REPRESENTATIONS OF "KANAL İSTANBUL" IN TURKISH
NEWS MEDIA: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRO-GOVERNMENT
AND OPPOSITIONAL NEWSPAPERS

A Master's Thesis

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Ankara
September 2022

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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN MEDIA AND VISUAL STUDIES

THE DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION AND DESIGN
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
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By Ezgi Hamamcı

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scopeand in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts (in Media and Visual Studies).

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ABSTRACT

REPRESENTATIONS OF "KANAL İSTANBUL" IN TURKISH NEWS MEDIA:
CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRO-GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITIONAL NEWSPAPERS

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M.A. in Media and Visual Studies

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September 2022

This thesis examines the representations of the Kanal Istanbul project in online news articles published in Turkish pro-government and opposition newspapers with different political and ideological orientations. Five newspapers with different political and ideological perspectives, Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah, are analyzed in terms of news content. In the study, news articles about Kanal Istanbul are analyzed under different categories such as the attitude of the news, the general tone of the news, the political figures in the news, the sources used in the news, and the theme of the news. The time scale of quantitative and qualitative content analysis covers the years between 2011 and 2022. Since there is not enough news text for analysis between 2011-2016, the news texts between 2016-2022 are included in the study. Focusing on the representations of the Kanal Istanbul project in the context of media framing theory, this thesis aims to reveal the ideological reflections in news representation by considering the principles of objectivity and impartiality in journalism practices.

Keywords: Framing, Objectivity in News, Kanal İstanbul, Representation, Ideology

ÖZET

TÜRK HABER MEDYASINDAKİ "KANAL İSTANBUL" TEMSİLLERİ:
HÜKÜMET YANLISI VE MUHALİF GAZETELERİN İÇERİK ANALİZİ

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Eylül 2022

Bu tez, farklı siyasi ve ideolojik yönelimlere sahip Türk hükümet yanlısı ve muhalif gazetelerinde yayınlanan çevrimiçi haber makalelerinde Kanal İstanbul projesinin temsillerini incelemektedir. Farklı siyasi ve ideolojik bakış açısına sahip beş gazete Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar ve Sabah gazeteleri haber içerikleri açısından incelenmektedir. Çalışmada, Kanal İstanbul ile ilgili haber metinleri haberlerin tutumu, haberlerin genel tonu, haberlerde yer alan politik figürler, haberlerde kullanılan kaynaklar ve haberlerin teması olmak üzere farklı kategoriler altında analiz edilmektedir. Niceliksel ve niteliksel içerik analizinin zaman ölçeği 2011 ve 2022 yılları arasını kapsamaktadır. 2011-2016 yılları arasında analiz için yeterli miktarda haber metnine ulaşılamadığı için, çalışmaya 2016-2022 yılları arasındaki haber metinleri dahil edilmiştir. Medya çerçeveleme kuramı bağlamında Kanal İstanbul projesinin temsillerine odaklanan çalışma, gazetecilik uygulamalarındaki objektiflik ve tarafsızlık ilkelerini göz önünde bulundurarak haber sunumundaki ideolojik yansımaları ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Medya Çerçeveleme, Haberde Objektiflik, Kanal İstanbul, Temsil, İdeoloji

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis advisor Prof. Dr. Bülent Çaplı. I wanted to work with him even before starting my master's degree program, and I feel very lucky to have this opportunity. I thank him for always comforting me and being patient on this journey.

Secondly, I would like to thank my committee members Asst. Prof. Dr. Ergin Şafak Dikmen and Asst. Prof. Dr. Lutz Peschke for sharing invaluable feedback and ideas. I would like to express my gratitude to Asst. Prof. Emel Özdora Akşak for always supporting me throughout the thesis process and enlightening my path with her inspiring ideas. Also, I want to give a special thanks to Ufuk Önen, who was like a mentor to me and always stood by me throughout the process, helped me gain a lot of academic experience by giving me the chance to be his teaching assistant, and always motivated me with his joy.

I would like to thank my father, Ahmet Tevfik Hamamcı, for always supporting me in pursuing my dreams and being the best father in the world. I could not be like this today if you did not introduce me to rock and metal music by listening to Metallica in the car on our holiday trips... Also, I would like to thank my mother -the best mother in the world-, Yeşim Nermin Hamamcı, for being such a kind-hearted person, always teaching

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The world has entered the era of mega projects, and every country plans and implements large-scale projects in order to expand its economy. The main reason why the idea of developing mega projects has become attractive for both central and local governments is that global neoliberal economic policies have become widespread in the world, and the economic race between countries and cities has been fuelled (Jessop, 2002; Ponzini, 2011). Since global cities are seen as centres of growth and development, they are the places that produce the most mega projects. Countries and cities aim to surpass their competitors economically by realizing these projects (Robbins, 2015). As in many countries and cities worldwide, various mega projects are being designed in Turkey.

Mega projects are mostly on the agenda of international relations and national economic policies. Ensuring economic growth is often the main purpose of implementing mega projects. In addition to economic goals, mega projects are developed to achieve sociocultural, social, and environmental goals (Frey, 2016). It is also possible to understand the goals, problems, and future vision of a society or state by looking at mega projects (Söderlund, 2017). International transportation and infrastructure investments bring countries closer not only physically but also institutionally and socio-

culturally, and this international convergence can provide a much more added value to the parties than expected (Küçükmehmetoğlu, 2017)

There are various opinions on the definition of the mega project. According to Pitsis et al. (2018), it is possible to define mega projects through seven different features. These are the size of the project area, the duration of the project, the risks of the project, the uncertainties of the project, the organizational structure of the project, the discussions and conflicts created by the project, and the legal characteristics of the project. Therefore, there are many social and economic variables in the definition of mega projects.

Mega projects are implemented in a globally competitive environment. Many goals and policies, from global to local, are considered together in mega projects. A mega-project has various effects and reflections not only in the country and city where it is developed but also in other countries and cities (Douglass, 2010). Some scholars criticize the prioritization of economic policies instead of social and environmental policies in mega projects (Jessop, 2000; Mouffe, 2005) and argue that mega projects do not have as much economic return as is thought (Cochrane, 1999). Despite this, the idea of megaproject development is very attractive to many local and central governments.

Some scholars argue that mega-projects are implemented in democratic and non-transparent ways, focus too much on economic goals, standard planning mechanisms are not used, and progress beyond established legal and institutional procedures (Wilson &

Swyngedouw, 2015). Ahlers et al. (2017) states that politics has dominant power over urban projects, and accordingly, transparency and protection of citizens' rights have become problematic in the megaproject development process. New planning approaches emphasize the operation of various public participation mechanisms in planning processes, determining the needs and expectations of all segments of society, and defending the rights of disadvantaged segments of society (Bozdağ et al., 2017).

Mega projects have become widespread in conditions where capital is concentrated in the production of the urban built environment, the rate of monopolization has increased, and state-capital cooperation has become stronger. In this context, mega projects entered Turkey's agenda with the political promises of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on behalf of the AKP in the 2011 General Elections. The project, which is underlined as the "crazy project", is a statement that the tendency of the concentration of capital in space and the energy sector will continue with greater steps. In conditions where centralism, authoritarianism, and pressure on the opposition increase in state administration, and social control over the decisions and actions of the public administration weakens, the state support for capital has also increased (Canıtez et al., 2020). In other words, larger projects emerge as the rate of the monopoly of capital and the rate of authoritarianism of the state increase.

These investment projects face serious criticism and opposition. Criticisms are gathered under significant headings such as the size of their environmental costs, their lack of

transparency and public control mechanisms, the risks they create due to Treasury guarantees, nepotism in tenders, and the burden they create on the country's economy (Candan & Kolluoğlu, 2008). Intensifying criticism is perceived as threatening the economic and political gains that the political power aims to achieve through these projects and the stability of the investment environment of investor companies.

One of the reasons behind calling these mega-investments as "crazy projects" is to point to the magnitude of the power held by the government. Another important reason is the effort to neutralize the opposition and ensure the social acceptance of the projects (Keyman & Koyuncu, 2005). Other discourses pointing to the growthist and developmental ideology are part of the strategy followed to get rid of the economic costs of these projects and the negative effects of the environmental destruction they create and to gain the consent of the society.

These mega projects in Turkey are Marmaray, Kanal Istanbul, 3rd Bosphorus Bridge, 3rd Airport, three-storey Great Istanbul Tunnel Project, Ankara-Istanbul High-Speed Train, Izmit Gulf Crossing Bridge, Istanbul-Izmir Highway, and Kars-Baku-Tbilisi Railway Project. All these transportation and infrastructure projects are interconnected and feed each other with other urban projects, especially the Kanal Istanbul Project, which opens the northern forests of Istanbul to urbanization (Candan & Kolluoğlu, 2008). The fact that these projects are focused on Istanbul is related to the political

power's desire to make Istanbul a world city and relations with market dynamics and supranational projects.

Discussions and criticisms about the effects and results of megaprojects in Turkey have a great place in the news media (Giezen, 2012). These discussions and criticisms of mega projects affecting social, environmental, cultural, economic, and political life, and different ideas about megaprojects in the political arena, are presented to the reader by the news media. According to framing theory, the media not only sets the agenda but also conveys the current importance of certain attributes to issues, events, or candidates. Therefore, it is assumed that the media actually frame the news differently for different reasons. One of the mega projects considered as an alternative gateway to the Bosphorus in Turkey and still under construction is the Kanal Istanbul project. Most studies in the context of large-scale and current mega projects such as Kanal Istanbul focus more on the environmental impacts of these projects (Doğan & Stupar, 2017). No study has been encountered in Turkey in which a megaproject has been examined within the scope of the concept of media framing. However, it should be emphasized that it is essential to examine the media representation of an issue whose political, environmental, economic, and social consequences and effects seem to generate so much controversy (Şahin, 2019). Therefore, this study focuses on the frameworks in which the Kanal Istanbul project is represented in the news media in the context of the principles of objectivity and impartiality by asking the following questions:

RQ1. In the context of the principles of objectivity and impartiality of journalism, what kind of representation is made in the newspaper news about Kanal Istanbul in the Turkish news media?

RQ2. How and to what extent do the journalism practices of the examined newspapers reflect their political ideologies while framing the Kanal Istanbul project?

To answer these research questions, CHAPTER II first focuses on media framing theory to grasp the theoretical framework of the research. It then explains the principles of objectivity and impartiality to better understand journalism practices. The research, which examines the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the media, focuses on the development and change of the Turkish media, as well as Turkish media organizations and newspapers. Before coming to the dynamics in the realization of the Kanal Istanbul project, a summary is made about other mega projects in Turkey. The study also analyses the developments related to the Kanal Istanbul project between 2011 and 2022. Examining the project's social, economic, political, legal, and environmental dimensions adds a political context to the study as it examines the media representations of the Kanal Istanbul project in the news published between 2016-2022.

CHAPTER III provides a detailed discussion of the method of the study and how the selected samples for analysis were obtained. In addition, the coding sheet and categories of the content analysis conducted in this research are shared with the reader.

CHAPTER IV analyzes the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project between the years 2016-2022 by the newspapers Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Karar, Sabah, and Yeni Akit, which have politically and ideologically different stances. The news contents of each newspaper are presented comparatively using both qualitative and quantitative content analysis.

CHAPTER V concludes the study by presenting and comparatively discussing the research findings, suggests the limitations of the research, and includes recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines the media framing theory, which is the theoretical framework of this thesis, objectivity in the news, the Turkish news media landscape and Turkish news media outlets, the place of the newspapers to be analysed in the political perspective, and their ideological stances, also highlights the mega projects in Turkey and the representation of these projects in the media with emphasizing and summarizing the importance of the media framing theory by focusing the Kanal Istanbul project.

2.1. Theoretical Framework: Media Framing

The framing method, which has become an important concept, especially after the 1980s, has started to be used in studies on the relationship between media and society. Many political, social, and economic events in societies are transferred to people in certain ways. Our perceptions are shaped semantically and interpretively by these events, which are conveyed within a specific framework. Durur (2011) states that social structure and culture have an essential place in producing and presenting media texts within a particular framework.

One of the first to mention the word 'frame' in a social context is Bateson (1955). In his psychological definition, Bateson mentions that certain situations conveyed are like pictures in frames. While the items in the frame are meaningful and necessary, the items outside the frame are situations that do not need to be transferred. From this point of view, how a situation or event is handled and what is included in the frame can have different effects on the society in which the media texts are delivered. This situation also affects the interpretation capacity of the society exposed to the media text. With this approach, how news is framed is important in events that impact society.

Media framing is defined as how a subject, a decision, or an idea is presented to the audience. Erving Goffman took the fundamental steps of framing theory by arguing that people use "schemata of interpretation" to contextualize the information they perceive as well as the information they receive (Goffmann, 1974, pp. 10-21). The American sociologist Goffmann (1974) evaluates the concept of framing within everyday life practices. Goffman (1974), who considers all our social behaviours as a process, states that people create primary frameworks to classify what they experience during the day within specific meaning patterns. People's understanding and interpretation of events around them are essential in defining and better understanding the acquired knowledge. The primary tool that helps people in this process is the "schemata" (Goffman, 1974, pp. 10-21). According to Goffman (1974), media framing is the way of interpretation that affects how people perceive and understand a subject.

There is a great variety of definitions of news frames, both in theoretical and empirical contributions. Tuchman (1978) and Gitlin (1980), working on framing theory by referring to Goffman's studies, adapt the concept which was put forward from a sociological perspective to communication studies (Özarslan and Güran, 2015: 33). Gitlin (1980) defines frames as the forms of comprehension, interpretation, and presentation of the selection, emphasis, and exclusion processes that discourse uses as an organizing tool (p. 7). According to Gitlin, the media plays a significant role in forming ideologies in society. From this idea, Gitlin explores how certain ideologies are framed in the media. In this context, Gitlin tries to determine how the news is created by examining the factors affecting the news content and the ways of using the sources. Tuchman (1978), on the other hand, argues that with the framework made in the news, the status quo gains more legitimacy. According to Tuchman, every framing made serves a purpose.

Entman makes one of the most memorable definitions of framing theory. Although the framing theory was first and extensively studied by Goffmann (1974), its use in research increased with an article by Entman named "Framing as a Fractured Paradigm" in 1993 (Oğuz, 2019: 26). According to Entman (1993), framing consists of two basic elements. These are choosing and giving importance. Entman states that choosing a part of a perceived or learned situation and presenting that part as crucial is framing. Özçetin (2018: 122) points out that although it is emphasized that framing is related to giving importance and choices, it is also an act of elimination and exclusion.

Entman (1993) also refers to the concept of media framing as "to frame a communicating text or message is to promote certain facets of a 'perceived reality' and make them more salient in such a way that 1) endorses a specific problem definition, 2) causal interpretation, 3) moral evaluation, and /or 4) a treatment recommendation" (p. 51). In other words, Entman (1993) defines news framing as supporting the news by making problem definition, causality relationship, evaluation, and solution suggestions about the event, as well as choosing a certain aspect of an event and making it important.

In short, news framing is to evaluate the creator of the news text and the concepts considered necessary, together with their supporters, within the same scope. The concept of media framing can explain how the media affects the interpretation of events by framing some aspects of social events while omitting other aspects. While a researcher examines a text or news in this context, a sentence in that article may contain these four basic features simultaneously or none. At this point, some keywords or phrases are sufficient to form the framework (Entman, 1993, p. 52). In this case, it is necessary to carefully examine the elements in the text within the scope of the study and the semantic and thematic ties they establish with each other.

Gamson and Modigliani (1989) refer to frames as 'interpretive packages' that give meaning to a subject. At the core of this package is a "central organizing idea" or framework emphasized to give meaning to relevant events and assert the main issue (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, pp. 157-158). In the context of emphasizing some elements of a topic more than others, the function of a framework is to provide a way to understand the event or issue. In this regard, Cappella and Jamieson (1997) argue that

frames enable knowledge, promote cultural morals and values, and create contexts (p. 47).

Additionally, according to Scheufele (1999), in media framing theory, framing can be done in different ways, and this shaping can be ideological (p.107). Media framing is inevitably used in politics so that the readers can perceive a subject or a situation in the desired way. News media can shape political interpretations by framing social events in different ways. According to McChesney (2000), the media is responsible for informing about cultural, economic, and political issues. At some points, "media target as their primary audience market, not the general public, but rather their advertisers" (McChesney, 2000, pp. 130-131). Thus, the media concentrates on the issues at the forefront and essential for these people. McCombs and Shaw (1972) state that the media framing effect can be associated with agenda-setting theory because media framing has the power to lead people and society to interpret and discuss some aspects of events (p. 176).

As a result, media framing is a highly controversial issue, especially regarding manipulation and perception management. Words, images, sentences, diagrams, and metaphors are of great importance in framing news (Oğuz, 2019; Tokgöz, 2005). Tankard (2001) explains framing theory with many focal points. In news framing; headlines, photographs, sources, citation selections, statistics, and graphics are significant focuses used in framing. According to Norris et al. (2003), news framing strengthens the ways of evaluating and interpreting a situation in a context. The framing

made in news texts can completely affect the viewer's understanding of the event or situation. At this point, framing in news texts narrows the versatility of the news.

When we look at the literature, there are studies in which the framing theory is used in media research. The framing effect of the media in the context of the psychological and sociological elements of individuals forming the public opinion is discussed by academics. A view claimed in these discussions is that individuals tend to choose the easy way of obtaining information, including their cognitive states and intellectual actions that they try to keep very short. In the context of this action, frames can create a comfortable environment for people to access information and pass the personal messages they get from texts through their mental filters (Sobel, 2014, p. 318). For this reason, individuals who generally do not enjoy the act of reading or those who skim through the news due to lack of time can easily be affected by these frames due to their tendency to choose the easy way when accessing information and evaluating specific topics during the act of reading the news.

In addition, according to some interdisciplinary views covering sociology and communication studies, the influence and importance of the media on the public is increasing in societies that have kept up with the conditions of the time. In other words, the media has considerable importance in everyday life practices of individuals, and the influence of the media is increasing daily. Under these circumstances, media framing can play a very influential role in changing and shaping public opinion in the context of particular issues of political and social content. In an environment where the media can

put its weight on the fundamental dynamics in current life practices, certain issues can be brought to the fore, and society can perceive these issues in the way they are covered.

2.2. Objectivity in News

The essential principles emerging within the framework of the professional principles of the press are the independence of the journalist, the sanctity of the news, and the objectivity of the news. Impartiality and objectivity in the news are the most basic professional norms of the profession. According to Tokgöz (2000), the principle of accuracy is of great importance, and the fact that the news is accurate proves that journalists do their duty responsibly (Tokgöz, 2000).

According to theorists who define the press as a reflection of social reality (Alemdar 1999; İnal 1995), the principle of objectivity in the news is an integral part of serious and reliable journalism. The responsibilities that the social responsibility approach imposes on the press must fulfil the function of conveying news and information in the press in an accurate, objective, and fair manner (Alemdar 1999). The correct reflection of social reality, that is, the fulfilment of the task of the press in a complete, correct, and realistic manner, depends on the principle of objectivity. In the literature, discussions on freedom of the press, which is defined as the primary condition of democracy and the freedom of the people to receive information, are almost intertwined with the debates on objectivity (Bülbül, 2001; Yüksel & Gürcan, 2001; Karagöz, 1996). Bülbül (2001) states that the criteria for objectivity in the news are precision and accuracy in the data about the event, conveying the main lines exactly, being neutral and balanced when examining different aspects of the event, separating the news from the commentary, not reflecting

the personal opinion and attitude of the news writer into the content, and biased attitudes. (Bülbül 2001). Girgin (1998), on the other hand, primarily focuses on the principles of avoiding impartiality or trying to be objective, which the journalist should apply in order to stay out of all influences as much as possible.

According to Altshull (1984), there are three valid press models: the Market Model, the Communitarian Model, and the Advancing Model. In his study of these models, Altshull (1984) concludes that in all press systems, the news media is the representative of people with political and economic power. He also argues that newspapers, magazines, and electronic publishing media are not independent, despite their potential to have independent power. The content of the news media is always created in line with the interests of those who pay for the media. All press systems are based on the belief in free expression; however, free expression is defined in different ways. All media systems endorse the doctrine of social responsibility, declare that they serve people's aspirations and interests, and express their willingness to give people access. Journalism schools export ideologies and value systems to society and inevitably help those who hold power exist and control the news media.

In the press, whose social and organizational relations are primarily determined by market rules, employees work within the existing rules without leaving this structure. In other words, journalists appear not as persistent advocates of a certain idea or just workers who take care of public interests, but as professionals who do their job for money, who are aware of the fact that their product is a commercial commodity, who understand the editorial policy of their institution and who fulfil what is expected of them. However, journalistic action requires professionals who can bear the responsibility

of producing a product that is directly related to society and even to the lives of individuals who may be the subject of news in terms of its results. According to Altschull (1984), a certain socially conditioned knowledge is produced by individuals in human communication activity. That is, there is always re-arrangement and bias in transmitting a certain truth to society.

Likewise, Erdoğan and Alemdar (1990) argue that such objectivity is impossible. Pointing out that the possibility of impartial and value-free information is very low, Erdoğan and Alemdar (1990) emphasize that defending the neutrality of power is challenging. In addition, it should be considered that every word, every concept, every sentence, every paragraph, every subject, and every picture in the news has a specific meaning. In addition, Erdogan and Alemdar (1990) say that the objectivity of news producers consists of six elements. These are: 1) being balanced and impartial when presenting different aspects of an issue 2) adhering to precision and realism in writing the news 3) presenting all the main valid points in the news 4) distinguishing facts with commentary but accepting the idea as valid 5) reducing the impact of the author's attitude, comment, or involvement, and 6) to avoid the purposes of being contrary, biased, and resentful.

There are many evaluations in the context of factors affecting media content in the literature. Among these, Oalter points to the ruling class operating the mass media system, and Breed points to the influence of the newspaper owner and the editorial manager representing it in determining the newspaper publishing policy (Rogers & Dearing, 1988). When considered with a systematic approach, it can be mentioned that

the elements arising from the business structure of the media, news organization, and media contents (Yüksel & Gürcan, 2001). As indicated by Dearing and Rogers, a broader framework is encountered, such as media advocacy, subject bidding, flaming events, public relations activities, and interaction between mass media and real-life indicators (Yüksel and Gürcan, 2001).

In terms of defining the effects coming from outside the institution, McQuail's definition of the field of social forces that cause external pressures is quite explanatory (Söylemez 1998). According to McQuail, media institutions try to meet conflicting demands and expectations under limitations and obstructions, and the power or influence of the variables can also change. On the one side, company owners, advertisers, sources, and audiences/readers are at the centre of the media organization, on the other side, there are social and political institutions, investors, pressure groups, and the government (Söylemez 1998).

The most comprehensive study on the factors affecting news content in the literature belongs to Shoemaker and Reese. Scholars have defined these effecting elements in five categories according to the source of influence (Severin & Tankard, 1994). As Yüksel and Gürcan (2001) stated, the first of these is the effects arising from media workers: The effects of media workers' personal characteristics, attitudes, values, beliefs, ethnic origins, professional backgrounds, and roles. Secondly, the effects arising from the working order are mentioned: The effects arising from the publication period, time constraints, space limitations, news writing rules, news value, objectivity, and dependence on the news source. Thirdly, there are the effects arising from institutional

objectives: Institutional objectives, economic objectives, and effects arising from the internal division of labour. Within the institutional approach, this level deals with the hierarchical structures, labour division, and media institutions' economic goals. On the other hand, the political economy approach emphasizes the power of media institutions and that the main determining factor is economic interests and property structures. Fourthly, the influences coming from outside the institution are given as an example, mostly from pressure groups in terms of news sources and from the pressures of the government aiming to have positive coverage in the media. Finally, the effects of ideological tendencies are listed as the effects caused by the proximity of the mass media to any ideology.

These five categories, which vary between the micro level created by the media workers and the macro level created by the ideology, are called the hierarchy of effects. The news content is often organized through the rules and lifestyle determined by the dominant ideology and adopted by the society. As Freud notes, people are greatly influenced by their society. Sometimes individuals must conform to social norms, even if it is against their thoughts. Thus, the concepts of right and wrong are shaped according to the society, not the individual (Freud, 1975). The media is under certain obligations because of an assumed contract between the media and society. Therefore, the primary condition for the ethical operation of the media is to report important issues accurately and completely. The minimum ethical restrictions that the media organs are obliged to comply with include the correct and complete transmission of the context in which the news was received, as well as the issues such as the accuracy and impartiality of the news. As Çaplı (2002) states, in other words, the ethical obligation of journalists is to

report the events accurately, that is, as they are (p.88). However, while media organs

take their political decisions in the political conjuncture of the world, they establish

close relations with the ruling parties or the ruling party candidates with the news they

create. This naturally brings about the fact that the media organs show more interest in

the news about one side of society and that they are regulated in this way. In this flow,

where ideology is at the top, it is accepted that there is a filter function towards all other

levels. In other words, the ideological level is defined as the most significant element

that determines the contents of the news.

2.3. Turkish News Media Landscape

When we look at the media practices in Turkey, the increasingly polarized media circles

for various reasons and globalization, which affects the lives of societies in political,

social, and economic terms, can be given as examples of some of the reasons seen in the

change of media circles (Chomsky & Herman, 2002; Çağlar & Çakar-Mengü, 2009;

Kaya & Çakmur, 2010; Sümer & Taş, 2020). Many different factors should be

considered when evaluating the media system of a society. Every society has different

media practices; therefore, it is not possible to meet certain standards in traditional

journalism and communication practices. According to the literature, it is emphasized

that this situation occurs as a result of the restrictive attitude of the current government

AKP (Justice and Development Party), towards the media sector, especially journalists

(Çağlar & Çakar-Mengü, 2009; Kaya & Çakmur, 2010). In addition, the influence of

media conglomerates has a great place in media circles in Turkey. While most of the

research focuses on the impact of the current government on journalism practices, there

are studies in the literature that also address external factors, such as media conglomerates, that impact media circles. According to Çağlar and Çakar-Mengü (2009), monopolization and the dominant role of media owners in the media, as in all other systems, prevent the transmission of different ideas and set their agendas, making it difficult to establish a democratic environment in journalism (Çağlar & Çakar-Mengü, 2009).

There has long been a demand for the media industry by wealthy businesspeople. Although this situation has become a problem in the media sector, which is encountered worldwide, this study focuses on Turkey and Turkish media. With the mentioned monopoly and control, the fields of politics, media, and economy became more intertwined (Kaya & Çakmur, 2010). With the continuous increase in the desire to make a profit in the political and economic fields, the media has begun to be seen as a tool for some parties to achieve their desired goals. Founded as a radio in 1964, the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) became a television channel in 1974. While there was no alternative other than TRT, which was a state-owned channel at the beginning, privatization and progress in the field of media have emerged with the free market environment, neoliberal policies, and globalization (Çağlar & Çakar-Mengü, 2009). The increase in media organizations was also due to increased investments in the media sector. Thus, society has different opportunities and options to reach the news.

However, this development and diversity in media have caused some problems. Some holdings that are not involved in the media sector have joined the media circles intending to make a profit. With the emergence of different groups in this sector, both

the effect of the feeling of dominance and the purpose of profit-seeking negatively affected the free and democratic space in the media (Çağlar & Çakar-Mengü, 2009). Kaya and Çakmur (2010) mention that the media has become a tool to influence and control the socio-political structure after all these developments. At this point, there was a need for an institution that would undertake the task of preventing and regulating the problems that may arise. The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) was established in 1994 to fulfil this task, and many bureaucratic obstacles arose during the establishment of this institution. According to Çaplı (1994), the effects of politics on the media and the fact that politics is the centre of power are crucial obstacles preventing the establishment of this institution (Çaplı, 1994).

Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) emerged as an institution that supervises media contents and those who create these contents. It can be thought that the functioning of the media will fall into place with a regulatory institution. However, while it was expected that a regulatory and supervisory institution would set the functioning of the media in order in the Turkish media, media conglomerates made the media a tool of politics, and the role of the media in political decisions began to become more prominent. With the integrations such as the monopolization and privatization of the media in Turkey, the power in the media has gathered around the elites, and as a result, media contents have been limited. Media duties such as informing and entertaining society have been left aside, and it has been turned into a means of making a profit in political, social, and economic contexts by the media moguls.

A new term, "pool media", has emerged to describe media types created by media conglomerates building closer relationships with the government. Pool media is a media term that can be defined as pro-government, especially supported by construction moguls who are active in the media industry as well as the construction industry. (Sümer & Taş, 2020; Yetkin, 2015). The entry of these bosses into the media sector and the fact that the government has a more significant say in the media through these bosses caused a great change in the Turkish media. In particular, many scholars argue that this negative change in the Turkish media and the damage to freedom and objectivity in the media is caused by the current AKP (Justice and Development Party) government (Çağlar & Çakar-Mengü, 2011). In this way, media conglomerates seize the opportunity to hold power by using different branches of the media. As a result of this situation, having the majority of the media allows the desired messages to be conveyed in the desired way. In other words, individuals are constantly exposed to the same content through different media channels. In short, due to the monopoly in the Turkish media and the strong relationship between the government and the media, it is seen that the processes of producing and transmitting news are manipulated, and it is not easy to talk about impartial and objective journalism.

2.4. Turkish News Media Outlets

There is a great relationship between Turkish media and politics. It is seen that the movements in the traditional media create a biased media environment, with the economic developments being shaped according to the outcome of the political life. According to Chomsky and Herman (1988), this is proof of how effective the control of

the mass media, which is a source of information, in these political-economic circles can be in the society's process of obtaining information.

Considering the Turkish media, Doğan, Çukurova, and Merkez Groups were the three largest media groups in Turkey as of March 2007 (Çağlar & Çakar-Mengü, 2011). Afterward, Çalık Group's assets were put on the market and sold to a construction company called Kalyon, which is now one of the top 10 companies to receive public tenders in the world with the participation of the AKP Government. On the other hand, businessman Aydın Doğan, who bought Hürriyet, Milliyet, and Posta newspapers, among the best-selling newspapers in Turkey when the circulation rates are considered, had nothing to do with the media. Collecting numerous mergers and acquisitions under the name of Kanal D, Doğan Group has become the most essential media mogul (Kaya & Çakmur, 2010). Doğan sold most of its media branches to the pro-government Demirören Group in 2018. Demirören Group, which is now "Turkey's leading and Europe's fourth largest media organization", thanks to its close ties with the government, is involved in a wide range of sectors such as construction, media, and education.

The fact that media conglomerates are versatile in political, social, and economic life and their desire to participate in every field is widespread in Turkey's media sector. Research and discussions in the literature primarily refer to a Turkish media established around the mutual interest relationship between the AKP government and these media conglomerates. We can say that these ongoing situations have adversely affected the news media and journalism practices, which should have the principles of impartiality, accuracy, and objectivity.

In Turkey, the newspaper, one of the most used mass communication tools in order to obtain information, enables the events that concern society and cause an impact on its social structure to be communicated to the public on the level of knowledge and labour. Newspapers and the profession of journalism have a function that allows the fact or non-fact to be shared with the public from an objective point of view. Informing and enlightening the public is defined as the newspaper's primary and most important task.

Many media professionals around the world agree that ensuring impartiality in journalism is an illusion (İnceoğlu, 1994; Çaplı, 2002). Media organizations have to put aside acting with impartiality and free will to survive in the sector, maintain their lives, and ensure the continuity of their financial income. Media outlets sometimes act this way because of private sector ownership and pressure, and sometimes due to government sanctions. Social and ideological realities constructed by newspapers are important in determining how voters perceive parties that are struggling with each other in the political arena. Since newspapers present events in binary oppositions in the reporting process, they place the events to be discussed in a cultural, political, and ideological frame of reference in accordance with their editorial policies. As Kellner (2003) also states, newspapers create a sense of 'us' and 'them' (opposites) among readers/viewers by adding images, symbols, and events to the news text.

The media, in the Turkish case, is one of the institutions that support and/or criticize politics with its news and comments on the continuation of political life. In general, the

news determines the political agenda of society. According to İnceoğlu, although newspapers were criticized in the 1960s for the opinion of the publisher or for consciously taking the side of the editorial staff, one of the criticisms made in recent years is that journalists are unintentionally or unconsciously "political" (İnceoğlu, 1994). How the media frames events and issues are of great importance in shaping readers' and viewers' perceptions of news. Galtung and Ruge state that the media is not a reflector of objective truth in the news but tools that ideologically construct social reality through the news. (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Media contents are generally determined by the ownership and power relations of the society in which they operate. In addition, factors such as supporting or opposing political institutions, especially governments, in the way newspapers present the news determine what kind of ideological symbols will be preferred in the news content.

In total, approximately 2,214 newspapers are circulating in Turkey. They differ in the sense of national, regional, and local. To be exact numbers, there are 40 national, 23 regional, and 2,061 local newspapers. National newspapers and broadcasting companies are located in Ankara and İstanbul. Thus, they are considered the main media centres of Turkey. There are a couple of major national daily newspapers, such as Posta with 644.413, Hürriyet with 522.880, Zaman with 509.667, Sabah with 445.679, and Milliyet with 263.538 average sales daily (Terzis, 2008).

2.4.1. Sözcü

Sözcü is a newspaper founded on 27 June 2007, based in Istanbul. The editor-in-chief is Metin Yılmaz, and the concessionaire is Burak Akbay. The newspaper, which started its publication life with the name "Gözcü" in June 2007 and is a part of Doğan Yayın Holding, was re-published under the name Sözcü after its closure in April 2007. Sözcü newspaper is a daily distribution newspaper in Turkey with the slogan "If Sözcü is silent, Turkey will be silent". Sözcü newspaper has three primary political alignments: Kemalism, Secularism, and Liberal Nationalism. It is accepted that it is on the opposition side in the political arena of Turkey with its political stance and Kemalist structure.

According to Sözcü (2022), newspaper, which started publication in 2007, sold 60,000 copies in its first days. While the newspaper had an average circulation of 150,000 in September 2008, it increased to an average of 210,000 in December 2010. In 2011, Sözcü was among Turkey's ten most read newspapers and ranked fifth. With a circulation of 328,030 in 2012, it surpassed the Sabah newspaper with a circulation of 303,358. It thus came to the fourth rank in the list of newspapers with the highest circulation in Turkey. By 2014, with a circulation of 402,870, it became the second newspaper with the highest circulation in Turkey, just below Zaman. Since 8 May 2016, its average daily circulation has been 288,649, and it is on the list as the fourth newspaper with the highest circulation after Hürriyet, Sabah, and Posta newspapers.

2.4.2. Cumhuriyet

Cumhuriyet was founded on May 7, 1924, by Yunus Nadi and institutionalized by Nadir Nadi. Cumhuriyet considered itself a non-party and non-government newspaper but a defender of the democracy of the nation with its scientific and widespread expression. The political alignment of the Cumhuriyet newspaper is   Centre-left, Left-wing Politics, Secularism/Laïcité, and Social Democracy.

Cumhuriyet (2022) states that the newspaper puts goals to itself, such as establishing a true sense of democracy in the country, showing the clear line of difference between science and religion, and aiding the adoption of the principle of secularism by the society with the help of Atatürk's revolution and principles. Cumhuriyet accepts 'The Declaration of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms' as democracy's universal constitution. According to Cumhuriyet, their general publishing principles are; ensuring that the public can use the right and freedom of information to the fullest, to adopt reality, topicality, public interest, objectivity, balanced and fairness, freedom of expression, and criticism in the interpretation of the news, and not to distort the facts, not to exaggerate, not to be censored, not to be under the influence of pressure and interest groups.

2.4.3. Yeni Akit

Yeni Akit is an Islamist and socially conservative national newspaper published daily in Turkey. The political alignment of the Yeni Akit newspaper is Traditionalist

conservatism, Erdoğanism, Islamism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Reactionism. Yeni Akit newspaper takes an extreme right-wing stance and is criticized for its hate speech and fundamentalism against groups such as Jews, atheists, and homosexuals. According to a report prepared by the Hrant Dink Foundation, the national newspaper with the highest rate of hate speech in Turkey was Yeni Akit.

Yeni Akit newspaper started its publication life on September 12, 1993, under the name "Beklenen Vakit". Later, the newspaper's name was changed to "Akit" on 5 December 2001, and it continued to be published under the name "Anadolu'da Vakit". After a publishing life of 9 years, the newspaper took its current name on 11 October 2010, after the death of Nuri Aykon, the concessionaire of Anadolu'da Vakit newspaper, on September 13, 2010. Former Welfare Party Rize deputy and mayor Şevki Yılmaz, Merve Kavakçı, who was deprived of his parliamentary sea and not sworn in because she was wearing a headscarf, Hasan Aksay, one of the former state ministers, Asım Yenihaber and Kenan Alpay, who were faced trial because of an article about 312 generals, were embodied in the Yeni Akit newspaper. In 2015, Akit TV, the newspaper's broadcast organ in the television sector, was established. The publishing principles of Yeni Akit (2022) newspaper can be summarized under seven headings: 1.Trust, 2.Independence, 3.Attitude to be taken in the news about religious beliefs, religious groups, or communities, 4.Compliance with community values, 5.Protection of personal rights and private life, 6.Transparency and accountability; and 7.Corporate reputation.

2.4.4. Karar

Karar newspaper is a daily newspaper that started its broadcasting life on March 7, 2016. The newspaper, whose editor-in-chief is İbrahim Kiras, was founded on April 28, 2015, with a team that separated from Akşam and Star newspapers. It was first published as an e-newspaper. As with other newspapers, the headquarters of the newspaper Karar is in Istanbul. The newspaper's political alignment is Conservative Liberalism with the slogan "Right News, Right Decision". The newspaper, owned by Mehmet Aydın, is characterized by some press and media organizations as having a publishing mentality parallel to the ideas and perspectives of former AKP leader Ahmet Davutoğlu, who is currently the leader of the Future Party (Karar, 2022).

2.4.5. Sabah

Sabah is a daily newspaper that started to be published on April 22, 1985 in Turkey. Its slogan is "Turkey's best newspaper". The newspaper started to be published on the internet as of January 1997. Erdal Şafak is the Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper, which was transferred to the SDIF in 2007 and then joined the Turkuvaz Media Group.

After the attempt to turn Yeni Asır newspaper into a nationwide newspaper failed, Sabah started to be published all over Turkey under the ownership of Dinç Bilgin and through Sabah Yayıncılık A. Ş. The first Editor-in-Chief of Sabah was Rahmi Turan, and its first issue was published on April 22, 1985. Sabah, which was later released under the

management of Zafer Mutlu, was also managed by Ergun Babahan, Ufuk Güldemir and Tayfun Devecioğlu in the following years. Dinç Bilgin, who went into a 50 percent partnership with Turgay Ciner shortly before Etibank was seized in 2000, transferred his shares in Sabah Publishing to Mehmet Emin Karamehmet's Çukurova Holding and Murat Vargı's MV Holding. While Bilgin withdrew from the media sector, the new management of Sabah Publishing transferred to Çukurova Holding, MV Holding, and MTM Haber Yatırım A. Ş. Dinç Bilgin returned to the newspaper in January 2001. It was rented by Turgay Ciner in October 2002. Dinç Bilgin, the owner of Bilgin Group, which includes SABAH and ATV under its roof, left the tag of the newspaper in November 2003, after the protocol was signed with the SDIF for the liquidation of Etibank debts. In March 2005, it was purchased by the Central Group, of which Turgay Ciner is a partner. As of January 2, 2006, Fatih Altaylı was appointed as the Editor-in-Chief. However, as of April 1, 2007, Sabah newspaper was seized by the SDIF due to its debts. Sabah and ATV joint tender were held on 7 November 2007. The opening price in the tender was determined as $1.1 billion (Sabah, 2022). Its sale to Çalık Holding was approved on April 22, 2008. After the newspaper was seized by the SDIF in 2007 and sold to Ahmet Çalık on loans from two public banks, on 31 December 2008, the Editor-in-Chief Fatih Altaylı submitted his resignation to the newspaper's concessionaire Ahmet Çalık. Erdal Şafak was appointed as the Editor-in-Chief on February 18, 2009. The circulation of Sabah, which sold 506,957 thousand in its newspaper sales report between 9 April 2007 and 15 April 2007 before the SDIF's seizure, decreased to 331,913 thousand between 30 August 2010 and 5 September 2010.

2.5. Mega Projects

The central government's embrace of the strategy of administering cities in the 1970s, particularly in Europe and America, changed the focus of local governments from social welfare concerns to programs centred on economic growth. When paired with the changes in the city economy, this has resulted in considerable changes in urban areas (Şahin, 2019). Local governments, whose resources have been significantly reduced, have begun to play a more entrepreneurial role in achieving sustainability in local economic development, forming alliances with various interest groups, and focusing on speculative land development and field marketing (Doğan & Stupar, 2017).

Because of globalization, city rivalry has reached an international level, leading to the design of cities based on investor preferences (Kennedy, 2015). Instead of comprehensive planning methods, initiatives concentrating on sectors such as service, finance, and tourism are aimed to make the city recognizable through famous venues (Eren, 2019). Furthermore, these initiatives have evolved into large-scale urban projects with mixed uses, such as social, cultural, and recreational spaces required by the qualified labour force and upper class working in these new economic sectors (Mylonas & Xenidis, 2018).

As a result, projects spread across the city and were employed by the central government as an urban economy and marketing tool (Flybvierg et al., 2003). Although large-scale urban projects are not new to cities, they have become more prevalent in recent decades as a means of attracting investments and regulating urban growth.

One of the most important aspects of Mega Projects is their cost. Their costs might be in the millions of dollars, and these projects typically involve multiple industries collaborating to complete the initiatives (Keyder, 2005). To create and maintain these Mega Projects, around 6 to 9 trillion dollars are invested globally each year, which equates to 8% of global GDP (Candan & Kolluoğlu, 2008). Turkey, on the other hand, has begun and completed several projects in a variety of fields, ranging from healthcare to energy, defence to transportation and aviation to infrastructure. Turkey has completed projects worth more than $150 billion USD in the last 20 years (Candan & Kolluoğlu, 2008; Canıtez et al., 2020). The foundations of 21 Mega Projects had been laid, and the cumulative cost of them had already surpassed the national income of other 140 countries. These Mega Projects drew the attention of global media as well as governments. Some well-known Mega Projects are Marmaray, İGA (İstanbul Grand Airport), Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge and Kanal İstanbul.

Marmaray: As one of the important projects in the world, the Marmaray Project is a railway that does not pollute the environment by using electrical energy. It is designed according to the needs with its high capacity to maintain Istanbul's healthy urban life and offer a modern city (Doğan & Stupar, 2017). It was stated that the Marmaray project was built to present city life and urban transportation opportunities to the citizens and preserve the natural and historical features of the city. The Marmaray Project was carried out to connect Halkalı on the European side and Gebze on the Asian side with a rail system. With the development of the Haydarpaşa-Gebze and Sirkeci-Halkalı lines and their connection to the Marmaray Tunnel, Marmaray was put into practice . With the

completion of the second phase in 2019, it was put into use with its long line servers serving 43 stations over 76 km, with a depth of 60.46 meters, which has the title of the world's deepest underwater tube tunnel used by rail systems (T.C. Ulaştırma ve Altyapı Bakanlığı, Mega Projeler, 2022).

There were different ideas that the Marmaray project would have both positive and negative effects. One of the project's positive results is that it significantly relieves the difficult transportation in Istanbul and the Marmaray, which is used extensively today, makes it somewhat easier for people to go from one place to another in Istanbul (Kennedy, 2015). On the contrary, minibus operators and taxi drivers, who would lose a large part of their income sources, were opposed to the project. At the same time, on the opposition side, there were reactions from the CHP against this project. CHP Deputy Chairman Faik Öztrak complained that this project, which was signed by the 9th President Süleyman Demirel and Bülent Ecevit as the Prime Minister with the decision of the Council of Ministers, presented it to the public as if President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was starting and completing the project.

İstanbul Grand Airport: Istanbul Grand Airport (İGA) is the international airport serving the city of Istanbul in Turkey. Located on the European side of the city, between the villages of Tayakadın and Akpınar on the Black Sea coast, the airport was opened on October 29, 2018. It is 35 km from the city center. The first flight from Istanbul to Ankara was on 29 October 2018, with the code TK2124. After completing all phases, İGA has flight routes to more than 300 destinations and an annual passenger capacity of 200 million (T.C. Ulaştırma ve Altyapı Bakanlığı, Mega Projeler, 2022).

However, the mega-project has many controversies. One of them is that The Turkish Chamber of Environmental Engineers (ÇMO) took the Project to court, saying that it violated existing legislation of the Environmental impact Assessment (ÇED) report. In 2014, the court ordered construction to be suspended; however, the opening ceremony of construction still took place. Another considerable controversy was about worker rights (Kennedy, 2015). Newspaper Cumhuriyet published a report in 2014 claiming that more than 400 workers had been killed during the construction. Families of the workers were paid to be silent about those incidents. Other newspapers, such as Evrensel, also stated that the fatal incidents continued to occur. While newspapers reported this situation to the public, the Turkish Ministry of Labour and Social Security claimed that only 27 fatalities occurred during the construction. On the other hand, international media also focused on construction fatalities. UK publications Architects' Journal and Construction News published an investigation about the workers in 2019 (Keyder, 2005). While the official death count was 55, foreign media named the construction "The Cemetery" due to estimated real numbers being higher than 400.

Third Bosphorus Bridge: Yavuz Sultan Selin Bridge, also known as the "Third Bosphorus Bridge", is a rail and vehicle transit bridge over Bosphorus Strait. It connects Europe and Asia from Garipçe in Sarıyer from Europe and Poyrazköy in Beykoz from Asia near the entrance of the Black Sea. The beginning of construction initially started in 2013, and it opened to traffic in 2016. It is considered one of the tallest bridges in the world with its 322-meter height. The bridge is a part of another project, the Northern Marmara Motorway. The new motorway is 260 km long and is planned to bypass

northern urban parts of İstanbul (T.C. Ulaştırma ve Altyapı Bakanlığı, Mega Projeler, 2022).

In 2018, due to the Turkish currency and debt crisis, Bloomberg reported that Astaldi, one of the companies constructing the bridge, was planning to sell its stake in the project due to its failure to meet projections. Ankara had to boost the operator's revenue from Turkey's treasure (Eren, 2019).

One of the most critical adverse reactions came from Alevis. The name of the bridge, "Yavuz Sultan Selim" caused the Alevis to react. Ali Yıldırım, Head of the Alevi Research Center, declared that naming the 3rd Bridge after the murderer of 40 thousand Alevis was an act against Alevis. The name, which received significant opposition on social media, remained the permanent name of the 3rd Bridge without any change.

2.6. Kanal İstanbul
2.6.1. Geographical Location and Historical Process

Kanal İstanbul (English: *Istanbul Canal*) is an artificial waterway project planned to be built on the European side of Istanbul and extending from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara (Kundak & Baypınar, 2011, p.54). Considered as an alternative to the Bosphorus, the Kanal İstanbul project is thought to facilitate the passage of tankships, warships and merchant ships between the Black Sea and Marmara (Ece, 2011, p.52). "The length of the canal will be approximately 45 km, its base width will be a minimum of 275 meters, and its depth will be 20.75 meters" (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı, 2020).

According to Tütüncü (2017), the project aims to have a width of 145-150 meters on the surface and 150-160 ships to pass through the canal per day (p.114). The plan of the project covers the area in Istanbul that includes a specific part of Avcılar, Arnavutköy, Başakşehir, and Küçükçekmece (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı, 2020). With the Kanal İstanbul Project, Istanbul will consist of two new peninsulas and a new island.

When we look at the historical process of the Kanal İstanbul project, it is seen that the idea of constructing an alternative waterway to the Bosphorus goes back to the historical Roman Empire (Morvan, 2011). For the first time, the Governor of Bithynia Plinius and Emperor Trajan mentioned the Sakarya River Transport Project in the correspondence between them. The idea of connecting these two seas by creating an artificial channel between the Black Sea and the Marmara has been put forward six times since the 16th century (Simavoryan, 2020). The project, which aims to connect the Sakarya River and Sapanca Lake to the Black Sea and Marmara, is one of the three major projects the Ottoman Empire planned to implement in the 1500s (Imanzade, 2021). Although the preparations for the project began by Mimar Sinan and architect Nicola Parisi during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent in 1550, the wars that took place at that time did not allow the project to be realized (Morvan, 2011; Imanzade, 2021).

During the Republican Era, the article "İstanbul Kanalını Düşünüyorum", written by Yüksel Önem, who was the Consultant of the Ministry of Energy at that time, was published in TUBITAK's Science and Technology magazine in August 1990. In his article, Önem (1990) mentions that the length of the Istanbul Canal, which will start from Büyükçekmece Lake and reach the Black Sea from the west of Terkos Lake, is 47

km, its width on the water surface is 100 m, its water depth is 25 m, and the canal

bottom width is 60 m. The most important aim of this project was to provide a

connection between the Marmara and the Black Sea.

By 1994, Bülent Ecevit suggested opening a canal on the European side of Istanbul to

create a link between the Black Sea and the Marmara Sea. This project took place in the

election brochures of DSP as "Bosphorus and DSP's Channel Project" (Kundak &

Baypınar, 2011). On September 23, 2010, the first public hearing of the project was

made by Hıncal Uluç in his article titled "A 'Crazy' project from the Prime Minister",

which did not include the content of the project (Kundak & Baypınar, 2011; Morvan,

2011).

Although the Kanal İstanbul project proposal was first made in 1994 by the Prime

Minister of the time, Bülent Ecevit (Çınar, 2017, p.24), it was announced in 2011 with

the official statement of the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Çınar, 2017, p.21).

"The crazy project" (Morvan, 2011, p.1) was also announced by Erdoğan in 2019 that

the construction and implementation of the Kanal İstanbul project will begin in 2020.

The year 2023 was specified as the completion date of the project (Imanzade, 2021,

p.1).

After the announcement of Kanal İstanbul on April 27, 2011, until 2013, route

evaluations were made with the help of various universities. In 2014, drilling was carried

out on the determined route to create the preliminary project (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı,

2020). In order to achieve this, geological and geotechnical data as a result of drilling

studies are used. In 2017, coordination was ensured by meeting with all institutions that may have existing and planned projects on the project route. By examining the artificial waterway experiences in the world, the road map of the survey project works is determined. For the detailed project of the route, additional drilling locations are decided on the canal axis, on the slopes, in the sea and lake environment, and geophysical studies (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı, 2020). From 2017 to 2019, detailed field, laboratory studies, and EIA were studied. With an additional 7,000 meters on land, sea, and lake, 17,100 meters of drilling are achieved at 304 points. The channel design is completed in light of the data obtained from these studies. The reports prepared from geological, geotechnical, and hydrogeological studies and numerical models laid the groundwork for the EIA Report (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı, 2020). In 2018, the route of Kanal Istanbul is announced as Küçükçekmece - Sazlıdere - Durusu. In 2019, it was announced that the tender for the megaproject would be published. The first foundations of the project are laid in 2021, and according to the statement, it is expected to be completed in 6 years. During this whole process, news articles about Kanal Istanbul have increased in newspapers, and the results and effects of the Kanal Istanbul project have begun to be criticized and discussed both in political environments and in society.

2.6.2. Legal Status and Montreux Convention

Evaluation of the Kanal Istanbul Project in terms of international law symbolizes the power that enables the relations between international legal persons and the sovereign state to continue in accordance with international law (Ece, 2011). A state has three different country areas. These are the land country, the sea country, and the air country

of the state. It is the greatest right of the state to use its sovereign authority independently in these three country areas. The limitations imposed by international law on the state's land, air, and sea country do not harm the state's sovereign authority (Akkaya, 2015). Since Kanal Istanbul Project is a project planned to be built within the borders of the Republic of Turkey and Turkey has independent political authority, its legal regime regarding the new channel is determined unilaterally (Simavoryan, 2020). After realizing the Kanal Istanbul project, evaluations must be made according to the rules of both the contract and international law to determine any situation contrary to the Montreux Straits Convention (Ece, 2011; Akkaya, 2015).

The Montreux Straits Convention, which regulates the passage of commercial and military vessels through the Turkish Straits and creates its legal infrastructure, is essential for all parties, including Turkey, and also implemented for non-participating countries (Kıyı Emniyeti Genel Müdürlüğü, n.d.). For the Kanal İstanbul project to be successful and achieve its purpose, especially the ships carrying dangerous goods should use Kanal Istanbul instead of the Bosphorus (Mylonas & Xenidis, 2018). It may be possible to make the Kanal İstanbul transit financially easier to encourage ships to use Kanal İstanbul. However, to achieve this, it may be necessary to make the passage through the Bosphorus difficult or even prohibit it. This situation will be clearly contrary to the generally accepted international law rules, even if the Montreux Convention and the termination of the Montreux Convention have taken place (Akgün & Tiryaki, 2020). In other words, according to both the Montreux Convention and international law, Turkey will not be able to force ships to use Kanal Istanbul (Kurumahmut, 2006).

According to Article 2 of the Montreux Convention,

In the time of peace, merchant ships shall enjoy full freedom of transit and round-trip (transportation) through the straits, regardless of day and night, flag and cargo, without any formalities, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 3 below. No taxes or duties shall be collected from these ships, apart from the taxes and duties stipulated in Annex I to this agreement, to be collected by the Turkish authorities while they are transiting through a port of the Straits.

However, this right to freedom of passage is not a completely free passage or a passage that is not legally supervised and not subject to any regulation. This passage is a freedom that international law defines as innocent transition, as long as it avoids actions that would harm the order, peace, or security of the coastal state of Turkey. The right of passage, which is discussed in Article 2, is accepted as a right of passage characterized in this way both in the decisions of the Court of Cassation and in the international literature and practice (Akgün & Tiryaki, 2020; Ece, 2011; Akkaya, 2015).

2.6.3. Possible Positive and Negative Impacts

Artificial waterway projects such as the Panama Canal and the Suez Canal were created with the effects of improving global trade, reducing costs, and saving time. The Dardanelles and the Bosphorus are natural formations. The realization of the Kanal Istanbul Project is considered to be necessary for the security of the Bosphorus. The Kanal Istanbul Project is planned to be an artificial waterway between the Black Sea and

the Marmara Sea to relieve ship traffic in the Bosphorus, which has no alternative gateway between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Thus, various cargoes on the ships will be able to be transported from north to south without passing through the Bosphorus.

Another positive effect believed to be created by the Kanal Istanbul Project is the thought that both commercial and tourism activities of Istanbul, which is the world's leading city of commerce, history, and culture, will increase thanks to this project (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı). Additionally, it is foreseen that the Kanal İstanbul Project will not only reduce the traffic created by merchant ships but also prevent the traffic of ships carrying nuclear cargo, such as tanker ships (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı). The Turkish Straits generally have heavy national and international maritime traffic. For this reason, it is an area where significant risks may arise in terms of life, property, and environmental safety. The general purpose of the Kanal Istanbul project is to minimize these risks (T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı). Those who argue that the project will bring positive results think that the Kanal İstanbul will help reduce the burden caused by maritime traffic and increase the safety of the strait by producing an alternative waterway to the maritime traffic in the Bosphorus (Yalçıntan et al., 2014). In addition to ensuring traffic safety and navigational safety, protecting the historical and cultural texture of the Bosphorus and increasing its security are among the positive effects envisaged (Ünlüata at al., 1990). In addition, considering a possible Istanbul earthquake, creating a modern earthquake-resistant residential area based on horizontal architecture is also seen as a positive innovation to be created by the Kanal Istanbul project.

On the other hand, the Kanal İstanbul Project has adverse effects. These negative effects are generally that the project may cause some problems under the Montreux Convention and cause environmental problems and disasters (Öğüt, 2014). As mentioned above, in order for the Kanal İstanbul Project to achieve its purpose, especially the cargo ships carrying dangerous goods need to use the Kanal İstanbul instead of the Bosphorus. For such a requirement to occur, it is considered that the passage of ships through the Bosphorus should be made more difficult (Kurumahmut, 2006). This situation is contrary to both the Montreux Convention and the rules of international law, even if the termination of this agreement is included (Öğüt, 2014; Vank, 1998). As a result of all these possibilities, it is considered that the peace process, which was ensured by the Montreux Convention and is still protected, may be jeopardized.

Considering that countries such as Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, and Georgia have coastlines on the Black Sea, apart from Turkey, the continuation of the international peace ensured by the Montreux Convention is an important issue (Vank, 1998). The geopolitical position of Turkey, surrounded by seas on three sides, gives Turkey strategic importance in terms of maritime transport. In addition to having a crucial natural road opening from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, it also forms the natural border separating the European and Asian continents (Mylonas & Xenidis, 2018). In all these respects, it has the feature of being a critical region for the states that are riparian to the Black Sea and for the states that want to reach the Black Sea (İstanbul Şehir Konseyi, 2022). All these features of the Turkish Straits have many advantages and on the other hand, they also bring essential responsibilities.

The fact that Turkey's coasts are at such a critical point in maritime transportation brings with it the problem of maritime traffic. Heavy maritime traffic also increases the risk of accidents at sea (İstanbul Şehir Konseyi, 2022). From this point of view, it is seen that solution methods should be developed for the problems created by the transitions and the density of sea transportation. When this situation is evaluated according to the Montreux Convention, some experts argue that the project is against the agreement (Ünlüata et al., 1990). In contrast, others think the treaty should be updated considering Turkey's power in the straits. However, from another point of view, if the countries bordering the Black Sea want to have more rights, the current situation carries the possibility of turning into a more serious international problem (İstanbul Şehir Konseyi, 2022).

When it comes to the impact of the Kanal İstanbul project on housing, urbanization, and environmental ecology, first of all, there is a city position that will grow above the vital resources of Istanbul (Simavoryan, 2020). With the project, some dangers such as ship accidents and explosions and situations that may cause air pollution and health problems will be transferred from the Bosphorus coast to the Kanal İstanbul coast (İstanbul Şehir Konseyi, 2022). Within the scope of the Kanal İstanbul project, besides transportation, energy, and environmental applications, it is aimed to create a new and modern living space around the canal. It is also planned to create sports facilities, hotels, and different activity areas, so there will be intense construction in the region. If the project is implemented, it is predicted that the seas and sea creatures, water basins, cultivated areas, and forests will be adversely affected (Akbulut & Candan, 2014). The academic environment and experts have some opinions that the living resources of Istanbul will be damaged if the project is realized. Those who oppose the project state that the water of

the Black Sea will drain into the Sea of Marmara, which will lead to the destruction of the environment Cengiz et al., 2019). As a result of the completion of the project, it is thought that there will be drought for Terkos, Küçükçekmece, and Büyükçekmece lakes, and the existence of fishery products in the Marmara Sea will be endangered. There are also some legal changes related to the project (Cengiz et al., 2019; Edelman, 2021). For example, the possibility that the Kanal Istanbul project will be included in the scope of 'projects for which Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will not be required will raise the possibility of some problems in terms of environmental law (Edelman, 2021). It is believed that the Kanal Istanbul project will cause changes in marine chemistry and lead to changes in the salinity rates in the seas, which will create profound negative changes in fish populations. This is also considered as one of the indicators that this project may cause economic losses (Akbulut and Candan, 2014; Cengiz et al., 2019; Edelman, 2021). In other words, with the construction of the Kanal Istanbul project, a severe environmental hazard will be faced in the region, from seas to forests and from plants to agricultural lands.

All things considered, it is seen that the relationship between media and politics can lead to different representations of different issues in the news media. In the power race in Turkish political circles, environmental mega-projects like Kanal Istanbul gain a new perspective besides being just construction or environmental project (Kurumahmut,, 2006). With the transformation of such projects into a political tool, their representation in the news media is also affected by the political environment, and it can be said that newspapers give place to different perspectives in different ways in presenting news (Marschall & Aydogan, 2015).

For this purpose, the research questions of this study aim to investigate how the Kanal Istanbul project is represented in the Turkish news media in the context of media framing theory and to what extent the selected newspapers reflect their ideologies in this representation. Therefore, the first question of the study explores the principles of journalism practices before analyzing whether there is a political representation and focuses mainly on the principles of objectivity and impartiality. The other question tries to reveal the level of political and ideological reflections in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the newspapers.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The chapter explains the research methodology in detail, and the variables used to create the coding sheet. Content analysis is used as this study's research method. The study intends to examine the media framing of the Kanal İstanbul project by using the news content of the selected newspapers. In other words, this thesis aims to scrutinize the news content of newspapers with different political ideologies in the context of media framing theory by using both quantitative and qualitative content analysis research methods.

3.1. Content Analysis

The method of this study is content analysis, which has been widely used in communication research. This study analyses how the Kanal Istanbul mega project is framed in selected Turkish newspapers. Mixed content analysis will be achieved through the use of both quantitative and qualitative forms of content analysis when examining how the Kanal Istanbul project is framed.

Content analysis is a research technique used by making inferences from transcripts or recordings and written or visual media messages obtained as a result of a research. As

Stokes (2013) indicates, content analysis is a measurement of "how much of something occurs in a set of texts" (p.120). Content analysis, which has a broad scope, is accepted as the primary point about the content and its results. According to Berelson (1952), content analysis is a research method created to define the "objective, systematic, and quantitative content of communication" (p.17). The concept of objectivity in this definition is the opposite of subjective or impressionistic. The concept of systematicity encompasses applying the research method similar to all the content selected for analysis. At the same time, it is the creation of the research categories so that all the content is analysed. The data collection process is created to provide the data related to the research question. Quantification is recording numerical data or frequencies in various types of content. Likewise, Holsti (1968), one of the names influenced by Berelson's content analysis studies, defines content analysis as systematically and objectively examining specific properties of the contents and reaching results.

For Krippendorff (1980), one of the leading names of the content analysis method, content analysis is a research technique used to obtain repeatable and valid results and inferences from the data regarding its content. These conclusions and inferences may be related to the "sender of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message" (Weber, 1985, p.5). Besides, Stone (1966) argues that the most critical point in the content analysis method is to create unbiased results. The steps followed by content analysis are "finding your images, devising your categories for coding, coding the images, and analysing the results" (Rose, 2016, pp.88-96). At this point, the coding system is fundamental because the coding system must be selected correctly for the

results and inferences from the research to be revealed objectively and systematically. Cartwright (1953) points out that we can make impartial definitions using content analysis and coding.

Using content analysis, researchers can measure and/or analyse the presence, meaning, and association of certain words, themes, or concepts. Content analysis is a beneficial research technique, especially in analysing the quality of social interaction through plain texts and/or narrative analyses (Cissel, 2012). It can be used in both quantitative and qualitative research. In this context, it is possible to discuss the distinction between quantitative and qualitative content analysis. Quantitative results are described in terms of numbers and percentages. Qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, provides an understanding of the direction of social interaction and communication through direct texts or transcripts (Rössler, 2013). It is used to statistically analyse or understand and interpret the relationships that can change between specific categories and relationships in the coded form of the text. Content analysis is an analysis technique developed to summarize all kinds of content by counting and/or coding various aspects of the content (White & Marsh 2006: 30-31).

There are five basic steps in both quantitative and qualitative content analysis (Demirci & Köseli, 2011). The first thing to do is to select the content to be analysed. According to the research question, the texts to be analysed are selected. This text can be the narrative of a movie, a newspaper article, or the text of a book (Hansen, 1998).

Secondly, the units of analysis are determined and their categories are defined. Third, a set of rules for coding is developed. Variables are determined in line with research questions or hypotheses (Simon & Burstein, 1985). Fourth, the text is coded according to the rules in the context of the determining variables. Finally, the text is analysed, conclusions drawn and interpreted (Bonini & Morello, 2014).

As in every stage of the quantitative research method, objectivity, impartialness, and systematicity are essential in quantitative content analysis. Therefore, it is aimed to describe the item discussed in an objective, systematic and quantitative way. According to White and Marsh (2006), quantitative content analysis fed from the positivist tradition includes special stages that allow copying (White & Marsh, 2006: 27). In the content in question, the basic elements are classified, and quantitative elements are used to interpret the content. A researcher who wants to do quantitative content analysis can count how many times certain words are repeated in texts to collect data, measure how many square centimetres are allocated to columns or news in newspapers, or calculate how many minutes/hours are devoted to the researched topic on radio and television.

Gönç Şavran (2012), on the other hand, argues that quantitative content analysis can offer ideas about the quality of the communication in question-based on the data obtained (Gönç Şavran, 2012: 95). The common use of quantitative content analysis is in written texts, where the frequency of certain words in the text is decisive in determining the quantitative elements. In other words, quantitative content analysis is a technique for

compressing and systematizing a text according to open coding rules and analysing it with fewer words. Stemler (2000) says that the purpose here is to reveal the frequency of certain concepts or words in any text and to express them numerically (Stemler, 2000: 1). In this way, it is possible to say something about the form of communication and the source of this form of communication.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) define qualitative content analysis as a type of research based on the subjective interpretation of text data's content through identifying themes and patterns and the systematic classification of coding (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1279). Descriptions of qualitative content analysis show that this technique emphasizes an integrated view of speeches/texts and their specific contexts (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). The qualitative content analysis goes beyond simply counting words or extracting factual content from texts to examine meanings, themes, and patterns that may be overt or hidden in a given text. Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) emphasize that qualitative content analysis, in which the researcher works in an interpretative paradigm, is a valuable alternative to quantitative content analysis (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

In contrast to quantitative content analysis, qualitative content analysis avoids a rapid digitization trend and focuses on the meaning in the content of the text. He uses codes and themes while revealing the meaning. According to these categories, the dimensions related to the research subject are determined and filtered from the text. The division of the text into categories also means its gradual and systematic examination. Mayring

(2011) states that with qualitative content analysis, the text is well checked, and the results of the step-by-step analysis are much more substantial. (Mayring, 2011: 117). Zhang and Wildemuth state that qualitative content analysis aims to identify significant themes or categories within a content body and to provide a detailed description of the social reality created by these themes/categories. Through careful data preparation, coding, and interpretation, the results of qualitative content analysis can support the development of new theories and models, as well as validate existing theories and provide explanations about specific environments or phenomena (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

3.2. Data Collection

A total of 1600 digital news articles are examined using "Kanal İstanbul" keyword between 2016 and 2022. Among the 1600 news, the news directly related to Kanal İstanbul project are selected, and the number of news directly related to Kanal Istanbul is 570. A total of 145.439 words are included in the content analysis for research and analysis. 120 of a total of 300 news for Sözcü newspaper, 122 of a total of 300 news for Cumhuriyet newspaper, 120 of a total of 270 news for Yeni Akit newspaper, 120 of a total of 480 news for Karar newspaper and 88 of 250 news for Sabah newspaper are included in the analysis.

The main factor for the search results obtained from both Google and the official websites of the newspapers is the inclusion of all the news reached between 2016 and

2022 with the Kanal Istanbul keyword. The news was selected in the analysis by examining whether the news texts represented the Kanal Istanbul project directly or indirectly. By excluding news that are not directly related to Kanal Istanbul in the research, it was aimed to avoid the confusion caused by how Kanal Istanbul is framed through different agendas.

To explain in more detail, while distinguishing whether the contents of the news texts directly or indirectly represent the Kanal Istanbul project, it is first distinguished whether the main theme of the news texts is Kanal Istanbul. In the content of the news that were examined and described as indirect, the Kanal Istanbul project was only mentioned at a minor point, and the main content and theme of the news is related to another subject.

For example, in some of the news that are described as indirect, a political party leader or politician refers to the Kanal Istanbul project while making a statement on another subject. In such news, the main subject of the news is not the Kanal Istanbul project. That is, most only refer to the Kanal Istanbul project while giving an example or making a statement on another subject. Another criterion is that news that do not allow objectivity to be examined are not included in the analysis. Such news was not included in the analysis because they do not have enough content to make a review in the context of the coding sheet on the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project. For this reason, news that are not directly related to Kanal Istanbul-related issues have been ignored.

Table 1. Number of News Articles about Kanal İstanbul, Number of Analysed News and Total Word Count

Newspaper / Period	Number of News Articles about Kanal İstanbul	Number of Analysed News Articles	Word Count
Sözcü / 2016-2022	300	120	31296
Cumhuriyet / 2016-2022	300	122	31841
Yeni Akit / 2016-2022	270	120	26557
Karar / 2016-2022	480	120	33426
Sabah / 2016-2022	250	88	22319
	Total: 1600	**Total:** 570	**Total:** 145439

In this study, Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers are chosen as research samples to examine the representation of the Kanal Istanbul mega project in the Turkish news media. These newspapers are selected for the diversity of research results, as they exhibit different ideological stances in the Turkish political context. In the selection of these newspapers with different ideologies, it is taken into account that this political and ideological diversity could enrich the study and offer the opportunity to make efficient comparisons and interpretations in the analysis process.

The news texts in the newspapers selected for the research cover the years 2016-2022. It is examined how the Kanal Istanbul project is represented in the newspapers determined between 2016 and 2022. While determining the time period here, the period from 2011, when the Kanal Istanbul project was shared with the public for the first time, to the present (2022) is included in the research. However, very few and insufficient number of

newspaper articles about Kanal Istanbul can be accessed in the newspapers determined before 2016. The content in the news texts about Kanal Istanbul accessed in the years before 2016 was not included in the analysis because there are concise expressions about Kanal Istanbul in the news texts. These statements were not included in the analysis as they could not be analyzed within the frameworks categorized on the coding sheet. At this point, the period included in the research is limited to the years between 2016 and 2022. One of the most important reasons for determining a six-year period for the research is to analyse the representations of the Kanal Istanbul project in the news texts of newspapers with different ideologies and to reach more fertile results over the years.

During the research process of this thesis, both sufficient numbers of news and news that are open to everyone's access are collected through the Google search engine and the official websites of Sözcü (https://www.sozcu.com.tr/), Cumhuriyet (https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/), Yeni Akit (https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/), Karar (https://www.karar.com/), and Sabah (https://www.sabah.com.tr/) newspapers. The reasons for using the Google search engine for this research are that it is a search engine used worldwide, it is simple and easy to use, and most importantly, it creates a chronological list for the user while providing access to news texts. News articles are searched using the keyword "Kanal Istanbul" on selected newspapers' internet pages and the Google search engine. After the keyword search, all the news published between 2016-2022 is included in the content analysis.

The keyword "Kanal Istanbul" is first searched on the Google search engine, and the news reached was collected. The news accessed from both the Google search engine and the official web pages of the newspapers were categorized in a folder created on the computer desktop, separated by years. Since the news texts are digital, each screenshot for the news article was taken and added to the folders. Within the scope of the empirical research, a total of one thousand six hundred news items were reached for all newspapers between 2016 and 2022. Three hundred news for Sözcü, three hundred for Cumhuriyet, two hundred and seventy for Yeni Akit newspaper, four hundred eighty news for Karar newspaper, and two hundred and fifty for Sabah newspaper are accessed. The news articles found on Google were collected and included in the study by going to other pages following the page order starting from the first result page. In cases where a sufficient number of news could not be reached only through the Google search engine, the same keywords were searched in the search sections of the official web pages of the newspapers. The news obtained from the websites of the newspapers selected for the research was included in the study by following the publication dates between January and December for every year except 2022. For 2022, the publications between January and June, the first six months of 2022, were collected. The reason for including the news published only in the first six months (January-June) of 2022 was determined according to the duration of the analysis section of the thesis. Therefore, the news published in July and August were not included in the analysis.

3.3. Coding Sheet

The coding sheet examines how the Kanal Istanbul project is represented in news articles through media frameworks such as attitude of the news, themes/concepts (international context, national issues, environment, infrastructure, economy, and security), political figures, general tone, references/resources, criticism of government, criticism of opposition, support for government, and support for opposition. All sentences with semantic integrity, including the headlines of the news, are used as the content analysis unit.

While creating the coding sheet, previous studies in the literature are taken into account, and those suitable for the research are included in the study. In more detail, both national and non-national studies are used as resources for the coding sheet. A review of the relevant literature has allowed this thesis to examine how often and in what ways specific coding categories are used in media and communication scientific studies. In particular, studies that conduct a content analysis on how an event or situation is framed and represented in the media are reviewed. The coding categories are created based on previous research on media framing, in conjunction with the primary focus of the study revolving around the impact of objectivity-based journalism in reporting.

When looking at the other research in the literature that analyses the relationship between media framing and objectivity and uses content analysis, a wide variety of studies examine different situations or events represented in the media. In particular,

studies examining how newspapers present specific issues show that such as election and immigrant issues, which affect societies socially, politically, and economically, take place in large numbers. Election and immigration topics are the subject of many studies as they significantly affect societies in the political context. There are minimal findings in the literature regarding the representation of megaprojects in the media, both in national and international studies. No study has been found that does content analysis on how a megaproject like Kanal Istanbul is framed in the media. Again, this can be seen as a point emphasizing the purpose and importance of this thesis.

Based on the subjects and methods of all these research in the literature, the studies that examine how the newspapers present a subject according to their ideological and political orientations while framing the news with content analysis are used as the primary method in creating the coding sheet.

Table 2. Coding Sheet Categories

1	Attitudes of the News	Neutral = 0 Opposition = 1 Pro-Government = 2
1.1	Criticism of Government	No = 0 Yes = 1
	Criticism of Opposition	No = 0 Yes = 1
1.2	Support for Government	No = 0 Yes = 1
	Support for Opposition	No = 0 Yes = 1
2	General Tone	Neutral = 0 Positive = 1 Negative = 2

3	Political Figures	No = 0 Yes = 1
3.1	Political Figures – if "yes"	Not Applicable = -1 Governmental Institutions = 1 Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) = 2 Politicians / Political Parties = 3 Other = 4 Academicians = 5 None = 6
3.2	Politicians	None = -1 Recep Tayyip Erdoğan = 1 Ekrem İmamoğlu = 2 Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu = 3 Binali Yıldırım = 4 Oppositional Politician = 5 Pro-Government Politician = 6 Not Applicable = 7
4	References / Sources	No = 0 Yes = 1
4.1	References / Sources – if "yes"	Official Documents = 0 Legal Decisions = 1 Government Institutions = 2 Agreements = 3 Scientists / Scientific Documents = 4 Environmental Impact Assessments = 5
5	Themes / Concepts	International Context = 0 National Context = 1 Environment = 2 Infrastructure = 3 Economy = 4 Security = 5

Some of the framing categories of this study, such as the general tone of the news, political actors, critical/supportive statements, or the general theme reflected by the news, are widely used in academic studies that examine media representations through framing theory and the objectivity of the news. In this context, various coding categories are borrowed from the relevant literature and many different studies, and the academic background of media and communication research is used for this study.

This study primarily focuses on objectivity in how news is represented, so it is essential to look at how objectivity has been handled in journalism in previous research. Stuart Hall, the founder of representation theory, states that the concept of representation points to a process of making sense (1997, pp.16-19). Representation expresses the relationship between language and concept. Because representation is the interpretation of the concepts in our minds through language. The relationship between things, concepts, and signs are at the center of the production of meaning in language. The process that connects these three elements is called 'representation'. Based on this, the concept of representation is a meaning-making process that emerges as a result of the relationship between mental perceptions of events and phenomena, and language.

Hall (1997, pp.7-8) draws attention to the fact that the concept of representation is beyond the constitutive of the event rather than something that emerges after events or facts in this process of making sense. Accordingly, the meanings of events emerge at this point. The way the event is constructed can distort or change its meaning. Making sense varies from one society to another, from one group to another, or from one individual to another. Moreover, the most important thing here is how the event is presented. At this point, the concept of representation as a part of the event comes into play. In other words, representation is defined as the process of making sense as the element that builds meaning.

Considering the relationship between media and representation, the point to be emphasized is media outputs. What subjects the media deals with and how it is presented are related to the representation process of the media. In the media; the ways in which people, institutions, objects, and events are represented are essential; because the outcomes resulting from representation gain a place in society and legitimize this place. For this reason, the representation process must be impartial and transparent. The fact that media professionals carry out the screening and highlighting processes indicates that there will be a difference between reality and representation.

To exemplify, Gauthier (1993) emphasizes the concept of objectivity in journalism because he emphasizes that the absence of objectivity in journalism is the end of journalism. Gauthier says in his study that journalists tend to cling to constructs of objectivity, whether or not they specifically use the term objectivity. On the other hand, even though the rules of objectivity and impartiality prevent journalists from reflecting their political stances in the news, reporters and editors evaluate power holders in terms of popularity and effectiveness in exercising power.

According to Bennett (1983), mainstream news organizations claim that by keeping up with the norms of objectivity, they provide a similar approach to opposite parties and prevent any bias in their news representations. However, despite all these claims, it is common for news organizations to be inclined towards one of the parties involved. "Permission to use objective and non-ideological evaluation criteria derives from

normative self-images and socialization in the profession." (Entman, 2010, p.394).

Again, Bennett and Livingston (2003) argues that news production processes cannot

guarantee a constant level of standing between the parties when the skills of the

competing parties are different, and the relevant facts vary.

Considering the studies examining the bias in news presentations and the reflection of a

certain ideology, the Glasgow University Media Group Scholars (1980) noted that there

are links between how news is presented and the ideology it promotes. Besides, in their

study, Iyengar and Simon (1993) analyzed the news reports about the Gulf crisis. They

concluded that the media's framing process was designed to legitimize the

administration's perspective.

Despite the claims that all objectivity rules in journalism are followed, studies in the

literature show that news coverage and news framing in the media are generally

influenced by ideology and are guided accordingly. The ideologies reflected in news

frames are of great importance because previous research in the literature proves that

news coverage and the way it is framed affect both audience views and their political

decisions in this context.

Hence, since it is important how news about a subject is framed and at what point

ideologically the newspaper presenting that news is located, it was first examined

whether newspaper news was ideologically biased or unbiased in the analysis. The

ideological attitudes of the news have been added under 3 main items: Neutral = 0 /

Opposition= 1 / Pro-Government = 2.

Apart from the neutral, opposition, or pro-government attitudes of the news texts, it is

also one of the factors that affect the objectivity of the news, whether the news texts

have a supportive or critical representation of a particular topic by the newspapers

presenting the news. The purpose of using this critical or supportive approach is that

selected words and phrases in media texts change and affect the perceptions, thoughts,

and evaluations of individuals with the ideologies reflected in these attitudes. According

to İnceoğlu and Çomak (2009), this method aims to reach implicit ideological structures

from explicit linguistic structures.

At this point, it is crucial not only to examine whether a news text has a neutral,

opposition, or pro-government attitudes, but also to examine whether a critical or

supportive attitudes is used in order to analyze both the news objectivity and its

ideological representation. In the analysis process of the study, by looking at the

ideological presentation of the news texts, it was first examined whether they had a

critical approach to the government and the opposition. In this analysis, coding was done

as Criticism of Government (No = 0 / Yes = 1) and Criticism of Opposition (No = 0 /

Yes = 1). Likewise, when examining the objectivity and bias of news texts, whether they

used a supportive attitude towards the government and the opposition was added to the

content analysis part of the research. The coding prepared as Support for Government

(No = 0 / Yes = 1) and Support for Opposition (No = 0 / Yes = 1) was included in the content analysis.

While news framing shapes the ideas of individuals about a topic, they also affect the direction of people's perception in the context of this topic with the tone of news texts. In other words, the direction and tone of these individuals' perceptions are determined by how the media and journalists present a subject within the economic, political, social, and cultural structures, in what conditions, in what ways, and in what network of relations. When we look at the literature, it is seen that the tone used in terms of language in the news is very influential in shaping the evaluation made by the readers (Sheafer, 2007). Another important work in the literature on tone and classification of changes in tone in the context of current news is Tamir Schafer's article "How to Evaluate It: The Role of Story - Evaluative Tone in Agenda Setting and Priming". In this article, Schafer (2007) explained that the tone used in the news is classified as negative, positive, and neutral, together with his empirical analysis, and presented two reasons why tone is essential. First, the audience's opinions can be shaped by the negative, positive, and neutral expressions used in the tone of the news while the public evaluates the importance of the subject. Secondly, the tone used in the news creates an interaction thanks to the emotional feature. In this framework, the emotional feature plays a complementary role in forming the effect and strength of the message that should be conveyed by the news (Sheafer 2007).

For example, Dunaway et al. (2015) examine how objective campaign news, defined by a similar approach toward two rival parties, is represented one candidate relative to the other. They analyze the content of campaign news texts related to the 2004, 2006, and 2008 state elections. The differences in the tone of the story and the quality and type of the information in the news texts are examined. In addition, while making this analysis, the article also touches on the relationship between the phenomenon of objectivity and information bias in election news. In the article, tone coding is done in three different ways. If the news generally has negative language about the candidate, the news is coded as negative=1. If the news presents a candidate as neutral, it is coded as neutral=2. Again, if a news report uses positive language towards the candidate this time, it is coded as positive=3.

In one study, Xu (2013) examines the framing of Occupy Wall Street, which started in New York in September 2011, in the media. Here, the general tone refers to the general attitude towards the protesters. According to Dardis (2006), after readers read the entire article, the tone of the story is conceptualized to represent what feeling dominates. If the article's general attitude towards the protest and protesters is negative, it is coded as "negative". The article's general attitude towards the protesters was coded as "neutral" if it was neutral and "positive" if it was positive.

The explanations of how the general tone of news is determined as neutral, positive, or negative in this study are given below:

Neutral Tone

1. Transferring facts and information about the Kanal Istanbul project without any additional comments,

2. Covering every aspect and side of the Kanal Istanbul project equally,

3. Texts that do not include unrealistic criticisms and negative language about Kanal Istanbul.

Positive Tone

1. Containing only factual facts,

2. Explaining the (economic, cultural, social, political, environmental, etc.) contribution of the Kanal Istanbul project to Turkey,

3. Condemning the negative attitudes towards the Kanal Istanbul project,

4. Texts criticizing the negative representations of the Kanal Istanbul project.

Negative Tone

1. Using (directly) negative words and expressions to describe the Kanal Istanbul project,

2. Including expressions that describe the Kanal Istanbul project negatively through the connotations of the words used,

3. Explaining the (economic, cultural, social, political, environmental, etc.) damages of the Kanal Istanbul project to Turkey.

4. Texts with opposing views on the Kanal Istanbul project.

The critical point is that while examining the attitude of the news, the attitudes towards the government or the opposition in the news content were analyzed. On the other hand, while examining the general tone of the news, the approach to the Kanal Istanbul project in the contents of the news texts was analyzed.

Previous research on news framing in the media has also focused on the roles of some non-media figures, such as governments, politicians, official government agencies, or private companies, in the communications and reporting fields. According to Davidson and Gismondi (2011), these actors primarily draw attention to the economic benefits of the projects they offer. Moreover, the relationship between journalistic norms, cultural values, and political figures plays a crucial role in creating news frames. According to Liebes (2000), ideological constraints and parties significantly affect the frame of a news story. Press and broadcasting organizations are under pressure directly or indirectly by economic interests or political relations.

From this point of view, news outlets and organizations act as a bridge between political figures and individuals in society. Citizens affected by mass media create a perspective according to the framing of the news in the media in the process of perceiving a situation and acquiring information. At this point, Chong and Druckman (2007) mention that framing can create new perspectives on political figures. Of course, it is not possible to

be sure that the political figure in the media frame and widely used will always be

successful in controlling the opinion of the public and the reader. In other words, when

news frames are made, it does not mean that the actor often mentioned is framed in the

desired way in every situation. At this point, what is of paramount significance for the

successful exercise and reflection of political power is whether the established

framework has a decisive and specific effect on both target groups, not on people in

general (see summaries of Chong & Druckman, 2007; Entman et al., 2009).

"Skilled politicians and other actors frame communications to highlight and weave

together those dimensions of a situation most likely to sway potential allies to become

actual supporters" (Entman, 2010, p.392). In short, as Entman argues, it is also essential

to look at how political figures are used to frame the news, with the media acting as a

bridge in communication with the citizen for political actors who seek power by

directing the ideas, thoughts, and feelings of most members of a society on an issue.

Therefore, while looking at the framing of the news in this study, it was primarily

determined whether a political figure was involved: Political Figures (No = 0 / Yes = 1).

Then, if there is any political figure in that news, these political figures are categorized

as explained in Table 2. These categories are Governmental Institutions = 1 / Non-

governmental Organizations (NGOs) = 2 / Politician & Political Party = 3 / Other = 4 /

Academician = 5. This categorization was based on the results that emerged during the

analysis phase. If a news report contains no political figures, it is marked as None = 6

during this categorization phase. For each news text, three separate sections were opened

in the SPSS (*Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*) program, and titles were

created as Political Figure 1 / Political Figure 2 / Political Figure 3. If less than three

political figures are included in the news, the unfilled parts are marked as Not

Applicable = -1.

In order to better understand how political figures are framed, the next step is to

determine which politicians are used in news frames. At this determination stage, two

separate sections were opened on the SPSS program, and titles Politician 1 / Politician 2

were created. The categories created for politicians are Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

(President of Turkey) = 1 / Ekrem İmamoğlu (Mayor of İstanbul from Republican

People's Party (CHP)) = 2 / Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (Leader of the Main Opposition CHP) =

3 / Binali Yıldırım (Last Prime Minister of Turkey from Justice and Development Party

(AKP)) = 4 / Oppositional Politician = 5 / Pro-Government Politician = 6. Again, this

categorization was based on the results that emerged during the analysis phase. If there

is no politician in a news item, it is marked as None = -1 during this categorization

phase. If less than two politicians are in the news, the unfilled parts are marked as Not

Applicable = 7.

In addition to all of these, Ogan and Swift (1982) state that general media research finds

that news media primarily benefit from official government sources. Also, the parties

presenting the news find and use politicians as reliable news sources to a large extent.

Likewise, the relationship between the journalist and the news source, the impositions of

pressure groups, and lobbying activities are external factors that affect the news-making

process outside the institutional structure (Yüksel & Gürcan, 2001: 72). For example, according to Kayode and Adeniran (2012), the scope of major development projects and information about these projects are shared based on official sources and interviews rather than documents or data. Moreover, there are some criticisms of how the media use resources or evidence in addressing community development and improvement projects. While some researchers argue that the media represent megaprojects in a more sensational way (Shumow & Gutsche Jr, 2016), others emphasize that the media barely covers the issues related to megaprojects (Kayode & Adeniran, 2012). In addition to development and improvement projects, there are deficiencies in researcher reports, interviews, and critical analysis within the scope of megaprojects. According to some researchers, while media discourse ignores critical commentary and alternative analysis, it supports assumptions that more is needed in the context of economic development (Martin & Oshagan, 1997).

Since the sources used in the analysis of a news text should not be ignored when examining the framing and representation forms, the sources mentioned in the news were also included in the analysis in order to see the use of sources and the difference between the sources in the news about the Kanal Istanbul project in the selected newspapers. For analysis of the sources, a coding was created in order to distinguish whether a source was used or not in the news texts examined first: References/Sources (No = 0 / Yes = 1). After this distinction, if a source is used in news texts, what kind of source it is categorized. The coding of the sources used in the news texts is Official

Document = 0 / Legal Document = 1 / Government Unit = 2 / Agreement = 3 / Scientist & Scientific Document = 4 / Environmental Impact Assessment = 5.

Researchers, for example, Greenberg & Knight (2004), analyze the thematic structure of news texts in their examination of the fact that the sources used play a major role in directing politics, media, and society's agendas and influencing the opinions of individuals. According to Pan and Kosicki (1993), these themes and concepts show different sides of the news story, including quotes, information, and descriptions of events or individuals to form a general meaning. Additionally, Kim et al. (2014) mention that when examining news framing in studies using content analysis methodology, the main theme should be considered in news stories. To exemplify, Chen (2020) examines how the Pacific NorthWest LNG project (PNW), seen as British Columbia's liquefied natural gas development vessel, is represented in the media. Six Canadian media outlets analyzed how PNW was represented in the media over 36 months. In order to determine the themes framed by the media, the news texts were carefully read, and the emerging themes were coded. After the thematic analysis of the news texts, the themes were coded as politics, economy, and environment.

Likewise, in this study, the themes in the news texts and representation of the Kanal İstanbul project by the newspapers were analyzed. While the themes were categorized, the news texts' titles and paragraphs were read in detail, and thematic distinctions were created. After this stage, a total of six categories were obtained: International Context =

0 / National Context = 1 / Environment = 2 / Infrastructure = 3 / Economy = 4 / Security = 5.

In the news texts in the "International Context" category, along with the construction of the Kanal Istanbul project, there are statements about the relations between Turkey and other states (e.g. changes that may occur in ship transportation between the Black Sea countries and Turkey within the scope of the Montreux Straits Convention). In the "National Context" category, there are statements that refer to the social changes that may occur within the borders of Turkey with the Kanal Istanbul project (e.g. the effects of the Kanal Istanbul project, which is considered an alternative to the Bosphorus, on the public in the region where it will be built). While addressing the "Environment" theme, news texts mentioning the environmental impacts that emerged with the project were included (e.g. the positive-negative effects of the project on the environment, natural disasters, and the consequences that may arise for plants/animals). In the "Infrastructure" category, all technical and infrastructure works brought with the Kanal Istanbul project were collected thematically (e.g. other infrastructure works, workplaces, factories, buildings, etc. that will be operational in the region where the Kanal Istanbul project is planned). For the "Economy" category, it has been determined what financial impacts Turkey will have both on itself and foreign relations (e.g. the toll from Kanal Istanbul and the cost of construction works in the region). In the "Security" category, the evaluation of Turkey's relationship with the countries neighbouring the Marmara and Black Seas in the context of national security and transportation is included in the theme

(e.g. the validity of the Montreux Straits Convention, which may arise with the completion of the Kanal Istanbul project, and Turkey's relations with other countries).

In the light of all this information, the main purpose of this study is to determine how the news about megaprojects -Kanal Istanbul-, which is one of the important events affecting and directing society, is represented in selected Turkish newspapers and in what form they are brought to the agenda. From 2016, when the news about the Kanal Istanbul project started to become more frequent, until today, steps have been taken to analyse the news about this project with the content analysis method.

This research is essential in determining the dimensions and formats of the news about Kanal Istanbul in the newspapers and both qualitatively and quantitatively determining other indicators. It is of value for research on news analysis in the field of media and visual studies. Also, this study is important in terms of supporting the research to be conducted in this scope. The significance of the study is how much a megaproject like Kanal Istanbul affects everyday life economically, culturally, socially, and politically, as well as how these developments and changes are reflected in the national press. The research highlights how the press, which undertakes the function of forming public opinion and informing, creates an ideological representation in the context of the Kanal Istanbul project, which is framed in the media.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter analyses both quantitatively and qualitatively how Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers represented the Kanal Istanbul project between 2016-2022. The analysis is examined within the scope of media framing theory and objectivity in journalism.

In order to analyse the objectivity in journalism, the effect of ideology, and how the news media represent the Kanal Istanbul project, a coding sheet that consists of studies that make content analysis in the context of media framing theory in the literature was created. This coding sheet was used to subject the data to both quantitative and qualitative content analysis. The coding sheet I compiled and prepared according to the media and visual studies literature allowed me to interpret the news texts included in the analysis according to different variables. A timeline covering six years, including the years 2016-2022, has been determined for this thesis. During this period, the news was found with the keyword "kanal istanbul" on both their official web pages and the Google search engine of selected newspapers (Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah) were collected for analysis. The news texts in the research were searched manually without using any program and were collected in an Excel file. As a result of the search made with the keyword "kanal istanbul" for all newspapers, a total of 1600 news items

were accessed. After the empirical study, 570 of these news were included in the analysis. Then, with the detailed analysis and reading of the news texts, the quantitative content analysis was completed through the SPSS program, and the results are shared below.

4.1. News Distribution by Years

The data in Table 3 represent the news directly related to the Kanal Istanbul project as a result of the search made with the keyword "kanal istanbul" from the official websites of selected newspapers and the Google search engine between the years 2016-2022.

Table 3. News Distribution by Years

	Newspapers					Total
	Cumhuriyet	**Karar**	**Sabah**	**Sözcü**	**Yeni Akit**	
2016	0	0	2	2	2	6
	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
2017	0	0	3	1	8	12
	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	8.3%	66.7%	100.0%
2018	5	0	17	17	24	63
	7.9%	0.0%	27.0%	27.0%	38.1%	100.0%
2019	12	7	12	25	27	83
	14.5%	8.4%	14.5%	30.1%	32.5%	100.0%

2020	35	51	13	26	15	140
	25.0%	36.4%	9.3%	18.6%	10.7%	100.0%
2021	46	46	37	25	40	194
	23.7%	23.7%	19.1%	12.9%	20.6%	100.0%
2022	24	16	4	24	4	72
	33.3%	22.2%	5.6%	33.3%	5.6%	100.0%

- When the distribution of newspaper news for selected newspapers on a yearly basis is examined, it is seen that the total number of news continues to increase each year from 2016 to 2021. Since the last six months of 2022 could not be included in the study, a lower number of newspaper articles is encountered this year compared to 2021.

- In total, the number of analysed news was 6 for 2016, 12 for 2017, 63 for 2018, 83 for 2019, 140 for 2020, 194 for 2021, and 72 for 2022.

- There was no direct news about Kanal Istanbul in the Cumhuriyet newspaper in 2016 and 2017. The distribution of the 122 news analysed for Cumhuriyet newspaper by year is as follows: 5 of them 2018, 12 of them 2019, 35 of them 2020, 46 of them 2021, and 24 of them 2022. The numerical distribution of the news is increasing year by year.

- In the Karar newspaper, no direct news about Kanal Istanbul was found in 2016, 2017, and 2018. 7 news published in 2019, 51 in 2020, 46 in 2021, and 16 in 2022 were accessed.

- In 2016, there are 2 direct news for each Sabah, Sözcü, and Yeni Akit newspapers.

- For the Sabah newspaper, 3 news in 2017, 17 in 2018, 12 in 2019, 13 in 2020, 37 in 2021, and 4 in 2022 were accessed.

- For the Sözcü newspaper, 1 news in 2017, 17 in 2018, 25 in 2019, 26 in 2020, 25 in 2021, and 24 in 2022 was reached.

- Finally, for the Yeni Akit newspaper, 8 news in 2017, 24 in 2018, 27 in 2019, 15 in 2020, 40 in 2021, and 4 in 2022 were found.

One of the reasons why the increase in the number of news is generally in 2020 and 2021 may be related to the fact that the Kanal Istanbul project started to be used as a political tool during and after the Turkish Local Elections held in 2019. Especially with the conflict between the ruling party AKP and the main opposition party CHP, the Kanal Istanbul project came to the fore. Political leaders of both sides made statements on the Kanal Istanbul project in the party campaigns and rallies held before the elections, ensuring that the project was up-to-date and an important tool used in the political arena.

With the Kanal Istanbul project being included in various forms in these election statements, some clarifications about the process of the project have started. At this point, with the announcement that the construction foundations of the Kanal Istanbul project are laid in 2021, we see the news about the Kanal Istanbul project at the highest level this year.

4.2. Attitudes of News

Table 4. Attitudes of News

|	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Neutral	174	30.5
Opposition	266	46.7
Pro-government	130	22.8
Total	570	100.0

In the analysis, the attitudes seen in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers' news texts are included analysis examined whether they are neutral, opposition, or pro-government towards the government. This analysis is made in three categories: Neutral, opposition, and pro-government. In the content of the news, the attitudes in all the news are analysed based on the expressions against the government and the opposition in order to determine the ideological findings in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project and the objectivity in framing the news.

Of the 570 news items included in the analysis, 266 (46.7%) have an oppositional attitude, while 130 (22.8%) have a pro-government attitude. The number of news showing a neutral attitude is 174 (30.5%). In the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project by selected Turkish newspapers, it was concluded that the majority of the news texts examined showed an attitude against the government. The attitudes of the

newspapers selected for analysis in the context of Kanal Istanbul are examined separately below.

4.2.1. Sözcü

Figure 1. Attitude of Sözcü Newspaper
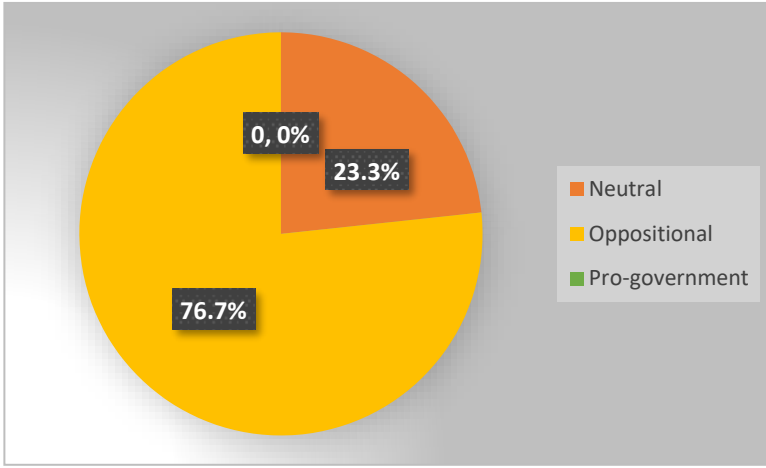
- While examining the attitude of Sözcü newspaper in the context of the Kanal Istanbul project between 2016 and 2022, 120 news items were included in the analysis.

- We see that a great majority of the news has an oppositional attitude to the government, with a rate of 76.7% (92 news).

- In the light of the information given in the literature review section of the newspaper, it is not surprising that Sözcü had a more oppositional attitude while presenting and framing the Kanal Istanbul project.

For example, a sentence in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul ya da kasten şehir cinayeti" (Sözcü newspaper news dated December 02, 2019): "The same

government, on the other hand, will result in environmental destruction, turn the geography, climate, and seas upside down, and are at risk of major earthquakes. It is already prepared to open a tender of 75 billion TL for Kanal Istanbul, which is already clear that it will destroy Istanbul." This statement displays an oppositional attitude while presenting the Kanal Istanbul project. In other words, as can be understood from both the title of the news and the content of the news, one can talk about opposition to Kanal Istanbul and the current government.

- There are also news that Sözcü has a neutral attitude with a rate of 23.2% (28 news).

- It is seen that both the titles and the contents of the news that display a neutral attitude are primarily for informational purposes and do not display any pro-government or anti-government attitude.

For example, in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul'un güzergahı belli oldu" (Sözcü newspaper news dated January 15, 2018), it is seen that there are statements giving information about the route of the Kanal Istanbul project.

- When the pro-government attitude of the Sözcü newspaper is examined, it is encountered that there is no news in which pro-government expressions are used in the news texts analyzed with 0.0% (0 news).

The attitude of Sözcü while presenting the Kanal Istanbul project is an indication that the representation and framework it has created in the context of this issue is within the scope of its ideological view.

Table 5. Criticism and/or Support in Sözcü

	Criticism of Government	Criticism of Opposition	Support for Government	Support for Opposition
NO	38 31.7%	119 99.2%	120 100.0%	56 46.7%
YES	82 68.3%	1 0.8%	0 0.0%	64 53.3%

After examining the attitudes in the newspaper Sözcü, news containing expressions of criticism and/or support for the government/opposition were analyzed to see the objectivity of the news texts better and how much ideology is reflected in the news texts. While 68.3% (82 news) of the 120 news texts in the Sözcü newspaper contain expressions of criticism against the government, there are texts that do not contain any criticism against the government with a rate of 31.7% (38 news). The news that does not contain criticism against the opposition covers almost all of the news with 99.2% (119 news). While Sözcü does not contain statements supporting the government in any news text with 100.0% (120 news), there are 53.3% (64 news) news texts with expressions supporting the opposition. News texts that do not include expressions supporting the government have a rate of 46.7% (56 news).

4.2.2. Cumhuriyet

Figure 2. Attitude of Cumhuriyet Newspaper
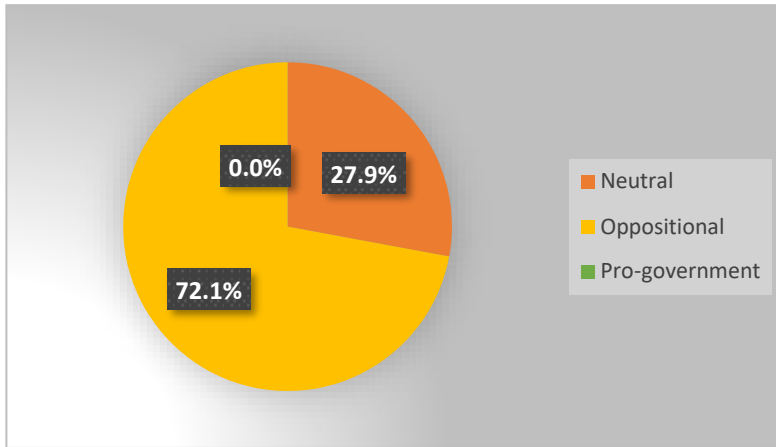
- The analysis of how Cumhuriyet newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project between 2016 and 2022 was made by examining 122 news.

- As in Sözcü, we see that the news with an oppositional attitude with 72.1% (88 news) in Cumhuriyet newspaper is in the majority.

- Considering the ideological stance of the Cumhuriyet newspaper, the fact that the Kanal Istanbul project exhibited an opposition rather than a pro-government attitude in its representation proves that the newspaper reflects its political ideology in the context of news framing.

In its news titled "Bir rant projesi: Kanal istanbul" (News from Cumhuriyet newspaper on October 25, 2021), Cumhuriyet newspaper displays an oppositional stance against both the Kanal Istanbul project and the current government. In particular, "While 84 million citizens will cover the project cost, the resulting rent will go to interest and pressure groups, speculators, Arab sheiks and privileged circles of politics, businessmen and bureaucracy." In this sentence, the benefit that

the government will gain with the construction of the Kanal Istanbul project and with whom this benefit will be shared. One of the most mentioned points in the news content is that, as mentioned in this sentence, with the Kanal Istanbul project, the citizens may not benefit but harm from this project. This damage will occur due to the decisions made by the government.

- When viewed from all these perspectives, similar to this news, which is shown as an example, in the majority of the news published by Cumhuriyet newspaper, the Kanal Istanbul project is seen as a "project of the power" and an opposite attitude is displayed.

- News that exhibit a neutral attitude are categorized as news that do not show any stance on pro-government or the opposition.

- Again, the rate of news analyzed in Cumhuriyet newspaper, which is close to Sözcü, and displays a neutral attitude, is 27.9% (34 news).

More descriptive and proving statements are included in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul güzergahının havadan fotoğrafları" (News of Cumhuriyet newspaper dated January 15, 2018). No comment is made to the government or the opposition over the Kanal Istanbul project. The indication of its demonstrative nature is the use of many visuals (photographs) related to the planned route of Kanal Istanbul in the news content.

- The rate of government-oriented news has the lowest rate with 0.0% (0 news), as in the Sözcü newspaper.

- A pro-government attitude towards the Kanal Istanbul project is not found in any of the 122 newspapers examined.

When we look at how Cumhuriyet newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project, it has emerged as a result of the analyzed news that its stance on this issue is mainly in opposition.

In other words, it can be concluded that Sözcü newspaper and Cumhuriyet newspaper mostly took an oppositional stance in the presentation of the Kanal Istanbul project, and they had an anti-government attitude in the context of media framing theory. Considering the objectivity of the news, it is seen that the Kanal Istanbul project is reported with a single point of view due to this oppositional stance and anti-government.

Table 6. Criticism and/or Support in Cumhuriyet

	Criticism of Government	Criticism of Opposition	Support for Government	Support for Opposition
NO	47 38.5%	122 100.0%	122 100.0%	42 34.4%
YES	75 61.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	80 65.6%

Looking at the attitudes in the newspaper Cumhuriyet, news containing expressions of criticism and/or support for the government/opposition were analyzed to see the objectivity of the news texts better and how much ideology is reflected in the news texts. While 61.5% (75 news) of the 122 news texts in the Cumhuriyet newspaper contain expressions of criticism against the government, there are texts that do not contain any criticism against the government with a rate of 38.5% (47 news). The news that does not

contain criticism against the opposition covers all of the news with 100.0% (122 news). While Cumhuriyet does not contain statements supporting the government in any news text with 100.0% (122 news), there are 65.6% (80 news) news texts with expressions supporting the opposition. News texts that do not include expressions supporting the opposition have a rate of 34.4% (42 news).

4.2.3. Yeni Akit

Figure 3. Attitude of Yeni Akit Newspaper
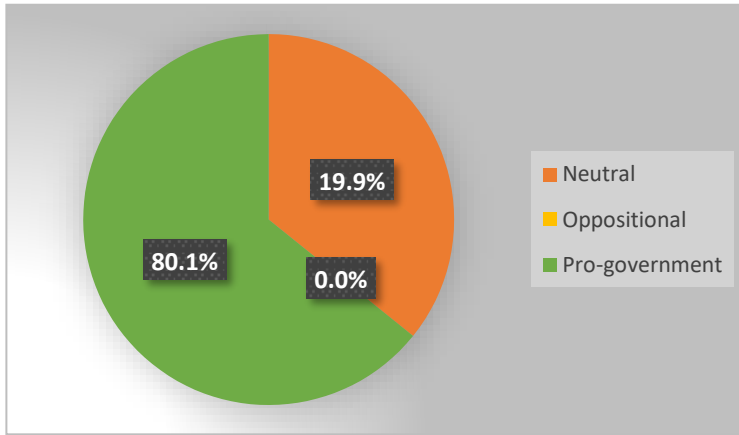
- A total of 120 news articles were analyzed between 2016 and 2022 for the Yeni Akit newspaper, one of the newspapers examined in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project.
- When we look at the rate of news that demonstrates an attitude against the government, we see that there is no news with this attitude with 0.0% (0 news).
- Contrary to Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, no oppositional attitude was encountered in the framing category towards the attitude of the Kanal Istanbul project in Yeni Akit newspaper.

- Again, for Yeni Akit newspaper, the news showing a neutral attitude were categorized as news that did not show any stance against the government or the opposition.

- With a rate of 19.9% (24 news), Yeni Akit newspaper has news with a less neutral attitude than Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers.

One of the news examples that can be given of the neutral attitude of the newspaper is the news titled "Kanal İstanbul güzergahı havadan görüntülendi" (Yeni Akit newspaper news dated January 15, 2018). As in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, the news in which Yeni Akit has a neutral attitude generally has informative and explanatory language. As in this example, the news has the quality of giving information about the Kanal Istanbul project and the project's route. Likewise, in "Kanal İstanbul nerede son bulacak?" (news titled Yeni Akit newspaper news dated October 15, 2017), there is some information and explanations about when the project will start and the construction area.

- It is seen that the news in Yeni Akit newspaper, which displays a pro-government attitude with 80.1% (96 news), is quite different from those of Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers.

- While no newspaper articles show a government-biased attitude in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, the highest rate in Yeni Akit newspaper has a pro-government attitude.

- Here, it can be mentioned that there is an ideological stance in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project for the Yeni Akit newspaper, as it is for both Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers.

In its news titled "Yabancı yatırımcının iştahı arttı herkesin gözü Kanal İstanbul'da" (Yeni Akit newspaper news on 10 December 2018), it is seen that Yeni Akit newspaper has direct support for both the Kanal Istanbul project and the government. As can be interpreted from the news titled "Kanal İstanbul Durdurulmalı mı? 'Solcular Türkiye'nin ilerlemesini istemiyor" (Yeni Akit newspaper news on 18 August 2018), Yeni Akit newspaper has a stance that is mainly against the opposition side and supports the government, as there are many other examples. In this news, which includes the results of a survey conducted with citizens about the Kanal Istanbul project, Yeni Akit newspaper represents this project with the positive views of the people living in the community and their opposing views towards this project. Thus, Yeni Akit tends to try to justify their point of view. As can be seen from both examples, Yeni Akit newspaper, which has an attitude that is the opposite of Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, also represents the Kanal Istanbul project from a single perspective away from objectivity around its political ideology.

Table 7. Criticism and/or Support in Yeni Akit

	Criticism of Government	Criticism of Opposition	Support for Government	Support for Opposition
NO	120 100.0%%	40 33.3%	28 23.3%	120 100.0%
YES	0 0.0%	80 66.7%	92 76.7%	0 0.0%

Looking at the attitudes in the Yeni Akit, news containing expressions of criticism and/or support for the government/opposition were analyzed to better see the objectivity of the news texts and how much ideology is reflected in the news texts. While 0.0% (0 news) of the 120 news texts in the Yeni Akit newspaper contain expressions of criticism against the government, some texts do not contain any criticism against the government with a rate of 100.0% (120 news). The news that does not contain criticism against the opposition with 33.3% (40 news), while 66.7% (80 news) have a criticism of opposition. Yeni Akit does not contain statements supporting the opposition in any news text with 100.0% (120 news). News texts that do not include expressions supporting the government have a rate of 23.3% (28 news), and news texts with 76.7% (92 news) support the government.

4.2.4. Karar

Figure 4. Attitude of Karar Newspaper
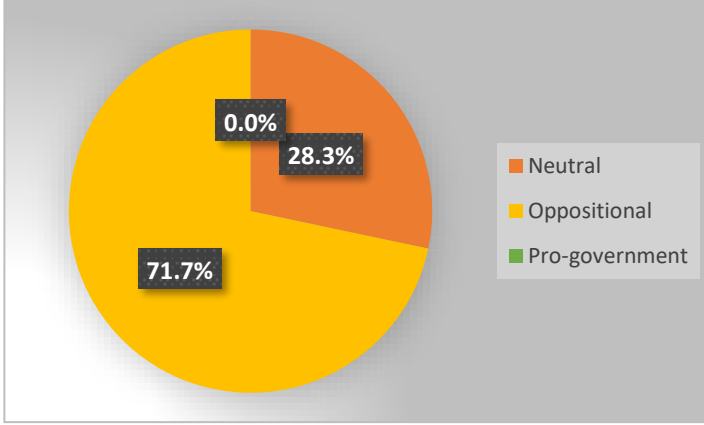
- The analysis of how Karar newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project between 2016 and 2022 was made by examining 120 news.

- As in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet, we see that the news with an oppositional attitude with 71.7% (86 news) in Karar newspaper is in the majority.

- Considering the ideological stance of the Karar newspaper, the fact that the Kanal Istanbul project exhibited an opposition rather than a pro-government attitude in its representation proves that the newspaper reflects its political ideology in the context of news framing.

In its news titled "'Çılgın proje' için çevre kıyımı! Kanal İstanbul'un ÇED raporu ayrıntıları ortaya çıkardı" (Karar newspaper on July 07, 2021), Karar newspaper displays an oppositional stance against both the Kanal Istanbul project and the current government. Addressing that the Kanal Istanbul project, which the government always calls the "crazy project", will have harmful environmental consequences for the planned region, and supporting the opinions of the opposition

party in this direction, the newspaper Karar has an opposing attitude to the government. Although the aim of this news is to make an objective report by using the results of the EIA report and numerical data, the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project is made with an opposite attitude by using the expression "the disaster of Marmara" for the Kanal Istanbul project. Moreover, the expressions used in the news that the Kanal Istanbul project is the project of the government, especially President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's project, also demonstrates that this representation style exhibits an opposition-oriented, anti-government attitude.

- Again, news that exhibit a neutral attitude are categorized as news that do not show any stance on pro-government or the opposition.

- The rate of news analyzed in Karar newspaper, which is a little bit higher than Sözcü and Cumhuriyet, and displays a neutral attitude, is 28.3% (34 news).

As in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Yeni Akit newspapers, the news that display a neutral attitude also present the facts with their evidence without adding any comments in terms of objectivity. For example, in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul'da 31 dönüm arsa satışa çıktı" (The news of the Karar newspaper dated March 25, 2022), information is given about the lands that are on sale on the route of the Kanal Istanbul project and to whom these lands are offered for sale.

- The rate of government-oriented news has the lowest rate with 0.0% (0 news), as in the Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers.

- A pro-government attitude towards the Kanal Istanbul project is not found in any of the 120 newspapers examined.

- When we look at how Karar newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project, it has emerged as a result of the analyzed news that its stance on this issue is mainly in opposition.

In other words, it can be concluded that Sözcü newspaper, Cumhuriyet newspaper, and Karar newspaper mostly took an oppositional stance in the presentation of the Kanal Istanbul project, and they had an anti-government attitude in the context of media framing theory.

Table 8. Criticism and/or Support in Karar

	Criticism of Government	Criticism of Opposition	Support for Government	Support for Opposition
NO	42 35.0%	120 100.0%	120 100.0%	56 46.7%
YES	78 65.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	64 53.3%

In the attitudes in the newspaper Karar, news containing expressions of criticism and/or support for the government/opposition were analyzed to better see the news texts' objectivity and how much ideology is reflected in the news texts. While 65.0% (78 news) of the 120 news texts in the Karar newspaper contain expressions of criticism against the government, there are texts that do not contain any criticism against the government with a rate of 35.0% (42 news). The news that does not contain criticism against the opposition covers all of the news with 100.0% (120 news). While Karar does not contain statements supporting the government in any news text with 100.0% (120

news), there are 53.3% (64 news) news texts with expressions supporting the opposition. News texts that do not include expressions supporting the opposition have a rate of 46.7% (56 news).

4.2.5. Sabah

Figure 5. Attitude of Sabah Newspaper
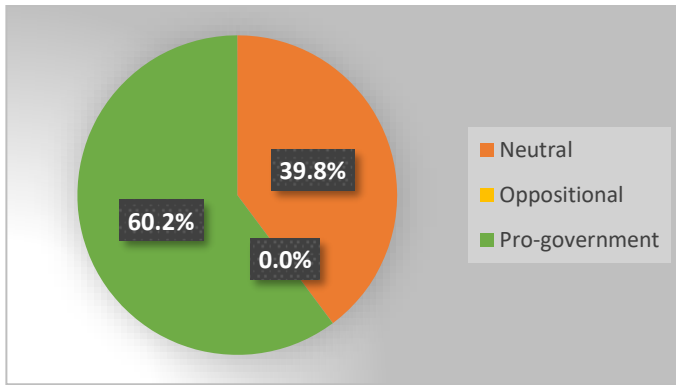
- A total of 88 news articles were analyzed between 2016 and 2022 for Sabah newspaper, which is another newspaper examined in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project.

- When we look at the news rate that shows an oppositional attitude, we see that there is no news with this attitude with 0.0% (0 news).

- Unlike Sözcü Cumhuriyet and Karar newspapers, there was no oppositional attitude in the framing category towards the attitude of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Sabah newspaper, as in the Yeni Akit newspaper.

- Again, for the Sabah newspaper, the news that displayed a neutral attitude were categorized as the news that did not show any stance against the government or the opposition.

- With a rate of 39.8% (35 news), Sabah newspaper has the highest percentage of news with a neutral attitude compared to other newspapers.

One of the news examples that can be given of the neutral attitude of the newspaper is the news titled "İletişim Başkanlığı duyurdu! Kanal İstanbul internet sitesi yayında" (Sabah newspaper news dated 01 February 2020). As in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, and Karar newspapers, the news in which Sabah newspaper displays a neutral attitude generally has informative and explanatory language. As in this example, the news makes a statement regarding the establishment of a website related to the Kanal Istanbul project.

- It is seen that the news with 60.2% (53 news) in Sabah, which has a pro-government attitude, is quite different from those of Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Karar newspapers. When we compare it with the Yeni Akit newspaper, it is concluded that the rate of government-oriented news is high in both newspapers.
- While no newspaper articles show a pro-government attitude in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Karar newspapers, the highest rate in Yeni Akit and Sabah newspapers is pro-government.
- Here, too, it can be mentioned that there is an ideological stance for the Sabah newspaper, as in other newspapers, in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project.

In its news titled "İmamoğlu'nun Kanal İstanbul kıyımı sürüyor! Destek veren isimleri görevden aldı" (Sabah newspaper news dated 28 December 2019), Sabah newspaper includes the statements of Ekrem İmamoğlu, the opposition party member and Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor, about Kanal Istanbul. Here, a language

against İmamoğlu's rhetoric and expressions supports both Kanal Istanbul and the government. As there are many other examples of Sabah newspaper, it mostly has an opposing and supportive stance to the government. In particular, the statements in the language of news against the opposition party and the people on that side, and the fact that it constantly presents the Kanal Istanbul project as a beneficial and positive project while creating a language in favor of the ruling party, gives us information about the ideological stance of Sabah newspaper.

Table 9. Criticism and/or Support in Sabah

	Criticism of Government	Criticism of Opposition	Support for Government	Support for Opposition
NO	88 100.0%%	37 42.0%	14 15.9%	88 100.0%
YES	0 0.0%	51 58.0%	74 84.1%	0 0.0%

Looking at the attitudes in the Sabah, news containing expressions of criticism and/or support for the government/opposition were analyzed to better see the objectivity of the news texts and how much ideology is reflected in the news texts. While 0.0% (0 news) of the 88 news texts in the Sabah newspaper contain expressions of criticism against the government, some texts do not contain any criticism against the government with a rate of 100.0% (88 news). The news that does not contain criticism against the opposition with 42.0% (37 news), while 58.0% (51 news) have a criticism of opposition. Sabah does not contain statements supporting the opposition in any news text with 100.0% (88

news). News texts that do not include expressions supporting the government have a rate of 15.9% (14 news), and news texts with 84.1% (74 news) support the government.

4.3. General Tone of News

Table 10. General Tone of the News

|	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	169	29.6
Positive	138	24.2
Negative	263	46.1
Total	570	99.8

The analysis of the general tone and their frequencies seen in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers' news texts are included analysis examined whether the news articles have neutral, positive, or negative tones. This analysis is made in three categories: Neutral = 0 / Positive = 1 / Negative = 2. In the news content, the general tone in all the news is analyzed one by one to determine the ideological findings in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project and the objectivity in framing the news.

Of the 570 news items included in the analysis, there are 169 (29.6%) "Neutral", 138 (24.2%) "Positive" and 263 (46.1%) "Negative" tones in news articles. In the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project by selected Turkish newspapers, it was concluded that among the analyzed news, the vast majority have a negative tone, while a

neutral tone takes the second place. It is seen that news texts with a positive tone are the least in number.

### 4.3.1. Sözcü

Figure 6. General Tone of Sözcü
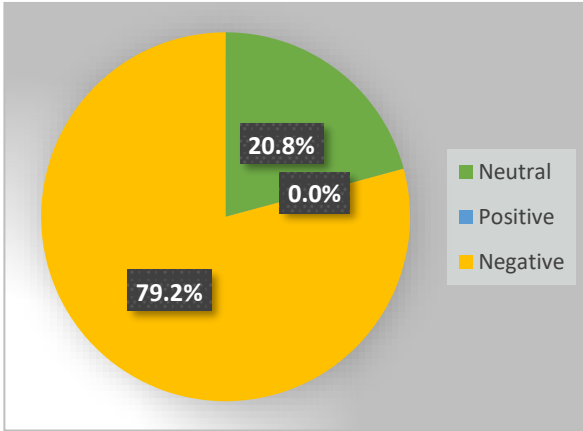
While examining the general tone of Sözcü newspaper in the context of the Kanal Istanbul project between 2016 and 2022, 120 news items were included in the analysis. We see that a great majority of the news has a negative tone with a rate of 79.2% (95 news). For example, a sentence in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul raporundaki 'risk'" (Sözcü newspaper news dated February 04, 2022): "We are talking about a demolition project that includes all possible risks, from the dam, water basins, agricultural areas that it will destroy, to the intensity of noise and dust during excavation, from the exchange rate to its financing, from damaging the settlements to the damage it will cause to the historical texture." This statement displays a negative tone while presenting the Kanal Istanbul project. In other words, as can be understood from both the news title and the news content, opposition to the Kanal Istanbul project is clearly seen. There are also

news that Sözcü has a neutral tone with a rate of 20.8% (25 news). It is seen that both the titles and the contents of the news that display a neutral tone are primarily for informational purposes and do not display any negative or positive comments about the Kanal İstanbul project. For example, in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul gayrimenkul fiyatlarını nasıl etkiler?" (Sözcü newspaper news dated January 15, 2018), it is seen that there are statements giving information about the real estates and their prices in the region where the Kanal Istanbul project will be built. When the positive tone in the Sözcü newspaper is examined, it is encountered that there is no news in which positive expressions are used in the news texts analyzed with 0.0% (0 news). The negative tone dominance of Sözcü while presenting the Kanal Istanbul project indicates that the representation and framework it has created in the context of this issue is within the scope of the newspaper's ideological perspective.

4.3.2. Cumhuriyet

Figure 7. General Tone of Cumhuriyet
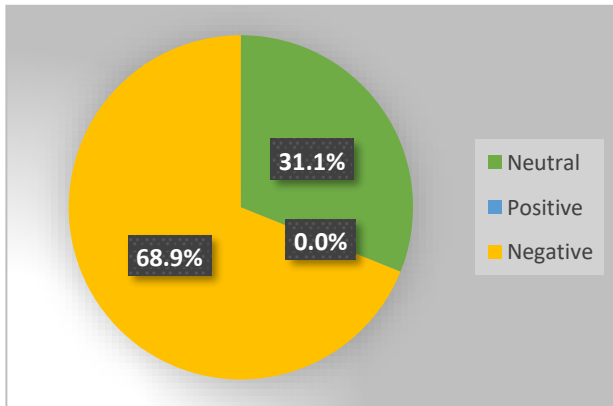
The analysis of how Cumhuriyet newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project between 2016 and 2022 was made by examining 122 news. As in Sözcü, we see that the news with a negative tone with 68.9% (84 news) in Cumhuriyet newspaper is in the majority. In its news titled "Kanal İstanbul projesi İstanbul'un nefesini kesecek" (News from Cumhuriyet newspaper on June 27, 2021), Cumhuriyet newspaper displays a negative tone about the Kanal Istanbul project. News that exhibit a neutral tone are categorized as news that do not show any positive or negative tone. Again, the rate of news analyzed in Cumhuriyet newspaper and displays a neutral tone is 31.1% (38 news). More descriptive and proving statements are included in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul için yeni ihale" (News of Cumhuriyet newspaper dated March 26, 2022). No comment is made positively or negatively over the Kanal Istanbul project. The rate of positive tone has the lowest rate with 0.0% (0 news), as in the Sözcü newspaper. A positive tone towards the Kanal Istanbul project is not found in any of the 122 newspapers examined. When we look at how Cumhuriyet newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project, it has emerged from the analyzed news that its tone on this issue is mainly negative. In other words, it can be concluded that Sözcü newspaper and Cumhuriyet newspaper mostly have a negative tone in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the context of media framing theory. Considering the objectivity of the news, it is seen that the Kanal Istanbul project is reported again from one perspective without any positive approach.

4.3.3. Yeni Akit

Figure 8. General Tone of Yeni Akit
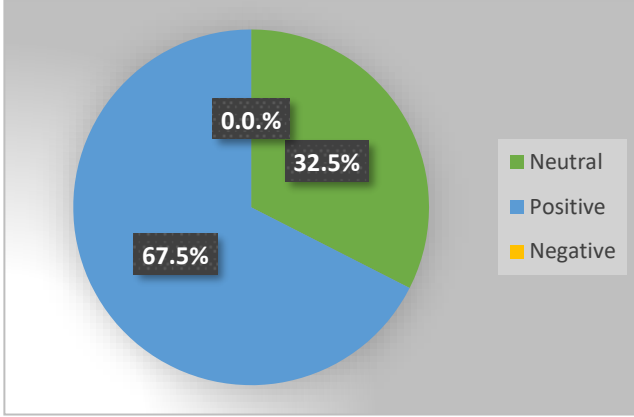
A total of 120 news articles were analyzed between 2016 and 2022 for the Yeni Akit newspaper. When we look at the rate of news that demonstrates a negative tone, we see that there is no news with this attitude with 0.0% (0 news). Contrary to Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, no negative tone was encountered in the framing category towards the general tone of the Kanal Istanbul project in Yeni Akit newspaper. Again, for Yeni Akit newspaper, the news showing a neutral tone were categorized as news that did not show any positive or negative tone. With a rate of 32.5% (39 news), Yeni Akit newspaper has news with a neutral tone. One of the news examples of the newspaper's neutral tone is the news titled "Kanal İstanbul'da geri sayım" (Yeni Akit newspaper news dated December 24, 2017). As in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, the news in which Yeni Akit has a neutral tone generally has informative and explanatory language. As in this example, the news has the quality of giving information about the Kanal Istanbul project and its starting date. Likewise, in "Resmileşti! Kanal İstanbul'da sıcak gelişme!" (News titled Yeni Akit newspaper news dated July 24, 2018), there is some information and explanations about the official statement of the Kanal İstanbul project.

It is seen that the news in Yeni Akit newspaper, which displays a positive tone with 67.5% (81 news), is quite different from those of Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. While no newspaper articles show a positive tone in Cumhuriyet newspapers, the highest rate in Yeni Akit newspaper has a positive tone. Here, it can be mentioned that there is an ideological reflection in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project for the Yeni Akit newspaper, as it is for both Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. In its news titled "Kanal İstanbul neden önemli? İstanbul'a faydası ne olacak?" (Yeni Akit newspaper news on 23 December 2019), it is seen that Yeni Akit newspaper has direct support for the Kanal Istanbul project by giving information about the benefits of the project and has a positive tone over the Kanal İstanbul project, as there are many other examples. Yeni Akit newspaper, which has a primarily positive tone that is the opposite of Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, also represents the Kanal Istanbul project from one point of view around its political ideology.

4.3.4. Karar

Figure 9. General Tone of Karar
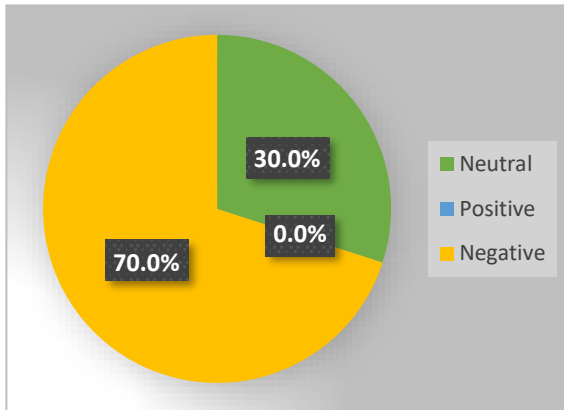
The analysis of how Karar newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project between 2016 and 2022 was made by examining 120 news. As in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet, we see that the news with a negative tone with 70.0% (84 news) in Karar newspaper is in the majority. Considering the ideological stance of the Karar newspaper, the fact that the Kanal Istanbul project exhibited a negative tone rather than a positive tone in its representation proves that the newspaper reflects its political ideology in the context of news framing. In its news titled "Millete karşı 'devlet projesi'" (Karar newspaper on November 18, 2020), Karar newspaper displays a negative tone over the Kanal Istanbul project. In this news text, it is argued that the Kanal Istanbul project is not a project that takes into account the benefit of the public but rather a project that will benefit the state and cause harm to society. The representation of the Kanal Istanbul project by using the expression "state project" for the Kanal Istanbul project creates a negative tone in this news. Again, news that exhibit a neutral tone are categorized as news that do not show any positive or negative comments. The rate of news analyzed in Karar newspaper with a neutral tone is 30.0% (36 news). As in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Yeni Akit newspapers, the news that display a neutral attitude also present the facts with their evidence without adding any comments regarding objectivity. For example, in the news titled "Kanal İstanbul için ilk ihale 26 Mart'ta" (The news of the Karar newspaper dated March 02, 2020), information is given about the lands that are on sale on the route of the Kanal Istanbul project and to whom these lands are offered for sale. The rate of positive tone has the lowest rate with 0.0% (0 news), as in the Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. A positive tone towards the Kanal Istanbul project is not found in any of the 120 newspapers examined. When we look at how Karar newspaper framed the Kanal Istanbul project, it has emerged from the analyzed news that its general tone on this

issue is mainly negative. In other words, it can be concluded that Sözcü newspaper, Cumhuriyet newspaper, and Karar newspaper mostly have a negative tone in the presentation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the context of media framing theory.

4.3.5. Sabah

Figure 10. General Tone of Sabah
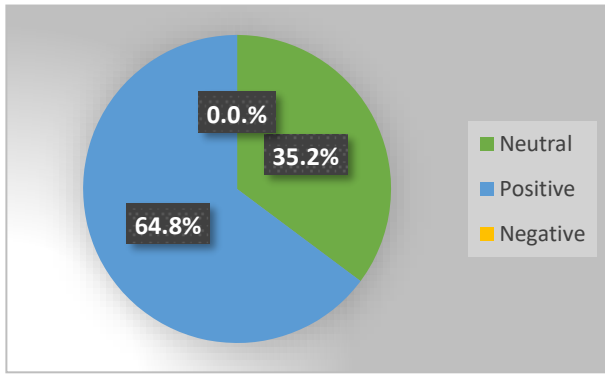
A total of 88 news articles were analyzed between 2016 and 2022 for Sabah newspaper. When we look at the news rate that shows a negative tone, we see that there is no news with this tone of 0.0% (0 news). Unlike Sözcü Cumhuriyet and Karar newspapers, there was no negative tone in the framing category towards the general tone of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Sabah newspaper, as in the Yeni Akit newspaper. Again, for the Sabah newspaper, the news that displayed a neutral tone were categorized as the news that did not show any stance against the government or the opposition. Sabah newspaper has a neutral tone with a rate of 35.2% (31 news). One of the news examples that can be given of the neutral tone of the newspaper is the news titled "Kanal İstanbul'da kazı zamanı" (Sabah newspaper news dated 14 October 2017). As in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, and Karar newspapers, the news in which Sabah newspaper displays a neutral

tone generally has informative and explanatory language. As in this example, the news makes a statement regarding the starting date of the Kanal İstanbul project. It is seen that the news with 64.8% (57 news) in Sabah, which has a positive tone, is quite different from those of Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Karar newspapers. When we compare it with the Yeni Akit newspaper, it is concluded that the rate of news articles with a positive tone is high in both newspapers. While no newspaper articles show a positive tone in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Karar newspapers, the highest rate in Yeni Akit and Sabah newspapers is a positive tone. Here, too, it can be mentioned that there is an ideological tone for the Sabah newspaper, as in other newspapers, in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project.

4.4. Political Figures in News

Table 11. Political Figures

	Frequency	Percent
No	186	32.6
Yes	384	67.3
Total	570	99.8

In the analysis, the political figures and their frequencies seen in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers' news texts are included analysis examined whether the news articles have political figures mentioned or not. This analysis is made in two categories: No = 0 or Yes = 1. In the news content, the political figures mentioned in all the news are analyzed one by one to determine the ideological findings

in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project and the objectivity in framing the news.

Of the 570 news items included in the analysis, there are 186 (32.6%) "No" answer, while 384 (67.3%) with "Yes" answer. In the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project by selected Turkish newspapers, it was concluded that some political figures were included in most of the news texts examined. After analyzing whether any political figure is included in a news text, if there is a political figure in the news, it is examined in which category this political figure is included (see Table 2.) Then, who the political figure or figures in the news text are and how it was framed were analyzed.

4.4.1. Sözcü

Table 12. Political Figures Mentioned in Sözcü

NO	YES	TOTAL
17	103	120

At least one political figure is mentioned in 103 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the Sözcü newspaper. Very few of the news texts (17 news texts) analyzed in Sözcü did not include any political figures.

Figure 11. Categorization of Political Figures for Sözcü
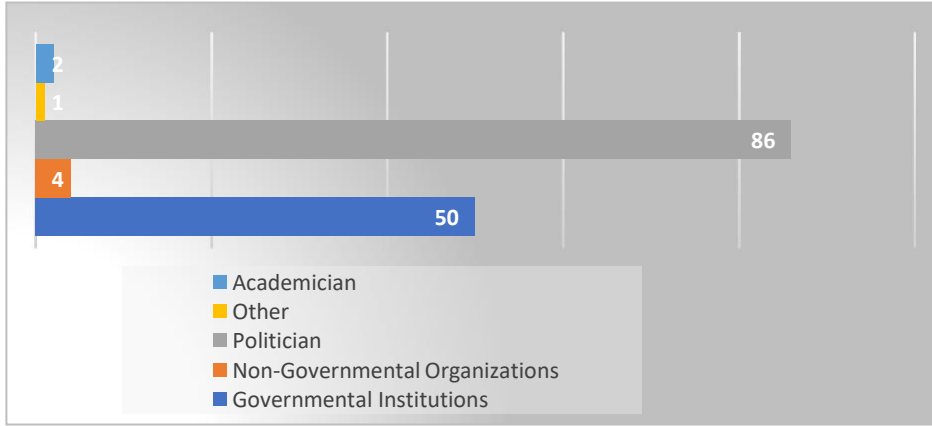
- An academician's name is mentioned in only 2 of the news texts examined for the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Sözcü newspaper.

- The person mentioned in these news is "ITU Geological Engineering Department retired faculty member and Science Academy Founding Member Prof. Dr. Naci Görür".

- One or more politicians or political parties are mentioned in 86 of the 120 news items included in the analysis.

- In this category, which has the most significant percentage, it is concluded that the politicians or political parties have the highest percentage for framing political figures by the Sözcü newspaper.

- Examples of people in this category are "President and Justice and Development Party (*Turkish=AKP*) Chairman Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", "Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu", "AKP Deputy Chairman for Environment, City and Culture Çiğdem Karaaslan" and "Republican People's Party (*Turkish=CHP*) Istanbul Deputy Özgür Karabat".

- The second category with the highest framing rate after politicians and political parties is governmental institutions.

- One or more official institutions are mentioned in 50 of 120 news texts.

- Some official institutions mentioned in the news texts are "The Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change", "General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre" and "Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure".

- Finally, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are included in only 4 of the 120 news texts.

- One of the NGOs is "Ya Kanal Ya İstanbul Koordinasyonu".

Figure 12. Politicians in Sözcü
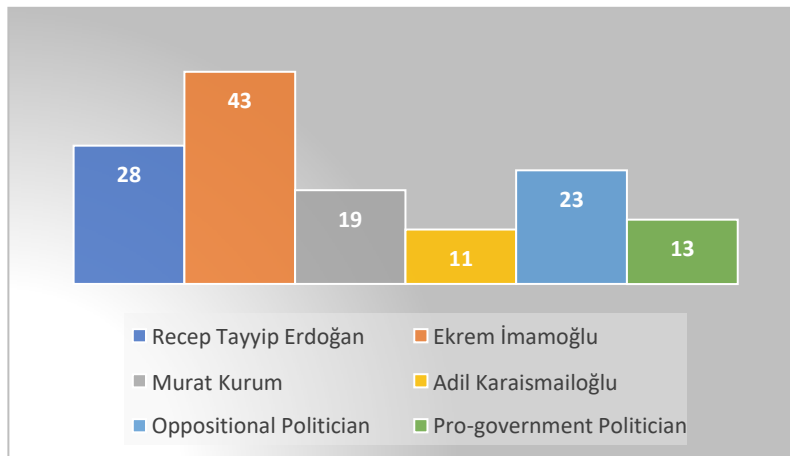
- For the Sözcü newspaper, the most repeated politician in 43 of the 120 newspaper news included in the analysis is Ekrem İmamoğlu, who is the Mayor of Istanbul.

- The second most repeated politician after Ekrem İmamoğlu is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

- Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's name is mentioned in 28 of 120 news texts.

- Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is followed by opposition politicians, with 23 of 120 news texts being used.

- Some oppositional politicians mentioned in the news are "CHP member and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (*Turkish=İBB*) Assembly Member İsa Öztürk", "CHP member and İBB Assembly Member Esin Hacıalioğlu", "CHP Konya Deputy Abdüllatif Şener", "Good Party (*Turkish=İYİ Party*) Deputy Durmuş Yılmaz", "Good Party Deputy Hayrettin Nuhoğlu" and "CHP Deputy Gülizar Emecan".

- In 13 of the 120 news articles, the names of the politicians on the ruling side are mentioned.

- Examples of these politicians are "Nationalist Movement Party (*Turkish=MHP*) Group Deputy Chairman and Silivri Mayor Volkan Yılmaz", "AKP Group Deputy Chairman and Esenler Mayor Tevfik Göksu" and "AKP member and Law Commission President Sibğetullah Şahin".

- The Minister of Environment and Urbanization, Murat Kurum, is featured in 19 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the Sözcü newspaper.

- Adil Karaismailoğlu, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, is the politician whose name is the least mentioned in the news, taking place in 11 of 120 news.
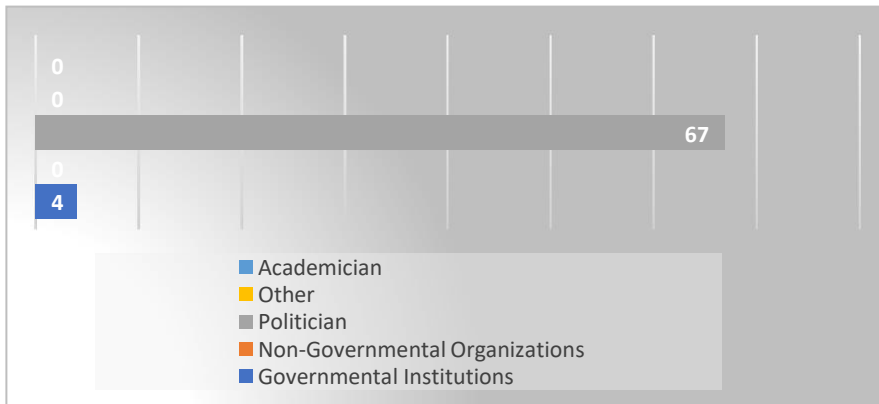
4.4.2. Cumhuriyet

Table 13. Political Figures Mentioned in Cumhuriyet

NO	YES	TOTAL
47	75	122

At least one political figure is mentioned in 75 of the 122 news texts analyzed for the Cumhuriyet newspaper. 47 news texts analyzed for Cumhuriyet did not include any political figures.

Figure 13. Categorization of Political Figures for Cumhuriyet

- No academician is mentioned in the news texts examined for the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Cumhuriyet newspaper.
- One or more politicians or political parties are mentioned in 67 of the 122 news items included in the analysis.

- In this category, which has the most significant percentage, it is concluded that the politicians or political parties have the highest percentage for framing political figures by the Cumhuriyet newspaper.

- Examples of people in this category are "President and AKP Chairman Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", "Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu", "CHP member Ahmet Akın" and "İBB spokesperson Murat Ongun".

- The second category with the highest framing rate after politicians and political parties is governmental institutions.

- One or more governmental institutions are mentioned in 4 of 122 news texts with a very low rate.

- Some governmental institutions mentioned in the news texts are "The Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change", "General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre" and "Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure".

- Like academicians, no non-governmental organizations are mentioned in 122 news articles.

Figure 14. Politicians in Cumhuriyet
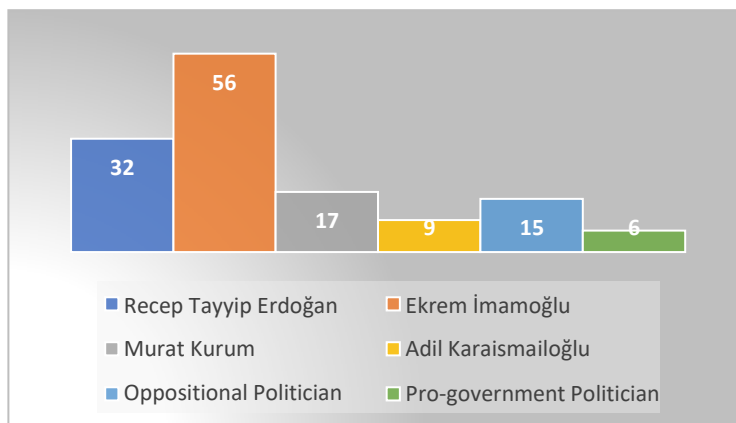
- For the Cumhuriyet newspaper, the most repeated politician in 56 of the 122 newspaper news included in the analysis is Ekrem İmamoğlu, who is the Mayor of Istanbul.

- The second most repeated politician after Ekrem İmamoğlu is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

- Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's name is mentioned in 32 of 122 news texts.

- 15 of the 122 news texts used were composed of oppositional politicians.

- Some oppositional politicians mentioned in the news are "CHP member Özgür Karabat", "CHP member and İBB Assembly Member Esin Hacıalioğlu", "İBB spokesperson Murat Ongun", "CHP member Ahmet Akın" and "Muharrem İnce", "Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu" and"Erkan Baş".

- In 6 of the 122 news articles, the names of the politicians on the ruling side are mentioned.

- Examples of these politicians are "Fatih Erbakan", "Berat Albayrak" and "Binali Yıldırım".

- The Minister of Environment and Urbanization, Murat Kurum, is featured in 17 of the 122 news texts analyzed for the Cumhuriyet newspaper.

- Adil Karaismailoğlu, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, takes place in 9 of 122 news.

4.4.3. Yeni Akit

Table 14. Political Figures Mentioned in Yeni Akit

NO	YES	TOTAL
35	85	120

At least one political figure is mentioned in 85 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the

Yeni Akit newspaper. 35 news texts analyzed for Yeni Akit did not include any political

figures.

Figure 15. Categorization of Political Figures for Yeni Akit
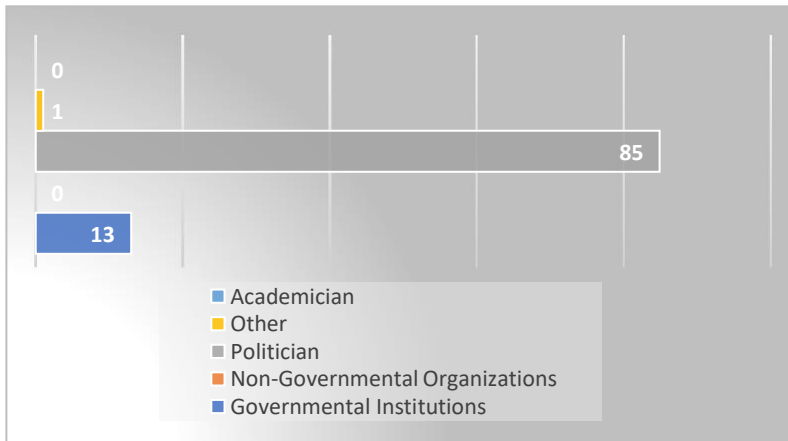
- One or more politicians or political parties are mentioned in 85 of the 120 news
  items included in the analysis.
- In this category, which has the most significant percentage, it is concluded that
  the politicians or political parties have the highest percentage for framing
  political figures by the Yeni Akit newspaper.

- Examples of people in this category are "President and AKP Chairman Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", "Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu", "Ahmet Davutoğlu", "Ali Babacan", "Murat Kurum" and "Adil Karaismailoğlu".

- The second category with the highest framing rate after politicians and political parties is governmental institutions.

- One or more governmental institutions are mentioned in 13 of 120 news texts with a very low rate.

- Some governmental institutions mentioned in the news texts are "The Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change", "General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre", "Directorate of Religious Affairs" and "Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure".

- No academician is mentioned in the news texts examined for the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Yeni Akit newspaper.

- Like academicians, no non-governmental organizations are mentioned in 120 news articles.

Figure 16. Politicians in Yeni Akit
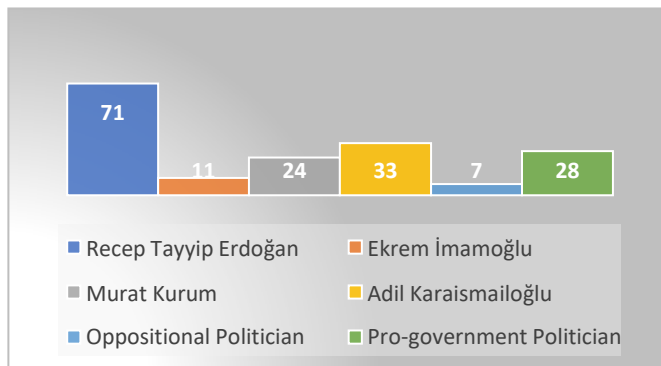
- In Yeni Akit newspaper, the most repeated politician in 71 of the 120 newspaper articles included in the analysis is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

- After this, the most repeated politician is Ali Karaismailoğlu, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure.

- Ali Karaismailoğlu's name is mentioned in 33 of 120 news texts.

- 28 of the 120 news texts used were composed of pro-government politicians.

- Some pro-government politicians mentioned in the news are "Binali Yıldırım", "Mayor of Tokat Eyüp Eroğlu", "AKP Group Deputy Chairman and Esenler Mayor Tevfik Göksu" and "AKP member and Law Commission President Sibğetullah Şahin".

- The Minister of Environment and Urbanization, Murat Kurum, is featured in 24 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the Yeni Akit newspaper.

- In 7 of the 120 news articles, the names of the politicians on the opposition side, which have the lowest rate, are mentioned.

- Examples of these politicians are "Meral Akşener", "Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu", "Ahmet Davutoğlu" and "Ali Babacan".

- Ekrem İmamoğlu, the Mayor of Istanbul, is taking place in 11 of 120 news.

4.4.4. Karar

Table 15. Political Figures Mentioned in Karar

NO	YES	TOTAL
43	77	120

At least one political figure is mentioned in 77 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the

Karar newspaper. 43 news texts analyzed for Karar did not include any political figures.

Figure 17. Categorization of Political Figures for Karar

- One or more politicians or political parties are mentioned in 71 of the 120 news
  items included in the analysis.

- In this category, which has the most significant percentage, it is concluded that
  the politicians or political parties have the highest percentage for framing
  political figures by the Karar newspaper.

- Examples of people in this category are "President and AKP Chairman Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", "Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu", "Ahmet Davutoğlu", "Ali Babacan", "Murat Kurum" and "Adil Karaismailoğlu".

- The second category with the highest framing rate after politicians and political parties is governmental institutions.

- One or more governmental institutions are mentioned in 6 of 120 news texts with a very low rate.

- Some governmental institutions mentioned in the news texts are "The Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change", "General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre" and "Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure".

- No academician is mentioned in the news texts examined for the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Karar newspaper.

- Like academicians, no non-governmental organizations are mentioned in 120 news articles.

Figure 18. Politicians in Karar
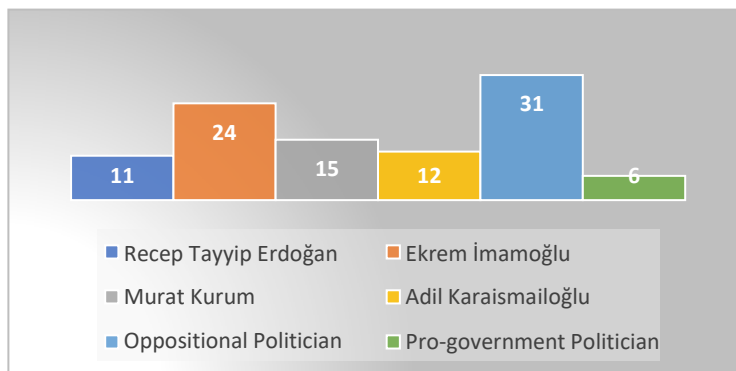
- For the Karar newspaper, the most repeated politician in 31 of the 120 newspaper articles included in the analysis is oppositional politicians, namely, Ahmet Davutoğlu and Ali Babacan.

- The second most repeated politician after Ahmet Davutoğlu and Ali Babacan is Ekrem İmamoğlu.

- Ekrem İmamoğlu is mentioned in 24 of 120 news texts.

- 11 of the 120 news texts includes Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

- In 6 of the 120 news articles, which has the lowest rate, the names of the politicians on the ruling side are mentioned.

- Examples of these politicians are "Vice President Fuat Oktay", "Berat Albayrak" and "Binali Yıldırım".

- The Minister of Environment and Urbanization, Murat Kurum, is featured in 15 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the Karar newspaper.

- Adil Karaismailoğlu, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, takes place in 12 of 120 news.
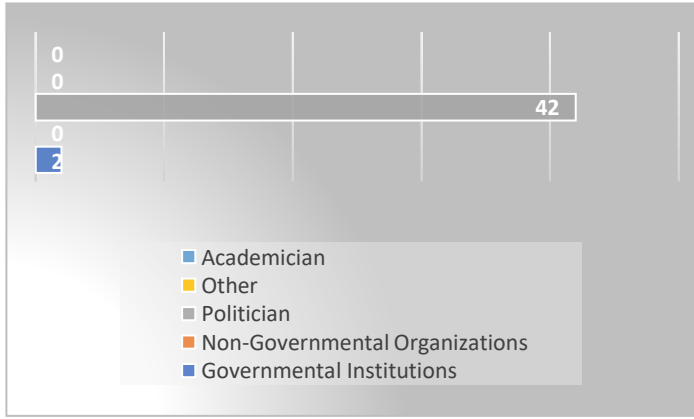
4.4.5. Sabah

Table 16. Political Figures Mentioned in Sabah

NO	YES	TOTAL
44	44	88

At least one political figure is mentioned in 44 of the 88 news texts analyzed for the Sabah newspaper. Equally, 44 news texts analyzed for Sabah did not include any political figures.

Figure 19. Categorization of Political Figures for Sabah

- One or more politicians or political parties are mentioned in 42 of the 88 news items included in the analysis.

- In this category, which has the most significant percentage, it is concluded that the politicians or political parties have the highest percentage for framing political figures by the Sabah newspaper.

- Examples of people in this category are "President and AKP Chairman Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", "Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu", "Retired Lieutenant General İsmail Hakkı Pekin" and "Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu".

- The second category with the highest framing rate after politicians and political parties is governmental institutions.

- One or more governmental institutions are mentioned in 2 of 88 news texts with a very low rate.

- Some governmental institutions mentioned in the news texts are "The Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change", "General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre" and "Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure".

- No academician is mentioned in the news texts examined for the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Sabah newspaper.

- Like academicians, no non-governmental organizations are mentioned in 88 news articles.

Figure 20. Politicians in Sabah
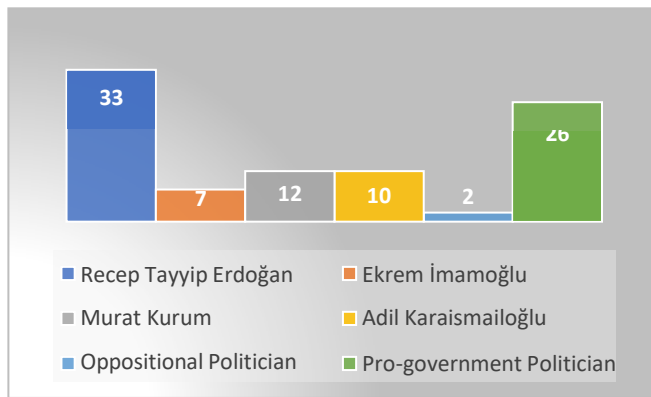
- In Sabah newspaper, the most repeated politician in 33 of the 88 newspaper articles included in the analysis is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

- The Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Ali Karaismailoğlu's name is mentioned in 10 of 88 news texts.

- 26 of the 88 news texts used were composed of pro-government politicians.

- Some pro-government politicians mentioned in the news are "Binali Yıldırım", "Berat Albayrak", "Former Minister of Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Turkey Mehmet Cahit Turhan", "Retired Lieutenant General İsmail

Hakkı Pekin" and "Member of the Turkish Grand National Assembly Mustafa Levent Karahocagil".

- The Minister of Environment and Urbanization, Murat Kurum, is featured in 12 of the 88 news texts analyzed for the Sabah newspaper.

- In 2 of the 88 news articles, the names of the politicians on the opposition side, which have the lowest rate, are mentioned.

- Examples of these politicians are "Meral Akşener", "Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu", "Ahmet Davutoğlu" and "Ali Babacan".

- Ekrem İmamoğlu, the Mayor of Istanbul, is taking place in 7 of 88 news.

Firstly, while examining how Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers framed the Kanal Istanbul project, the rate of political figures mentioned in news texts was analyzed quantitatively. While trying to measure the objectivity of the newspaper news included in the analysis in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project, the figures in the political arena were categorized. While making this categorization, both the frames created in the previous studies in the literature and the contents of the newspaper news that were read in detail were taken into consideration.

It is seen that at least one political figure is involved in the vast majority of the news included in the analysis for the Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. The most prominent political figures in the Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers are politicians and governmental institutions. In an environmental project such as Kanal Istanbul, it is seen

that authorized figures and institutions in this field are less involved in the news than politicians. The fact that political persons or political parties have such a prominent place in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project and that the project has turned into a political tool gives clues about the dominance of ideology.

When we look at who the politicians in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet are and how often they appear in the news, Ekrem İmamoğlu has the highest rate of mention. When we consider the ideological stance of the Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspaper, it is not surprising that Ekrem İmamoğlu, who is on the opposing side and has been on the agenda since the Istanbul elections, has the highest rate of mention. Again, the fact that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is in second place after Ekrem İmamoğlu and that politicians with opposing ideological attitudes are at the forefront when representing the Kanal Istanbul project is an indication that the project has been transformed into a politically important tool. Although Murat Kurum, the Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, and Adil Karaismailoğlu, the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, are also included in some news texts, it is seen that the two most prominent names of the government and the opposition are very much associated with this project. In addition, the fact that the statements of oppositional politicians are given more space in both newspapers than the politicians who are government-oriented shows how dominant ideology can be in the representation of news. As a result, the transformation of the Kanal Istanbul project into a tool used in the political environment makes the objectivity of the news questionable.

Likewise, in the news texts analyzed in the Yeni Akit and Sabah newspapers, the number of news that includes at least one political figure has the highest rate. The most prominent political figures in Yeni Akit and Sabah newspapers are politicians and governmental institutions, as in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. The fact that political figures or political parties have a significant place in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project in the Yeni Akit and Sabah as well as in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet is an indication that the newspapers reflect their ideologies.

Contrary to Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, when we look at who the politicians in Yeni Akit and Sabah newspapers are and how often they appear in the news, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has the highest rate of mention. It is seen that Ekrem İmamoğlu is mentioned very few in Yeni Akit and Sabah newspapers compared to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. It is also noteworthy that politicians on the opposition side are less mentioned in both newspapers than politicians on the ruling side.

Although the newspapers Yeni Akit and Sabah have more coverage of Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Murat Kurum and Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Adil Karaismailoğlu than Sözcü and Cumhuriyet, the fact that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the politicians on the ruling side are most cited is again evidence of an ideological representation.

Finally, when we look at the newspaper Karar, we see that the number of news articles in which at least one political figure is included in the analyzed news texts still has the highest rate. Politicians and governmental institutions are the most prominent political figures in Karar, as in the newspapers Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, and Sabah. When we look at who the politicians in the Karar newspaper are and how often they appear in the news, unlike Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, and Sabah, oppositional politicians have the highest rate of mention. The politicians most mentioned in the news texts are Ahmet Davutoğlu and Ali Babacan. Ekrem İmamoğlu, on the other hand, has the third highest mention rate. Additionally, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and pro-government politicians have the lowest mention rates.

Although Murat Kurum, Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, and Adil Karaismailoğlu, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, have a close rate of mention, they generally have a low rate. From this, it can be deduced that there is an example of ideological representation related to Kanal Istanbul.

4.5. References/Sources

Table 17. References/Sources

	Frequency	Percent
No	423	74.1
Yes	147	27.5
Total	570	99.8

In the analysis, the references or sources and their frequencies seen in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers' news texts are included analysis examined whether the news articles have references or sources in order to see journalistic objectivity. This analysis is made in two categories: No = 0 or Yes = 1. In the news content, the references and sources in all the news are analyzed one by one to determine the ideological findings in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project and the objectivity in framing the news.

Of the 570 news items included in the analysis, there are 423 (74.1%) "No" answer, while 147 (27.5%) with "Yes" answer. In the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project by selected Turkish newspapers, it was concluded that very few references/sources were included in most of the news texts examined. After analyzing whether any reference or source is included in a news text, if there is a reference/source in the news, it is examined in which category this reference/source is included (see Table 2.) The categorization of references and sources includes laws, decrees, and other legal documents in legal documents. Tested and shared data by scientists were used for scientific documents. In official documents, there are texts created by governmental institutions apart from legal documents. There are ministries, directorates, and presidencies directly mentioned in the news texts of government units and used as sources.
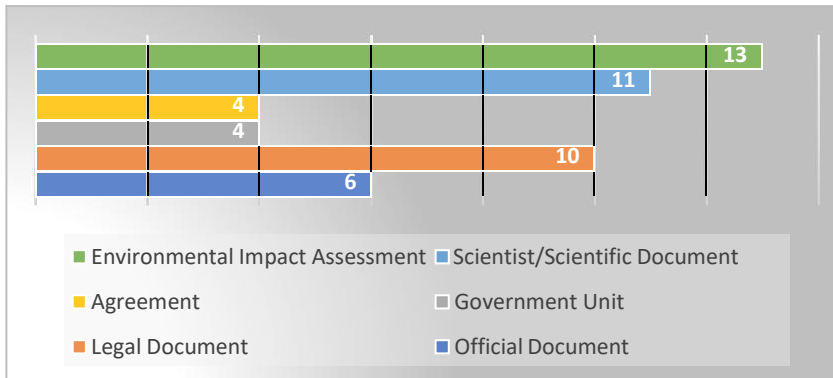
4.5.1. Sözcü

Table 18. References/Sources in Sözcü

NO	YES	TOTAL
67	53	120

At least one reference or source is in 53 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the Sözcü

newspaper. 67 news texts analyzed for Sözcü did not include any references/sources.

Figure 21. Categorization of References/Sources for Sözcü

While no source was used in 67 of 120 news texts analyzed in the Sözcü newspaper,

references or sources were used in 53 news texts. When we look at the categories of

references and sources, we see that 13 of the news are Environmental Impact

Assessments, 11 of them are Scientists/Scientific Documents, 4 of them are Agreements,

4 of them are Government Units, 10 of them are Legal Documents, and 6 of them are

Official Documents. It is not surprising that Environmental Impact Assessment reports

are the most popular in the media representation of the Kanal Istanbul project, which is

an environmental project. When we look at the source used in the analyzed news texts of

the Sözcü newspaper, at least one source is used in almost half of the news while representing the Kanal Istanbul project. When the objectivity of the news is evaluated with the frequency and type of source used in the news texts, it is seen that political names are associated with the project rather than the references and sources divided into categories in the representation of the project. Political actors are mostly used instead of references and sources in news texts containing information and explanations about the Kanal Istanbul project.

4.5.2. Cumhuriyet

Table 19. References/Sources in Cumhuriyet

NO	YES	TOTAL
86	36	122

At least one reference or source is in 36 of the 122 news texts analyzed for the Cumhuriyet newspaper. 86 news texts analyzed for Cumhuriyet did not include any references/sources.

Figure 22. Categorization of References/Sources for Cumhuriyet
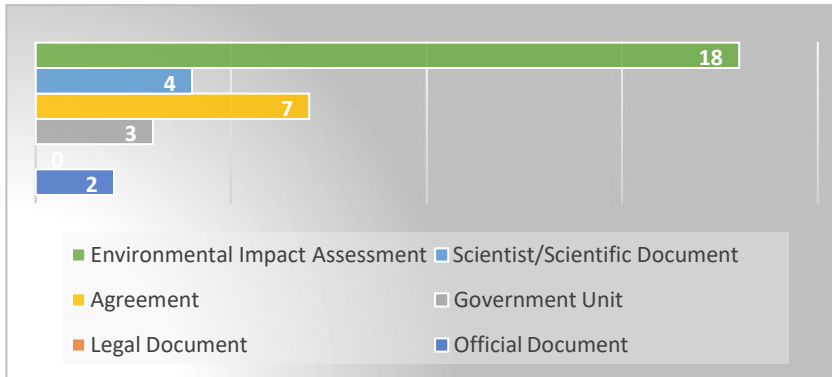
At least one reference/source was used in 36 of 122 news texts for Cumhuriyet newspaper. In 86 of them, any references/sources divided into categories were not used. The categories of references and sources in the newspaper Cumhuriyet are Environmental Impact Assessment in 18 news articles, Scientist/Scientific Document in 4 news articles, Agreement in 7 news articles, the Government Unit in 3 news articles, and Official Document in 2 news articles. No news articles that used the Legal Document were encountered. In the Cumhuriyet newspaper, as in Sözcü, it is not surprising that the Environmental Impact Assessment reports were the most prominent in the media representation of the Kanal Istanbul project, which is an environmental project. When we look at the use of resources in the analyzed news texts of Cumhuriyet newspaper, we come across articles that used fewer resources while representing the Kanal Istanbul project. Again, the fact that the references/sources in the representation of the Kanal İstanbul project use very few sources compared to the number of news texts may cause the objectivity of the project to be questioned. In addition, it is seen that the result obtained in the framework of "political actors" and the resources used are not parallel to each other. It is clear that political actors are a dominant framework used in the representation of news, especially politicians.
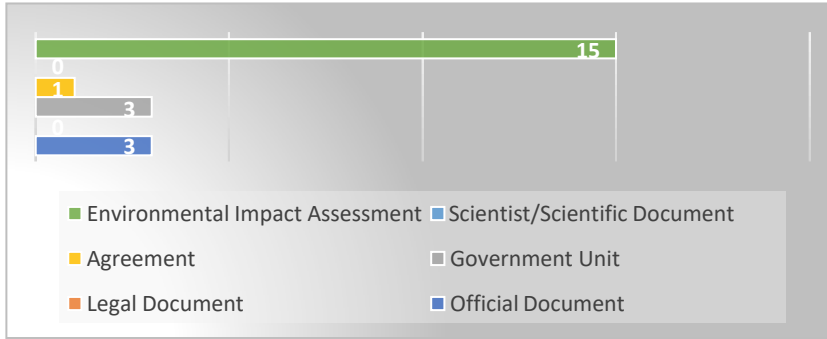
4.5.3. Yeni Akit

Table 20. References/Sources in Yeni Akit

NO	YES	TOTAL
102	18	120

At least one reference or source is in 18 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the Yeni Akit newspaper. 102 news texts analyzed for Yeni Akit did not include any references/sources.

Figure 23. Categorization of References/Sources for Yeni Akit

In Yeni Akit newspaper, 18 of 120 news texts use at least one reference/source. In 102 of them, any references/sources divided into categories were not used. The categories of references and sources in the newspaper Yeni Akit are Environmental Impact Assessment in 15 news articles, Agreement in 1 news article, the Government Unit in 3 news articles, and Official Document in 3 news articles. No news articles that used the Legal and Scientist/Scientific Documents were encountered. In the Yeni Akit newspaper, as in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet, it is not surprising that the Environmental Impact Assessment reports were the most prominent in the media representation of the Kanal Istanbul project, which is an environmental project. When we look at the use of resources in the analyzed news texts of the Yeni Akit newspaper, we come across articles that used even fewer resources than the Cumhuriyet. In terms of objectivity in journalistic practices, Yeni Akit reflects its ideology by using political parties and politicians, especially political party leaders in the representation of Kanal İstanbul.

4.5.4. Karar

Table 21. References/Sources in Karar

NO	YES	TOTAL
88	32	120

At least one reference or source is in 32 of the 120 news texts analyzed for the Karar

newspaper. 88 news texts analyzed for Karar did not include any references/sources.

Figure 24. Categorization of References/Sources for Karar
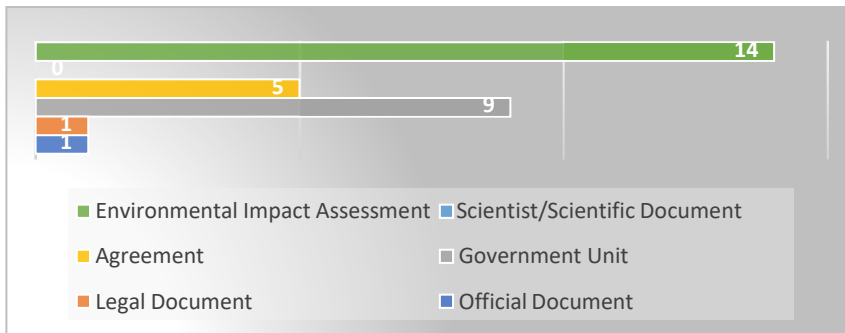
While no source was used in 88 of 120 news texts analyzed in the Karar newspaper,

references or sources were used in 32 news texts. When we look at the categories of

references and sources, we see that 14 of the news are Environmental Impact

Assessments, 5 of them are Agreements, 9 of them are Government Units, 1 of them are

Legal Documents, and 1 of them are Official Documents. Scientists/Scientific

Documents are not used in any news articles in Karar. Likewise, Environmental Impact

Assessment reports are the most popular in the media representation of the Kanal

Istanbul project. When we look at the source used in the analyzed news texts of the

Karar newspaper, the reference/source used are very few. When the objectivity of the news is evaluated with the frequency and type of source used in the news texts, as we can see in other newspapers, political actors are associated with the project. Political actors are mainly used instead of references and sources in news texts containing information and explanations about the Kanal Istanbul project.

4.5.5. Sabah

Table 22. References/Sources in Sabah

NO	YES	TOTAL
80	8	88

At least one reference or source is in 8 of the 88 news texts analyzed for the Sabah newspaper. 80 news texts analyzed for Sabah did not include any references/sources.

Figure 25. Categorization of References/Sources for Sabah
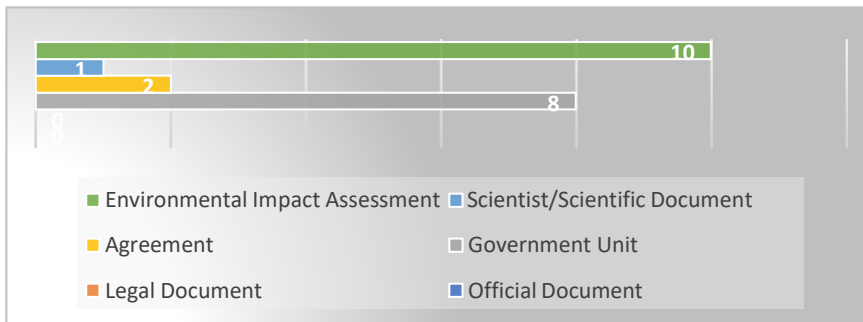
When we compare it with other newspapers, we see that the number of sources used in the Sabah newspaper is much less. At least one reference/source was used in 8 of 88 news texts for Sabah newspaper. In 80 of them, any references/sources divided into

categories were not used. The references and sources in the newspaper Sabah are

Environmental Impact Assessment in 10 news articles, Scientist/Scientific Document in

1 news article, Agreement in 2 news articles, and the Government Unit in 8 news

articles. There is no reference or source in the category of Official Document and Legal

Document. In the Sabah newspaper, as in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, and Karar, the

Environmental Impact Assessment reports were the most prominent in the media

representation of the Kanal Istanbul project. When we look at the use of resources in the

analyzed news texts of Sabah newspaper, we come across articles that used fewer

resources while representing the Kanal Istanbul project. Again, the fact that the

references/sources in the representation of the Kanal İstanbul project use very few

sources compared to the number of news articles may cause the objectivity of the project

to be questioned. Additionally, it is concluded that politicians are a dominant framework

rather than references/sources.

4.6. Themes/Topics

Table 23. Themes/Topics

	International Context	National Context	Environment	Infrastructure	Economy	Security	Other
Frequency Percent							
No	432 75.7%	190 33.3%	244 42.7%	207 36.3%	237 41.5%	474 83.0%	537 94.0%
Yes	138 24.2%	380 66.5%	326 57.1%	363 63.6%	333 58.3%	96 16.8%	33 5.8%

In the analysis, the themes and concepts and their frequencies seen in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers' news texts are included analysis examined in order to understand which themes and concepts are used by the newspapers when they frame the Kanal İstanbul project. This analysis is made in two categories: No = 0 or Yes = 1. In the news content, the themes and concepts in all the news are analyzed one by one to determine the ideological findings in the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project and the objectivity in framing the news. Themes and concepts used in news texts are essential when measuring news's objectivity. It was included in the process as a step of this research in order to analyze the concepts within which the Kanal Istanbul project was discussed and how the newspapers represented it.

When trying to determine the main themes through which the Kanal Istanbul project was conveyed to the newspaper readers, the main themes that came to the fore in the news contents were: International Context, National Context, Environment, Infrastructure, Economy, Security, and Other. Within the International Context theme, it is seen that our relations with other countries are generally framed through the Kanal Istanbul project. In the context of the National Context concept, there is a framework for the effects of the Kanal Istanbul project on Turkish society during and after the construction phase. While the Environment theme focuses on the environmental impacts and results of the Kanal Istanbul project, the Infrastructure theme deals with the structural and technical issues related to the Kanal Istanbul project. With the Kanal Istanbul project, economic relations and comments both within the country and with foreign countries are

collected under the theme of Economy, while the uncertainties and national security issues that will be created by the Kanal Istanbul project, especially within the scope of the Montreux Straits Convention, are discussed under the Security title. Subjects other than these themes and concepts were added to the Other category.

Of the 570 news items included in the analysis, there are themes including 138 (24.2%) for International Context, 380 (66.5) for National Context, 326 (57.1%) for Environment, 363 (63.6%) for Infrastructure, 333 (58.3%) for Economy and 96 (16.8%) for Security. In the representation of the Kanal Istanbul project by selected Turkish newspapers, it was concluded that while most news articles cover the National Context, Environment, Infrastructure, and Economy concepts, a few news articles cover International Context and Security themes in the comparison.
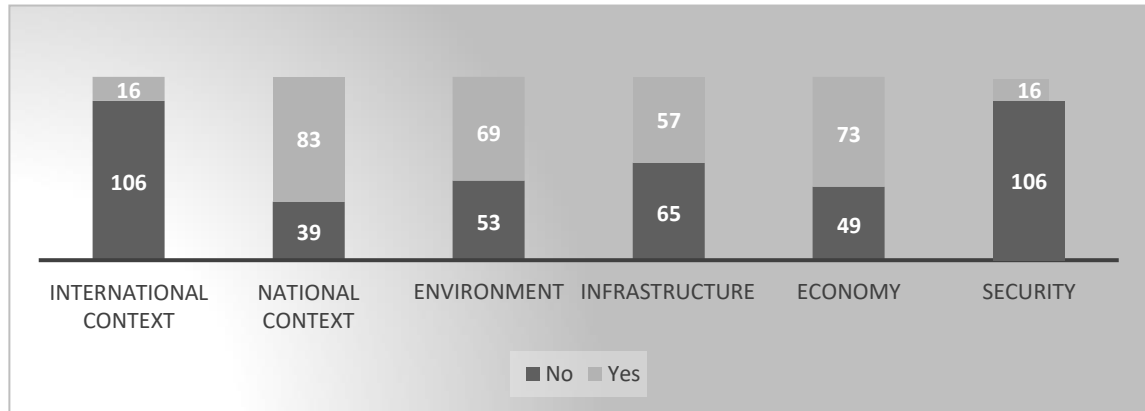
4.6.1. Sözcü

Figure 26. Themes and Concepts in Sözcü
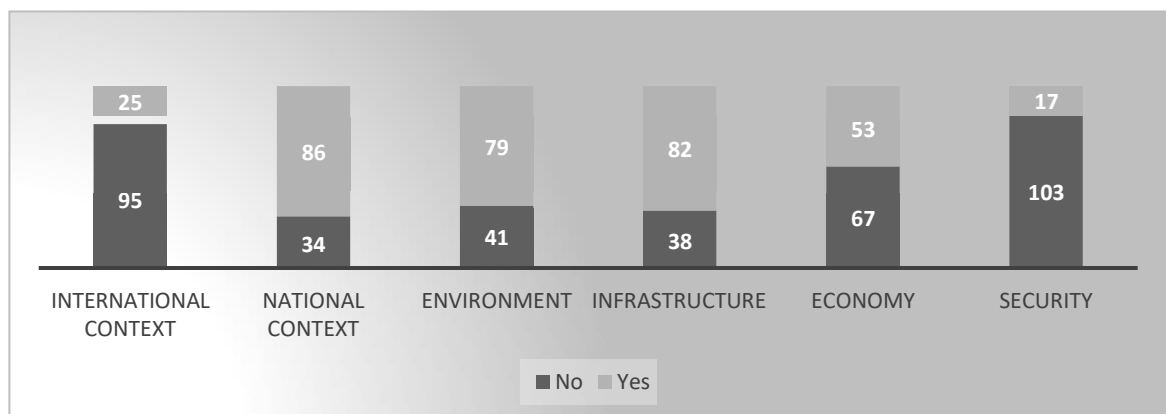
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- In the Sözcü newspaper, the most framed themes and concepts related to Kanal Istanbul were National Context (86 news), Environment (79 news), and Infrastructure (82 news) for 120 news stories included in the analysis.

- The news titled "Very serious warning for Kanal Istanbul: It increases the population in the region to 40 million" (news dated December 12, 2019) was in the National Context category, the news titled "200 thousand trees will be sacrificed for Kanal Istanbul" (news dated July 07, 2021) was in the Environment category and "Statement from İBB on housing rent projects in Kanal Istanbul: It will spread like a virus" (news on September 09, 2021) can be given as an example of the Infrastructure category.

- As it can be understood from the news headlines given as examples above and with many more recent examples, the Sözcü newspaper consistently emphasizes opposition to the project in its news about Kanal Istanbul on different themes. This situation supports that the Kanal Istanbul project is harmful in every aspect. This situation shows that the Sözcü newspaper uses an ideological framing rather than complete objectivity.

- The least mentioned news category in Sözcü was the International Context and Security themes. The usage rate of the Economy theme among 120 news texts is nearly half.

4.6.2. Cumhuriyet

Figure 27. Themes and Concepts in Cumhuriyet

- In the Cumhuriyet newspaper, the most framed themes and concepts related to Kanal Istanbul were National Context (83 news), Environment (69 news), and Economy (73 news) for 122 news stories included in the analysis.

- The news titled "Istanbulite said 'no' in İBB's Kanal Istanbul survey" (news dated August 30, 2020) was in the National Context category, the news titled "267 landslide areas were detected on the route of Kanal Istanbul" (news dated July 28, 2020) was in the Environment category and "Nuhoğlu from the Good Party: The excavation cost of Kanal Istanbul alone is over 75 billion Liras" (news on September 09, 2021) can be given as an example of the Economy category.

- As seen from its news headlines and many more recent examples, Cumhuriyet newspaper, like Sözcü newspaper, constantly emphasizes opposition to the project in its news about Kanal Istanbul on different themes. In the newspaper, which includes the names of politicians and statesmen on the opposition side and

comments on their ideas, we can talk about ideological frameworks rather than complete objectivity, as in the Sözcü newspaper.

- Cumhuriyet's least mentioned news category was the International Context and Security themes. The usage rate of the Environment theme among 120 news texts is more than half.

4.6.3. Yeni Akit

Figure 28. Themes and Concepts in Yeni Akit
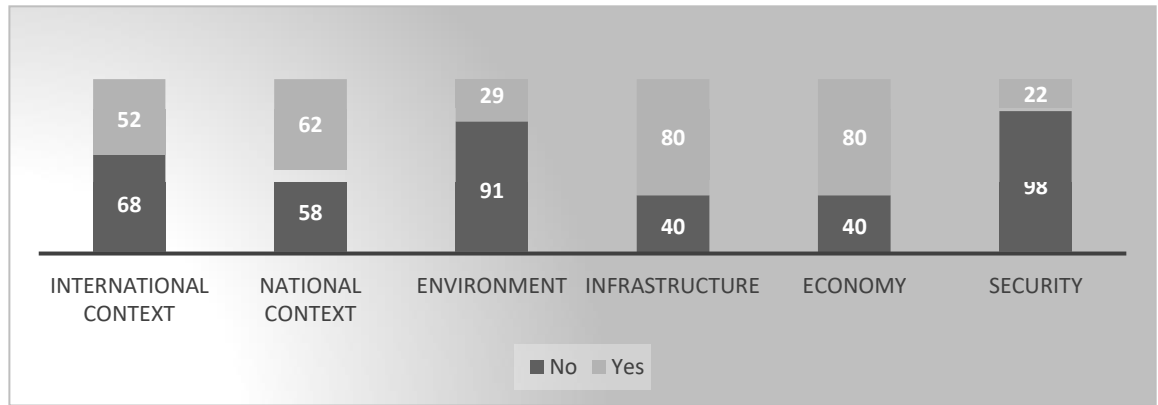
In the Yeni Akit newspaper, the most framed themes and concepts related to Kanal Istanbul were Infrastructure (80 news) and Economy (80 news) for 120 news stories included in the analysis.

- The news titled "Countries are building new channels against Kanal Istanbul! We will either watch it or we will do it." (news dated December 18, 2019) was in the Infrastructure category, and "Foreign investors lined up for Kanal Istanbul" (news on 02 August 2018) can be given as an example of the Economy category.

- As seen from its news headlines and many more recent examples, Yeni Akit newspaper, unlike Sözcü and Cumhuriyeyt newspapers, constantly emphasizes support for the project in its news about Kanal Istanbul on different themes. While the positive effects of the Kanal Istanbul project are constantly mentioned under each theme, there are also opinions against the opposition side. In the newspaper, which includes the names of politicians and statesmen on the pro-government side and comments on their ideas, we can talk about ideological frameworks rather than complete objectivity, as in the Sözcü newspaper.

- At least mentioned news category in Yeni Akit was the International Environment and Security themes. The usage rate of the International Context and National Context themes among 120 news texts is around half.

4.6.4. Karar

Figure 29. Themes and Concepts in Karar
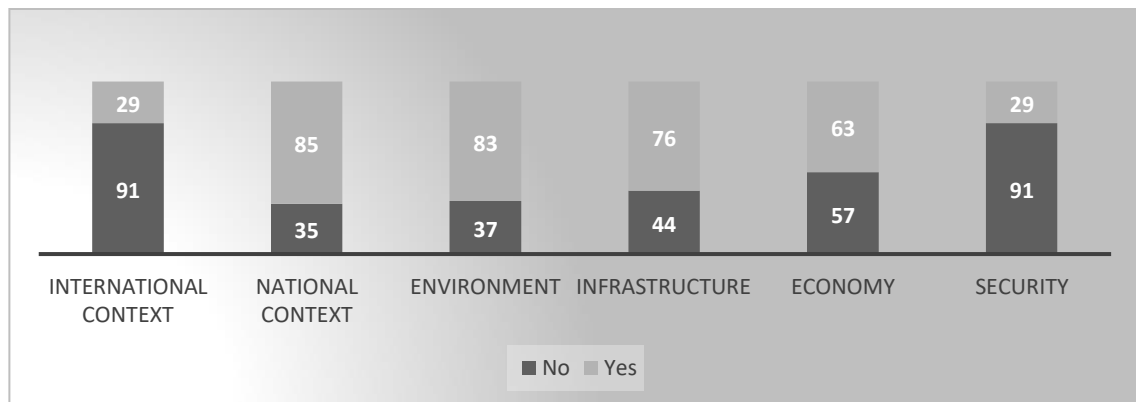
- In the Karar newspaper, the most framed themes and concepts related to Kanal Istanbul were National Context (85 news), Environment (83 news), and Infrastructure (76 news) for 120 news stories included in the analysis.

- The news titled "Kanal Istanbul case from Yeniköy residents: They demanded the cancellation of the zoning application" (news dated May 13, 2022) was in the National Context category, the news titled "Kanal Istanbul will destroy 10 thousand hectares of agricultural land" (news dated August 01, 2020) was in the Environment category and "Luxury residence in pastures" (news on September 10, 2021) can be given as an example of the Infrastructure category.

- Although the Karar newspaper does not give as much coverage to the fact that Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers stand on a certain side while presenting the Kanal Istanbul project in the context of themes, it still shows the ideological point of its stance by representing views against the government and mentioning certain politicians a lot in the news. This situation demonstrates that the Karar newspaper uses an ideological framing rather than complete objectivity.

- The least mentioned news category in Karar was the International Context and Security themes. The usage rate of the Economy theme among 120 news texts is over half.
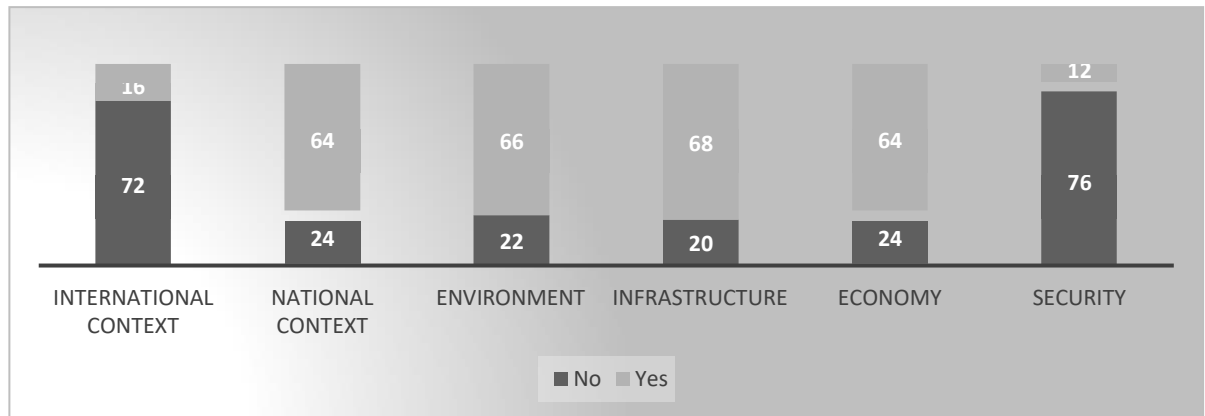
4.6.5. Sabah

Figure 30. Themes and Concepts in Sabah

- In the Sabah newspaper, the most framed themes and concepts related to Kanal Istanbul were National Context (64 news), Environment (66), Infrastructure (68 news), and Economy (40 news) for 88 news stories included in the analysis.

- The news titled "Revolutionary new zoning plan for Istanbul: Houses will be 5-storey" (news dated November 17, 2021) was in the Infrastructure category, "Even the name of Kanal Istanbul was enough! Smiling faces in that area..." (news dated December 19, 2019) was in the National Context category, "Endemic species are protected in Kanal Istanbul" (news dated March 19, 2018) was in the Environment category and "Their new target is Kanal Istanbul! Turks will generate 4 times more income" (news on 18 May 2018) can be given as an example of the Economy category.

- As seen from its news headlines and many more recent examples, Sabah newspaper, unlike Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Karar newspapers, constantly emphasizes support for the project in its news about Kanal Istanbul on different themes as same as Yeni Akit. While the positive effects of the Kanal Istanbul

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project are constantly mentioned under each theme, there are also opinions against the opposition side. In the newspaper, which includes the names of politicians and statesmen on the pro-government side and comments on their ideas, we can talk about ideological frameworks rather than complete objectivity.

- At least mentioned news category in Yeni Akit was the International Context and Security themes.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents an overall analysis of the research along with the findings of the research. It concludes with the answers to the study's research questions, addresses the limitations of the study, and finally concludes the study by emphasizing the prospects for future research. This section also explains the purpose of the research by summarizing the research questions, the literature review, the methodology, and the findings.

The study, which examines the ideological practices seen in the context of media framing theory in the news media in connection with the principles of objectivity and impartiality in journalism, aims to reveal the analysis of the representation of the Kanal İstanbul mega project in Turkish newspapers. In this study, as the corpus of the study, news texts about Kanal İstanbul in Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers between the years 2016-2022 are collected. The study is analyzed using qualitative and quantitative content analysis methods. The content analysis tries to reveal how the Kanal İstanbul project is represented in the selected newspapers and the effects of the ideological tendencies of the newspapers on these representations.

The analysis of newspaper news focuses on the idea of how newspapers reflect their ideological stance in news representation, around the practices of objectivity and impartiality in journalism. For this reason, it is emphasized that the government and opposition perspectives in the news texts on the issues related to Kanal İstanbul have a substantial effect on the representation of the news. It should be noted that not only the government's practices and attitudes towards journalism practices shape media frameworks, but also that the opposition makes its own ideologies highly visible in their news representations.

First, the principles of objectivity and impartiality in journalism practices are discussed to establish a solid ground while reviewing the literature. Then, the formations in the Turkish media are examined in order to provide a better understanding of the practices in the Turkish news media. In order to convey the dimensions of the relationship between politics and the media to the reader, it has been emphasized how the newspapers have an effect in the context of their ideological stances. It has been observed that the media, as an effective power responsible for conveying the facts with an impartial attitude, has started to act in favor of governments and oppositions. Thus, it is possible that media practices, particularly news representation, are associated with the current government and the ideological leanings of opposition parties.

In analyzing the principles of objectivity and impartiality in news representations in the context of media framing theory, the representation of mega projects that are constantly

developing and new ones being added in today's societies has been chosen. In the light

of the information obtained from the literature within the scope of the Turkish political

arena, it has been observed that mega-projects take a lot in discussions. In particular, the

Kanal İstanbul project stands out for being the most up-to-date mega project and

creating many discussions. For this reason, news texts related to the Kanal İstanbul

project have been chosen as units of analysis to shed light on how the media frames are

ideologically shaped in examining the principles of objectivity and impartiality in

Turkish news media.

Accordingly, five newspapers in the Turkish media with different ideologies are chosen

as the research samples. Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar and Sabah newspapers are

selected. Different categories are determined to analyze the news texts in these

newspapers related to the Kanal İstanbul project. These include the attitudes of the news

texts towards the government and opposition, the general tone of the news texts about

Kanal İstanbul, the political figures in the news texts, the sources used in the news, and

the themes of the news. Each category shows different trends regarding the place of

ideology in journalism when seeking answers to research questions. More importantly, it

demonstrates some similarities and differences in framing an issue in five selected

newspapers.

Before moving on to the first analyzed category of the research, the numerical

distribution of the news texts between 2016 and 2022 is examined. During the research

process, the news texts of the first six months of 2022 are included in the analysis, as there is no news for the last six months of 2022. When the distribution of news numbers over the years is examined, it is seen that the news about Kanal İstanbul has increased for all five newspapers over the years. The news have reached the highest number, especially in 2019, 2020, and 2021. As the reason for this, it is concluded that during the election process in 2019 and afterward, the Kanal İstanbul project is used as a political tool.

The first category examined is the attitude of the news texts towards the government and the opposition in the context of the Kanal İstanbul project. While analyzing the attitudes toward the news, a separate analysis is made for five newspapers, and the results are reached. First of all, when the attitudes of Sözcü newspaper towards the government and the opposition in the context of the Kanal İstanbul project are examined, it is seen that it exhibits an oppositional attitude with the highest rate. It is concluded that the Sözcü newspaper has a more oppositional attitude and has no pro-government attitude (0.0%). In addition, when it is examined whether there is a critical or supportive attitude towards the government and the opposition in the news, it is seen that Sözcü has a mostly critical approach towards the government and a more supportive attitude towards the opposition. The result obtained when the political ideology of the Sözcü newspaper is taken into consideration proves that the newspaper's attitude in the context of the Kanal İstanbul project is in line with its ideology.

Secondly, the attitudes of Cumhuriyet newspaper towards the government and the opposition in the context of the Kanal İstanbul project are examined. The newspaper Cumhuriyet, which has very close ratios with Sözcü, has the highest rate of oppositional attitude. Again, as in the Sözcü newspaper, the rate of news that displays a neutral attitude after the opposition attitude has second place. There is also no news text with a pro-government stance, with a percentage of 0.0%. Likewise, when the critical or supportive approaches towards the government and the opposition in the news texts are examined in detail, it is encountered that Cumhuriyet newspaper includes statements that are critical of the government but does not take any critical approach to the opposition. In addition, while there is no attitude supporting the government in the news texts, there are expressions supporting the opposition and its ideas. It has been concluded that in the news representations of Cumhuriyet newspaper about Kanal İstanbul, a reflection of its ideological stance is seen, as in Sözcü newspaper.

In the third place, the attitude of Yeni Akit newspaper in the news texts is examined. As a result of the ratios regarding the attitudes toward the news, a very opposite result is reached compared to Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. Most of the news articles in the Yeni Akit newspaper have a pro-government stance, and in parallel, none of the news in the newspaper has a critical approach toward the government. The rate of news with neutral attitudes in the news texts of Yeni Akit newspaper is less than in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. Yeni Akit newspaper generally uses critical language against the opposition and makes a news representation according to its political ideology.

When the attitudes of the newspaper Karar towards the government and the opposition in the context of the Kanal İstanbul project are examined, it is seen that it exhibits an oppositional attitude with the highest rate, as in the newspapers Sözcü and Cumhuriyet. It is concluded that after the oppositional attitude, the newspaper has a more neutral attitude and a pro-government attitude with 0.0%. In addition, when it is examined whether there is a critical or supportive attitude towards the government and the opposition in the news, it is seen that the Karar newspaper has a mostly critical approach towards the government and a more supportive attitude towards the opposition. The most probable reason for this situation is the association of Ahmet Davutoğlu, a former member of the current government (AKP) and the chairman of the newly established Future Party, with the newspaper Karar. Because of this, it is not surprising that the newspaper's ideas and framing are anti-government.

Finally, the attitude of Sabah newspaper in the news texts is examined. As a result of the rates related to the attitudes toward the news, the newspaper, which has similar results to Yeni Akit, has very opposite rates compared to Sözcü, Karar, and Cumhuriyet newspapers. Most of the news articles in the Sabah have a pro-government stance, and in parallel, none of the news in the newspaper found a critical approach towards the government. Unlike other newspapers, Sabah is the newspaper with the highest rate of neutral attitudes. In Sabah, which has 39.8% of news texts with neutral attitudes, a generally critical language is used against the opposition, and a representation that revolves around political ideology has been reached, as in other newspapers.

In the general tone analysis, which is the second category, it was examined which tones were used in the content while presenting the Kanal İstanbul project. When compared with the attitudes of the news texts, it is seen that the general tone of each newspaper is in parallel with their attitudes towards the government and the opposition. While a negative tone is used in the majority of the news texts analyzed, the tone with a minor percentage is positive.

It is seen that most of the news texts of Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Karar newspapers have a negative tone towards the Kanal İstanbul project. As can be seen in the literature, it is seen that mega projects, which are not only construction or environmental projects but also used more politically, are associated with current governments. Here, too, while pro-government newspapers such as Sabah and Yeni Akit used a more positive tone towards the Kanal İstanbul project and supported the construction of the project, Sözcü Cumhuriyet and Karar newspapers, on the opposing side, mostly criticized the Kanal İstanbul project, do not support it and include its negative results. Considering the principles of objectivity and impartiality in journalism, Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, and Karar newspapers do not give any place to the positive and beneficial aspects of the Kanal İstanbul project. On the contrary, it constantly emphasizes the environmental, political, social, and economic damages of the project. On the other hand, Sabah and Yeni Akit newspapers point out that the Kanal İstanbul project is critical for Turkey's development and progress in every aspect. Although these five newspapers, which claim to adopt the principles of objectivity and impartiality and whose ideological stances are clear, display

a biased stance within the context of the Kanal İstanbul project as a result of examining their general tone.

The political figures included in the news texts are analyzed in the third category in the coding sheet. First, these political figures are categorized as governmental institutions, non-government organizations, politicians, and academics. After obtaining the quantitative distribution of these figures for each newspaper, it is concluded that the most frequently cited political figures in the newspaper news were politicians. In the context of media framing theory, in order to understand how newspaper news represents politicians, a sub-category is created, and which politicians are included in the news texts for each newspaper is examined.

When we look at Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, the most common subcategory among political figures has been politicians. At the same time, it is essential to note that government institutions are also more involved than other topics. Ekrem İmamoğlu, a member of the opposition party CHP and the Mayor of İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, is the first of the politicians most frequently featured in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers. While Ekrem İmamoğlu's statements about Kanal İstanbul have a significant place in news texts, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's name is also in the second place. The most striking point here is that the Kanal İstanbul project is mentioned as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's "big project" in news texts. After these two political names, the news texts in which the names of opposition politicians are included

are in the third place. Pro-government politicians are mentioned very few in news articles. Murat Kurum, The Minister of Environment and Urbanization, and Adil Karaismailoğlu, The Minister of Transport and Infrastructure are less featured in both newspapers compared to Ekrem İmamoğlu and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The fact that Ekrem İmamoğlu and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who is on opposite sides, are more involved in the representation of Kanal İstanbul proves how the project is positioned ideologically.

As in Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers, the most common subcategory among political figures in Yeni Akit and Sabah newspapers is politicians. In particular, the name Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is mentioned in the majority of news texts in the Yeni Akit newspaper. When we look at the sub-headings of the politicians category, names other than Recep Tayyip Erdoğan are rarely mentioned in the Yeni Akit newspaper. This confirms the statements of Sözcü and Cumhuriyet newspapers that the Kanal İstanbul project is an individual project of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Because Yeni Akit newspaper presents the Kanal İstanbul project not as a government project but as a project of Recep Tayyip Erdogan. From this, we see that Yeni Akit newspaper strongly reflects its political ideology in its news texts. We encounter the same situation in the Sabah newspaper. Unlike Yeni Akit, Sabah newspaper also includes the names of other pro-government politicians. However, this situation shows that there is an ideological representation as in the Yeni Akit newspaper. Both newspapers include mainly the name of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. However, the names of other politicians on the subject are rarely mentioned in the news texts.

Politicians appearing in the news texts of the Karar newspaper show a little difference compared to other newspapers. The politicians most frequently mentioned in news texts are not Recep Tayyip Erdoğan or Ekrem İmamoğlu. The politicians in the majority of the news texts of the Karar newspaper are opposition politicians. The results obtained after the content analysis demonstrate that these politicians are especially Ahmet Davutoğlu and Ali Babacan. The fact that the newspaper Karar is associated with Ahmet Davutoğlu, as mentioned in the literature, is proven by the fact that this name is primarily mentioned in the news texts. After these two politicians, Ekrem İmamoğlu is the most mentioned politician. Again, the names of Murat Kurum and Adil Karaismailoğlu appear in the texts much less than expected. When viewed from all these perspectives, it is seen that the political ideology of the newspaper Karar is reflected in the representation of the Kanal İstanbul project.

When we look at the rate of sources used in news texts, it is seen that 27.5% of news texts use sources. It is seen that the most used resource in all five newspapers is Environmental Impact Assessments. In the results of the content analysis, it is revealed that governmental institutions are the most used sources. While the newspaper that used the most resources in news texts is Sözcü, the newspaper that used the least is Sabah. Considering the principles of objectivity and impartiality, the number of sources used in news texts in the context of the Kanal İstanbul project is less than expected. Considering that an environmental and construction project has many technical and economic aspects, it is expected that news texts will use more sources of evidence in presenting this information to the reader. In addition, it is concluded that the newspapers made a

representation according to their ideologies while giving information. For example, it has been found that Sabah and Yeni Akit newspapers mostly use resources to present the positive aspects of the project while conveying this information to the reader.

On the other hand, the opposition newspapers mainly refer to Environmental Impact Assessments and legal documents in their statements that they oppose the Kanal İstanbul project. Although newspapers refer to a source in some news texts, especially in the news with the aim of giving information and explanation, the number of these sources is very few. Qualitatively, it is possible to say that the Kanal İstanbul project is not seen as an environmental or construction project and is represented in the media as a political tool, and political ideology plays a very dominant role in the presentation of this project.

Finally, an analysis of the themes of the news texts is examined in the content analysis. In the analysis process, the themes in the newspaper news are categorized under six main headings. These six topics are divided into International Context, National Context, Environment, Infrastructure, Economy, and Security. The most common themes in Sözcü newspaper are National Context and Environment. In the presentation of the Kanal İstanbul project, the Sözcü newspaper mainly focuses on the social and environmental impacts of the project. Unlike Sözcü, the news texts in Cumhuriyet newspaper concentrate on the National Context and Economy categories. Infrastructure and Economy are the themes that Yeni Akit newspaper most frequently included in its news texts. On the other hand, the Karar newspaper is similar to the Sözcü newspaper,

presenting the project in terms of the National Context and Environment. Finally, Sabah newspaper has different thematic content from all other newspapers. The most common themes in the news texts of Sabah newspaper are National Context, Environment, Infrastructure, and Economy. The theme that take place the least in each newspaper was the theme of Security. Next, International Context is the second least included theme. In summary, it is seen that the themes in the representation of Kanal İstanbul in the five selected newspapers mostly focus on the domestic problems and impacts of the project. The project's results and impacts in the international context have much less place in the news texts and the representation of the Kanal İstanbul project in the news texts is more involved in the thematic analysis within the framework of national issues.

As a result, when we look at the representation of the Kanal İstanbul project in the Turkish news media, it is seen that the ideological stances of the newspapers are largely reflected in the presentation of this project. It is concluded that the principles of objectivity and impartiality, which are one of the most essential principles of journalism according to the literature, have been pushed aside in the presentation of this project and have more of an ideological representation. The data obtained from categories created using the quantitative and qualitative content analysis method produced results supporting this ideological representation. In particular, as a result of the analysis of the attitude of the news texts examined for each newspaper, the tone of the news texts and the political figures in the news texts, Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers convey their political stance to the reader in the representation of the Kanal İstanbul. In other words, with the analysis of the news articles in the context of media

framing theory under different categories, we can see that the Kanal İstanbul project has turned from an environmental project into a tool used in political competition.

5.1. Limitations of the Study

In this study, a total of 1600 news texts, 570 related to the topic of Kanal Istanbul, are analyzed. In the study, both quantitative and qualitative content analysis method is used. These analyses conclude that Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Akit, Karar, and Sabah newspapers reflected their ideologies in representing the Kanal Istanbul project. However, when the distribution of news texts by years after the Kanal Istanbul project is announced in 2011, a very limited number of news texts are reached between 2011 and 2015. In addition, since only 570 of the 1600 news articles analyzed for content analysis are directly related to the Kanal Istanbul project, almost 1/3 of the analyzed news is included in the analysis. The number of news articles on the subject could have been higher to get more comprehensive results. More concretely, news texts in which only the name of the Kanal Istanbul project is mentioned or that refer to the Kanal Istanbul project within the scope of another topic are excluded from the analysis because it is not possible to analyze these news within the framework of the categories in the coding sheet.

During the literature review, it is seen that there is no research in the context of media framing theory related to a mega project before, both in Turkey and around the world. In further research, the representation of different megaprojects in the media can be

examined not only by considering ideology but also from other angles. More importantly, considering the effects of the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia, with the completion of the Kanal Istanbul project, both for these countries and for Turkey, the media's representation on this issue can be analyzed. Considering the scope of the Montreux Convention on the Straits, how the media representation of such projects may affect the relations between countries, together with the phenomenon of war, can provide a different analysis for further research. In the analysis process of this thesis, it was seen that there are very few news texts with content about the effects of the Kanal Istanbul project in the context of this war. Examining why such a mega-project, which can impact international relations and in situations such as war, is so little presented in the media can be another research topic. In addition, how events in a country affect the presentation of a megaproject in the media can be analyzed by looking at the country's social, political, economic, and many other processes. Another research area is the analysis of how megaprojects interact with the environment in the context of the developing and advancing sustainability field and how the effects that megaprojects may create in the future are presented through the media.

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