fact, unilateral communication conflicts with the spirit of web 2.0. At this point, it is possible to say that BDP has such a network management, that it can interact with its voters and make it possible for voters/users to produce content. We share the opinion that the real political language and structure in Turkey should be changed so that the accounts of political parties allow the participation of citizens and citizens can interact with political parties and the political language can be evolved into a negotiant democracy (Young 1998: 176). Following the viewpoint of Lincoln Dahlberg (2001: 615–633), we can say that the language that political actors use on social media should help them be sincere, honest, frank, well-intentioned, self-reflective and allow them to listen to various political opinions and develop wise arguments and criticism. Self-reflection, in this context, means that political actors can criticize their own opinions, values, and arguments when confronted with new and different arguments. It is only in this way that social media can contribute to the development of democracy and civic citizenship, by providing eager citizens with a public platform where they can have a direct say in the political discussion.

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