

Abstract

Protests have been important social phenomena for the wider Middle East, especially since the Arab Spring, with the potential to achieve dramatic change. Understanding the nature of uprisings in the region is important for our understanding of the present and the future. To this end, this thesis tried to make sense of the dynamics and processes that led to the emergence of three protests in the region, the 25th of January Revolution in Egypt, the Syrian Uprising, and the Gezi protest. It tried to analyze the different aspects in which they were comparable. Furthermore, it tried to analyze their representation in the media by uncovering the differences and similarities between the discourse of two Turkish newspapers, Sabah and Cumhuriyet, in their columns and news reports regarding these instances of protests. Critical discourse analysis was used alongside comparative case study to see the differences between social reality and the discourse of the newspapers. Also, the thesis tried to explain the discrepancies and commonalities between the discourse of the newspapers. When the protests were compared with the help of the existing literature, it was seen that the protests had some similarities in the aspects such as causes of protest, the performance of the protestors, and state reaction. Moreover, it was found that there were some inconsistencies in the overall discourse of the newspapers and the columns of some journalists when they were dealing with different cases, as well as differences in discourse between the two newspapers. Finally, it was argued that the difference and inconsistency of discourse of both newspapers, with regards to each case, can be explained by the ideological and political positions of the newspapers to some extent.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Comparative Case Study, Arab Spring, Egypt, Syria, Gezi Protests, Turkey, Journalism, Sabah, Cumhuriyet