

## Değişen Gündem ve Türkiye: 2009 Yılı Medya Gündemi Üzerine Bir İnceleme

## Changing Agenda And Turkey: A Study On The Media Agenda Of 2009\*

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### ÖZET

Enformasyonun haber formatındaki üretimi ve dağıtımını yerine getiren medya, kamusal alandaki tartışmaların en önemli belirleyicisi ve taşıyıcısı olarak kilit bir rol üstlenmektedir. Buna bağlı olarak haber medyasında öne çıkan konular ve bu konuların haberleştirilmesinde kullanılan dilsel pratikler geniş bir inceleme alanı olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu çalışmada ise medya gündeminin çok sık değiştiği ya da değiştirildiği yönündeki tartışmaların hız kazandığı bir yıl olarak 2009 yılında, yaygın medyanın değişmez konu başlıkları, bu konulardan oluşan medya gündemini kimin belirlediği, nasıl şekillendirdiği, gündemin değişim sıklığı ve hızı, haber sunumunda öne çıkan çerçeveler gibi sorulara yanıtlar aranmıştır. Bu çerçevede 1 Ocak-31 Aralık 2009 tarihleri arasında yaygın medyaya mensup Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Posta, Radikal, Sabah, Taraf, Yeni Şafak ve Zaman gazetelerinin manşet ve sürmanşetleri içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda 2009 yılında en fazla gündemde kalan konuların Ergenekon davasına ilişkin gelişmeler ve Kürt açılımı tartışmaları olduğu saptanmıştır. Bu konuları ilk defa manşetlerine taşıyan ve uzun süre gündemde kalmasını sağlayan gazeteler ise Zaman, Taraf ve Radikal'dir. Çalışmanın ortaya çıkardığı temel bulgu, gazetelerin ateşleyici olayların dışında kalan zamanlarda kendi yayın politikaları ve ideolojik duruşları ile gündemlerini belirledikleri şeklindedir. Nitekim haberde ideolojik kutuplaşmaya göre kendi düşüncelerini destekleyecek sözcükleri seçme, cümleleri kurma ve sunma davranışı Cumhuriyet, Zaman ve Yeni Şafak gazetelerinde yoğun olarak görülmektedir.

**AnahtarKelimeler:** Medyagündemi, içerikanalizi, Türk basını, başlık

**ÇalışmanınTürü:** Araştırma

### ABSTRACT

Media which enables production and distribution of information as news format plays crucial role in public discussions as a determinant and carrier of them. Accordingly, featured issues in news media and linguistic practices used to report them as news appear as a rich research field. In this study in 2009 when discussions regarding rapid changing or changed media agenda increased it was aimed to seek answers to questions regarding consistent themes of the mainstream media as to who sets the agenda covering these themes and how they are shaped and regarding the frequency and rate of the change in the agenda and commonly used frames in the presentation of news. In the research it was also intended to seek answers to questions such as "whether is there a strong agenda setter, that is, a 'pilot' newspaper and specifically in which subjects is this newspaper determinant?", "which factors are effective in agenda setting?", "specifically in what kind of news subjects are media advocacy that can be considered to be an endeavor to influence public opinion and politics by advocating only particular aspects of the subject and partisan agenda as reflection of ideological slants displayed?" and "what are the general attributes of the frameworks used in covering news?".

A content analysis was employed to expose which issues were focused on within the contents of the most prominent news items (headlines and subheadings) that were presented on the front pages and are considered to be show case of the newspapers within one-year period. Through employing content analysis one of the methods which can be applied to systematically analyze content of media texts, both quantitative data as to which subjects became prominent in 2009 which newspaper was the agenda-setting in those subjects that is, which newspaper was "the pilot of the Turkish press", how long these issues remained on the agenda and how many times the agenda changed over the course of that year and qualitative data as to whether there were interactions or significant differences among the newspapers examined in terms of media agenda were obtained. The headlines and subheadings of the mainstream media -Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Posta, Radikal, Sabah, Taraf, YeniŞafak and Zaman- within the time period of 1th January 2009 - 31th December 2009, were examined. Within this scope at the end of the analysis, it was found that the agenda changed 2772 times and the change degree was 76%. It was established that all of the newspapers under scrutiny provided the same subject in their headlines for 20 days in 2009. At the end of the research it was determined that the "Ergenekon case" related developments and "Kurdish initiative" related discussions remained on agenda for the longest time period. The newspapers which published these subjects in headlines for the first time and made them remain on agenda for a long time are Zaman, Taraf and Radikal. The topic called "Ergenekon case" was covered with various headlines throughout the year. When examining which newspaper firstly covers the news regarding "Ergenekon case", that is, which newspaper is "pilot newspaper" in such news items, it is Taraf. Zaman has the lowest degree in agenda change frequency because of being the newspapers covering issues of "Ergenekon case" in headlines with the highest frequency and duration of time, Posta has the lowest degree of agenda change frequency in covering the prominent topics of 2009 as the top main agenda however it is the

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newspaper covering most diversified agenda issues in magazinish, dramatically and popular ways in headlines and thus it appears as the newspaper with the most diversified agenda issues (86%).

Within the scope of mainstream media's sense of journalism, immediate trigger events have priority to be covered as being newsworthy. Within this context, the fundamental finding the study revealed is that newspapers set the agenda on the basis of their publishing policies and ideological stands in times when there are no trigger events. The newspapers while covering and providing these top agenda items, carried out this differently and acted in accordance with their ideological stands what we term partisan agenda and media advocacy attitude to highlight particular aspects of an issue. Other subjects remained on the agenda in 2009 had importance mainly within the scope of trigger events and they were off the agenda when they lost their popularity in conjecture. Throughout the year, only the developments which took place within the scope of "Ergenekon case" and debates on "Kurdish initiative" remained on agenda. It was determined that leading newspapers in these subjects are Zaman, Taraf and Radikal which are occasionally determinant both in media agenda and in political and public agenda. It was found that Radikal is the newspaper playing leading role in coverage of debates regarding "Kurdish initiative". The newspaper was influential in naming of the process and had an endeavor to create a cognitive awareness allowing the subject remain on the agenda for the longest period. It was assessed that these newspapers try to mold public opinion in accordance with their ideological stands and publishing policies and take on a task of being the pilot of the Turkish press. Besides, having a publishing policy which covers mainly domestic affairs and top agenda topics from a different angle, Cumhuriyet occupies an important position in opinion journalism.

The principal finding the research revealed is that they set the agenda on the basis of their publishing policies and ideological stands in times when there are no trigger events. Thus selections of words, formation of sentences and presentation of them which bear their ideas on the basis of the ideological polarization are heavily seen in Cumhuriyet, Zaman and YeniŞafak. What is mainly important here rather than the similarities in situating these issues on top agenda are the differences in coverage of the issues by the newspapers. This is because differences among the newspapers in selection of particular subjects among existing information, highlighting, stressing, attributing various meanings, evaluating, covering or excluding and ignoring are important in terms of containing references to publishing policies and ideological stands.

**Keywords:** Media agenda, content analysis, Turkish press, headlines

**Type of Study:** Research

## Introduction

Our response to the question "which issues should be primarily addressed?" contains an interest-based attitude and has a content which makes our expectations prominent. However in issues concerning whole society while media raise awareness in cognitive level or taking an attitude, our priorities are generally parallel with media's order of importance. In this context the media is influencing the reference frameworks of readers and audience through which they interpret public issues (Scheufele, 1999; 105; Severin and Tankard, 1994; 536). We can describe this influence as a process which has four stages. The first stage to be awareness starts by being open to the messages of media. People learn what is happening in their environment and in the world through media. After something more is learned about the issue which we are aware we pass to the "cognitive affects" which is the second stage. With the "change in the attitude" and "change in the behavior" we finish all stages.

Lippman according to whom people need meaning maps to understand what is happening in the world and make meaningful the external world argues that meaning maps are formed through the information media presented and therefore he is one of the leading figures of agenda setting theory (1949; 4). This theory asserts that through the way it presents news, the media is deciding about the issues which people should think and discuss. The media is driving people's attention to some certain issues. By constantly bringing some issues to the agenda the media determines which issues people should know and think (Lang and Lang, 1981; 337). By following the media people do not only know what is happening. According to presentation of issue and the information given by the media they also know how much they should notice a news (McCombs and Show, 1972; 176). Shortly media is determining which topics are more important and should be in the top of the agenda. At the end of this process public's agenda influence political agenda (Yüksel, 2001; 22). Thus it was found in many empirical studies that issues which media presents as important and privileged through interpreting by the language used and news formats gradually become important or privileged issues of the public as well and that media dramatically influences what importance the public mentally attach to issues (Yüksel, 2009; 130). That is why the agenda of media as a list that indicates which subjects are predominantly covered in media as well as the diversity of this agenda, the frequency and rate of the change and the frameworks predominant in news coverage become important. In this context media agenda researches focus how the agenda of the media is formed and which factors are determining the agenda of the media.

Considering from this point of view 2009 is such a year when Turkey's agenda changed frequently and certain issues discussed within certain frameworks were edited in different ways by various media organizations. Thus in October of the year under scrutiny Münir, one of the columnists of Milliyet, in his article titled "*Agent Father*", while criticizing this situation emphasized on the changing or changed agenda and concluded the article with "*The opium of masses is not religion, but agenda*" (2009). When discussing the frequent change of the agenda Münir criticized hegemony of publishing policy dominated by ideological positioning that are based on media advocacy and can be labeled as partisan agenda which are far from the real life indicators. At this point, it is needed to define the concept of "agenda" which is often mentioned and principal research subject of the study. Agenda is a list of subjects and events ranked according to their importance in a certain point of time (Dearing and Rogers, 1996; 2). Agenda is a political power and the criteria of this power is the area devoted for the privileged topics in the mass media (Yaşın, 2008; 25). Therefore constitution of this limited list requires the selection some among subjects. Agenda for newspapers is if there is no flash news the most important news item of the previous day, that is the summary of the news item which the highest prominence is attributed. The way to display this is to cover the news in headline or subheadings\*. Considering how the agenda is set whatever the subject is it is needed to discuss the power situating it in headlines and subheadings. This situation determinant in making and covering news might be generated by either modus operandi of the media or its ideological preferences and material interests. Within this scope headlines contain trigger events, subjects made prominent by professional managers-journalists, subject proposers, public relations companies as well as the president of the USA personally or information office those acting within media advocacy and agenda bias\*\*. Within the context of factors determining media content we can juxtapose impacts as individual, institutional, non-institutional and ideological level (McCombs, 2004; Yüksel 2009; 136). In this study in media agenda covering limited subjects, questions as "to what extent aforementioned factors are effective", "which ones gain prominence" and "which ones are ignored" will be examined.

Thus fundamental problem of the study consists of "how often the agenda changes in Turkey" and of its composition by various issues as well as of debates of agenda bias within the context of framing and coverage of prominent news. Media's presentation forms of issues consist of frameworks which include messages and viewpoints about how public opinion should see, evaluate and think an event or a problem (Yüksel, 2008; 110). News frameworks by making situation definitions about events and problems determine how these events and problems should be discussed and which political choices should be made (Altheide, 1996; 30). Newspapers and whole mass media in general construct social reality and reproduce it over and over through selecting certain subjects and issues, framing, highlighting, attributing prominence or ignoring them (Nelson-Clawson and Oxley, 1997; 7). At this point framing news as an arrangement which determines the situations of news in the agenda hierarchy has a special place. Framing is to select some aspect of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, caused interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment recommendation for the item described (Entman, 1993; 52). These frames are implicit in the keywords, concepts, symbols and charectarizations which are put forward in a news text. Therefore framing and presenting events and news in the mass media are influencing how audience understand them systemetically (Price and fri., 1997; 489; Entman, 1993; 52; Scheufele, 1999; 107).

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\*Headline is a heading with the largest point size, which is just below the logo of the newspaper. Sometimes news item, which is reserved above the logo and has larger point size than the headline's, addresses to the most prominent case of the day and is called subheading.

\*\* Speeches made by the president of the USA and themes chosen by him are one of the determinants of agenda setting. "Subject proposers" can be identified as an individual or a group of people, who attract media attention into a topic, make it gain prominence. They also have an impact on agenda setting. Another important factor in media content setting is "trigger event" or events emerging immediately and bringing a topic to agenda. The main task of public relations specialist is to provide the coverage of the institution s/he works in media. Therefore, "Public relations activities" plays also crucial role in setting of media content. A topic published specifically in a mass media organization with high prestige and authority is also reserved in other media organization with the same content and coverage. This situation is called "interactions among mass media". Values such as unemployment rate and inflation level in a country are defined as "real life index" of that country and are influential in setting of media content. For detail information in this subject see Dearing and Rogers, 1996; McCombs, 1972.

Accordingly it was aimed to examine consistent subject headings that is as to what was highlighted as the top agenda or issue which issues were made the most prominent themes in which newspapers and whether the newspapers interacted. Within the scope of the research it was also intended to seek answers to questions such as “whether is there a strong agenda setter, that is, a ‘pilot’ newspaper and specifically in which subjects is this newspaper determinant?”, “which factors are effective in agenda setting?”, “specifically in what kind of news subjects are media advocacy that can be considered to be an endeavor to influence public opinion and politics by advocating only particular aspects of the subject; and partisan agenda as reflection of ideological slants displayed?” (Yüksel, 2001; 85-93) and “what are the general attributes of the frameworks used in covering news?”. Within this context framing approach was employed which concentrates on efforts of mass media to make a particular assessment, evaluation and slant in public opinion by emphasizing certain aspects of an event or information (Scheufele, 1999; 107; Entman, 1993; 52). This is because newspapers in broadly speaking constantly create such framing that could be defined as choosing particular aspect of the existing information and highlighting that aspect.

### Research Method

According to topic examined there are two methods in agenda researches. There are researches in which topics are covered together and topic hierarchy is examined and there are researches in which only one topic is examined with its rising and declining position in the agenda. In this study topics in the agenda of 2009 are compared with each other and their values were stated and therefore news hierarchy of 2009 was extracted. Although real world indicators influence mass media, they may not overlap with their agenda. At this point some facts like efficient publication policy in the process of news producing and ideology position takes a role (Yaşın, 2008;19). Mass media helps interest and attention focus on particular issue thanks to language used and news formats (McLeod-Kosicki and Zhongdang, 2003; 144). Differences emerging during selection and coverage processes are generated by editorial policies, ideological preferences or material interests. Various researches have been conducted to reveal those. In this study it is aimed to expose empirically to what extent the assessment of “*In Turkey media agenda changes too often*”, which is often heard is true particularly in 2009. Then rising and declining positions of topics in the agenda hierarchy show us the world we live in.

Research sample contains issues of the mainstream newspapers -Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Posta, Radikal, Sabah, Taraf, YeniŞafak and Zaman- within the period of 1th January-31th December 2009, considered to be representatives of political spectrum with their editorial policies. We can classify these newspapers which represent different parts of society because of their different world views, publication policies, ideological positions, ownership structures as following.

**Table 1.** Ideological affiliations of mentioned newspapers

Liberal	<b>Radikal, Taraf</b>
Centre right	<b>Akşam, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Posta, Sabah</b>
Centre left	<b>Cumhuriyet</b>
Moderate Islam	<b>Yeni Şafak, Zaman</b>

In the Turkish media there are newspapers which have different political and ideological positions, publication policies and ownership structures like extreme right, extreme Islamist, extreme nationalist right, sport, financial. In this study we examined newspapers which can influence public opinion because they call out majority and which have different publication policies from each other. Zaman, the daily newspaper which can be called as an Islamist-liberal newspaper, has a democratic Islamist viewpoint in the politics and has a conservation stance in social and cultural context (Alver, 2011; 368). It supports AKP’s struggle against the influence of the army and its aim to transform the structure of institutions of the Republic (Alver, 2011; 371). YeniŞafak, the daily newspaper, has an Islamist and conservative political stance too. Sabah, the daily newspaper, while liberal in politics and economy is conservative in social context and has a positive stance against political Islam after the AKP came to the government. After it was bought by Çalık Group, it has shown an Islamist liberal tendency (Alver, 2011; 371). Conservative, democratic and secular in political and social context and liberal in economy, Hürriyet, the daily

newspaper, is becoming more conservative socially and loosening its secular limits after the AKP came to the power. However after quarrels between Prime Minister RecepTayyipErdoğan and the owner of Doğan Group, AydınDoğan, the newspaper stressed again its secular position (Alver, 2011; 372). Radikal, the daily newspaper, belongs to Doğan Group, has a liberal and democratic publication policy in social, political and economic context. Cumhuriyet, the daily newspaper which has a left Kemalist publication policy defends Republican philosophy and Kemalist principles foremost secularism (Alver, 2011; 374). Taraf, the daily newspaper, about which there is ambiguity for its financial sources has left-liberal and religious columnists (Alver, 2011; 394). Posta and Milliyet the daily newspapers which belong to Doğan Group and Akşam which belongs to Çukurova Group are conservative, democratic and secular in political and social context and they are liberal in economic context. Posta, which has one of the highest circulation in Turkey, with its populist and different publication policy which puts forward third page news is included to the study.

A content analysis was employed to expose which issues were focused on within the contents of the most prominent news items (headlines and subheadings) that were presented on the front pages and are considered to be show case of the newspapers within one-year period. Through employing content analysis one of the methods which can be applied to systematically analyze content of media texts both quantitative data as to which subjects became prominent in 2009 which newspaper was the agenda-setting in those subjects, that is, which newspaper was “*the pilot of the Turkish press*”, how long these issues remained on the agenda and how many times the agenda changed over the course of that year and qualitative data as to whether there were interactions or significant differences among the newspapers examined in terms of media agenda were obtained.

Content analysis is not a method independent from the context and does not only provide quantitative data but it as a multi-dimensional technique contains qualitative data as well. This is because content analysis is a method depending on inferences and on evaluation of messages considering components identified during the analysis. Within this context at the second step of the research it was aimed to reveal prominent themes, key words, sentences, identifications, definitions and concepts briefly, that is, the frames used in covering news in the period under scrutiny (Kahneman, 2002; 456; Entman, 1991; 6). Media as an interpreter of social, political and economic developments presents reality in different ways via language chosen and news story patterns (Durfee, 2006; 463). The way to expose this is to make “a second reading” in order to determine components affecting people unnoticedly in addition to overt (written-clear) content of media texts (Berelson, 1952; 18; Bilgin, 2000; 3). Accordingly assessments regarding messages, representations and their comprehensive social meanings and prominence which news texts include and send can be provided.

## 1. Research Findings

Through employing content analysis prepared on the basis of criteria specific to newspaper in order to make a profile regarding prominent topics of 2009, 3650 issues of 10 newspapers published within the period of 1th January 2009 – 31th December 2009, news items the newspapers ranked as the most prominent topics of the day and presented in headlines and subheadings were analyzed. Within this scope at the end of the analysis it was found that the agenda changed 2772 times and the change degree was 76%. In consideration of newspapers, Posta with 86% change degree (frequency 315) ranked as the first and then Sabah (306) and Akşam (305) followed respectively. Among the newspapers examined Zaman (223) with 61 % change degree is the newspapers whose agenda changed at the lowest degree. Then YeniŞafak (253) and Radikal (255) followed. After the general picture illustrated regarding agenda change frequencies of the newspapers and the differences among them it is needed to determine prominent subject titles.

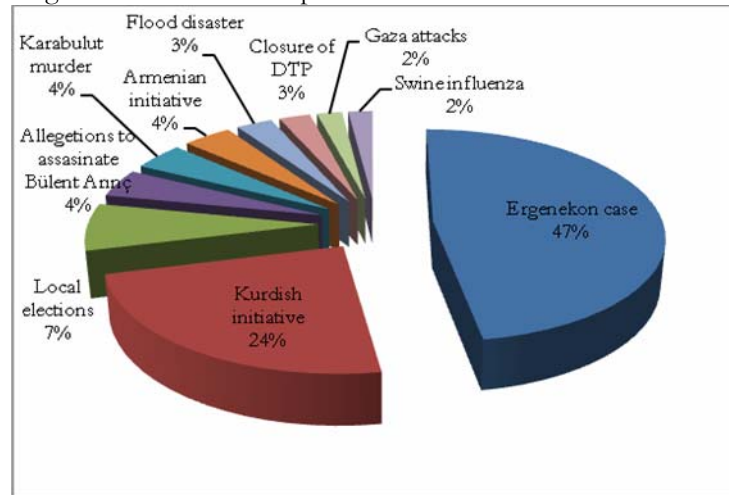
### 2.1. Top Agenda Items in 2009

Quantitative distribution of the top issues\* monthly is shown in Tablo-1 which were the top agenda and remained on the agenda with the longest duration in 2009.

**Table1.** Distribution of top ten subjects monthly, which were the top agenda in 2009

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Ergenekon case	123	42	55	68	32	109	70	45	20	41	93	48	746
Kurdish initiative	1	1	0	0	21	5	32	115	42	93	43	18	371
Local elections	8	36	52	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	112
Allegations to assassinate Bülent Arınç	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	67	67
Karabulut murder	0	0	0	0	6	4	6	7	34	1	7	0	65
Armenian initiative	0	0	0	14	1	0	0	0	14	31	2	0	62
Flood disaster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	46	0	0	0	46
Closure of DTP (Democratic Society Party)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	40
Gaza attacks	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32
Swine influenza	0	0	0	0	12	0	2	0	0	7	10	0	31

Among tens of issues remained on the agenda in 2009, news items regarding topics defined as “Ergenekon case” and “Kurdish initiative” have a prominent position. For example “Ergenekon case” related news items were covered in 123 out of 310 headlines (40%) in the first month of the year and “Kurdish initiative” related news items was reserved in the 115 headlines of the newspapers (37%) in August. It can be said that news regarding “Ergenekon case”, the top agenda with 47% of first ten agenda items of the year is “the main agenda item of 2009”. In this frame news hierarchy consists of topics, which were on the top of 2009 agenda is shown in Graphic -1.



**Graph1.** The proportional distribution of the top ten agenda items of 2009

\*Detailed explanations about these 10 topics, which were on the top of 2009 agenda, are at the end of the article under the title of Notes.

According to the data obtained from analyses conducted the proportion of coverage regarding “Ergenekon case” is approximately half of the total proportion of top ten agenda items. The second top agenda is “Kurdish initiative” with 24 %. Another prominent agenda of 2009 is “local elections” held in March. It was found that the coverage of local elections which frequently remained on agenda for the first four months is prominent seasonally.

In addition as in the cases of “Allegations to assassinate Bülent Arınç” the top agenda of December with being covered in headlines 67 times and subject of “Flood disasters in the Thrace and Istanbul” covered most in September with 46 frequencies it was determined that in different periods, different subjects remained on agenda and even they became the main agenda of the month. Developments defined as “trigger events” in terms of immediate emergence and situating the case on agenda can be considered to be cyclical because of them being effective in a limited time. In the periods when these trigger events lost their impact it was found that newspapers in the sample had an agenda in which news of the “Ergenekon case” which we defined as the main agenda item of the year was the determinant. Therefore it is needed to state that following parts of the study rather than coverage appearing seasonally analyzes the news remaining on agenda over the course of the year and thus themes being prominent with their frequencies. From this point monthly distributions and proportions of top three agenda themes of 2009 are demonstrated in Chart 1.

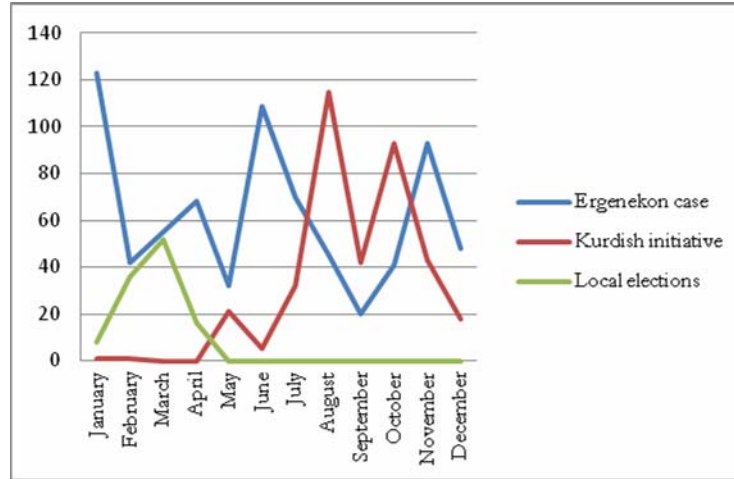


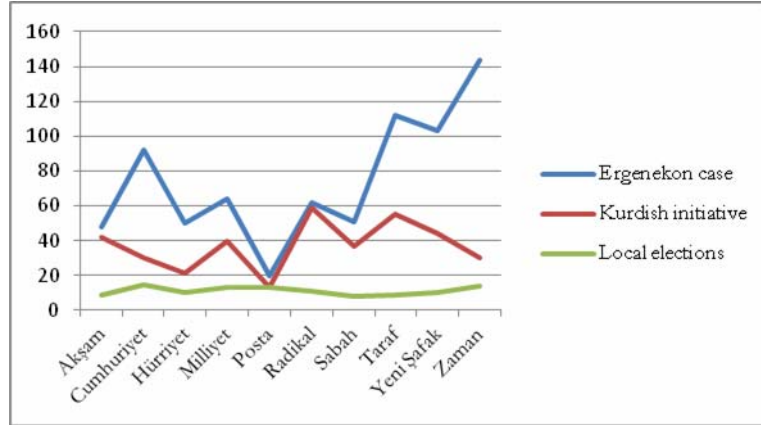
Chart 1. The proportional distributions of top three agenda themes in 2009

“Ergenekon case” related news is salient since it was the top agenda and remained on agenda in various rates in each month of the year. When examining the chart, it was observed that there are fluctuations in the proportions of the news subjects, that is, when proportion of Ergenekon case related news diminished the news regarding “Kurdish initiative” increased and seasonally (as in July and August) became the most prominent issues. Besides “Ergenekon case” related news items intensified in January (frequency 123) and diminished to the lowest level (frequency 20) in September. For instance on four different days in January, “Ergenekon case” related news items were covered in headlines and during these four days, 90% of the newspapers preferred to cover this case on the top agenda. In September, coverage proportion of the second top agenda “Kurdish initiative” diminished. This is because “flood disaster in the Thrace and Istanbul” was intensely covered. When examining the coverage of the “local elections” the third top agenda of 2009 it was observed that the subject was covered as the second top agenda of the first three months of the year but lost its prominence after the election.

## 2.2. Distribution of the News Items by the Newspapers

After drawing the frame through providing quantitative data regarding the prominent issues and their distributions it is needed to evaluate distribution of prominent issues by the newspapers in detail. Total news volume and proportion of each newspaper in the volume regarding top three agenda themes during

the provision of the data are given in tables and evaluating whether there are statistically significant differences among them and in which subjects the differences extend it was aimed to provide a perspective regarding publishing policies of the newspapers on these themes. Findings obtained from the analysis that was conducted to reveal how often these top three agenda items were covered in the newspapers are shown comparatively in Chart-2.



**Chart2.** The chart of proportions of top three agenda items of 2009 regarding the newspapers

“Ergenekon case” and “Kurdish initiative” related news items were covered predominantly in the headlines of Zaman and Radikal newspapers respectively. The newspaper covering these prominent subjects at the lowest level is Posta newspaper. Within this context there are statistically significant differences among newspapers in terms of publishing policies and political attitudes. These findings are also consistent with the data of how often the newspapers change their agenda. This is because while Zaman has the lowest degree in agenda change frequency because of being the newspapers covering issues of “Ergenekon case” in headlines with the highest frequency and duration of time, Posta has the lowest degree of agenda change frequency in covering the prominent topics of 2009 as the top main agenda but however it is the newspaper covering most diversified agenda issues in magazinish, dramatically and popular ways in headlines and thus it appears as the newspaper with the most diversified agenda issues (86%).

Regarding “local elections” related issues it was found that the slants of newspapers under scrutiny show parallelism. Therefore it cannot be said that any newspaper is salient or there are significant differences among newspapers specific to this subject. At this point because significant data could not be obtained from “local elections” related news items in terms of both frequency and distribution by the newspapers the rest of the analyses focused on the news items related to “Ergenekon case” and “Kurdish initiative”.

The topic called “Ergenekon case” was covered with various headlines throughout the year. When examining which newspaper firstly covers the news regarding “Ergenekon case”, that is, which newspaper is “*pilot newspaper*” in such news items, it is Taraf. At this point it is needed to state that it is natural situation when all newspapers under scrutiny cover the news of trigger events like the detentions and arrests of the prominent people within the scope of “Ergenekon case”. What is important here is to determine which newspaper covers the different aspect of the issue setting agenda which other newspapers follow. From this perspective, Taraf’s headline titled “Plan to remove of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) and FethullahGülen” dated 13 June 2009 is the first news item having long time duration and framing the issue. It was determined that on June 14, Sabah and Zaman and then notably YeniŞafak and the rest of the newspapers under scrutiny covered the issue in their headlines. When examining the news coverage of the other newspapers, role of Taraf in revealing the case makes clear its role of being pilot position in agenda setting.

In “Kurdish initiative”, the second top agenda of 2009, it was found that Zaman was replaced by Radikal. The newspaper’s constant coverage of Kurdish problem and of what have been done within the



scope of “initiative” policies in headlines for 9 days within the period of July, 23-31 and of October, 17-25 can be interpreted as an attempt to mold public opinion regarding this subject and to influence the politics in this direction, that is, an indicator of partisan agenda. When considering this attitude of Radikal with its being the newspaper which covered the process called “Kurdish initiative” in headlines with the highest degree its attempts in this direction gets clear.

### 2.3. The Topic is the Same, The Presentation is Different: News Frames

Media as an interpreter of social, political and economic cases chooses particular subjects among existing information makes them prominent, emphasizes and attributes various meanings on them, interprets and provides them while excluding and ignoring others (Durfee, 2006; 463; Atabek and Uztuğ, 1998; 100). In this respect there are various determinant factors such as publishing policies of media organizations, their ideological stands and their ownership structure. However in some cases, the development experienced or the problem emerging is so powerful that it is impossible for mass media to be out of this agenda. In general in order to figure out to what extent developments called “trigger events” are determinant in the production of the media content it is crucial to evaluate contents of news items of all newspapers which were covered in headlines.

At the end of the analysis conducted all of the newspapers within the scope of research covered the same issue in their headlines for 20 days in 2009 and 90 percent of them covered the same case in their headlines for 16 days. It was assessed that all of the newspapers considering of fundamental function of keeping public memory alive when making an assessment regarding subjects made “Ergenekon case” related news issues prominent for 7 out of 20 days (35%). At this point what are salient are the different attitudes the newspapers display in news coverage. In other words it was found that newspapers distinguish in choosing particular aspects of the issue and making them prominent in news text (Entman 1993; 52). Attitudes the newspapers displayed in 14th April 2009 during the process called “12. wave in Ergenekon case” can be given as an example for this situation. While Cumhuriyet, Milliyet, Posta and Radikal newspapers made the operation against ÇağdaşYaşamıDesteklemeDerneği (ÇYDD- Association in Support of Contemporary Life) prominent; Akşam, Hürriyet, Sabah, Taraf, YeniŞafak and Zaman presented the issue within the frame of detention of academicians and focused on different aspects. That is why it is important to analyze messages of mass media in addition to overt meanings on the basis of ideological structure (Hall, 1993). Within this context in order to clarify the framing differences among the newspapers it is needed to evaluate prominent points in headlines.

Within this scope issue of Akşam dated 14th April, one of the newspapers analyzed, in evaluations made with the headline “(Police) Take (into custody) in waves” and subheadings “Operation against Saylan treated for cancer in her sickbed” and “Hank university presidents in opposition meet synchronously” displayed distance position in ways of expressing question marks towards how the operations were carried out. Cumhuriyet using the headline “Coup d’état’ to contemporaneous”, covered the issue by politicizing it and displayed a critical stand claiming that the operation was carried out against “modern education”. In accordance with Cumhuriyet, Milliyet with the headline “This time target is the Contemporary Life”, Posta with the headline “A bust against the contemporary life”, Radikal with the headline “Ergenekon is confused” and the heading “Operation targets civilian education volunteers” made the operation against the ÇYDD in the detentions prominent and generally displayed critical attitudes against the operations. Hürriyet in the coverage of developments with the subheading “Prof. wave in Ergenekon” evaluated the developments as trigger events and preferred to cover the case in a sensationalizing way, making words of Saylan “I hope they have not taken my love letters” prominent. YeniŞafak and Sabah featured the operation as “Academic wave” on the basis of individuals under custody. In the same coverage Sabah using the heading “In academia an operation like tsunami, Prof. Haberal under detention” edited the issue focusing on the prominence and seriousness of the case. Taraf with headline “Professors with boots (referring to the army) under custody” and Zaman with headline “Last wave takes university presidents” and with the subheading “They hold a meeting to stage coup d’état with generals” approached the case from different angle and covered the detention operations linking to the allegations to stage so coup d’état. When examining the newspapers within the scope of sample of research it was observed that each newspaper act in accordance with its own publishing policy and ideology provides news frames in such a way and makes different aspects of the case prominent within the frame of media advocacy.

The polemic between Prime Minister Erdoğan and Israeli President Peres as a trigger event was covered in the headlines of issues of all newspapers dated 31st January 2009. When examining the headlines of Cumhuriyet it was assessed that Cumhuriyet became “pilot newspaper” setting agenda regarding the Davos summit with the headline dated 29th January highlighting economic dimension of the summit. Within the frame of their ideological stands and publishing policies Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet and Milliyet covered how this event was presented in foreign press and within the context of reflections on the Turkish foreign policy whereas newspapers such as Posta, Sabah, YeniŞafak and Zaman highlighted effects of leadership skills covering the case in terms of domestic politics. With the headline “*Atatürk spiri*” in its issue dated 31st January, Posta covered the news on the basis of similarities between Atatürk and Erdoğan in terms of leadership embracing Prime Minister Erdoğan’s scolding in the Davos summit in its own popular rhetoric. The event was legitimized and glorified in terms of leadership ability by YeniŞafak via the headline “*No one can disrespect us*”, referring to Prime Minister Erdoğan’s behavior and by Zaman via evaluation with the headline “*The Davos scolding of the Prime Minister is supported by many*”. Considering concepts used within headings and coverage it can be seen that mainstream media concerning on circulation covered the news by sensationalizing them specifically in this subject. Milliyet with the headline “*The world talks about the fight*” and Cumhuriyet with the headline “*The world in debate*” generally limited the coverage with the reports from foreign press and centers.

The coverage Turkish Airlines (THY) plane crash in the Netherlands in the issues of newspapers dated 26th February is a good illustrator of understanding that trigger events have priority in terms of newsworthiness. The point where headlines distinguish is rhetoric chosen and how they mold reality in various ways by repeating particular news story angles, that is, frames (Durfee, 2006; 463). That is why news media as being places where certain meanings or ideologies are produced through active selection, presentation and structuring and molding (Hartley, 1982; 7). While Akşam, Hürriyet and Posta covered the news regarding the incident focusing on aspect of human stories in ways of a sensational and popular language practices, the other newspapers emphasize on forensic aspects of the accident. In the 28 February dated headline having topic of wife of the pilot died in the accident who tried to reach his husband without knowing whether he was alive or not with the title “*But his cell phone rang*” Hürriyet presented the case as dramatic story in an emotional way.

Another news topic all of the newspaper examined chose to cover in headline is relevant to the results of local elections reserved broadly in the newspapers on March 30-31 and to the evaluations made. How the elections results were covered reveals their ideological stands and publishing policies. This is because suitable conditions for ideological indicators of news discourse are provided by daily routines of news coverage (Nunan, 1993; 5). Within this scope in their March 30 dated issues when Radikal, Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Milliyet and Hürriyet assessed the results as “*A warning to the government*” they implied that the election result was a kind of failure for the current government. YeniŞafak and Zaman presented the election results as a success of the Justice and Development Party in power using the headings “*Vote of confidence in spite of the crisis*” and “*Voters give hope*”. Cumhuriyet chose the particular aspects of the election results as to how the government and opposition should evaluate the results and brought them to headline in March 30 and 31 respectively: “*Warning from the poll*” and “*Rise of the opposition*”. The newspaper therefore assessed that the party in power was losing its power and opposition in the country was strengthening. Various meaning produced by these various presentations emphasis interpretation and exclusion styles of the same case by the newspapers can be interpreted as an indicator of efforts to influence public opinion in direction with their perspectives and publishing policies.

What and how media portray the issue is mostly determined by interactions among media staff and potential news sources. These sources generally consist of existing interest groups, politicians, non-governmental organizations and social “elites” who promote their own agenda and thus reform media agenda (Entman, 2003; 420). In consideration from this point of view involvement of president of USA in a case increases both newsworthiness of the case and possibility of coverage of the case in media contents and headlines. Within this context there are news and evaluations regarding President Obama’s visit to Turkey in all of the newspapers issued on April 7 and 8. The newspapers discussed the Obama’s visit to Turkey and his speech in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey from different perspectives therefore they covered details and different aspects of the visit in headlines. Majority of the newspapers covered the

call of Obama to the EU to accept Turkey's membership in headline, Hürriyet and Taraf displayed more magazinist slant which praises Obama and claims how much he is loved in Turkey. Within this scope the subheading “Welcome Mr. President” (in English) of 6th April dated issue of Hürriyet and heading “According to the recent poll, 52 percent of Turkish population trust Obama” and the headline “He wins if participating in an election” of Taraf make explicit their judgments that Obama is loved in Turkey so much.

In accordance with their political slant using the headline which it assessed “Emphasis on secular democracy” (April 7) and the heading “Two secular, democratic country models should get into partnership” and the headline including wish “May our partnership be model” (7 April), Cumhuriyet highlighted the words of Obama regarding secularism. YeniŞafak and Zaman enthusiastically covered Obama's words emphasizing on the USA's relationships with Islamic world in their headlines. Within this respect, YeniŞafak, having headlines “There are Muslims within my family” (April 7) and “Our conversation goes on until azaan” used by borrowing from Obama's words and Zaman, having April 8 dated headline “He opens new page in Turkey” and evaluations of “He takes a historical leap in relationship with Islamic world”, discussed the words of the President from perspectives of religious sensitivities in spot of the news and displayed a media advocacy corresponding with their ideological positions.

All of the newspapers under scrutiny reserved “A massacre in Bilge village” in Mardin as a trigger event in their headlines. It was observed that claiming event occurred because of “a matter of honor” immediately expressions such as “honor killing” and “barbarity” as indispensable words were used in headlines in the first days of the news coverage. In passing eyes over standard coverage of the event that 44 people were killed it was found that Taraf, YeniŞafak, Posta, Zaman and Akşam provided the event within the frames of social and political responsibility whereas other newspapers covered the event by taking it out of the context and focusing on security and forensic aspects in the way of hiding cause and effect relation.

The news brought to agenda on May 5, 2009 and in May 6 dated issue of YeniŞafak referring to the event used “Terrorism” and in Posta referring to the actors used “Terrorists” in their headlines. Accordingly the newspapers considered this event to be a kind of terrorist event and thus provided short and warning headings displaying similar reactions. In the same day, Sabah, having a headline “A bride 44 corpse” and Milliyet, having a headline “Agony and shame” presented the event in a sensational and dramatic way. As seen in the coverage of this event at times when trigger event occurs this trigger event sets agenda and media follows this. In such cases what sets media agenda are mostly developments in public opinion.

In all of the newspapers dated May 17 it can be seen that the news coverage regarding the first “swine influenza” case which can be considered to be a trigger event were provided in headlines. What is the distinguishing newspapers are details they highlight and underline when providing news. When covering the case that swine influenza virus was detected on an airline passenger coming from abroad Milliyet, on May 17, through asking the question of “What kind of quarantine is this?” in the headline and evaluation of “Confusion in the first swine influenza case in Turkey” in the heading presented the developments in a critical way. Sabah assessing that “the first case and the intense precautions” in the headline and YeniŞafak having the headline “Swine influenza is caught in the custom” and subheading assessing that “Swine influenza came into Turkey. However thanks to measures taken two citizens of the USA were put in quarantine as soon as getting off the plane” evaluated the case in the way of being exact opposite of Milliyet. This situation can be considered to be impacts of ideological positioning of newspapers close to politically responsible people within the frame of partisan agenda.

When a disaster such as an earthquake, flood and fire strikes media is most likely to cover this trigger event. Thus it was observed that newspapers under scrutiny provided the “flood disaster” which stroke the Thrace region and Istanbul on September 10 and 12 and deaths in headline. It can be said that this case is de facto journalist attitude because of having priority as being newsworthy within the frame of journalism of mainstream media. What is high point here are differences in the news coverage in terms of highlighting human stories, unplanned urbanization causing floods or criticizing responsible individuals/organizations of this situation. In the news coverage it was found that responsibility frame was commonly used in news items regarding the flood considered to be generated by unplanned urbanization and generally human interest framing was used to commentate states of people in an emotional way. Within this scope after the headline “Typhoon in the Thrace” on September 9, Cumhuriyet continued to

cover news regarding the flood along with headlines “*Istanbul is also flooded*” (September 10), “*The responsible ones are known*” (September 11) and “(Mayor of Istanbul Kadir Topbaş) *Looks for ones responsible in the past*”; and without needing any reference, directly provided assessments and warnings as the opinions of the newspaper. In consideration in terms of news practices, it can be said that the newspaper covered the issues in the way of criticizing the government. Taraf adopted similar attitude and maintaining a publishing policy which implies that the government is responsible along with headlines of “*The grossest omission in eighty-year (period)*” “*White spoon taken out of milk pudding*” (referring to failure of Mayor Topbaş who is also engaging in selling of milk dishes) and “*Someone lies in Istanbul*” in September 10, 11 and 12, criticized the politically responsible individuals/organizations. Along with headlines of “*Like Tsunami*” (September 9), “*Istanbul s.o.s.*” (September 11) and “*Dila slipped through my fingers*” (September 11), Hürriyet covered the event within such a framing which is sensational in accordance with general publishing policy. It highlights human stories and does not provide background but dramatic features dominate.

News regarding a protocol signed to improve relationships between Turkey and Armenia was covered in the headlines of all newspapers dated October 11. None of the newspapers examined went out of the agenda which was set by this case which can be described as a trigger event. Regarding this event while Radikal captioned “*Historical signatures*”, YeniŞafak with the headline “*Historical signature*” and in a more descriptive language, Posta with headline “*They made history silently*” published the development attributing to history. At this point on September 1 through covering headline “*Armenian initiative*” used to describe the process regarding the improvement of relationship between Turkey and Armenia, Radikal coined the process as “*Armenian initiative*” and as in the case of “*Kurdish initiative*” it was determinant in the process.

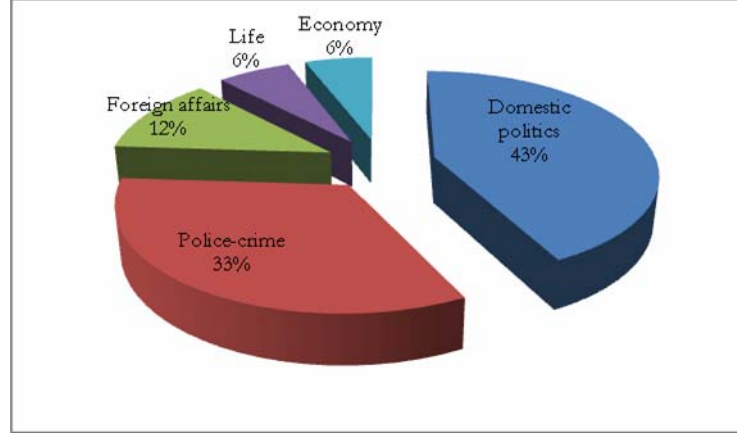
Prime Minister Erdoğan’s visit to Northern Iraq and then coming of a group of members of the PKK from Mahmur Camp and Kandil mountain which was brought to agenda were covered in two newspapers dated October 17 (Taraf and Radikal) on October 20 when first group of PKK came 80 percent of the newspapers covered this news in headline. All of the newspapers dated October 21 covered the returns of PKK members from Kandil Mountain and the trial process and releases of them in headlines. What is salient here is that coverage differences of headlines chosen to provide what happened. While Milliyet (*Hard times of the judge*) Posta (*It is considered by the court*) Radikal (*All free*) emphasized on the legal dimension of the case, YeniŞafak [*Candle (Kandil) goes out*] meant that the process comes to end, Zaman attempted to summarize the process through the headline “*PKK members who came down from the mountain are released, way to returning home is open*”. Rather than being misleading generated by short headline Zaman preferred longer heading and gave messages clearly from the beginning of the news. In conclusion it can be said that these differences in how they publish the news and in framings in editorial processes are generated in the direction of ideological stands of the newspapers and their general publishing policies.

Allegations to assassinate Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç which were brought to agenda via headlines of “*Arınç’s address in the Colonel’s pocket*” and “*Crypto in the annotation refers to Bülent Arınç’s apartment*” used on December 22, 2009 dated issues of Taraf and Zaman respectively and then new emerging developments continued to remain on the newspapers’ agenda for the following ten days. On December 27, all of the newspapers showed parallelism in coverage of the developments related to this issue and in presentation it as the most prominent event of the day. The difference among them is how they edit the news and which aspects of the news are highlighted.

When making an assessment within this frame the newspapers covered the police search by court decision in the Mobilization Regional Directorate of the General Staff where the officers work who allegedly planned to assassinate Bülent Arınç, through using headlines like “*Cosmic search in the headquarters*” (Milliyet), “*Fight for secret in the state*” (Posta), “*A seal to black box*” (Sabah), “*The crisis of sealed room*” (Akşam), “*Second search in the cosmic room*” (Hürriyet). Within this frame focusing on the place where secret documents are hidden some of the newspapers described what had happened in magazinish and sensational way with attribution such as “*Room crisis*” or “*Fight for secret*”. Other newspapers emphasizing on sealing of the room labeled as “*Black box*” which could reveal what had happened highlighted the political dimension of the event and covered the case in the way of including conflict.

## 2. The Profile of 2009 in terms of News Categories

It is important to make an assessment regarding news categories in order to make an evaluation as to what kind of events or cases were heavily provided in 2009 in the headlines of ten newspapers examined within the scope of the research or as to around which subjects they attempted to form cognitive schemes. Within this frame the table below is assessed when examining subjects of which news categories were covered in headlines.



**Graph2.** Proportional distribution of news categories in 2009

It was determined that news items with themes of domestic affairs and police-crime were heavily provided in headlines. This situation get clarified when evaluating it with contents of main agenda topics of 2009 which are described as “Ergenekon case” and “Kurdish initiative”. The most important reason why police-crime news items almost one-third of all news items are so frequently covered in headlines is volume of “Ergenekon case” related news items. At this point it is important to determine which subjects the headlines highlighted in the news categories of the newspapers under scrutiny in terms of them being an indicator regarding newspapers’ publishing policies. Within this scope the data obtained are shown in Table 2.

**Table2.** The distribution of news categories according to newspapers

	Akşam	Cumhuriyet	Hürriyet	Milliyet	Posta	Radikal	Sabah	Taraf	YeniŞafak	Zaman	Total
Domestic affairs	150	190	103	182	80	165	117	180	161	153	1481
Police-crime	90	79	121	100	165	105	148	134	111	112	1165
Foreign affairs	44	47	69	40	21	38	33	30	51	43	416
Life	28	7	42	19	52	15	31	4	11	9	218
Economy	26	21	14	16	13	29	23	5	22	32	201
Education	4	6	2	7	6	13	1	1	3	5	48
Health	7	1	6	5	5	2	6	1	2	7	42
Tabloid	4	0	2	0	10	1	1	0	1	0	19

It was found that while Cumhuriyet covered domestic affairs news at the highest level (13%), Posta is the one providing it at the lowest level (5%). Cumhuriyet preferred to focus on news within domestic affairs category for 190 out of 365 days (52%). In consideration of the newspapers in terms of police-crime news Posta is the prior one (16%). Posta highlighted police-crime news or preferred to frame it in

this way in 45 percent of the year. It was assessed that Cumhuriyet is the newspaper with the lowest volume of this category in its headlines (7%). These data explain why Posta situated as “*Turkey’s best-selling newspaper*” covered the most highlighted and top agenda topics of 2009 at the lowest level. From this point of view when examining which subjects were covered mainly in Posta they are mainly murder, accident and death news (frequency 87). When evaluating these findings with publishing policy, ideological stand and news frames chosen, table regarding profiles of newspapers analyzed gets clarified. It was found that other news categories were covered in a limited proportion. When examining the newspapers from this angle Hürriyet is the newspaper with the highest volume of foreign affairs (17%), Posta brought life news to agenda (24%) and economy news are generally provided in the headline by Zaman (16%).

### 3. Conclusion and Evaluation

In this study the fundamental question we tried to answer is “to what extent is the assessment that Turkey’s agenda change so quickly true?”. Within this scope subjects highlighted in the headlines of Turkish press over the course of 2009 were analyzed. At this point there are several interrelated questions. The primary ones are “which news items were most frequently covered with the longest duration over the course of the year”, “which newspapers highlighted the particular subjects within existing information and how long and within what kind of frames did they provide this?”, “which factors were determinant in media content and in what kind of issues were they influential to make them remaining on agenda?” and “in which news categories were they predominantly covered?”.

Through applying content analysis news items provided in headlines and subheadings were analyzed which were situated as the most prominent news item of the day in 3650 issues of Akşam, Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Milliyet, Posta, Radikal, Sabah, Taraf, YeniŞafak and Zaman. At the end of this analysis, agenda change rate with frequency 2772 was determined below 76%. Examining the most-frequently repeated news items in this change, ten news items were determined which were highlighted and repeated over the course of the year. According to this it was assessed that the main agenda item of 2009 is the “Ergenekon case” which remained on agenda with various frequencies. For example, “Ergenekon case” related news items remained on agenda within the period of July 15-August 8 in various newspapers but in a consistent way. The second top agenda of the year is news items coined “Kurdish initiative”. It was established that news items within this category were remained on agenda for 36 days within the period of August 5-September 9 in various newspapers but in a continuous way.

In coverage of these subject coined as “top agenda items” it was seen that there are statistically significant differences in terms of publishing policies and perspectives of the newspapers. Accordingly it was established that Zaman is the newspaper which provided “Ergenekon case” related news items with the highest frequency (19%) and longest duration (for continuously 16 days) and Posta is the one with the lowest frequency (3%) and shortest time duration of coverage. Given the fact that it is the first newspaper brought the “Ergenekon case” related news items to agenda it was determined that Taraf is “*The pilot newspaper of the Turkish press*” in the news regarding the issue.

In the case of “Kurdish initiative”, Radikal is the determinant in terms of either covering it most frequently in headline (16%) or of making it remain on agenda for the longest time duration or of semantic construction. The approach differences of Zaman and Radikal in these issues can be evaluated as an endeavor to situate the subject as an issue of public agenda and mold a public opinion in this subject within frame of partisan agenda.

It was established that all of the newspapers under scrutiny provided the same subject in their headlines for 20 days in 2009. “Ergenekon case” related news is the top in having the longest duration of coverage in headline (35%). When analyzing in which subjects newspapers showed parallelism in coverage of headline we face shocking detentions within the scope of “Ergenekon case”, flood disasters in the Thrace and Istanbul, the local election results, the polemic between Prime minister Erdoğan and Israeli President Simon Peres and his following attitudes, the crash of Turkish Airlines plane named Tekirdağ in the Netherland, President Obama’s visit to Turkey, the massacre in Bilge village of Mardin causing 44 deaths, first swine influenza case in Turkey, a protocol signed between Turkey and Armenia, returning of PKK’s within the scope of the Kurdish initiative and allegations of an assassination plot against Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç. Within the scope of mainstream media’s sense of journalism immediate

trigger events have priority to be covered as being newsworthy. The fundamental finding the study revealed is that newspapers set the agenda on the basis of their publishing policies and ideological stands in times when there are no trigger events. Thus selection of words, making sentences and provision of them in a way of supporting their ideas in ideological polarization can be heavily seen in Cumhuriyet, Zaman and YeniŞafak.

In conclusion when examining media content of 2009 debates on “Ergenekon case” and “Kurdish initiative” appear as the top agenda items. While Taraf is the first newspapers which brought developments of “Ergenekon case” to agenda and the pilot newspapers in this issue, Zaman is the paper that has the longest duration of the coverage on the agenda. Thus Zaman is leading newspaper in molding public opinion regarding this issue thanks to being the newspapers making this subject remain on the agenda for the longest period. It was found that Radikal is the newspaper playing leading role in coverage of debates regarding “Kurdish initiative”. The newspaper was influential in naming of the process and had an endeavor to create a cognitive awareness allowing the subject remain on the agenda for the longest period. The newspapers while covering and providing these top agenda items carried out this differently and acted in accordance with their ideological stands what we term partisan agenda and media advocacy, attitude to highlight particular aspects of an issue. Other subjects remained on the agenda in 2009 had importance mainly within the scope of trigger events and they were off the agenda when they lost their popularity in conjecture. Throughout the year only the developments which took place within the scope of “Ergenekon case” and debates on “Kurdish initiative” remained on agenda. It was determined that leading newspapers in these subjects are Zaman, Taraf and Radikal which are occasionally determinant both in media agenda and in political and public agenda. It was assessed that these newspapers try to mold public opinion in accordance with their ideological stands and publishing policies and take on a task of being the pilot of the Turkish press. Besides having a publishing policy which covers mainly domestic affairs and top agenda topics from a different angle Cumhuriyet occupies an important position in opinion journalism.

### Notes

*The Case of Ergenekon:* The investigation and then the case that was started after 27 hand grenades, TNT and fuzes were founded in a squatter house of Ümraniye, Çakmak Street, in 12 June 2007 is called the case of Ergenekon by public opinion.

*Kurdish Initiative;* Radikal, the daily newspaper, called AKP government’s initiatives to find a political solution to PKK, which is a terrorist organization and does terrorist attacks against Turkey since 1978, as Kurdish Initiative, and then this concept was used by the media generally.

*Local elections;* Local elections which were undertaken in 29 March 2009 through which municipalities elected.

*Assasination to Bülent Arınç:* It is the event that two people were caught who were thought planning to kill Bülent Arınç who was Vice Prime Minister. It was asserted that these people were members of the army and their car was registered to the General Staff.

*Murder of Karabulut;* It is the event that high school student Münevver Karabulut was killed brutally in 3 March 2009. Brutality of the murder and the fact that the suspect who was a member of a rich and famous family could not be caught, sparked reaction in Turkish public opinion. The suspect submitted after 197 days and judgement process ended in 18 November 2001.

*Armenian Initiative;* Radikal, the daily newspaper also called AKP government’s attempts to start relations about claims of Armenian genocide and border trade with Armenia as Armenian initiation.

*Flood Catastrophe:* Floods happened on September 2009 in Trakya and in İstanbul and people’s death in these floods were on the top of the media agenda for a while.

*Closed down of DTP:* The Constitution Court, closed DTP because it was claimed that the party became a focus of actions against the unity of Turkish Republic with its nation and some deputies who are also leading figures of Kurdish politics were banned. “

*Gaza attack:* After İsrail’s attacks to Gaza, hundreds of people including civilians died on January 2009 and it was claimed that Israel used unproportional force. These events appeared also in Turkish media.

*Swine flu*; News about rumours that swine flu would be epidemic in Turkey and rumours about death proportion caused by this illness.

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