

GOVERNMENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE OPPOSITION
PARTIES IN TURKISH POLITICS

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PARTIES IN TURKISH POLITICS

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In Memory of My Uncle Sitki Gencer...

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1 INTRODUCTION

In democratic systems, the presence of political opposition and its internalization, especially by the political authorities, is a significant factor for its sustainability. In this respect, the following research attempts to examine the Turkish governments' attitudes toward opposition parties in Turkish politics after the country's transition to multi-party politics in 1946. Three different time periods and two different types of governments are selected for comparison. The aim of this research is to understand the nature of the perception of the political opposition in the eyes of the governing elites in Turkey.

1.1 Questions and Expectations

As will be discussed in the following pages in detail, political opposition is recognized as one of the indispensable features of democracy. The absence or presence of the multi-party system (thus the political opposition) is one of the indicators of a democratic regime. As Apter claims, competing parties can make each of the spheres of a democratic system active and meaningful, or they can dull the system and make it inoperative.¹ Türsan, agreeing with Apter, claims that by themselves parties are not guaranty of democracy, however, they can create the conditions and interact in ways that make democracy possible, therefore political parties are a necessary, albeit insufficient condition of democracy.² The literature on democracy and political

¹ Apter, D. E. (1962). "Some Reflections on the Role of a Political Opposition in New Nations," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 4(2), p. 161

²Türsan, H. (2004). *Democratisation in Turkey*. Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, p. 263

opposition, which will be discussed in the second chapter, presents that there is a positive correlation between the presence of political opposition and the development of democracy. Depending on this suggestion, Turkish politics contains several questions and expectations related to the relationship between development of political opposition and democratization of the country.

First of all, at least structurally, Turkey moved to multi-party politics when the opposition parties started to be established in 1945. In 1946, national elections were conducted with the participation of opposition parties. In 1950, the government changed democratically for the first time in the history of the Turkish Republic. Since then Turkey has been experiencing democratic multi-party politics except for the breakdowns with military interventions in 1960, 1971, and 1980.

The arising question is, whether Turkish politics had achieved the recognition and internalization of the opposition parties into the political system after experiencing multi-party politics for a long time or not. Comparing the early and contemporary Turkish politics, the attitudes of the governments toward the opposition parties constitute one of the sources to understand how the government elites view their opponents.

Regarding the question above, two experiences of party governments of the Turkish Republic are selected for comparison. The governments of the Democratic Party (DP) and Justice and Development Party (AKP) are party governments, which enjoyed substantial majorities in the National Assembly. The DP represents the beginning of the multi-party politics and the AKP represents the contemporary situation of Turkish politics. Thus, the elites of these two party governments are selected for analysis of their attitudes toward the opposition parties. It is hypothesized here that the length of experience of multi-party politics contributes to the recognition and internalization of political opposition in the eyes of the governing elites.

In addition, this research provides a comparison of party governments with coalition governments. Coalition governments also ruled the country for several years and the question here is whether there is a difference between the attitudes of the elites of the party governments and of the coalition governments toward opposition parties. It

hypothesized here that since coalition governments do not have large majorities in the National Assembly and they need as much support from every parliamentary party as they can get, and thus they are expected to have less negative and conflictual behavior toward the opposition parties than party governments.

Regarding all of the questions and expected outcomes, this research aims to provide a picture on the attitudes of governing party elites toward opposition parties comparing different types of governments and different time periods.

1.2 The Significance of the Research

The analysis of the attitudes of the governments toward political opposition is significant for several reasons. First of all, although the presence and recognition of the opposition is very significant for the evaluation of the political system, the topic has not been studied extensively. Pointing to this gap, Helms recently claimed that “although published as early as in the mid-1960s, Robert Dahl’s *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* remains the unchallenged point of reference in a field that has seen few substantial contributions since.”³ Two years later, Mujica and Sanchez argued the same point that “although the analysis of opposition has a long tradition dating back to the mid twentieth century, if not before, many scholars have complained that Robert Dahl’s first systematic treatment of the subject has not been matched by comparable subsequent studies and that, as a result, opposition remains an inadequately explored area of political science.”⁴ As a result, although significant studies on this topic exist, and some will be discussed in the second chapter, the authors of these studies also claim that the amount of research related to this topic remains less than the importance of the topic requires.

The same gap is also present in the literature on Turkish politics. There are some significant studies which will be discussed in the second chapter, but as Komsuoğlu

³ Helms, L. (2004). “Five Ways of Institutionalizing Political Opposition: Lessons from the Advanced Democracies,” *Government and Opposition*, 39(1), p. 23

⁴ Mujica, A. and Sanchez, I. (2006). “Consensus and Parliamentary Opposition: The Case of Spain,” *Government and Opposition*, 41(1), p. 86

claims the only study that she could access, which directly focuses on the political opposition in the literature of Turkish politics is the book of Nükhet Turgut.⁵ Even the comprehensive research of Turgut⁶ examines only the time period from the 1950s until the 1980s but fails to cover the contemporary Turkish politics. Similarly, the work of Komsuoğlu, which is quoted above, includes other research on the political opposition in Turkey but covers the period of multi-party politics only until the 1980s. This thesis not only covers the 1950s, the beginning of the multi-party politics, but also the 1990s and the 2000s.

Beyond its contribution to the shortage in the literature on political opposition in Turkish politics, this study also tries to provide insight into the development of democratic culture in Turkey. As discussed above, the correlation between status of the political opposition and the level of democratic consolidation is highly emphasized in the literature. So, a study focusing on the attitudes of the Turkish political authorities toward opposition parties in the multi-party period will be conducive to a better understanding of the Turkish democratization process.

Finally, this study aims not only to contribute to the literature on political science, but also to the literature on conflict analysis and resolution. The relation between government and opposition parties is one of the significant and most conflictual fields of politics. Besides, this relation should not be taken only as political. Since political parties are the most influential actors of political life, the interactions and conflicts between them have the potential of affecting the different dynamics of the society and the country. This research aims to provide an overtime perspective on how governments react toward the opposition parties in the past and today. In this way, whether the relation between these two actors evolved toward a more or less competitive one, whether more integrative or more exclusive exercises are dominant toward the opposition parties, whether more positive or negative attitudes had been developed toward the opposition parties will be analyzed in this thesis.

⁵ Komsuoğlu, A. (2008). *Türkiye’de Siyasal Muhalefet* [Political Opposition in Turkey]. İstanbul: Bengi Yayınları, p. 11

⁶ Turgut, N. (1984). *Siyasal Muhalefet* [Political Opposition]. Ankara: Birey ve Toplum Yayınları.

1.3 The Outline of the Research

The next chapter, Chapter 2, provides the definition of political opposition in the context of this research. It also includes theoretical discussions on political opposition related to democracy and conflict resolution. Finally, it describes the development of political opposition in Turkey and theoretical perspectives on its development.

Chapter 3 deals with methodology. The research questions and the hypotheses are presented in this chapter. The units of analysis, the periods and the governments that are included in the study, formation of the sample, collection and analysis of the data and the methodology which is used for the interpretation of the data are all explained in this chapter as well. Finally, the operational procedures used for the coding of the data and the inter-coder reliability test, which is very significant for the reliability and reproducibility of the research, are present in this chapter.

Chapter 4 contains the findings of this study organized into tables and graphs. Findings regarding each question presented in Chapter 3 and their interpretations are also presented in this chapter.

The final chapter, Chapter 5, presents the discussions regarding all of the findings and presents the broad picture which appeared after the research. This final chapter also includes the limitations of the research and the suggestions for future research on the same topic.

2 POLITICAL OPPOSITION: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

In this chapter, firstly, opposition and political opposition will be theoretically examined to introduce what is considered as political opposition in this research. Then the discussions about the interdependency between democracy and political opposition will be analyzed to better understand the role of multi-party politics for a democratic system. The effect of the nature of the relation between governing and opposition parties on the development of political conflicts will be discussed to better establish the relevance of the topic with the conflict resolution field. Finally, the historical development of the political opposition in Turkish politics and the problems that it has encountered will be discussed to understand the background of the political opposition in Turkish politics.

2.1 Political Opposition

“The right of opposition, it seems to me, is a natural, inalienable, and sacred right.”⁷

Diderot

The word ‘opposition’ has several definitions. For instance, the official dictionary of Turkish language, presented by Turkish Language Association (TDK), puts three different definitions. One of the definitions, the broadest one, presents the opposition as a state of being against an attitude, an opinion or a behavior.⁸ In this

⁷ Qtd in Ionescu, G. and Madariaga, I. (1972). *Opposition: Past and Present of a Political Institution*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, p. 29

⁸ <http://tdk.gov.tr/TR/Genel/SozBul.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAAF6AA849816B2EF4376734BED947CDE&Kelime=muhalefet>

sense, opposition is always present as a natural and inevitable feature of human kind in every type of relation and in every aspect of life. From micro levels to macro levels of relations between states, religions, social classes or genders, contending ideas, cleavages and presence of opposition have been inevitable and natural.

In politics as well, political opposition is a natural, inevitable and a necessary feature. In a broader sense political opposition is defined as a behavior or an action that constitutes being against a political regime and its socio-economic condition or only one of them, criticizing them with or without proposing an alternative system or using legal or illegal methods.⁹ Thus, any kind of opposition toward any political subject regardless of the organization or the structure of the opposition is defined as political opposition.

The definition above presents a very broad formulation of political opposition. In this study, however, political opposition is defined in a much narrower sense. What is meant by political opposition is only the parliamentary opposition since as Helms claims, parliamentary opposition is considered to be the true form of political opposition in Western democracies.¹⁰ Parliamentary opposition is preferred for this study since as Giulj claims it has two functions, which are the institutionalization of the conflicts inherent in every society and the institutionalization of contestation by transforming it into a parliamentary opposition which ensures the dynamism and the duration of democratic systems.¹¹ The intention, by focusing on parliamentary opposition, is to observe legitimate and institutional way of political opposition. However, what is meant by the parliament is not the place itself. The parliamentary opposition is considered to be the opposition of any legal political party regardless of its representation in the National Assembly.¹² More specifically, TDK's other definition of opposition, which says that political opposition is the party or parties that are out of the government in a

⁹ Turgut, N. (1984). *op. cit.*, p. 8

¹⁰ Helms, L. (2004). *op. cit.*, p. 24

¹¹ Giulj, S. (1981). "Confrontation or Conciliation: The Status of the Opposition in Europe," *Government and Opposition*, 16(4), p. 494

¹² Turgut, N. (1984). *op. cit.*, p. 14

democratic system, is the definition of political opposition in this research.¹³ Thus, for this research, political opposition means any legal political party which is not in the government.

2.2 Political Opposition and Democratic System

“If there be no opposition, there is no democracy...”¹⁴

Sir Ivor Jennings

The above sentence belongs to Sir Ivor Jennings who refers to the roots of institutionalized political opposition developing firstly in British politics. According to Jennings, the notion of opposition as an inherent feature of the political system is more sharply defined in Britain than in anywhere else, and this has been for a far longer time.¹⁵ The idea of opposition was introduced to British politics back in the 18th century. In the early 19th century opposition parties participated in the elections for the first time and political opposition institutionalized since then. Jennings claim that “although only the Great Britain has genuinely given the opposition the status of an institution and recognized its rights and responsibilities, other countries have given it a measure of recognition by introducing into positive law the notion of parliamentary minority entitled to some prerogatives.”¹⁶

Although the broadest definition of opposition, as given above, says that the political opposition is inevitable and present in every political system, it is not recognized as a legal actor in political systems other than democracies. Przeworski and Limongi define democracy as a regime in which some governmental offices are filled as

¹³<http://tdk.gov.tr/TR/Genel/SozBul.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFAAF6AA849816B2EF4376734BED947CDE&Kelime=muhalefet>

¹⁴ Jennings, I. (1961). *Cabinet Government*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 16

¹⁵ Johnson, N. (1964). “Opposition in the British Political System,” *Government and Opposition*, 32(4), p. 487

¹⁶ Giulj, S. (1981). *op. cit.*, p. 477

a consequence of contested elections.¹⁷ This contestation occurs only when there exists an opposition that has some chance of winning office as a consequence of elections and only in those systems incumbent parties actually did lose the offices.¹⁸ Also, Beyme and Daniels claim that in most of the authoritarian systems, opposition parties were totally forbidden or it was existent only for show where they do not have a chance of winning the offices.¹⁹

Helms claims that it has long been acknowledged by democratic theory that the principle of legitimate political opposition belongs to the most fundamental components of any liberal democracy.²⁰ From the same perspective, R. Dahl claims that the rights to oppose and dissent the views of the governments are what distinguish libertarian from authoritarian systems.²¹ The same point is emphasized by Ionescu and Madariaga as the presence or absence of institutionalized opposition which can become the criterion for the classification of any political society into one of two categories: liberal or dictatorial, democratic or authoritarian, pluralistic-constitutional, or monolithic.²² Linz and Stepan are the others who distinguish democratic systems from authoritarian or totalitarian systems depending on the presence of political opposition. They claim that democratic systems require open contestation over the right to win control of the government, and this in turn requires free competitive elections, the result of which

¹⁷ Przeworski, A. and Limongi, F. (1997). Democracy and Development in Hadenius, A. (Eds.). *Democracy's Victory and Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 179

¹⁸ Przeworski, A. and Limongi, F. (1997). *op. cit.*, p. 179

¹⁹ Beyme, K. and Daniels, D. (2004). "Opposition" (Mehmet Turhan, Trans.). *Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi*, 36(1), p. 220 (original work published in 1973).

²⁰ Helms, L. (2004). *op. cit.*, p. 22

²¹ Dahl, R.A. (1965). "Reflections on Opposition in Western Democracies," *Government and Opposition*, 1(1), p. 7

²² Ionescu, G. and Madariaga, I. (1972). *op. cit.*, p. 16

determine who governs.²³ Linz and Stepan put political parties and elections as essential features of a democratic system.²⁴

In fact, what is meant by democracy is not clear all the time. In other words, the definition, essentials and contents of democracy vary across scholars and politicians. Despite this plethora of definitions of democracy, the ideas on the relationship between political opposition and democracy do not vary at all. For instance, Lipset argues that “democracy implies a number of specific conditions: (1) a ‘political formula’ or body of beliefs specifying which institutions – political parties, a free press, and so forth – are legitimate (accepted as proper by all) (2) one set of political leaders in office and (3) one or more sets of recognized leaders attempting to gain office.”²⁵ For this study, the most significant point in the definition of Lipset is the need for recognized political parties and leaders attempting to gain the control of the government office or, in other words, the essentiality of political competition for democracy.

The same case is also pointed by Diamond when he defines democracy as a system of institutionalized competition for power. According to him, without competition there is no democracy.²⁶ Similarly, Giulj claims that “the greatest common denominator of the Western democracies is undoubtedly the recognition of the opposition which has been integrated within the institutional and especially the parliamentary machinery.”²⁷ The author continues that the ways in which the opposition is integrated into the political system vary (confrontation or conciliation) and it seems that the appropriateness of one or another way depends on the extent of alternation in

²³ Linz, J. J. and Stepan, A. (1996). *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 3

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8

²⁵ Lipset, S. M. (1959). *Political Man*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, p. 45

²⁶ Diamond, L. (1990). “Three Paradoxes of Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy*, 1(3), p. 49

²⁷ Giulj, S. (1981). *op. cit.*, p. 472

power and consensus of the system. In any event, the exclusion of the opposition is incompatible with the smooth working of democracy because it is its presence which gives meaning to the parliamentary institution.²⁸ Giulj concludes that “the criterion by which one can judge if a democracy is functioning properly is the presence of a genuine opposition within the parliamentary system.”²⁹ Close also remarks on this point that “in an ideal democracy opposition is encouraged, because it makes governments defend their decisions, assures the ventilation of opinions, and fosters debate.”³⁰

Presenting many other interpretations about the importance of the opposition for a democratic system is possible. Also, presenting many other definition of political opposition is possible. The political opposition can be a parliamentary or extra-parliamentary opposition, or can be party or interest group opposition. An assertion that the political opposition is the only denominator for the establishment of democracy would be an oversimplification. However, simply, in the literature on democracy, the scholars above agree on that political opposition is one of the indispensable components of a democratic system.

2.3 Political Opposition and Conflict

For a democratic system, the presence and recognition of political opposition is important regarding the development of political conflicts. Blondel claims that if the distance between the goals of the main opposition body and those of the government is small, the temperature of political conflicts likely to be low; if that distance is large, the temperature of political conflict is likely to be high.³¹ The tension between these two political actors is significant since it influences the outcomes of the conflict. As an

²⁸ Giulj, S. (1981). *op. cit.*, p. 485

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 493

³⁰ Close, D. (2000). “Democratization and Opposition,” Unpublished paper presented at the XXII International Congress of LASA, p. 1

³¹ Blondel, J. (2007). “Political Opposition in the Contemporary World,” *Government and Opposition*, 32(4), p. 470

example, regarding the government of DP, Cleveland claims that “by removing the outlets for peaceful criticism, the government created a situation in which violent protest became the only means of expressing political opposition.”³² Then, any political conflict has the potential of escalation rather than a proclivity for peaceful solutions. In this regard, a study on government-opposition relations stands to be important for the conflict studies as well since the governing and opposition parties are the actors which mostly determine the outcomes of the conflicts.

In fact, conflicts between governments and opposition parties are normal and not necessarily bad. Such scholars of political science as Dahl, Lipset, Lane and Ersson emphasize the necessity of conflicts and cleavages as well as the necessity of consensus in a society for a democratic system. For instance, Dahl’s arguments on the low and high consensus systems are significant. On the one hand, he claims, high-consensus polities are prone to ignore possible advantages of radical changes in the status quo since the alternatives presented by political leaders for consideration among themselves and by the voters are likely to represent relatively small marginal changes.³³ On the other hand, low-consensus polities may find it difficult to profit from the advantages of incremental changes since the greater discrepancy between the goals of the parties to a conflict give way to coercion and bargaining rather than problem-solving and persuasion.³⁴ Accordingly, developing a balance between a conflictual and consensual society, which north European democracies have come close to demonstrate such a balance, is important.

Continuing with the discussion, referring to the Lipset’s Political Man’s opening passage, which states that “the study of the conditions encouraging democracy must therefore focus on the sources of both cleavage and consensus”³⁵, J. Lane and S. Ersson

³² Cleveland, W. L. (2000). *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Boulder: Westview Press, pp. 271-272

³³ Dahl, R. A. (1965). *op. cit.*, p. 13

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13

³⁵ Lipset, S. M. (1959). *op. cit.*, p. 21

claim that Lipset's starting point for a democratic system is the recognition of the presence and necessity of opposition and thus cleavages in the society.³⁶ However, Lipset also recognizes the possibility of conflicts or cleavages straining the democratic regime so he proposes several factors that are conducive to democratic stability, which one of them is the development of conflict resolution.³⁷ Concerning the present study here, Lipset's point shows that the development of conflict resolution methods between governing and opposition parties is significant for the sustainability of the political system. For a constructive conflict resolution process the relation between government and opposition parties is significant. If the relation between these actors is not totally exclusive and negative then it is more likely to expect constructive outcomes for the conflicts among themselves. This study intends to provide a picture of the relation between governments and opposition parties and thus an interpretation about the possibility of developing conflict resolution methods.

As expressed before, this study focuses on the attitudes of the prime ministers' toward the opposition parties. In a sense, this study narrows down its limits to the top political elite depending on the idea that political elite is one of the influential actors for the constructive conflict resolution processes. Similarly, Lehbruch, Ursprung and Lijphart discuss the importance of political elite in political conflicts as well. In concordant democracy, Gerhard Lehbruch denotes a strategy of conflict management by cooperation and agreement among the different elites rather than by competition and majority decision.³⁸ Also, Ursprung claims that in concordant democracies the most common feature of the political resolution of conflicts in a parliament is not majority decision but, far more, the negotiation of sustainable compromises.³⁹ In consociational democracy, Lijphart claims that consensual behavior among political elites with

³⁶ Lane, J. E. and Ersson, S. O. (1994). *Politics and Society in Western Europe*. London: Sage Publications. p. 19

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35

³⁹ Ursprung, H. W. (1980). "Voting Behaviour in a system of Concordant Democracy," *Public Choice*, 35(3), p. 350

appropriate institutional support could ensure the effective governance of societies that were divided on religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial or ethnic lines.⁴⁰ Although his emphasis is mostly on the role of the institutions for democratic stability, he also recognizes that consensus-oriented culture often provides the basis for democracy and claims that “consensus democracy” may not be able to take root and thrive unless it is supported by a consensual political culture.⁴¹ On the same issue, Diamond claims that consensus may be best built when opposing party leaders take the lead in crafting an understanding and working relationship that bridges historic differences, restrains expectations, and establishes longer, more realistic time horizons for their agendas.⁴² Depending on these claims, an observation on the attitudes of the Turkish prime ministers toward opposition parties will provide a framework for the development of political conflicts in Turkish politics.

To conclude, the discussions above show that the ability to develop consensus, cooperation and compromise is as significant as the presence of opposition, cleavage and conflict in the relationship between the governing and opposition parties to manage the conflicts for the prosperity of the society. According to previous studies, in Western Democracies and more specifically in parliamentary systems, there are surprisingly high levels of consensus and cooperation between government and opposition compared to other political systems.⁴³ Giuseppe Di Palma shows this pattern in Italian politics⁴⁴, Rose in German and US politics⁴⁵ and again Rose in British

⁴⁰ Lijphart, A. (1999). *Patterns of Democracy*. New Haven&London: Yale University Press. p. 306

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 306

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 59

⁴³ Mujica, A. and Sanchez, I. (2006). *op. cit.*, p. 87

⁴⁴ Di Palma, G. (1977). *Surviving without Governing*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁴⁵ Rose, R. (1984). *Understanding Big Government*. London: Sage.

politics.⁴⁶ Although it is an oversimplification that consensus is absolute in consolidated democracies, as Mujica and Sanchez claim, consensus appears exceptional in regimes that can not be classified as fully democratic.⁴⁷ So, this study, by focusing on the relation between governments and opposition parties, will provide an aspect on the possibility of consensus or dissensus regarding the political conflicts in Turkish politics.

2.4 Political Opposition, Democratic System and Conflict in Turkish Politics

Concerning the discussions above, Turkish political history shows that Turkish politicians had problems on developing a consensus or creating a balance between consensus and competition. For instance, Uyar claims that in 1909, as the political parties emerged, the relations between the political parties transformed to a formation of fronts or camps which means high polarization between political parties.⁴⁸

In particular, political party leaders have part in this bitter polarization. On the role of political leaders Swaminathan claims that if the prime ministers decide not to negotiate and prefer to repress the opposition then the outcome is conflict and if the leaders are risk-acceptant then it is hard to get peaceful resolutions.⁴⁹ In this regard, when the Turkish political leaders are observed, Türsan criticizes the Turkish political parties and mostly their leaders since they turned politics into a zero-sum game, implemented conflict-seeking strategies, the conflictual situation between disloyal opposition and coercive government paved the way for the military interventions and brought the emergent democratic regime to several breakdowns and thus they have failed in conflict management.⁵⁰ Similarly, Sunar and Sayarı claim that for Turkey to be

⁴⁶ Rose, R. (1980). *Do Parties Make a Difference*. London: Macmillan.

⁴⁷ Mujica, A. and Sanchez, I. (2006). *op. cit.*, p. 88

⁴⁸ Uyar, H. (2001). *Vatan Cephesi* [Homeland Front]. İstanbul:Büke Yayınları. p. 17

⁴⁹ Swaminathan, S. (1999). "Time, Power and Democratic Transitions," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 43(2), p. 189

⁵⁰ Türsan, H. (2004). *op. cit.* p. 266

successful in her journey of democracy and multi-party system, compromise and cooperation should have been achieved among the party leaders.⁵¹ However, they seem to have failed in respect to the breakdowns and military interventions in the system. The non-compromising elite relations and increasing intra-elite conflict, strong party fragmentation and polarization made peaceful ends for the political conflicts impossible to achieve.⁵²

In fact, the political actors are expected to ease, handle, and resolve the conflicts, but as Helms claims, Turkish political leaders appear unsuccessful on this matter and mostly turn Turkish politics into a zero-sum or winner-takes-all situation that may well develop into a potential source of conflict in countries with a less tolerant and democratically mature political culture.⁵³ Therefore, analyzing both the positions of the Turkish governments and also their leaders is significant to develop a framework on the development of political conflicts in Turkish politics in the multi-party system. As Pierskalla claims, the recognition and internalization of political opposition and development of consensus between political actors is one of the factors that help the development of democracy which means of less repression of the opposition parties by governing parties and thus more constructive results for conflicts.⁵⁴

2.4.1 History of Political Opposition in Turkish Politics

Modern Turkish politics takes its roots from a patrimonial monarch of the Ottoman Empire. Mardin claims, until 1909, a political opposition did not exist in the

⁵¹ Sunar, İ. and Sayarı, S. (1986). ‘Democracy in Turkey: Problems and Prospects’ in O’Donnell, G. *et al.* (Eds.). *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 168

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Helms, L. (2004). *op. cit.*, p. 30

⁵⁴ Pierskalla, J. H. (2009). “Protest, Deterrence and Escalation,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 54(1), p. 120

Ottoman Empire which checks the absolute power and suggests policy alternatives.⁵⁵ Even an independent government which is elected through the votes of the people was not present until the beginning of the 20th century in the Ottoman Empire. Regarding the westernization and reformation processes the first opposition party was able to come into existence in 1908 with the Fedekaran-i Millet Fırkası.⁵⁶ Although some other opposition parties were present, the government, the Committee of Union and Progress (ITC), was mostly dominant and repressive during the short experience of multi-party politics in the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, the Party of Union and Progress established its dictatorship by proclaiming martial law and refusing to renew the elections.⁵⁷ Thus, until the collapse of the Ottoman system, multi-party politics had been shelved by the political power.

The situation was not much different after the establishment of the Republic. As Apter claims, the role of a political opposition has proved ambiguous in most newly independent nations and new governments rarely see the necessity for an opposition party nor do they always accept the idea of opposition as a normal feature of government.⁵⁸ Although some legal opposition parties were established in the first decade of the Republic, Turkish politics, similar to the claims of the Apter, reflects a type of authoritarian system or “dominant party system”⁵⁹ under the governance of a single party without accepting the idea of opposition and opposition party until 1945.

The 1945 is the year of transition to multi-party system in Turkish politics. However, before 1945 there had been two attempts for multi-party politics as well.

⁵⁵ Mardin, Ş. (1966). “Opposition and Control in Turkey,” *Government and Opposition*, 1(3), p. 376

⁵⁶ See: List of Turkish Political Parties.
(http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/kutuphane/siyasi_partiler.html)

⁵⁷ Mardin, Ş. (1966). *op. cit.*, p. 377

⁵⁸ Apter, D.E. (1962). *op. cit.*, p. 154

⁵⁹ Wjatr, J. J. and Przeworski, A. (1966). “Control Without Opposition,” *Government and Opposition*, 1(2).

Regarding these attempts, Karaömerlioğlu claims, 1940s is not a transition but a return to multi-party politics.⁶⁰ The first attempt, the Progressive Republican Party (TCF), was founded in 1924. However, the party's activities were considered to be against the secular principles of the Republic, and thus, only one year later after its foundation, in 1925, TCF was closed down by the Independence Courts.

Close points that in cases of protests as a form of opposition two issues emerge which are whether a government interprets such actions as political gestures or as simple lawlessness and the extent to which protest is classed as disloyal.⁶¹ In the Turkish case, TCF was exposed to the second alternative and associated with the illegal rebellions against fundamentals of the regime and accused of disloyalty.

The second experience, with the Free Republican Party (SCF) in 1930, was also disappointing and unsuccessful since SCF was forced to abolish itself only after three months from its foundation. As Blondel claims, in authoritarian polities the government can be brutal or mildly repressive and, in the latter case, allow some groups and even parties to express a degree of (limited) dissent, only to clamp down if this opposition goes beyond what are regarded as 'acceptable' bounds.⁶² Similar with Blondel, Gartner and Regan claim that if there were no serious challenges to the status quo, the ruling elite would not risk its dominant position by violently repressing the political outbursts.⁶³ In the Turkish case, the founding political elite of the Republic was still not convinced that the regime was secure and the political opposition was perceived to be moving out of the acceptable boundaries and endangering the fundamentals of the Republic. Both the experiences of TCF and SF have come to an end regarding the

⁶⁰ Karaömerlioğlu, M. A. (2006). "Türkiye'de Çok-Partili Demokrasiye Dönüşün Toplumsal Dinamikleri," *Toplum ve Bilim*, v. 106, p. 174

⁶¹ Close, D. (2000). *op. cit.*, p. 5

⁶² Blondel, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 486

⁶³ Gartner, S. S. and Regan, P. M. (1996). 'Threat and Repression: The non-Linear Relationship between Government and Opposition Violence,' *Journal of Peace Research*, 33 (3), p. 276

concerns of the founding elite that these parties would damage the fundamentals of the Republic. In other words, the regime considered not consolidated enough to have a competitive multi-party politics and thus these parties had been terminated. Lipset's argument that toleration of opposition was the hardest thing for a new democracy to learn appears to be true regarding the first decades of the Turkish Republic.⁶⁴

The third attempt, which actually established the multi-party system in Turkey, started in the mid-1940s. On 5 September 1945, the National Development Party⁶⁵ (MKP) was established by Nuri Demirağ as the first opposition party in Turkey after the World War II.⁶⁶ However, the real party competition started after the foundation of DP on January 7, 1946. DP was born out of CHP, presented a serious opposition and acquired the government after the 1950 national elections.

Transition to multi-party politics starts with 1946 since DP was founded and a national election with the participation of the opposition parties took place in 1946. As Romano claims, in 1946 Turkey implemented all the procedural requirements to transform the state into electoral democratic politics or into procedural democracy.⁶⁷ However, the 1946 elections, in which DP acquired 60 members of the 465 representatives, did not provide equal chance of competition to all of the parties. According to Zurcher, "the electoral procedures were far from perfect: there was no guarantee of secrecy during the actual voting, there was no impartial supervision of the elections and as soon as the results were declared the actual ballots were destroyed,

⁶⁴ Lipset, S. M. (1967). *The New Nation*. New York: Doubleday.

⁶⁵ Also called as National Rehabilitation Party in Gülek, K. (1951). "Democracy Takes Root in Turkey," *Foreign Affairs*, 30(1).

⁶⁶ Timur, T. (2003). *Türkiye'de Çok Partili Hayata Geçiş* [Transition to Multi-Party Life in Turkey]. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, p. 18

⁶⁷ Romano, D. (2011). "Turkey: The Long Road from Procedural to Substantive Democracy" Unpublished paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association Annual Conference "Global Governance: Political Authority in Transition", Montreal, Quebec, Canada. p. 2

making any checks impossible.”⁶⁸ That is why the 1950 elections stand as a more significant democratic development than the 1946 elections regarding the transition to competitive party politics in Turkey.

The elections in 1950 took place without major incidents and were indeed free and fair by all accounts.⁶⁹ With the 1950 elections DP won the majority of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) and established its party government which would govern the country for a decade.⁷⁰ So, 1950 stands important since it was the first experience of change of governing party and beginning of the new political life in Turkey. However, why the Turkish political decided to switch to multi-party politics is highly debated. There are four different views on this transition which are discussed below.

2.4.2 The Perspectives on the Transition to Multi-Party Politics in Turkish Politics

The first perspective refers to the internal dynamics of the country to explain the switch to multi-party system. Especially during and after the World War II, increasing numbers of people migrated to cities, acquiring the education, literacy and interests to mobilize politically. Romano claims that this dynamic changed the expectation of the society, and thus the Republic’s ruling elites decided to vent building political pressure by moving to a multi-party electoral system in 1946.⁷¹ According to Zurcher, CHP had even lost the support of the Young Turk Coalition and thus had to move toward multi-party system to ease the discontent that is increasing gradually.⁷² The majority of the masses and social groups believed that a new kind of regime is not possible with a

⁶⁸ Zurcher, E. J. (2005). *Turkey: A Modern History*. NY: I.B.Tauris&Co Ltd, p. 222

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 227

⁷⁰ See Appendix 2 for the list of governments, prime ministers, opposition parties and their leaders.

⁷¹ Romano, D. (2011). *op. cit.*, p. 9

⁷² Zurcher, E. J. (2005). *op. cit.*, pp. 216-217

single-party system. Neither the majority of the rural nor the urban populations were happy with the one-party system. CHP's public support was still significant but decreasing. In this perspective, Karaömerlioğlu claims that the increasing discontent from the social dynamics appears as the most proper explanation for the return to multi-party politics.⁷³

The second perspective focuses more on the external factors that prodded Turkish political leaders toward the multi-party system. After the Second World War, Soviet Union declared to Turkey that it would not renew the Friendship Treaty and formulated number of new conditions which include correction of the borders and change on the regime of the Turkish Straits.⁷⁴ At the end of the war "Democratic Front" appeared as the victor and democratic tendencies started to prevail around the world.⁷⁵ The Democratic Front or the West Camp under the leadership of the US started to condemn the authoritarian one-party regimes and thus Turkish the political leaders chose to introduce a multi-party system to get the political and also economic support of the US and the West.⁷⁶

The third point of view suggests that the political elite of the country was the group who triggered this transformation. According to this approach, the goal of the early Republican governments was to make the society attain the level of contemporary civilization. Since it was recognized that contemporary civilization was defined by Europe, the direction of change was Westernization. The models, such as France and Great Britain, were all political democracies. Hence, arriving at contemporary civilization did not preclude but actually implied the adoption of a politically

⁷³ Karaömerlioğlu, M. A. (2006). *op. cit.*, p. 179

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 217-218

⁷⁵ Kara, N. (1984-1985). "Türkiye'de Çok Partili Sisteme Geçiş Kararının Nedenleri," *Yapıt*, v. 8, p. 65

⁷⁶ Karaömerlioğlu, M. A. (2006). *Op. cit.*, pp. 177-178

competitive system.⁷⁷ Duverger claims that for the leaders of the Turkish Republic the ideal remained a plural system, monopoly being a result of the special political situation in Turkey.⁷⁸ The intra-party opposition in CHP which was recognized early in the Republican era was a sign of pluralism accepted by the elite.⁷⁹ Weiker, also, defines the period between 1931 and 1946 as a flexible one-party regime.⁸⁰

The final perspective emphasizes the role of İsmet İnönü, the president of the Republic and the head of the CHP. In fact, İnönü was making speeches supporting the idea of multi-party politics. Early in his presidency, in 1939, an Independent Group was founded in CHP to represent the opposition. Although this group did not present a significant opposition at all, it was still important since the Independent Group shows that the idea of organized opposition was not abandoned while the systems of ‘single party, single leader’ are dominant in Europe.⁸¹ Then in 1944 and later in 1945 İnönü declared that the only deficiency of Turkish democracy is the absence of opposition party. Two years later, in 1947, it was again İnönü who made the Twelfth of July Declaration in which he intended to protect the presence of political opposition.

Regarding these events, Gunter claims that in 1950⁸² İsmet İnönü, Atatürk’s successor, ended the one-party rule of the Republican Peoples Party by allowing

⁷⁷ Turan, İ. (1984). “The Evolution of Political Culture in Turkey” in Evin, A. *Modern Turkey: Continuity and Change*. Berlin: Leske Verlag and Budrich, p. 93

⁷⁸ Duverger, M. (1964). *Political Parties*. London: Lowe and Brydone (Printers) Ltd., p. 277

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 278

⁸⁰ Weiker, W. (1973). *Political Tutelage and Democracy in Turkey, The Free Party and Its Aftermath*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

⁸¹ Timur, T. (2003). *op. cit.*, p. 13

⁸² Although the transformation to multi-party politics starts in 1945, here Gunter accepted the 1950 as the beginning of the multi-party politics. Gunter, M. M. (1989). “Political Instability in Turkey During the 1970s”, *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 9(1), p. 63

Turkey's first genuinely competitive elections.⁸³ Heper also claims that İnönü wanted to develop Turkish democracy, avoided authoritarian policies and stood as a protector of democracy and multi-party system.⁸⁴ Similarly, Kara suggests that the understanding of İnönü brought the multi-party politics to Turkey. According to Kara, although external factors represent the basic concerns, the main reason for the transition is the understanding of the İnönü that he had to let multi-party politics to secure the support of the West which was not the actual demand of the Western countries for multi-party politics.⁸⁵

Finally, Angrist recognizes the contributions of the first three perspectives but he claims that neither the international context nor the internal features completely explain the events. Rather he focuses on the role of political leaders and claims that “if key actors conclude that a given party system configuration threatens their core values and interests, they are likely to defect from democratic norms which was not the case in Turkey so a transition to competitive party system had been successful in Turkey.”⁸⁶

All of these different perspectives contribute partially to the explanation of the transition to multi-party politics. Since the transition, excluding the breakdowns with the military coups, Turkish political system has been a multi-party competitive system, at least in theory. However, in practice the relations between governments and oppositions and the development of the political opposition had never been so easy. As Sayarı claims, the long party tradition in Turkey has two important aspects: The orientation of party elites toward political conflict and the elitist style of the official

⁸³ Gunter, M. M. (1989). “Political Instability in Turkey During the 1970s,” *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 9(1), p. 63

⁸⁴ Heper, M. (2008). ‘İsmet İnönü’ in Metin Heper and Sabri Sayarı (Ed.), *Türkiye’de Liderler ve Demokrasi* [Leaders and Democracy in Turkey]. İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, pp. 52-53

⁸⁵ Kara, N. (1984-1985). *op. cit.*, p. 74

⁸⁶ Angrist, M. P. (2004). “Party Systems and Regime Formation in the Modern Middle East: Explaining Turkish Exceptionalism,” *Comparative Politics*, 36(2), p. 244

parties which had adverse consequences on the contemporary party system.⁸⁷ Extreme antagonism between government and opposition was a dominant feature of political life during the Young Turk era and when a competitive party system emerged nearly four decades later, a similar tendency manifested itself and government-opposition relations rapidly acquired the characteristics of a zero-sum game.⁸⁸ This difficulty of internalizing the political opposition and developing stable relations between governments and opposition parties had been subject for theoretical discussions.

2.4.3 Theoretical Perspectives on the Development of Political Opposition in Turkish Politics

Although Heper claims that DP represents the political elite who place the democracy over the Republic,⁸⁹ according to Eroğul, the period under the DP government did not advance the procedural democracy further and democracy remained as a practice of voting every four years and nothing more.⁹⁰ Due to the intensity of factional cleavages at both elite and mass levels, the polity was divided into two diametrically opposed camps. Sayarı claims that “this non-ideological political bipolarity precluded compromise between the two parties even on the most fundamental principles of democratic processes, gave rise to bitter government-opposition confrontations, and frequently undermined the stability of the regime.”⁹¹ The high polarization between DP and opposition parties brought a quick end to the multi-party politics with the first military intervention of the Republic in 1960. There are two different perspectives to explain the political polarization and failure of developing

⁸⁷ Sayarı, S. (1978). “The Turkish Party System in Transition,” *Government and Opposition*, 13(1), p. 40

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40

⁸⁹ Heper, M. (2000). “The Ottoman Legacy and Turkish Politics,” *Journal of International Affairs*, 54(1), p. 73

⁹⁰ Eroğul, C. (1990). *Demokrat Parti Tarihi ve İdeolojisi* [Democratic Party History and Ideology]. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, p. 181

⁹¹ Sayarı, S. (1978). *op. cit.*, p. 43

compromise between the political parties in Turkish politics. They can be named as cultural approach and structural approach.

2.4.3.1 Political Culture Approach

Political culture, very briefly, is the set of attitudes, beliefs and feelings people hold about politics.⁹² In this approach Frey claims that Turkish political culture, as having the legacies of the Ottoman Empire, could not develop an idea of legitimate opposition. In the Ottoman Empire state was everything, loyalty to the state was above everything and conflict with the state was viewed as the severest turpitude and treason. Thus, political opposition was easily defined as resistance to both temporal and spiritual authority.⁹³ The most prominent legacy of the Ottoman tradition is the perception of in-group vs. out-group orientation. In a political world perceived as ‘us against them’ in which other actors tend to be seen as ‘either with us or against us’ such offensive and defensive ties are essential.⁹⁴ This makes the development of constructive or, at least, not destructive relations between the government and the opposition and the development of tolerance really hard.

First, clarifying the meaning of tolerance is significant to develop the discussion further. Sullivan and other scholars define tolerance as a willingness to put up with those things that one rejects. Politically, it implies a willingness to permit the expression of those ideas or interests that one opposes then a tolerant regime, like a tolerant individual or group, is one that allows wide berth to those ideas that challenge its way of life.⁹⁵ More specifically, political tolerance is defined as an opposition to state actions

⁹² Almond, G. A. and Powell, G. B. (1978). *Comparative Politics*. London: Scott, Foresman & Co., p. 25

⁹³ Frey, F. W. (1975). “Patterns of Elite Politics in Turkey” in G.Lenczowski (ed.) *Political Elites in the Middle East*. Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, p. 48

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 66

⁹⁵ Sullivan, J. L., Piereson, J. and Marcus, E. G. (1979). “An Alternative Conceptualization of Political Tolerance: Illusory Increases 1950s-1970s,” *The American Political Science Review*, 73(3), p. 784

that limit opportunities for citizens, individually or in groups, to compete for political power.⁹⁶ Finally, according to Williams and others tolerance includes accepting the other, within the law at least, even if it appears to be dangerous.⁹⁷

Regarding these definitions, in the cultural perspective, Mardin and Özbudun claim that the antagonism toward the opposition can be explained by a behavioral pattern in Turkish politics. Mardin uses the Ottoman tradition to explain the problems with the political opposition. Accordingly, in the Ottoman political tradition there was only one correct way and thus any kind of opposition becomes needless and dangerous. Neither the great tradition nor the little tradition which form the Ottoman tradition tolerates political opposition and this fabric draws the borders of the political culture from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. Such a political culture creates problems since it can not be integrated into the democratic system that the Republic has been trying to establish. Mardin concludes that tolerance has to become a functional integer of Turkish society before Turkey can really hope to legitimize the opposition in the eyes of the majority of the population and the elite.⁹⁸ Lawrence supports this point as he claims that democracy depends on the adherence of elites to democratic procedural norms; a democratic system can survive the intolerant attitudes of the masses as long as they are balanced by the tolerant attitudes of the politically active.⁹⁹

On the issue of tolerance, Close's remarks are supporting the points presented by Mardin. Close claims that even in long-established constitutional democracies, governments do not like opposition. Where there is no history of having to tolerate

⁹⁶ Gibson, J. L. and Bingham, R. D. (1982). "On the Conceptualization and Measurement of Political Tolerance," *The American Political Science Review*, 76(3), p. 604

⁹⁷ Williams, J. A., Nunn, Z. C. and Peter, L. (1976). "Origins of Tolerance," *Social Forces*, 55(2), p. 6

⁹⁸ Mardin, Ş. (1966). *op. cit.*, p. 387

⁹⁹ Lawrence, D. G. (1976). "Procedural Norms and Tolerance," *The American Political Science Review*, 70(1), p. 82

opponents, suddenly having to suffer criticism, face procedural delays, and even see projects fail must be especially hard to take.¹⁰⁰ To note that there appears a paradox at this point. It is hard to tolerate the opposition for the government, but as long as the government keeps suppressing the opposition and trying to terminate it, the government makes the opposition more violent and even more intolerable. This leads to further escalation of the conflicts between the government and opposition parties. As Blondel claims, opposition may well be (or become) more radical and indeed probably more violent where it is not overtly tolerated than where it is tolerated.¹⁰¹ According to the study of Gartner and Regan, governments' should respond to extreme types of opposition demand with comparatively lower levels of repression to avoid spiral of escalation of the conflicts.¹⁰² Turkey which appears as a not tolerant democracy seems to having problems with the presence of political opposition not only in the beginning of multi-party politics but also today and this makes the probability of escalation of the conflicts more than consensual solutions.¹⁰³

In this cultural perspective, Heper claims that continuity from the Ottoman Empire characterizes Turkish political culture. Ottoman political norms persist today, affecting numerous aspects of contemporary Turkish politics and the cultural cleavage between the little and great traditions of the Ottoman Empire remained in Turkish Republic in the form cleavage between political and state elite. The state elite consider that some in the political elite place political party or even personal interests above the long-term interests of the nation. This separation through cultural lines resulted with the zero-sum mode of thinking that was typical of Ottoman politics. The state elite and political elite with different interests could not develop consensual ends through conflicts.¹⁰⁴ Gunter, parallel with Heper, claims that the Turkish political culture had not

¹⁰⁰ Close, D. (2000). *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3

¹⁰¹ Blondel, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 473

¹⁰² Gartner, S. S. and Regan, P. M. (1996). *op. cit.*, p. 285

¹⁰³ Fox, G. H. and Nolte, G. (2000). 'Intolerant Democracies' in Fox, G. H. and Roth, B. R. (eds.) *Democratic Governance and International Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰⁴ Heper, M. (2000). *op. cit.* p. 78

yet fully been imbued with the concept of the loyal opposition. The 600 year old authoritarian heritage of the Ottoman Empire had lasted into the twentieth century. When the elections were held, party leaders gave too much priority to narrow, short term party goals while inhibiting the idea of legitimate opposition.¹⁰⁵

The cultural perspective has a lot to explain about the problem of political opposition in Turkey. However, as Frey figures out, the democratic impulse is another feature of the Turkish political culture.¹⁰⁶ If there is a democratic impulse in the political culture then cultural approach remains insufficient to answer the question that why there are significant rises and declines and why there is a great tension between the government and opposition. These questions lead to the second perspective which claims that it is not only the political culture and lack of tolerance that causes the problems but the structure of the Turkish political system.

2.4.3.2 Political Structure Approach

In this second perspective, Kalaycıoğlu criticizes the cultural approach that such a cultural environment suggests the impossibility of a successful performance of multi-party politics which is not the case in Turkey.¹⁰⁷ Regarding the claims on the absence of tolerance, Kalaycıoğlu, with his survey, shows that there is no widespread lack of tolerance for political opposition and lack of support for multi-party system among the national and local elites, nor among the masses in Turkey.¹⁰⁸ Thus, rather than a cultural perspective, Kalaycıoğlu proposes a structural approach in which high-stake politics, zero-sum political competition and lack of common good between the political leaders can be used to explain the problems of Turkish politics.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Gunter, M. M. (1989). *op. cit.*, p. 65-66

¹⁰⁶ Frey, F. W. (1975). *op. cit.*, p. 71

¹⁰⁷ Kalaycıoğlu, E. (1988). "Political Culture and Regime Stability," *Journal of Economics and Administrative Studies*, 2(2), p. 151

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 156

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 166

By the same token, Turan claims that the problems on political opposition in Turkish politics do not lie in the cultural dynamics. Turan, like Kalaycıoğlu, claims that the extreme value political parties attach to acquiring political power and doing this at all costs is the main problem. Having power is vital because the Turkish government is heavily centralized that distribution of public funds, goods and services all tie in here. In other words, state emerges as the most important and powerful actor in the economy. The political and economic centrality of the state in Turkish society allows those in government to have access directly and indirectly to an immense amount of resources to distribute, from which the supporters of government parties stand to benefit more than others. This structure of Turkish politics increases the tendency of political parties to fight for power at all costs.¹¹⁰

Political parties represent competing organizations for the conquest of state power, and the greater and more pervasive the power of the state, the more will parties want to get it and keep it at any price and this is why statism is so toxic to democracy since it raises the premium on political power to a degree approaching a zero-sum game.¹¹¹ Thus, Diamond claims that the crises in Turkish democracy does not appear to have derived from a lack of elements supportive of a democratic system in the political culture but from deliberate policies pursued by political parties and their cadres, who felt that there was too much at stake in losing elections.¹¹²

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter the concept of opposition, in particular, political opposition is defined. Then, the interdependence between a democratic system, conflict resolution and political opposition has been analyzed. In the last part, the historical development of political opposition, possible reasons for the transition to multi-party system and the two main perspectives on the problem of political opposition in Turkish politics have been discussed.

¹¹⁰ Turan, İ. (1984). *op. cit.*, p. 110

¹¹¹ Diamond, L. (1990). *op. cit.*, p. 59

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 112

After these discussions the question arises that although Turkish political elite introduced and maintained the idea of political opposition since the 1940s, is there any change of the situation of political opposition in Turkish politics since then? According to the literature on democracy, political opposition is one the prerequisites for a democratic system. However, the more significant point beyond the presence of political opposition is the tension between the government and opposition which is strongly influential on the development of consensus and constructive outcomes for the political conflicts, on the stability of democratic system and social-economic dynamics. In this sense, it is important to see if the Turkish political culture and/or structure developed more tolerance to the political opposition during the experience of multi-party politics. Regarding these considerations, this study intends to investigate the attitudes of the government elites toward the opposition parties by comparing party governments and coalition governments together. In the next chapter, the research questions, depending on the discussions presented above, will be introduced and the procedure that is used for the analysis will be discussed.

3 METHODOLOGY and THEORY

3.1 Scope of the Study

This study investigates the nature of government-opposition relations in Turkish politics. Within the selected time periods, the nature of this relation will be analyzed from the perspective of the governing parties toward political opposition parties. This comparative research composes three different time periods and cases in which the same type of information is collected across multiple time periods and compared. Content analysis has been employed as a methodology to interpret the data collected.

3.2 Research Questions

Regarding the literature discussed in the previous chapter, political opposition appears as one of the essential features of a democratic system. Depending on this requisite of democracy, whether the Turkish political system, which has been experiencing a competitive multi-party democracy since 1945, has developed the recognition and integration of political opposition into the political system and how the nature of government-opposition relations is will be questioned.

In this regard this study includes two main research questions. The first research question is: How has the experience of multi-party politics, since the introduction of multi-party system, influenced the attitude of the governing elites of the party governments toward political opposition in Turkish politics? This question is answered with the comparison of party government of the 1950s, DP, with the party government of 2000s, AKP.

The independent variable, in this question, is the length of experience of the Turkish political system with multi-party politics. The dependent variable is the attitude of the governing elites of the party governments toward opposition parties. It is expected that, as the length of the experience increases, opposition parties become more internalized and accepted by the governments. As the experience of co-existence increases, it is expected that governing parties would develop less negative attitudes and more consensual relations with the opposition parties. The dependent variable will be observed with the comparison of two different time periods which are the DP and AKP periods. It is intended to investigate whether the process of democratic multi-party politics had affected the attitude of party governments toward oppositions, if it has then, in what way.

H₁: *As the length of the experience of the multi-party system in the Turkish politics increases, the presence of political opposition becomes more recognized and internalized by the governing elites.*

The second research question is as follows: Is there any difference between the attitudes of coalition governments and party governments toward the opposition? As Blondel claims, the more power is concentrated in the government, the more opposition is also concentrated in one body and therefore cohesive.¹¹³ This concentration and cohesiveness, in return, causes more competitive and bitter relations between the governments and opposition. As Dahl argues, the concentration of power on the executive branch could lead to explosive potentialities and is likely to result in a strategy of strict competition, rather than, one assumes, of cooperation.¹¹⁴ Although some scholars such as Prins and Sprecher¹¹⁵ suggest the opposite, traditionally scholars have posited that single-party majority governments are less constrained than minority

¹¹³ Blondel, J. (2007). *op. cit.*, p. 473

¹¹⁴ Dahl, R. A. (1966). *Political Opposition in Western Democracies*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, p. 351

¹¹⁵ Prins, B. C. and Sprecher, C. (1999). "Institutional Constraints, Political Opposition and Inter-State Dispute Escalation," *Journal of Peace Research*, v. 36.

governments which make them more prone to conflict with the opposition.¹¹⁶ As Maoz and Russett argue, coalition governments or minority cabinets are far more constrained than are governments controlled by a single party and that, as a result, makes them less conflict prone.¹¹⁷ However, on the contrary, Ireland and Gartner claims that it is not possible to differentiate between the effects of majority and coalition governments toward the opposition.¹¹⁸ These different arguments lead to a comparison of party and coalition governments to understand if there is significant difference between these two types of governments. In this regard, the coalition governments of the 1990s with the party governments of both the 1950s and 2000s are compared in this research.

The independent variable is the type of government, party governments on the one hand and coalition governments on the other. The dependent variable is again the attitude of government toward opposition parties.

H2: *Governing elites of the coalition governments are more tolerant and cooperative toward the political opposition than the governing elites of the party governments.*

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The attitude of governing parties towards the opposition parties is the focal point of this research. Thus, what is meant by attitude should be clear first. Attitude is a concept widely used in social sciences to indicate a relationship between an individual and a socially significant object.¹¹⁹ Regarding the studies on the concept of attitude, there are two basic frameworks that are used in conceptualization. The framework

¹¹⁶ Ireland, M. J. and Gartner, S. S. (2001). "Government Type and Conflict Initiation in Parliamentary Systems," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45(5), p. 552

¹¹⁷ Maoz, Z. and Russett, B. (1993). "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986," *The American Political Science Review*, 87(3), p. 626

¹¹⁸ Ireland, M. J. and Gartner, S. S. (2001). *op. cit.*, p. 563

¹¹⁹ DeFleur, M. L. and Westie, F. R.(1963). "Attitude as a Social Concept," *Social Forces*, 42(1), p. 19

which focuses on the latent processes, inner mechanisms and variables to determine and analyze the attitude is not preferred in this study since it becomes complex and awkward to measure the concept as DeFleur and Westie suggest.¹²⁰ Inner mechanisms of the individuals or the latent processes are subjective dynamics and measuring them can be the interest of psychologists. However, this study analyzes prime ministers' speeches and it is not possible to grasp the inner mechanisms of those with the methodology of this research.

The behavioral probability conception, which is preferred in this study, ignores the latent or inner processes but focuses on the more observable manifest messages or responses from an individual to the subject. This definition of attitude implies that there are definable sets of behavior which an individual can perform as responses towards the stimulus in question, that there is a determinable probability of such responses occurring in the behavior which the given individual shows in connection with the attitude object.¹²¹ Regarding this definition, in this study, the responses (verbal expressions-speeches) of the individual (the prime minister) towards the stimulus (the opposition parties) are analyzed to figure out the attitude of the governments toward opposition parties in Turkish politics.

In the relation between government and opposition parties, this research only observes the attitudes of the governments since as Pierskalla found, the incidents of compromise, deterrence or escalation to violence, that he studies, are actually products of the optimal choices of the government.¹²² Also, prime ministers' attitudes are selected to analyze the attitudes of the governments since as Heper claims, even during the multi-party period after 1945, political party leaders continued to have inordinate power and thus determined the nature of the relations with the opposition parties.¹²³

¹²⁰ DeFleur, M. L. and Westie, F. R.(1963). *op. cit.*, p. 29

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21

¹²² Pierskalla, J. H. (2009). *op. cit.*, p. 121

¹²³ Heper, M. (2000). *op. cit.*, p. 69

To sum up, as the unit of analysis of this research the speeches of the prime ministers that addressed the opposition parties, regardless of being represented in the assembly, are collected and analyzed.

3.4 The Cases Analyzed

There are three main periods in this research. The first period is the period of DP that starts with June, 1950 and ends May, 1960. This period is selected because this decade represents, after some failed attempts, the beginning of the multi-party politics of the Republic. Also, this period represents a party government period which provides an opportunity to observe the attitudes of single majority party toward the political opposition and an opportunity for a comparison with today.

The second period constitutes the AKP governments, which starts in March, 2003 and ends July, 2010. Although AKP came to power in November, 2002 the period before March, 2003 is excluded. The prime-ministry of Abdullah Gül was accepted to be temporary by both government and opposition parties since they were preparing constitutional changes for the banned leader of AKP. As expected, the period with Gül did not last long and the leader of AKP became prime minister in March, 2003. Since Gül's period is a very short and temporary period, it is assumed that it would not represent the actual nature of Turkish politics and thus this period is not included in this study. Also, AKP is still the government after July, 2010 but the period in this research ends with the summer recess of the TBMM in 2010.

The AKP period is selected because as DP represents the beginning of multi-party politics, AKP represents the contemporary nature of attitudes of the governments toward opposition parties. Including both AKP and DP provides the ground for a comparison between the first and last decade of multi-party politics. This comparison is significant to see the development of the relation between government and opposition parties depending on the experience of multi-party politics.

Regarding Turkish political history, it could be questioned why the other periods of party governments are excluded from the study. During the multi-party politics, the Motherland Party (ANAP) represents a long period of party government from 1983 to

1991. Also, the party government of the Justice Party (AP) from 1965 to 1971 could also be used as a period for observation. First of all, the party governments of ANAP and AP are not but the AKP government is included since AKP represents the current situation of the Turkish politics. Also, those two cases of party governments are not included regarding the limits of this study. This will be discussed in the limitations part as well, but the scope of this study does not allow including all of the party government examples of Turkish political history.

The third period analyzed in this study includes the coalition governments. These governments are included to compare the attitudes of the party governments with coalitions toward political oppositions. This period starts in March, 1996 and ends in November, 2002. Thus, it is the 20th and 21st terms of the TBMM. More precisely, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th and 57th Republican governments are taken into consideration. Only the last two terms of the TBMM with coalition governments are selected and others are excluded in the light of practical considerations and the scope of the study. Also, a span of a recent seven years with coalitions is considered to be sufficiently long to provide data for an observation of the attitudes of coalition governments towards political opposition.

The period between 1974 and 1980 represents another long period with coalition governments. This period is not included since; first of all, 1990s represent a more contemporary situation of Turkish politics and includes a longer heritage of multi-party politics. It provides an opportunity to make a more up-to-date observation on Turkish politics.

Second, and more important, point is that the 1970s is already an extraordinary period of high polarization and competition between the parties. As Uyar argues, a government was established including the name ‘front’ for the first time and social events, right-left clash and terrorism were increasing gradually during this period.¹²⁴ Also, Gunter describes Turkish politics during the 1970s as the period of instability in which political leaders, because of the institutional and sociological causes went into polarization and competition although they appeared as moderate proponents of

¹²⁴ Uyar, H. (2001). *op. cit.*, p. 24

western-style democracy.¹²⁵ Also, according to Sayarı, during the 1970s, the tradition of intense intra-elite cleavages and antagonisms in Turkish politics became even more accentuated as a result of the increasing ideological distance between parties. While the AP's leadership sought to portray the CHP as a party infiltrated with militant Leftists, the CHP often denounced its principal competitor for collaborating with fascist political forces.¹²⁶ In his recent article, Sayarı reemphasized that especially the second half of the 1970s was one of the deadliest episodes of political violence and terrorism in Turkish modern history.¹²⁷

According to these interpretations, the 1970s was an extraordinary time period in which polarization was already quite high. Why 1950s or 2000s are included in the study which also reflect portrays of polarization between political parties can be questioned. However, the polarization in these periods remained between the political parties and there was no mass violence between the poles of the society. In this respect, 1970s were an extraordinary period in which political polarization, and moreover, mass violence were wide spread between the social groups of the society.¹²⁸ Thus, the period of 1970s is not included which assumed to be unrepresentative for the nature of Turkish politics. Instead, the coalitions of 1990s are preferred rather than the 1970s, since the 1990s carry a longer experience of multi-party politics, and political violence and terrorism were not present as they were present in the 1970s.

Finally, one may argue that the 1990s can also be problematic since there is the 'Democratic Front' which is another kind of polarization that is observed during the 1970s. However, the initiative of establishing a front did not last long and the alliance for the national elections (1999) did not come true.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Gunter, M. M. (1989). *op. cit.*, p. 66

¹²⁶ Sayarı, S. (1978). *op. cit.*, p. 50

¹²⁷ Sayarı, S. (2010). "Political Violence and Terrorism in Turkey, 1976-1980: A Retrospective Analysis," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 22(2), p. 198

¹²⁸ See Şahhüseyinoğlu, H. N. (1999). *Yakın Tarihimizde Kitleli Katliamlar* [Mass Massacres in Our Late History]. Ankara: İtalik Yayınları.

¹²⁹ Uyar, H. (2001). *op. cit.*, p. 28

3.5 Data Collection and Sampling

As already discussed, speeches of the prime ministers regarding the opposition are the source for the data. These speeches are interpreted through some questions which are explained below. To code, two different types of units are used. Coding for some of the questions is done as full-text coding using each speech as a single unit. For some of the other questions each sentence from the speeches is coded as a single unit.¹³⁰ The reason for this separation is explained with the questions that are prepared for coding.

Source for these speeches is the daily newspapers. First of all, newspapers are the most common mediums between politicians and the public. So it is possible to follow the discourse of the politicians as well as the reactions of the governments towards opposition parties from the newspapers. Also, newspapers are the most proper source in a sense that they cover all the periods that are going to be studied in this research, they are properly maintained and easy to access. Other kinds of sources, like TV or radio channels' databases, are not available for all of the periods that are included in this research and also it is not as easy to access to these kinds of sources as it is to the newspapers.

Considering the length of the selected periods, only two different newspapers have been selected for each term. It can be claimed that the selection and framing of the Prime Ministers' speeches may change according to the stance of the newspapers. Since, there are two different newspapers selected for each term to minimize any possible bias. One of the newspapers is thought to be pro-government and the other one is against the government.¹³¹ Having only two different newspapers still could be considered as a limitation but the discourse of the newspapers is not the focal point of this research. Rather than that, the discourse and content of the speeches of the prime ministers are important for this research. Newspapers are used only as the agent to acquire these data.

¹³⁰ See Appendix 3 for the table that presents the questions and their unit of analysis.

¹³¹ For the categorization of the Turkish newspapers see Topuz, H. (2003). *Türk Basın Tarihi* [History of Turkish Press]. İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.

For all of the three periods, Cumhuriyet is selected as one of the newspapers since it is available for all of the periods. Also, for all of the periods Cumhuriyet represents the newspaper which is more or less against the governments.

As the pro-government newspaper, two newspapers, Yeni Sabah and Zaman, are included in the research. For the DP period, Yeni Sabah is selected as an eminent pro-government newspaper. Actually, for the DP period, Zafer and Ulus are perceived to be the actual pro and anti government newspapers.¹³² However, to avoid a complete partisan framing, more moderate newspapers are preferred. For the period of coalition governments, Zaman is chosen as the pro-government newspaper, since Yeni Sabah was not available after 1964.¹³³ For the AKP period, as well, Zaman is chosen as the pro-government newspaper.

To sample the data, first, a purposive sampling method which involves the researcher making a decision as to what units he or she deems appropriate to include in the sample is implemented.¹³⁴ In this regard the data are collected only for the times when the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) was open and working. The purpose in doing this sampling is to reduce the large amounts of data regarding the scope of the study, and also, it is presupposed that most of the speeches would be made when the National Assembly is active. Therefore, the periods of winter and summer recesses of the TBMM are excluded. Then the remaining periods, in a monthly manner, are randomly divided among two newspapers with intention of getting equal amount of data from each of the newspapers. There sure are alternative methods for collecting the data. For instance, every other month could be collected from both of the newspapers but the researcher, here, intends to include all of the months in which the National Assembly is open for the purpose of continuousness. Thus, after distributing the months to the newspapers, the speeches that do not address the opposition are excluded and the

¹³² Topuz, H. (2003). *Türk Basın Tarihi* [History of Turkish Press]. İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, pp. 223-224

¹³³ Ibid., p. 244

¹³⁴ Neuendorf, A. K. (2002). *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, p. 88

remaining speeches addressing the opposition are selected after a research on the newspapers.

Below are the tables showing the formation of the sample:

Table 1: Sample for the DP Period

| | Number of months distributed to each newspaper | Number of speeches collected from each newspaper | Percentage of the speeches collected from each newspaper (%) |
|------------|--|--|--|
| Cumhuriyet | 37 | 89 | 50 |
| Yeni Sabah | 38 | 89 | 50 |
| Total | 75 | 182 | 100 |

Table 2: Sample for the Coalition Governments Period

| | Number of months distributed to each newspaper | Number of speeches collected from each newspaper | Percentage of the speeches collected from each newspaper (%) |
|------------|--|--|--|
| Cumhuriyet | 31 | 53 | 43.8 |
| Zaman | 33 | 68 | 56.2 |
| Total | 64 | 121 | 100 |

Table 3: Sample for the AKP Period

| | Number of months distributed to each newspaper | Number of speeches collected from each newspaper | Percentage of the speeches collected from each newspaper (%) |
|------------|--|--|--|
| Cumhuriyet | 37 | 184 | 38.3 |
| Zaman | 36 | 297 | 61.7 |
| Total | 73 | 482 | 100 |

Overall, an almost equal numbers of months are distributed to each newspaper. However, the sample includes more speeches from Zaman, especially for the AKP period. It is an expected outcome since Zaman is considered to be a pro-government newspaper and so it allocates more space to the government than Cumhuriyet.

3.6 Content Analysis

Content analysis, the methodology used in this research, is defined by Berelson as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.”¹³⁵ However, the method has gone beyond only being an analysis of manifest content. With the combination of the analysis of latent and manifest messages, content analysis became a widely used method in social sciences especially for text analysis. Since this research intends to investigate the attitude of the governments through texts, it is assumed that the content analysis is a proper way to do that.

3.7 Coding Questions and Coding Guide

To measure and reveal the attitude of the governments, some questions are formed regarding the speeches collected. These questions are formulated to capture the themes and streams in the speeches of the prime ministers. These questions require both manifest and latent coding types for the analysis. Some questions below require a manifest coding which is “a type of content analysis coding in which a researcher first develops a list of words, phrases, or symbols and then locates them in a communication medium.”¹³⁶ Other questions require a latent coding which is “a type of content analysis coding in which a researcher identifies subjective meaning such as themes or motifs and then systematically locates them in a communication medium.”¹³⁷ Depending on the questions formulated the data are coded and are available for results and findings.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software program is used to code the data. Below are the questions formulated for the coding, their purposes and coding guides:

¹³⁵ Berelson, B. (1952). *Content Analysis in Communications Research*. NY: Free Press, p. 18

¹³⁶ Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social Research Method, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Boston: Pearson Education Inc., p. 325

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 326

1) How does the sentence consider the opposition?

- a. Negative
- b. Positive
- c. Neutral
- d. Uncertain

This overall question is to reveal the general attitude of the government toward the opposition parties. This is an independent question which provides data for cross tabulations with other questions.

The unit of analysis in this question is the sentence. Since some of the speeches include both positive and negative expressions together, rather than coding one speech as a single unit, it is preferred to divide every speech into sentences and code accordingly for a proper coding.

The unit is coded as '*negative*' when the subject sentence includes any kind of criticism, insult, aggression, competitive behavior or accusation toward the opposition. The unit is coded as '*positive*' when the subject sentence includes any kind of appreciation, praise, cooperative expressions toward the opposition. The unit is coded as '*neutral*' when the subject sentence is balanced or contains neither positive nor negative attitude toward the opposition. The unit is coded as '*uncertain*' if the coder is uncertain whether the sentence is positive, negative or neutral.

2) Who is the addressee in the sentence?

- a. Only one of the opposition parties (*indicating the name of the party*)
- b. More than one opposition party
- c. Opposition in general

This question intends to reveal which actor has been taken in consideration as opposition by the governments. This question is to understand whether the government focuses on the main opposition party only or considers the other

opposition parties as well. Also, regarding the first question with a cross tabulation, possible differences of attitudes towards opposition parties can be observed.

The unit of analysis in this question is the sentence. Since some of the speeches address different actors together, sentence coding is preferred for an accurate coding.

The coder considers the active opposition parties in the subject period and codes the data accordingly. If the party itself, the leader of the party, or any member of the party is addressed then the coder codes the name of that political party. Some sentences are directed at more than one opposition party so in that situation, the coder codes as 'more than one opposition party'. Finally, some of the sentences do not address any opposition party or its members, but address the opposition as the opposition. Then the coder codes as 'opposition in general'. (See Appendix 2 for the list of opposition parties and their leaders)

3) Which one of the subjects below is the focused issue in the sentence?

- a. Economics
- b. Foreign Policy
- c. Domestic Politics
- d. Multiple issues
- e. Not issue based

Regarding the data, it is observed that some speeches specifically address concrete issues as economic policies, foreign policy issues or domestic politics.¹³⁸ On the other hand, some of them relate to abstract issues where there is no concrete issue to be discussed. This question classifies the sentences according to their relation with the categories above.

The unit of analysis is again the sentence since some of the speeches discuss different issues together.

¹³⁸ See Appendix 4 which includes the topics of the speeches for categorization of the speeches regarding the issues in this question.

This question is important in the sense that it reveals whether the government-opposition relations occurred mostly on concrete issues or on abstract issues. Also, combining with the first question investigating the attitude of the governments regarding different concrete or abstract issues is intended.

- 4) How does the speech address the leader/leaders of the opposition party/parties in person?
- a. Negative
 - b. Positive
 - c. Not Mentioned
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Uncertain

Regarding the data, prime ministers seem to prefer distinguishing between the party and its leader. This attitude is important in the sense that it gives an idea about whether the opposition had been considered as an institution or it is recognized through the individual leaders. This question reveals how frequently the leaders of the opposition parties in person are addressed in the speeches and what the attitude is toward them.

The unit of analysis is the speech because it is observed that most of the time a single party leader had been addressed in a single speech. Since the number of speeches including multiple party leaders are rare, coding speeches as single units is preferred.

The coder considers the speeches addressing only the opposition party/parties and evaluates whether the speech addresses the leaders in person or not. (See Appendix 2 for the list of main opposition parties and their leaders)

The unit is coded as '*negative*' when the subject sentence includes any kind of criticism, insult, aggression, competitive behavior, or accusation toward the leader of the opposition party. The unit is coded as '*positive*' when the subject sentence

includes any kind of appreciation, praise, or cooperative expressions, toward the leader of the opposition party. The unit is coded as *'not mentioned'* if the sentence does not address the leader of the opposition party. The unit is coded as *'neutral'* when the subject sentence contains neither a positive nor negative attitude toward the leader of the opposition party or if the coder is uncertain about the attitude in the sentence. Finally, unit is coded *'uncertain'* when the unit is not consistent with the other categories.

5) Does the speech include a pejorative word regarding the opposition?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Regarding the data it is observed that in some cases prime ministers prefer to go beyond criticism and address the opposition with some pejorative or insulting words. This question reveals the frequency of this choice and provides an opportunity to interpret the attitude of government in this regard.

The coder relies on a glossary for the coding. This glossary is a custom dictionary which is constructed by the researcher through a research and immersion in the message pool.¹³⁹ If the speech includes one of the pejorative words listed in Appendix 5 then the speech is coded as *'yes'*. Otherwise it is coded as *'no'*.

6) Which one of the below is addressed with a pejorative word?

- a. The leader of the main opposition party in person
- b. The leader/leaders of another opposition party/parties
- c. The main opposition party
- d. Another opposition party/parties
- e. Opposition in general

¹³⁹ Neuendorf, A. K. (2002). *op. cit.*, p. 127

This question, with a cross tabulation with the fifth question, provides data to see which one of the actors above is subjected to pejorative/insulting words mostly.

The coder considers the opposition parties and their leaders and codes accordingly (See Appendix 2).

7) Does the speech include any kind of threat toward the opposition?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Uncertain

Threat is defined as “messages of intention by the Party to behave in ways that are detrimental to the interests of the Other, depending on what the latter does or does not do.”¹⁴⁰

Occasionally, governments preferred to threaten the opposition regarding their opinions, critics, or policies. This behavior is important because threats constitute one of the conflictual and contentious tactics. This question intends to investigate how often the government applies this behavior.

The complete speech, rather than sentence, is the unit of analysis for this question. The speech is coded as ‘yes’ if there is any expression of threat toward the opposition. Otherwise the speech is coded as ‘no’. If the coder is not sure if an expression is a threat or not, then the speech is coded as ‘uncertain’.

8) How the interests of the nation interrelated with the opposition?

- a. Negative
- b. Positive
- c. Not Mentioned
- d. Neutral
- e. Uncertain

¹⁴⁰ Jeffrey, R. *et al.* (1994). *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement*. NY: McGraw-Hill. p. 57

Apter claims, in the new nations, fear that produces factionalism, corruption, and separatism is pervasive.¹⁴¹ This situation is present in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire and in the politics of the Turkish Republic as well. Mardin claims, the first opposition party in the Ottoman Empire was accused of treason by the Party of Union and Progress and this pattern was repeated with other opposition parties.¹⁴² As also Özcan claims, the state is the center in political activities. Thus, any kind of political opposition becomes treason.¹⁴³ In this research, accusation of treason, betrayal to the nation, state, or country, fear of separatism or split are all titled under the concept of the *interests of the nation*. To answer the question that why democracy in Turkey has still not become satisfactorily entrenched, Heper claims that the state elite, like military officers, thinks that some in the political elite place political party or even personal interests above the long-term interests of the nation.¹⁴⁴ This research investigates if the political elites exploit this concept against each other.

This question intends to reveal how the governments exploited the concept of the interests of the nation regarding the opposition. The results from this question provide data which show the frequency of accusation of the opposition and delegitimizing the presence of the political opposition on the basis of undermining the interests of the nation.

In this question, again, the whole speech is the unit of analysis. The speech is coded as ‘*negative*’ if the speech blames or criticizes the opposition for undermining the interests of the nation or betraying the interests of the nation. The speech is coded as ‘*positive*’ if the speech perceives the actions of the opposition for supporting the interests of the nation. Regarding the expressions on ‘the interests of the nation’, if the concept is not present in the speech then it is coded as ‘*not*

¹⁴¹ Apter, D. E. (1962). *op. cit.*, p. 156

¹⁴² Mardin, Ş. (1966). *op. cit.*, p. 377

¹⁴³ Özcan, A. (2000). *Derin Devlet ve Muhalefet Geleneği* [Deep State and the Tradition of Opposition]. İstanbul: Bakış Yayınları, p. 136

¹⁴⁴ Heper, M. (2000). *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77

mentioned'.¹⁴⁵ If the speech is neither negative nor positive or the tone is balanced then the speech is coded as '*neutral*.' Finally, if the coder is not sure the speech is coded as '*uncertain*'.

9) How is the attitude of the speech considering the past?

- a. Negative
- b. Positive
- c. Not Mentioned
- d. Neutral
- e. Uncertain

It is observed from the data that governments refer to past events and history. This question provides data on how frequently the governments develop their relation with the opposition through the past and how the attitude regarding the past experiences is.

The whole speech is coded as a single unit for this question. The unit is coded as '*negative*' if it presents criticism, insult, aggression, or accusation toward the opposition regarding the past. The unit is coded as '*positive*' if it presents appreciation, praise or cooperative expressions toward the opposition regarding the past. If there is no reference to the past then the unit is coded as '*not mentioned*'. If the attitude is neither negative nor positive or the tone is balanced then it is coded as '*neutral*'. Finally, if the attitude is not certain or if the coder is not sure then the unit is coded as '*uncertain*'.

10) How is the attitude of the speech considering the future?

- a. Negative
- b. Positive
- c. Not Mentioned
- d. Neutral
- e. Uncertain

¹⁴⁵ See Appendix 6 for the expressions regarding the concept of the interests of the nation.

This question is the opposite of the previous question. It is intended understand whether the prime ministers refers to future relations and events regarding the government-opposition relations. It is expected and understandable that the governments are mostly negative about the relations between opposition and government in the past. However, it is important to see if there is a hope or an effort to construct positive relations in the future.

The whole speech is coded as a single unit for this question. The speech is coded as *'negative'* if there is a negative reference regarding the future relations between government and opposition. It is coded as *'positive'* if the speech includes a positive, hopeful or constructive meaning regarding the future relations. If there is no reference toward the future then the speech is coded as *'not mentioned'*. If the reference toward the future is not negative or positive then it is coded as *'neutral'*. In a case when the meaning is not certain or the coder is not sure about the meaning then it is coded as *'uncertain'*.

3.8 Reliability Test

As Neuendorf claims, “to stand on indisputable ground, content analysts must be confident that their data mean the same thing for everyone who uses them.”¹⁴⁶ In other words, the data must be replicable and verifiable for a proper research. Although the coding of the whole data set is completed by a single coder, since large numbers of units are coded, it is a significant point to measure the reliability and reproducibility of the coding questions. For this reason a reliability test is implemented before coding all of the data and obtaining results.¹⁴⁷ It should be noted that only the fifth question was omitted in the reliability test since the coding for that question is made through a glossary that leaves subjectivity out of consideration.

¹⁴⁶ Neuendorf, A. K. (2002). *op. cit.*, p. 211

¹⁴⁷ To conduct the reliability test, a scholar from the Conflict Analysis and Resolution discipline voluntarily coded a part of the sample. The same part also coded by the researcher and measurement of Kappa is applied on both of the coders' results to reveal the reliability level.

For this test, Cohen’s Kappa is used which is also available in SPSS. Kappa is a statistic that measures how much better than chance the agreement is between a pair of coders on the presence or absence of binary themes in texts.¹⁴⁸

The results of the reliability test for each question are given in Table 5. However, before presenting the results, it is important to mention how much inter-coder agreement is enough for Kappa measurement. In fact there are no certain scores about this issue. According to Bernard, “many researchers are satisfied with kappa values of around 0.70, while others like to shoot for 0.80 and higher.”¹⁴⁹ The table below, presented by Landis and Koch, can be referred to evaluate the reliability of the coding questions of this research.

Table 4:Kappa Scores Categorization¹⁵⁰

| Kappa | Interpretation |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| <0 | Poor Agreement |
| 0.0-0.20 | Slight Agreement |
| 0.21-0.40 | Fair Agreement |
| 0.41-0.60 | Moderate Agreement |
| 0.61-0.80 | Substantial Agreement |
| 0.81-1.00 | Almost Perfect Agreement |

¹⁴⁸ Bernard, H. R. (2000). *Social Research Methods*. California: Sage Publications, p. 460

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 461

¹⁵⁰ Landis, J. R. and Koch, G. G. (1977). “The Measurement of Observer Agreement for Categorical Data,” *Biometrics*, 33(1), p. 165

Based on Kappa's measurement, the results of the comparison of the two coders for the questions employed in this study are in Table 5:

Table 5: Reliability Test Results (Kappa Scores)

| Question | Value | Interpretation |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| #1 | 0.698 | Substantial Agreement |
| #2 | 0.721 | Substantial Agreement |
| #3 | 0.691 | Substantial Agreement |
| #4 | 0.684 | Substantial Agreement |
| #6 | 0.729 | Substantial Agreement |
| #7 | 1 | Almost Perfect Agreement |
| #8 | 0.689 | Substantial Agreement |
| #9 | 0.641 | Substantial Agreement |
| #10 | 0.651 | Substantial Agreement |

Substantial agreements are acquired for all of the questions except for question 7 in which an almost perfect agreement is achieved. It is tenable to argue that the results of the reliability test for the coded questions have achieved their purpose of establishing the reliability of the data in question.

4 FINDINGS

This chapter, first of all, presents the results on the comparison of two party governments of the 1950s versus the 2000s. With this comparison the first hypothesis of this research will be tested. In other words, it is intended to investigate if the length of the experience of multi-party politics had affected the attitudes of the ruling parties toward the opposition parties. As it was stated, the comparison of party governments is done with the DP and AKP party governments.

The results on the comparison of party and coalition governments will be presented in this chapter as well. This comparison corresponds to the second hypothesis of this research. Whether a significant difference between the attitudes of the party governments and coalition governments toward the opposition parties exists or not is questioned. In comparison with the party governments that are given above, the coalition governments between 1996 and 2002 are included in the analysis to observe the difference of the attitudes between the party governments and coalition governments toward the opposition parties.

The tables and charts below include the findings both for the party governments and coalition governments.

4.1 General View on the Consideration of the Opposition

Table 6: Consideration of the Opposition Parties by Governing Parties

| How does the sentence consider the opposition? | | DP (%) | AKP (%) | Coalitions (%) |
|--|-----------|--------|---------|----------------|
| | Negative | 64.7 | 84.7 | 52.8 |
| | Neutral | 17.0 | 7.3 | 23.5 |
| | Positive | 16.5 | 3.4 | 21.8 |
| | Uncertain | 1.8 | 4.7 | 2.0 |
| | Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| | N | 1018 | 4041 | 400 |

Table 6 presents the results for the general consideration of the opposition parties by the governments. When the two party governments are compared, the from the first two columns show that neither the DP's nor AKP's prime ministers had positive or at least neutral stance toward the opposition parties. In both of the periods, both positive and neutral interactions represent minor percentages where negatives have the biggest portions. In fact, it is expected, and somehow acceptable, to have negative results to be dominant since the opposition parties are the rivals of the government and it would not be realistic to have, most of the time, positive interactions. Yet, the great difference between the negative and positive results is significant to see the solid negative stance toward the opposition parties. First two columns of this table suggest that opposition parties are mostly treated with negative attitudes.

Still, what is more striking is the increase of negative sentences and decrease of the positive sentences from the DP to AKP period. In fact, DP in particular reflects a hopeful picture. The sum of neutral and positive percentages is somehow balanced with the negative percentage although it is still lower. In the case of AKP, while the percentage of negatives is rising significantly, the positive sentences tended to disappear. The balanced attitude replaced with more negative attitude toward the opposition in the AKP period.

The general picture on the attitude of the DP and AKP governments toward the opposition parties shows that in both of the cases the percentage of negative sentences is

more than the others, but in spite of the long experience of multi-party politics, in the contemporary period negative attitude becomes considerably dominant.

When the different types of governments are compared the picture is different. The percentage of negative sentences becomes almost equal with the sum of positive and neutral sentences in the coalition governments' period. In other words, if one of the two sentences of the prime minister is negative toward the opposition then the other one is neutral or positive. The result on the coalition governments presents a hopeful picture for the government-opposition relations and the development of political opposition in politics when it is compared with the party governments' results.

Figure 1: Overall Consideration of the Opposition through Years(1950-1960)-Democratic Party

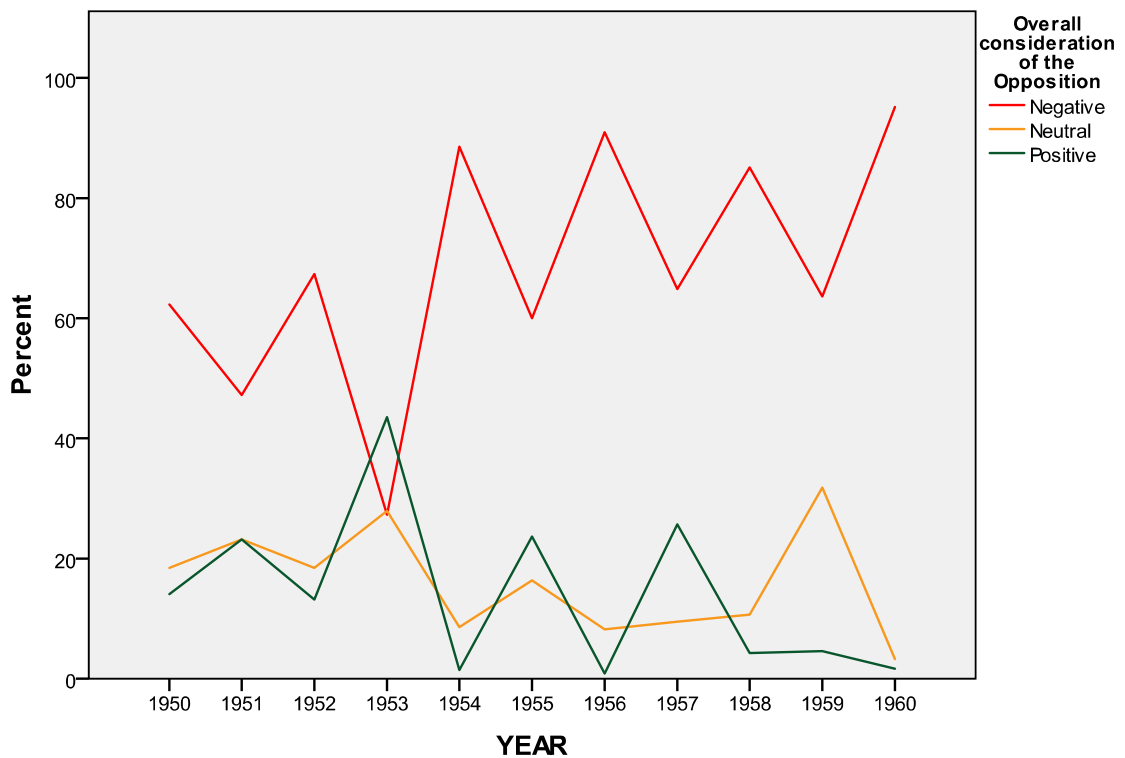


Figure 1 shows the distribution of negative, positive, and neutral sentences during the DP government throughout the years. There are two significant points in this figure. First of all, although there are some fluctuations, the ratio of negative sentences is always higher than the positive and neutral sentences except the year 1953. In fact, until 1953 the percentage of positive and neutral sentences had been increasing. This could be interpreted that during the first years of its government DP wanted to acquire

at least stable relations with the opposition parties. DP was elected as a hope for democracy. Democratic Party leaders had promised for the democratic developments which also include the presence of political opposition in the political sphere. In this regard, it is observed that the interaction with the opposition parties developed positively during the first years.

However, with the 1954 national elections the situation started to change. In the next years, the ratio of positive and neutral sentences decreased to very low levels and the presence of negative sentences increased. Even in some years the frequencies of positives in the sample of this research decreased to zero. The hopeful and balanced attitude toward the opposition seem to be lasted only for the first period of the DP government. During the second and third periods the negative attitude becomes more dominant. The internal dynamics of the DP period which shape this distribution is not in the scope of this research, but it can be suggested from this chart that in the first period when the ruling party was fresh, and trying to secure its position in the government, it initiated less negative or more cooperative attitudes toward the opposition parties. However, with the second and third periods of its government the negative attitude of the party government emerges.

Figure 2: Overall Consideration of the Opposition through Years(2003-2010)- Justice and Development Party

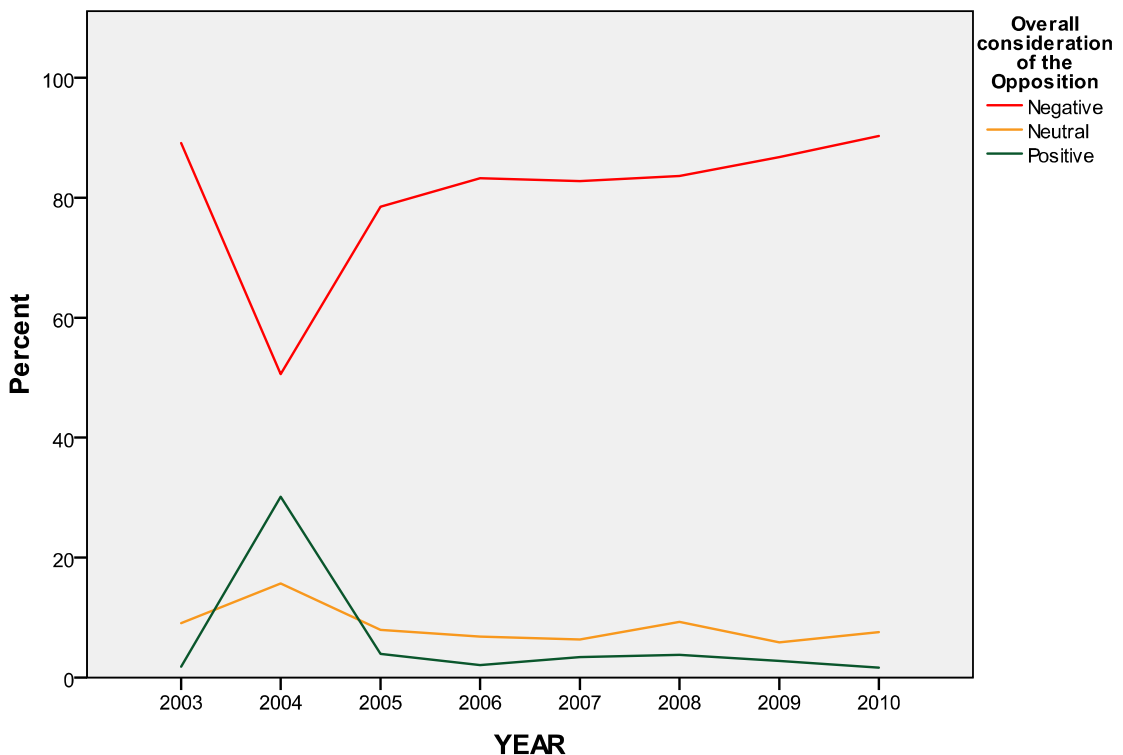


Figure 2 presents the results for the AKP government. Similar with the DP's results, the first year of the AKP government constitutes a time of cooperation and compromise with the opposition. The percentage of negative sentences is at its lowest point, and the percentage of positives is at its highest level. Like the DP, the AKP was elected with a hope of democratization and it came to government with a support of wide consensus. So, AKP could have intended to keep good relations with the opposition parties. However, this balanced attitude did not last long and starting with only one year after its election, the AKP reflected totally negative attitudes toward the opposition parties. For the rest of the years of its reign in government the frequencies of positive and neutral remain low, but the frequency of negatives increases steadily.

For both the DP and the AKP, as the Figures 1 and 2 together represent, ~~that~~ the longer the party government stays in power the more the positive attitudes decrease and the presence of negative attitudes increase. Both of the periods reflect a positive state in the beginning, but negative in the remaining.

However, there are three significant differences appear when these two figures are compared. Firstly, the AKP's length of positive attitude toward the opposition parties is shorter than that of the DP's. The first three years of DP rule reflects a balance between negative and positive attitudes. Moreover, in 1953 the percentage of positive sentences exceeds the percentage of negative sentences. However, the similar balanced period last only for one year in the AKP government.

The second significant difference is that during the DP's reign in power although the percentages of negative sentences are higher, there is fluctuation throughout the years. The DP does not present a solid negative attitude toward opposition parties. However, the AKP's picture is quite different. After its first year of government, AKP reflects a solid and continuing negative stance toward opposition parties.

Finally, the difference between the percentages of negative and positive sentences is higher in the AKP period when it is compared with the DP government. Thus, these two figures suggest that despite the long experience of multi-party politics, the contemporary situation of government's attitude toward the opposition parties is more negative than the beginning of multi-party politics.

Figure 3: Overall Consideration of the Opposition through Years(1996-2002)- Coalitions

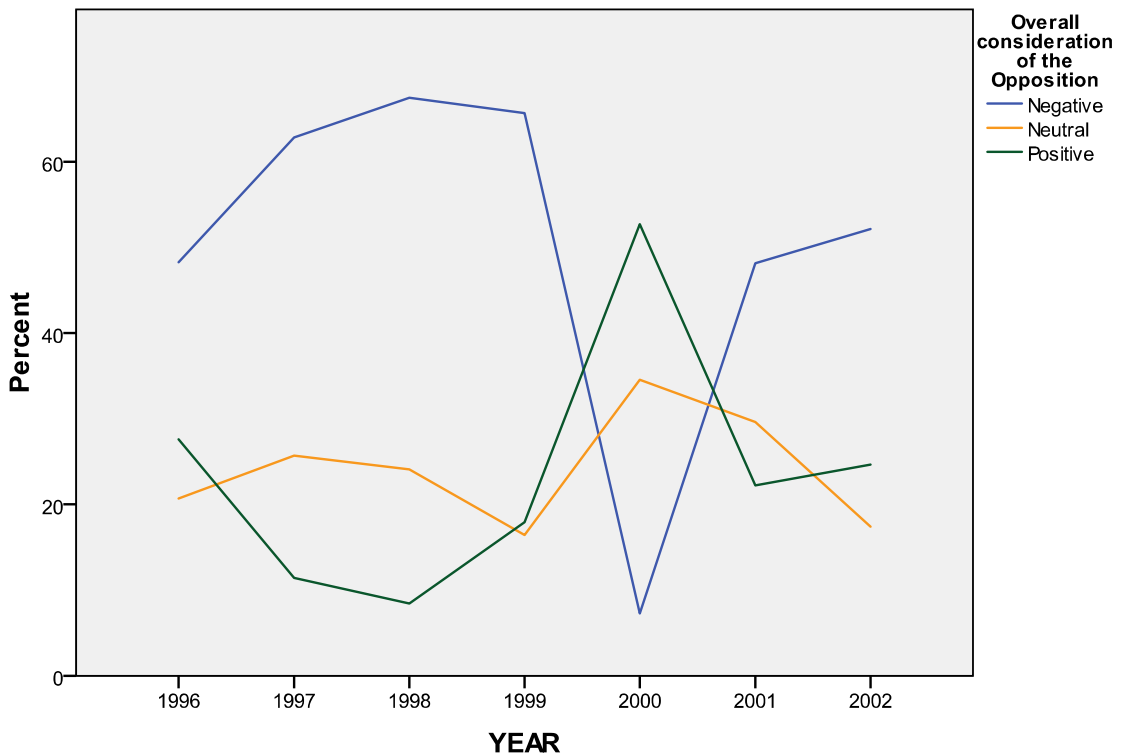


Figure 3 shows the results for the coalition governments over the years. Firstly, percentages of negatives and others seem to be more balanced when they are compared with the party governments. Coalition governments appear to be less negative toward the opposition parties when they are compared with the party governments.

Secondly, the last three years represent the most positive picture on the attitude of the governments toward the opposition parties. The period until 1999 does not present a stable political life since there are several different coalition governments with short periods of ruling. None of those coalition governments felt themselves secure and strong enough to develop better relations with the opposition parties. However, with the 1999 national elections, a stronger and more stable coalition government was formed between DSP, MHP, and ANAP. Between 1999 and 2002 the negative and positive attitudes represent their most balanced period. This balance is significant since it provides a ground for constructive and cooperative relations between the government and opposition parties.

These figures show a common point between party and coalition governments. The most positive pictures appear in the cases of DP and AKP governments during their first years. The same applies for the 57th Republican government as well. The year 2000 represents the most positive situation during the government of DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition. It can be interpreted that although the coalition governments reflect much more positive predisposition of the governments' leaders toward the opposition parties than the party governments, regardless of the government type the first years of the governments represent more positive picture toward the opposition parties than the rest of their governing periods since the elections are just over, both government and opposition are trying to determine their position and relation between the political actors are just new and fresh.

4.2 Who is the Opposition?

In this part, the characteristics of the opposition will be analyzed. Table 7 shows which actors were considered by the governments as the reference point of the opposition.

Table 7: The Addresse

| Who is addressed in the sentence? | DP (%) | AKP (%) | Coalitions (%) |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------|----------------|
| Republican People's Party | 59.2 | 42.2 | 22.8 |
| Opposition in General | 36.9 | 40.8 | 43.0 |
| Nation Party | 1.6 | - | - |
| Liberty Party | 1.5 | - | - |
| Nationalist Movement Party | - | 8.0 | - |
| HADEP & DEHAP & DTP & BDP | - | 3.8 | 3.3 |
| Young Party | - | 0.8 | - |
| RP & FP & SP | - | - | 13.5 |
| True Path Party | - | - | 7.8 |
| Justice and Development Party | - | - | 3.5 |
| Motherland Party | - | - | 2.0 |
| Multiple Parties | 0.5 | 3.8 | 2.0 |
| Others | 0.3 | 0.6 | 2.1 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | 1018 | 4041 | 400 |

Table 7 indicates that during the party governments the main opposition party (CHP) is the actor which is mostly addressed in the speeches of the prime ministers. An interesting point is that although the CHP was not the main opposition party during the period of coalition governments, it appeared as the party which was mostly addressed by the prime ministers of the time. The main opposition party of the period of coalition governments, RP (then FP and SP), comes after the CHP.

Another significant result is about the category of ‘opposition in general’. This category refers to the statements of the prime ministers when they do not address any of the opposition parties in particular but address the whole opposition. In a considerable portion of the sample, the prime ministers of the party governments and also coalitions preferred to address the entire opposition without identifying an opposition party in particular.

During the party governments, in both of the cases, prime ministers did not intend to address other opposition parties much. However, if the coalition period is compared with the party governments there appears to be a more balanced distribution among the opposition parties. This might be mostly because in the period of party governments the TBMM includes less number of parties than the period of coalition governments. So, the prime ministers of the party governments do not need to address other opposition parties which are out of the Assembly and are not effective in the politics.

**Table 8: Overall consideration of the Opposition * The addressee in the sentence
Crosstabulation-DP**

| | | The addressee in the sentence | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------|--------|
| | | CHP (%) | Opposition in General (%) | HP (%) | MP (%) |
| Overall Consideration | Negative | 66.2 | 61.7 | 73.3 | 75.0 |
| | Neutral | 17.1 | 17.3 | 13.3 | 6.3 |
| | Positive | 15.4 | 18.4 | 13.3 | 18.8 |
| | Uncertain | 1.3 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | | 603 | 376 | 15 | 16 |

Note: Cramer's $V^{151} = 0.26$ (Statistically significant at 0.95 confidence level)

¹⁵¹ Cramer's V presents the association between two different variables. It varies from 0 (no association) to 1 (complete association).

**Table 9: Overall consideration of the Opposition * The addressee in the sentence
Crosstabulation-AKP**

| | | The addressee in the sentence | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| | | CHP (%) | Opposition in General (%) | DEHAP & DTP & BDP (%) | MHP (%) |
| Overall Consideration | Negative | 87.1 | 80.9 | 89.5 | 87.8 |
| | Neutral | 6.1 | 9.3 | 4.3 | 4.6 |
| | Positive | 2.0 | 5.2 | 2.5 | 1.5 |
| | Uncertain | 4.8 | 4.6 | 3.7 | 6.1 |
| Total | | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | | 1707 | 1649 | 156 | 322 |

Note: Cramer's V= 0.15 (Statistically significant at 0.95 confidence level)

Tables 8 and 9 show that the negative attitudes toward each opposition party increase in the AKP period when it is compared with the DP period. This supports the previous result that the negative position becomes more dominant in the AKP period. Also, these tables show that whether the addressee is CHP, another party, or the opposition in general the percentages of negative and positive sentences are close to each other in both of the cases. It appears that the prime ministers of the party governments addressed the CHP the most, but they did not assume different attitudes toward different opposition parties and prime ministers treated all of the opposition parties negatively.

**Table 10: Overall consideration of the Opposition * The addressee in the sentence
Crosstabulation-Coalitions**

| | | The addressee in the sentence | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------|-----------|
| | | Opposition in General (%) | CHP (%) | FP (%) | DYP (%) | AKP (%) | HADEP (%) |
| Overall consideration of the Opposition | Negative | 39.0 | 72.5 | 77.8 | 25.8 | 64.3 | 92.3 |
| | Neutral | 26.2 | 22.0 | 20.1 | 25.8 | 28.6 | 7.7 |
| | Positive | 32.6 | 4.4 | 2.1 | 38.7 | 7.1 | 0.0 |
| | Uncertain | 2.3 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 9.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | | 172 | 91 | 54 | 31 | 14 | 13 |

Note: Cramer's V= 0.35 (Statistically significant at 0.95 confidence level)

When the results for the coalition period are observed from Table 10, three interesting points appear. First of all, there is no positive sentence directed at the People's Democracy Party (HADEP) which gets most of its support from the Kurdish population of Turkey. When compared with the other opposition parties HADEP is the party with the highest frequency of negative attitude. Previously it was concluded that the coalition governments were the closest to have positive or at least neutral attitudes toward the opposition parties. However, this result appears to be invalid for the parties which are supported mostly by Kurds. This case is also apparent in the AKP period. According to Table 9, such parties of the AKP period like Democratic Society Party (DTP) and Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) get the highest frequency of negative attitude as well.

Secondly, as a single case, the True Path Party (DYP) appears as the opposition party which was addressed with positive sentences more than negatives. This is because DYP was a potential partner for a coalition government. Finally, the high level of positive and neutral results for the category of opposition in general is interesting. When an opposition party is addressed in particular then the negative attitude of the coalition governments appear to be similar with the party governments. However, in the category of opposition in general, the frequencies of positive and neutral sentences increase significantly. The positive stance of the coalition governments, which is presented in Table 6, is apparent if the opposition is addressed without an opposition party in particular. Otherwise, when an opposition party is addressed in the speeches of the prime ministers in particular, then the attitude of the coalition governments is similar with the party governments.

4.3 The Issues

This part includes the basic issues of the interaction between the governments and the opposition parties. Dividing speeches into their subjects provides a clear basis for the analysis. This table provides an opportunity to understand if the prime ministers assume different discourses regarding the issue categories. Table 11 below presents the distribution of the issues among the party and coalition governments.

Table 11: The Issue¹⁵²

| What is the issue in the sentence? | | DP (%) | AKP (%) | Coalitions (%) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------|---------|----------------|
| | Non Issue Based | 57.2 | 36.7 | 32.5 |
| | Domestic Politics | 30.2 | 54.1 | 59.5 |
| | Economics | 6.6 | 6.3 | 4.5 |
| | Foreign Policy | 5.1 | 2.8 | 3.5 |
| | Multiple Issues | 1.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 |
| | Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| | N | 1018 | 4041 | 400 |

Table 11 shows that among the concrete discussions, domestic politics appears as the most common issue category between the government and opposition in each period. Economy and foreign politics are not in consideration much in both party and coalition governments' periods. The significant difference, in this table, is that for the DP government most of the interactions were based on abstract issues. In the AKP government, as well as the coalition governments, most of the interactions were based on domestic politics. This suggests that in the contemporary period the interaction with the opposition occurred mostly on concrete issues and specifically on domestic politics.

Table 12: The Issue-DP

| Consideration of the Opposition * The Issue | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Democratic Party | | | | |
| | None of the Issues (%) | Domestic Politics (%) | Economics (%) | Foreign Policy (%) |
| Negative | 59.8 | 75.9 | 67.2 | 53.8 |
| Neutral | 15.8 | 16.6 | 22.4 | 25.0 |
| Positive | 22.5 | 5.5 | 10.4 | 19.2 |
| Uncertain | 1.9 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 1.9 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | 582 | 307 | 67 | 52 |

Note: Cramer's V= 0.15 (Statistically significant at 0.95 confidence level)

¹⁵² See Appendix 4 for the categories of the issues.

Table 13: The Issue-AKP

| Consideration of the Opposition * The Issue Justice and Development Party | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | Domestic Politics (%) | None of the Issues (%) | Economics (%) | Foreign Policy (%) |
| Negative | 82.6 | 86.6 | 95.3 | 75.0 |
| Neutral | 8.7 | 6.1 | 1.6 | 7.1 |
| Positive | 3.5 | 3.0 | 0.8 | 12.5 |
| Uncertain | 5.2 | 4.3 | 2.4 | 5.4 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | 2187 | 1485 | 254 | 112 |

Note: Cramer's V= 0.13 (Statistically significant at 0.95 confidence level)

Table 14: The Issue-Coalition Governments

| Consideration of the Opposition * The Issue Coalitions | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | Domestic Politics (%) | None of the Issues (%) | Economics (%) | Foreign Policy (%) |
| Negative | 46.6 | 65.4 | 66.7 | 21.4 |
| Neutral | 26.1 | 21.5 | 16.7 | 7.1 |
| Positive | 25.2 | 13.1 | 11.1 | 57.1 |
| Uncertain | 2.1 | 0.0 | 5.6 | 14.3 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | 238 | 130 | 18 | 14 |

Note: Cramer's V= 0.19 (Statistically significant at 0.95 confidence level)

Tables 12, 13, and 14 above show the distribution of the sentences regarding the concrete or abstract interactions with the opposition parties. These tables suggest that in all of the periods, foreign policy issues are the issues in which the most positive relations had been developed. In the AKP period, although the negative attitude is dominant regarding the foreign policy issues, it was in this category that the least negative stance was expressed toward the opposition. Furthermore, in the DP period the negative and non-negative ratios of statements including foreign policy issues are almost equal. Even better, in the period of coalitions foreign policy issues appear as the category of cooperation between the government and opposition. According to Oran, until the 1960s, foreign policy was accepted as a national issue and questioning foreign policy decisions was accepted as a sign of anti-national attitude. He claims that disagreements between political parties were only related to domestic politics and for

the foreign policy issues, which should be national, a common position should be set.¹⁵³ The tables above are parallel with Oran and suggest that foreign policy issues are the issues that Turkish parties had less problem to deal with.

Among the issue based interactions, domestic politics appear as the most frequent category in all of the three periods. The positive attitude in the coalition governments reflect on the domestic issues as well. The total of negative sentences is lower than the sum of neutral and positive sentences. However, both in the DP and AKP periods, domestic politics constitutes the sharpest separation domain between the government and opposition.

Regarding the non-issue based interactions, in the DP period the negative and non-negative percentages for the non issue based discussions are almost equal. For the other two periods negatives are dominant.

Finally, what is striking in these tables is the gap between the negatives and the others in each of the categories in the AKP period. It was discussed that in spite of the 50 years of experience of multi-party politics, the negative stance is more apparent in the period of AKP and this reflects on the issue categories as well. Even concerning the foreign policy issues, there is a strong negative stance toward the opposition parties.

4.4 Opposition Party Leaders

In this part the frequency of the interaction of the prime ministers with the leaders of the opposition parties, and the nature of this interaction will be analyzed. The table below presents the numbers regarding this analysis. This observation is significant since it gives an idea whether the opposition parties are recognized as constituted of individual leaders or as institutional bodies.

¹⁵³ Oran, B. (2002). *Türk Dış Politikası* [Turkish Foreign Policy]. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, p. 78

Table 15: Party Leader

| How does the speech address the leader/leaders of the opposition party/parties in person? | DP (%) | AKP (%) | Coalitions (%) |
|---|--------|---------|----------------|
| Negative | 24.2 | 36.9 | 16.5 |
| Positive | 3.3 | 1.5 | 10.7 |
| Neutral | 1.6 | 1.9 | 8.3 |
| Uncertain | 0.0 | 0.4 | 1.7 |
| Total | 29.1 | 40.7 | 37.2 |
| Not Mentioned | 70.9 | 59.3 | 62.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | 182 | 482 | 121 |

According to the Table 15, during the DP period, the frequency of addressing the leaders of the opposition parties in person was considerable, but it was not as frequent as has been the case with the AKP period. Table 15 shows that the leaders of the opposition parties were addressed most frequently in the AKP period. Almost half of the speeches address the leader or leaders of the opposition parties in person. Also, the already low frequency of positive speeches decreased even further in the AKP period and almost all of the interactions with the opposition leaders observed to be negative in this period.

The results on DP and AKP show two significant points. First of all, frequency of the interaction with the leaders of the opposition parties increased in contemporary politics. Secondly, the negative attitude of the prime ministers toward these leaders increased as well. This individualistic approach has the danger of escalation of the conflicts between political leaders since the positive attitude is almost not present. Destructive examples of interactions between A. Menderes and İ. İnönü or R. T. Erdoğan and the leaders of opposition parties were very common. These results might be interpreted as that the political discourse is more individualistic rather than institutional.

Lijphart claims that even in the politically diverse societies, it is possible to develop consensus and democratic stability if only the political elites could develop

consensus among themselves.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, Diamond claims that presence of trust among political actors, willingness to cooperate, accommodate, and compromise are significant elements of democratic political culture that keep the balance between conflict and consensus.¹⁵⁵ In the Turkish context, in view of the preceding empirical evidence, Turkish political elites appear to be problematic on developing positive relations.

However, when the coalition governments are compared with the party governments the picture becomes more positive. The frequency of interaction with the leaders is greater than the DP period and almost equal with the AKP period but the attitude of the coalition governments toward the opposition parties are quite different from the party governments. The percentage of positive speeches is higher, and the sum of neutral and positive speeches is higher than the number of negative speeches. This suggests that the nature of the relations is far more positive during the period of coalition governments than the period of party governments.

4.5 Pejorative Words

Pejorative words are considered as the most destructive way of interaction between the government and opposition. The speeches with pejorative words considered to be breaking off the communication between the government and opposition parties. These speeches are considered to be escalating the conflicts to non-solvable stages. In this regard, the table below constitutes one of the most significant results of this research.

¹⁵⁴ Lijphart, A. (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

¹⁵⁵ Diamond, L. (1990). *op. cit.*, p. 56

Table 16: Pejorative Words

| Does the speech include a pejorative word? | DP (%) | AKP (%) | Coalitions (%) |
|--|--------|---------|----------------|
| No | 83.5 | 92.3 | 100.0 |
| Yes | 16.5 | 7.7 | 0.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | 182 | 482 | 121 |

The 16.5% of pejorative words in the speeches of DP's prime minister reflects that the destructive political discourse was remarkably present in the Adnan Menderes' discourse. The ratio appears to be low, but when the nature of pejorative words is considered then the conflictual discourse becomes more apparent. The decrease from 16.5% to 7.7% in the AKP period presents a positive development on the attitude of the government toward the opposition. This ratio still could be considered as high, but at least there is a significant decrease when the contemporary situation compared with the early period of the multi-party politics. In particular of the party governments, previous results had shown that the negative attitude of the government toward the opposition is increasing. However, Table 16 is indicative of the fact that the situation is better than before.

The most significant result of this table is about the coalition governments. The sample of speeches from the coalition governments includes no pejorative word. This result is parallel with the positive findings presented so far on coalition governments.

Table 17: The Addressee of the Pejorative Words

| | DP (%) | AKP (%) |
|--|--------|---------|
| The Leader of the Main Opposition Party | 46.7 | 29.7 |
| Opposition in General | 33.3 | 51.4 |
| The Main Opposition Party | 16.7 | 16.2 |
| Another Opposition Party/Parties | 3.3 | 0.0 |
| The Leader/Leaders of Another Opposition Party/Parties | 0.0 | 2.7 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N | 182 | 482 |

Table 17 shows who was addressed with the pejorative words during the DP and AKP governments. During the DP governments almost half of the pejorative words are directed toward the leader of the main opposition party. Similarly, in the period of the AKP governments, the percentage of pejorative words toward the leader of the main opposition emerges as the second most frequent category. This finding is parallel with the interpretation above that the individualistic approach in the political discourse has the potential of escalating the conflicts between the party leaders. Combining this table with the Table 15, it could be suggested that the interactions between the party leaders have the potential of escalating the level of conflicts. For instance, this table gives an idea about the negative relation between Adnan Menderes and İsmet İnönü. However, the positive development in the period of AKP is that the percentage of pejorative words toward the party leader decreases. This result suggests that the risk of individual conflicts between the leaders is less in the contemporary situation.

Another positive side of the AKP period is that, while the percentage of the references in the category of opposition in general increases, the frequency references of the other categories decreases. The prime minister of AKP mostly preferred to use pejorative words without identifying a person in particular.

4.6 Threats

As mentioned above, threats are categorized as one of contentious tactics and one of the ways to escalate the conflict between the parties.¹⁵⁶ Therefore the presence of threats in the speeches of the prime ministers is investigated. The table below presents the percentages of the presence of threats in the speeches.

Table 18: Threats

| Does the speech include a threat? | | DP (%) | AKP (%) | Coalitions (%) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------|---------|----------------|
| | No | 96.7 | 98.8 | 99.2 |
| | Yes | 3.3 | 1.2 | 0.8 |
| | Uncertain | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| | N | 182 | 482 | 121 |

¹⁵⁶ Pruitt, G. (1983). "Strategic Choice in Negotiation," *American Behavioral Scientist*, 27(2), pp. 167-194

Data presented in Table 18 indicate that, the ratios of the threats in the sampled speeches are very low for all of the three cases. Similar to the case of pejorative words, there is a positive development. The presence of threats decreases from the DP to the AKP governments. In the period of coalition governments the percentage is lower than both of the party governments. However, the percentages of different types of governments do not represent a significant difference. So, in the limits of this study, the presence of threats does not appear to be a significant drawback of Turkish political discourse in the cases of both party and coalition governments. Also, the decrease on the existence of threats in the recent times is a positive development.

4.7 The Interests of the Nation

In this part the concept of the interests of the nation is going to be investigated regarding the government-opposition relations. In this study, as discussed in the third chapter, the employment of this concept is considered to be a way of de-legitimizing the opposition parties by presenting them as harming the interests of the state, nation or country. The table below shows the distribution of the frequency of the prime ministers using this concept toward the political opposition.

Table 19: Interests of the Nation

| | | DP (%) | DP Valid (%) | AKP (%) | AKP Valid (%) | Coalitions (%) | Coalitions Valid (%) |
|---------|---------------|--------|--------------|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Valid | Negative | 23.1 | 67.7 | 28.4 | 96.5 | 10.8 | 72.2 |
| | Positive | 7.7 | 22.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 27.8 |
| | Neutral | 1.6 | 4.8 | 0.4 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Uncertain | 1.6 | 4.8 | .6 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Total | 34.1 | 100.0 | 29.5 | 100.0 | 15 | 100.0 |
| Missing | Not Mentioned | 65.9 | | 70.5 | | 85 | |
| Total | | 100.0 | | 100.0 | | 100,0 | |
| N | | 182 | 62 | 482 | 142 | 121 | 19 |

According to Table 19, in 34.1% of the speeches of Menderes the concept of interests of the nation was used, and most of the time (67.7%) used in a negative way toward the opposition parties. Only 22.6% of the speeches, which refer to the concept, were positive. Although the picture in the DP period is negative, the situation becomes

worse when it is compared with the AKP period. The percentage of the presence of the concept in the speeches is close to what it was during the DP period. However, the striking finding is that almost all of the time the prime minister of the AKP used this concept in a negative way. In the sample of this study, there is no speech in which the prime minister expressed that the opposition is working for the interests of the nation. Just like in many other tables above, the picture became more negative in the contemporary situation.

The picture is not promising even in the period of coalition governments. In fact, the concept is not as frequently used as in the periods of party governments. Only 14.8% of the speeches include the concept. However, the percentage of negative speeches is even higher than the DP period. According to the results of this study, in the case of interests of the nation coalition governments do not present a hopeful picture either. Opposition parties seem to be recognized as a harm and threat to the interests of the nation even in the period of coalition governments.

4.8 Past and Future Orientations

This final part includes how frequent the governments referred to the past actions of the opposition parties or to the future of the relations when they interact with the opposition parties. The past and future orientations are investigated to understand the nature of the interaction. Table 20 presents the results for the past orientation and Table 21 presents the results for the future orientation.

Table 20: Past Orientation

| Whether there is a consideration toward the past | | DP (%) | DP Valid (%) | AKP (%) | AKP Valid (%) | Coalitions (%) | Coalitions Valid (%) |
|--|---------------|--------|--------------|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Valid | Negative | 39.0 | 95.9 | 37.8 | 95.3 | 18.2 | 88.0 |
| | Positive | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 0.8 | 4.0 |
| | Neutral | 0.5 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Uncertain | 1.1 | 2.7 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 1.7 | 8.0 |
| | Total | 40.7 | 100.0 | 39.6 | 100.0 | 20.7 | 100.0 |
| Missing | Not Mentioned | 59.3 | | 60.4 | | 79.3 | |
| Total | | 100.0 | | 100.0 | | 100.0 | |
| N | | 182 | 74 | 482 | 191 | 121 | 26 |

According to Table 20, almost 40% of the speeches of the prime ministers of the party governments include a reference to the past actions, policies of the opposition parties or past of the government-opposition relations. The percentage decreases in half in the period of coalition governments. However, when these past references are investigated, both in the periods of party and coalition governments the reference to the past is, almost totally, made in a negative way. Especially, in the DP period, there is no speech in the sample that includes a positive reference to the past actions of the opposition parties, mostly of the CHP.

These findings suggest that even the political elites of the coalition governments are negatively predisposed toward the opposition parties as if they did nothing good for the benefit of the country in the past. This finding is also parallel with the use of the concept of the interests of the nation. In all cases political opposition is presented as an actor which mostly harms the nation and state.

Table 21: Future Orientation

| If there is a consideration toward the future | | DP (%) | DP Valid (%) | AKP (%) | AKP Valid (%) | Coalitions (%) | Coalitions Valid (%) |
|---|---------------|--------|--------------|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Valid | Positive | 16.5 | 62.5 | 6.2 | 48.4 | 18.2 | 84.6 |
| | Negative | 7.7 | 29.2 | 4.4 | 33.9 | 2.5 | 11.5 |
| | Neutral | 1.6 | 6.3 | 1.9 | 14.5 | 0.8 | 3.8 |
| | Uncertain | 0.5 | 2.1 | 0.4 | 3.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Total | 26.4 | 100.0 | 12.9 | 100.0 | 21.5 | 100.0 |
| Missing | Not Mentioned | 73.6 | | 87.1 | | 78.5 | |
| Total | | 100.0 | | 100.0 | | 100.0 | |
| N | | 182 | 48 | 482 | 62 | 121 | 27 |

In contrast to Table 20, Table 21 presents the future references of the prime ministers toward the opposition parties. This investigation gives an idea about whether the prime ministers are willing to develop positive relations with the opposition parties in the future.

According to Table 21, future reference is not present in the speeches of the prime ministers of the party governments as much as the references to the past. Also,

the percentage of the speeches with future references decreases from the DP to AKP period. The positive side is that the percentage of positive references is higher than the negative references in both of the party government periods. This suggests that party governments intended to establish better relations in the future, at least in their discourse. The negative side is that the percentage of positive speeches decreases when the AKP period compared with the DP period.

When the coalition governments are considered, the percentage of speeches including future references is almost the same with the DP period, and higher than the AKP period. However, the percentage of positive speeches regarding the future is quite high in comparison to the party governments' results. Only very low percentage of speeches includes negative attitudes toward the opposition. The positive stance of the prime ministers of the coalition governments is apparent in the case of future expectations.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Conjectures

This study presented a comparison of the attitudes of the prime ministers of the party and coalition governments toward the opposition parties and their leaders in different time periods and different types of governments in Turkish politics. The party governments of the 1950s and 2000s were selected to analyze whether the length of the experience of multi-party politics had influenced the attitudes of the governing parties toward the political opposition. Also, the coalition governments between 1996 and 2002 are included in the research to observe whether there is a difference of attitudes of the party governments and coalition governments toward the political opposition. The speeches of the prime ministers are collected from the three Turkish daily newspapers (Cumhuriyet, Yeni Sabah and Zaman). Ten different questions are formed to evaluate the data with content analysis.

The first hypothesis of this research was that as long as the Turkish political system experiences multi-party politics, the presence of political opposition is recognized and internalized by the governments. This hypothesis corresponds to the comparison of the DP and AKP party governments. After experiencing multi-party politics for over fifty years, it was anticipated that the party government of the 2000s would express a more positive and cooperative attitude toward the opposition parties. It was expected that the government would recognize the political opposition as one of the natural and necessary actors of the democratic system.

However, the findings from the comparison of the DP and AKP governments do not support the hypothesis above. First of all, regarding the overall stance of the

opposition, the results of this study present that while the percentage of negative interactions with the opposition parties increases significantly from the DP to the AKP period, the percentage of positive interactions decreases. Also, when these interactions are evaluated throughout the years, AKP government held a stable negative stance through its period of power while there are some fluctuations in the DP period. Although DP was also negative toward the opposition parties, it does not present total negative stance in all of the years. This situation is interpreted that the contemporary government felt less necessary to adjust its position regarding the opposition parties than the DP government.

Regarding the legitimacy of the political opposition in the eyes of the ruling parties, the concept of the interests of the nation is observed in this study. The results presented that the AKP government exploited this concept more frequently, and also, in a more negative way to de-legitimize and condemn the opposition parties than the DP government did. This result is significant since it suggests that although the opposition and opposition parties are present for more than 50 years, the contemporary government is more accusive about the presence of opposition parties regarding the interests of the nation.

In the category of past references, the AKP government appears as much negative as the DP government. Regarding the future of the relations with the opposition parties, the findings on the AKP governments reflect a much more negative attitude than the DP governments had which suggest that it becomes harder for the governing elites of the government party to develop better relations with the opposition parties in the contemporary situation. Thus, in spite of the long experience of multi-party system, the contemporary government appears to be more negative regarding the past and future of the relations with the opposition parties.

The more negative picture of AKP government reflects on the issue categories as well. The attitude of the AKP government is more negative in all of the issue categories. Even in the foreign policy issues that the governments had the most positive relations with the opposition parties, the AKP governments expressed sharper attitude toward the opposition parties than the DP governments did.

Finally, the frequency of the interaction with the opposition parties' leaders increases from DP to the AKP period. The increasing individual-level of interaction becomes more negative in the AKP government. This situation has the potential of more individual conflicts between party leaders and escalation of conflicts.

Although most of the findings reflect a negative development in the attitude of the party governments toward the opposition parties, there are some positive indicators as well. For instance, the presence of threats in the speeches of the prime ministers decreases from the DP government to AKP government. Although it is found that threats were not considerably high in either of the cases, the findings on threats represent, at least, a positive development. The more significant positive development is the findings on the presence of pejorative words. The percentage of pejorative words in the speeches decreases in half from DP to AKP government. Even though the pejorative words are present in the discourses of the prime minister of the AKP governments, the decrease is promising regarding the quality of political discourse in Turkish politics.

Besides the negative and positive differences of these two party governments, there are some similarities as well. Both the DP and AKP governments reflect their most positive attitude toward the opposition parties during their first years. Then the frequency of negative behavior increases during the remaining years. This situation is interpreted as during the period of consolidation the party governments tried to be concordant with the other political actors, but after a while they behave more discordantly. However, it is significant to note that even during its most positive period, the AKP governments appear more negative toward the opposition than the DP governments.

To conclude, since most of the findings present an increase in negative attitudes, the results of this research do not support the claim that the long experience of multi-party politics causes development of positive attitudes toward the opposition parties in the eyes of the governing parties and so do not support the first hypothesis. To the contrary, the contemporary government reflects more negative stance toward the opposition parties than the government in the beginning of the multi-party politics.

The second hypothesis of this research was that coalition governments would be less negative toward opposition parties than the party governments. This hypothesis corresponds to the comparison of the coalition governments between 1995 and 2002 with the party governments of DP and AKP. Since the coalition governments do not hold as strong majority in the assembly as the party governments do and they need the support of many actors in the politics, it was anticipated that the coalition governments would express more cooperative attitude toward the actors including the opposition parties.

Consequently, the findings support the expectation of the hypothesis as stated above. The percentage of negative sentences is at the lowest level when it is compared with the party governments. Contrary, almost half of the references of the prime ministers of the coalition governments are neutral or even positive toward the opposition parties. The results on the overall stance of the governments present that coalition governments are far less negative toward the opposition parties than party governments. This positive view is reflected on the issue categories as well. In both the domestic and external issues, the percentage of the negative sentences is lower than half. Furthermore, foreign policy issues, with a high percentage of positive interactions, reflect an area of cooperation between the ruling and opposition parties.

Although the percentage of individual interactions between the party leaders is almost equal with the numbers of party governments, the presence of negative interactions is less than the party governments' results. More significantly, the pejorative words, which were considered as the most conflictual and negative way of interaction with the opposition parties, were not present in the sample of speeches of the coalition governments' prime ministers. Also, the presence of threats, which was not high in the speeches of the party governments' prime ministers as well, decreases further. These results suggest that aggressive ways of interaction, such as threats or pejorative references, become almost non-existent in the period of coalition governments and thus enhancing the government-opposition relations.

Finally, regarding the future of the relations with the opposition parties, coalition governments reflect a much more positive position compared with the party governments. The results on party governments were also positive but the results on

coalition governments present that coalition governments provide better ground for the future of the government-opposition relations.

Yet there are some negative results on the coalition governments as well. First of all, the frequency of past references is higher in the period of coalition governments than the period party governments. Also, these past references of coalition governments' prime ministers are as negative as the past references of the party governments. Besides, regarding the interests of the nation concept, the figures are not much more promising. Although the results on the national interests are more positive than the AKP government, they are more negative than the DP government. So, it could not be claimed that the coalition governments do not condemn the opposition parties for undermining the interests of the nation.

To conclude, although there are some negative results regarding the coalition governments, such as the high frequency of negative past references or the exploitation of the concept of the interests of the nation, most of the results like the non-existence of pejorative words or threats, less negative overall stance, and better interaction with the leaders of the opposition parties support the second hypothesis of this research. The coalition governments reflect a much more positive stance toward opposition parties when they are compared with the party governments of both the 1950s and 2000s.

5.2 Conclusion

As a conclusion, this research had come up with two hypotheses to analyze the attitude of the governing parties toward the opposition parties starting with the multi-party system in Turkish politics. The first hypothesis could not be justified with the empirical analyses of this research. When all of the results are considered, the AKP government in the 2000s reflects more negative attitude toward the opposition parties than the DP government in the 1950s. The second hypothesis of this research could not be falsified at the end. The coalition governments, within the limits of this research, reflect a more positive attitude toward the opposition parties than the party governments did.

The investigation of coalition governments presents a relatively positive outcome on the relations between government and opposition parties. Regarding their low power in the National Assembly, it is considered that coalition governments present relatively positive and cooperative attitude toward the opposition parties since any opposition party of today has the potential of being a partner in the following cabinets.

However, the comparison of the DP and AKP party governments suggests that Turkish politics, after a long experience of multi-party system, seem to be problematic regarding the development of government-opposition relations. According to empirical observations of this research, both of the prime ministers of the party governments present a negative attitude toward the opposition parties. Prime ministers use pejorative words toward the opposition parties and condemn them for harming the interests of the nation. The exclusionist behaviors of the prime ministers do not provide hope for cooperation and conflict resolution processes between the governing and opposition parties. Rather, the negative discourse includes the danger of escalating the conflicts in the political sphere. Although the multi-party system survived for a long term, prime ministers seem to be having problems with the internalization of the existence of the opposition parties. The expectation that the long experience of multi-party politics would contribute to the development of less negative relations between governing and opposition parties did not prove to be true at the end of the research. Unless the political culture and/or structure, which were discussed in the second chapter, of Turkish politics change, it seems harder to expect better relations between the government and opposition parties and hard to expect constructive conflict resolution initiatives and consensus between the government and opposition parties.

As discussed before, there are several factors involved in this negative situation and several possible solutions for the problem. One of the suggestions for the solution is related to structural changes. Dahl argues that the typical solution of democracies is the dispersion, de-concentration of the power accumulated in the centre of the system.¹⁵⁷ Under these circumstances unless the heavily centralized Turkish political system changes, the development of stable and constructive government-opposition relations will probably remain to be difficult. Heper suggests that this

¹⁵⁷ Dahl, R. A. (1965). *op. cit.*, p. 7

structural change can happen over civil society. He claims that the democratic system in Turkey played a critical role in preventing a long-term hiatus in multi-party politics, but it has also prevented political parties from arriving at a consensus through conflict.¹⁵⁸ The political elite could not achieve sharing of power because the transition to democracy in Turkey was directed by the state elite, not by civil society.¹⁵⁹ As long as the state elite keeps its power and lead the democratization process, the political elite will think that obtaining special privileges from the state is more desirable and feasible than resorting to joint action with other members of the political elite toward the center.¹⁶⁰ According to this view, civilization of the politics and distributing the power concentrated in the center would normalize the relations between the actors of political elite.

Another suggestion is related to cultural rather than structural characteristics. As Frey suggests, dampening extremism and preventing the more puerile aspects of political culture could be a solution.¹⁶¹ Instead, values, roles, and patterns of behaviors that are associated with the growth of Western civilization should be developed.¹⁶² On this matter, Romano suggests to develop relations between Turkey and European Union.¹⁶³ Besides, the Turkish political leaders should understand and acknowledge the significance of the political opposition for the benefit of the system. As Diamond claims, party leaders must take the lead to establish working relationships, manifest a faith in the democratic process and commitment to its rules that supersedes the pursuit of power or other substantive goals.¹⁶⁴ Political leaders easily accept the view that political opposition is troublesome and dispensable, but they should recognize, just like

¹⁵⁸ Heper, M. (2000). *op. cit.*, p. 78

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 78

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 79

¹⁶¹ Frey, F. W. (1975). *op. cit.*, p. 48

¹⁶² Mardin, Ş. (1966). *op. cit.*, p. 387

¹⁶³ Romano, D. (2011). *op. cit.*, p. 24

¹⁶⁴ Diamond, L. (1990). *op. cit.*, p. 59

in the consolidated democracies, that political opposition is a crucial component of both the government of the day and of the people.¹⁶⁵

All of these suggestions may have some contributions to the solution of the problem of internalization of the political opposition. If structural change meaning the de-concentration of the system, and cultural change meaning the adaptation of the democratic principles and transformation of political elite can be achieved, then the political opposition may become recognized as a regular actor of the politics. Then the conflictual relations between the government and opposition could be enhanced and democratic behaviors could develop further. After then peaceful solutions for political conflicts, and constructive communication between governing and opposition parties could be expected.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Further Studies

This research provided a comparison of the first and last examples of the party governments after 1950 in the Turkish politics. Also, a period of coalition governments is included to compare with the party governments. A period of almost 25 years of the multi-party system in the Turkish politics is included in this research. While collecting the data to avoid the bias of a newspaper, two different newspapers are used for each of the cases. In spite of these advantages, this research has some limitations as well.

First of all, the most significant limitation of this research is the lack of the analysis of the attitudes of the opposition parties toward the ruling parties. Although it is assumed by this research that the ruling parties are the determinants of the relation between the government and the opposition since they have the political power, the opposition parties' and their leaders' attitudes might have a contribution on the relation between governing and opposition parties. Although the governments have more opportunities to determine the nature of the relations, the opposition parties may provoke or soften the relations as well. Although Turan claims that it is the increasing authoritarian practices of the governments that drive the opposition parties to escalate

¹⁶⁵ Apter, D. E. (1962). *op. cit.*, p. 155

their competitive activities¹⁶⁶, according to Eroğul, for the DP period, one of the reasons for A. Menderes to adopt wholly repressive tactics is the provocations of İ. İnönü.¹⁶⁷ In this respect, a future study which focuses on the attitudes of the opposition parties toward the ruling parties, or both on ruling and opposition parties, may contribute to this research and to the field.

A further limitation is on the comparison between the party governments. This research presented that the experience of multi-party experience did not contribute to the internalization of the opposition parties since the frequency of negative attitudes are more in the AKP period than the DP period. Yet, on this comparison, there remains an unanswered question. The rising bitterness of the attitudes toward the opposition parties may present us that the experience of multi-party politics did not contribute to the recognition of the opposition parties. However, this situation may be arising from a difference between the DP and AKP. Basically, the DP was a split from the CHP and except their understanding on economic system, they did not deeply differ on other issues. The AKP, however, is a fraction of the Islamist National View (Milli Görüş) movement and includes more extremist dynamics than the DP had. The difference between these two parties may shadow the contribution of the experience of multi-party politics to the development of democracy.¹⁶⁸ A future study focusing the idiosyncratic features of these parties could be contributing to the substance of this study.

Another limitation in this research is that the data are formed only from the speeches of the prime ministers of the corresponding time periods. Prime ministers are assumed to be the most influential person of the political parties. Although this assumption is mostly appropriate for the Turkish politics, other members or even the former leaders or members of the ruling parties might be influential on the discourse toward opposition parties. Thus, a research including all of the messages from the ruling parties toward the opposition parties could carry this research a step forward.

¹⁶⁶ Turan, İ. (1984). *op. cit.*, p. 98

¹⁶⁷ Eroğul, C. (1990). *op. cit.*, p. 118

¹⁶⁸ On this issue see Çarkoğlu, A. and Kalaycıoğlu, E. (2009). *The Rising Tide of Conservatism: Islam, Nationalism and Democracy*. NY: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Also, the data were only collected when the National Assembly was working. The recess periods of the parliament were excluded. For instance, the summer recess of 1957 was the period of political campaigns for the upcoming national elections. Also, the summer recess of 2002 was also the period of political campaigns for the future national elections. These periods may include significant data regarding the questions of this research. From this point of view, further studies may consider including the recess periods of the TBMM as well.

Another limitation is that only one of the two newspapers assigned to each of the months to collect the data. Although it was emphasized that the discourse of the newspapers is not significant for this research, collecting speeches more than one newspaper could minimize the danger of bias further. So, any future research including more sources for the sampling would provide better grounds for generalizations.

Finally, although a long period of Turkish political history with multi-party was system included, the period from 1960 to 1995 is excluded from this research. In this period, there are other examples of party and coalition governments. Regarding the large amount of data and scope of this research these examples were excluded. However, increasing the cases of both party and coalition governments would provide for more general findings. So, a further study focusing on the excluded cases of this research and providing a comparison with this research's results might contribute to the field and to this research as well.

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APPENDIX 1: LIST OF POLITICAL PARTIES

| Abbreviation | Party Name |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ANAP | Motherland Party |
| AKP | Justice and Development Party |
| BBP | Great Union Party |
| BDP | Peace and Democracy Party |
| CHP | Republican People's Party |
| CMP | Republican Nation Party |
| CMKP | Republican Peasant's Nation Party |
| DEHAP | Democratic People's Party |
| DP | Democratic Party |
| DSP | Democratic Left Party |
| *DTP | Democratic Turkey Party |
| **DTP | Democratic Society Party |
| FP | Virtue Party |
| GP | Young Party |
| HADEP | People's Democracy Party |
| HP | Liberty Party |
| KP | Peasant's Party |
| MHP | Nationalist Movement Party |
| MP | Nation Party |
| RP | Welfare Party |
| SP | Felicity Party |

**APPENDIX 2: LIST OF THE GOVERNMENTS, PRIME MINISTERS, MAIN
OPPOSITION PARTIES, MAIN OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS AND
OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES**

| Government | Prime minister | Main Opposition Party | Leader of the Main Opposition Party | Other Opposition Parties |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| DP (22.05.1950- 27.05.1960) | Adnan Menderes | CHP | İsmet İnönü | MP, CMP, CMKP, HP, KP |
| ANAP-DYP (06.03.1996- 06.06.1996) | Mesut Yılmaz | RP | Necmettin Erbakan | DSP, CHP, MHP, HADEP and Others |
| RP-DYP (28.06.1996- 21.06.1997) | Necmettin Erbakan | ANAP | Mesut Yılmaz | BBP, DSP, CHP, MHP, HADEP, DTP*, Others |
| ANAP-DSP- DTP* (30.06.1997- 25.11.1998) | Mesut Yılmaz | RP (FP) | Necmettin Erbakan (Recai Kutan) | DYP, CHP, MHP, HADEP, others |
| DSP (11.01.1999- 18.04.1999) | Bülent Ecevit | FP | Recai Kutan | ANAP, DYP, DSP, CHP, DTP*, Others |
| DSP-MHP- ANAP (28.05.1999- 03.11.2002) | Bülent Ecevit | FP (SP) | Recai Kutan | ANAP, DYP, CHP, HADEP, Others |
| AKP (14.03.2003- 22.07.2007) | R.Tayyip Erdoğan | CHP | Deniz Baykal | DYP, MHP, GP, DEHAP, ANAP, SP, Others |
| AKP (29.08.2007- Present) | R.Tayyip Erdoğan | CHP | Deniz Baykal (Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu) | MHP, DP, GP, DTP**, BDP, Others |

Appendix 3: QUESTIONS AND UNIT OF ANALYSIS

| Question | Unit of Analysis |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| #1 | Sentence |
| #2 | Sentence |
| #3 | Sentence |
| #4 | Speech |
| #5 | Speech |
| #6 | Speech |
| #7 | Speech |
| #8 | Speech |
| #9 | Speech |
| #10 | Speech |

APPENDIX 4: ISSUES AND CATEGORIES¹⁶⁹

| | Internal Issues | External Issues | Economics | Abstract Issues |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Democratic Party | Political party closures, Events of 6-7 September, National Elections, Freedom of the Press, Freedom of the Universities, Laicism, Kirsehir case, Real properties of CHP, Community Centers | Military Intervention in Korea | Budget, Economic aids, National debts | Atatürk, Political Party Relations, Interests of the Nation, References to period of former governments, Development of Democracy, Democratic Values, Criticisms and offenses of the Opposition |
| Coalition Governments | National Elections, Election of the president of the Republic, Abolition of Death Penalty, Constitutional Changes, Internal Regulations of the TBMM, Political Party Closures | Intervention in Afghanistan, European Union | Budget, National Debts, Relations with IMF | Political ethic, Democratic Values, Interests of the Nation, Political Party Relations, Principles of the Regime |
| Justice and Development Party | Constitutional changes, Local governance, Corruption, Political party closures, Cyprus, Kurdish Problem, The issue of immunity, The | The agreement allow the U.S. to base troops in Turkey, European Union | Privatizations, Budget, Relations with IMF | Political discourse, Criticisms and Offences of the Opposition parties, Interests of the Nation, Political ethic, Former governments, |

¹⁶⁹ This list only includes the cases that had been frequently discussed between the government and the opposition. Thus, it does not provide all of the agenda items of Turkish politics.

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| | headscarf issue, Setting up own cadre in public offices, Election of the president of the Republic, National Elections | | | Mentality of the Opposition |
|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------|

APPENDIX 5¹⁷⁰: PEJORATIVE WORDS

| | Democratic Party | Justice and Development Party |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Pejorative Words | Kindar İktidar Hastası Politika Hastası Şirret Zalim İhtiyar Tezvirci Jurnalıcı Kaypak Zorba Müstebid Çakal Müfteri Tedhişçi Sapık Nifakçı Çakal Hırsız | Hastalıklı Ruh Siyaset Bezirganları Zavallı Yaygaracı Densiz Hafif Hazımsız |

¹⁷⁰ A category for coalition governments is not present since the researcher did not find a pejorative word toward the opposition in this period.

APPENDIX 6: THE INTERESTS OF THE NATION

Expressions Addressing the Interests of the Nation

Devlet İtibarı
Devlet Çıkarı
Millet İradesi
Memleket Hayrı
Memleket Menfaatleri
Milli Birlik
Milli İrade
Memleketin Yüksek Menfaatleri
Vatanperver
Memleketin Selameti
Vatansever
Memleketin Hayrı
Gayri Milli
Millet İtibarı
Milli Tesevüt
Milletin Geleceđi
Ülkenin Geleceđi

APPENDIX 7: THE RESULT OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS FOR THE DP PERIOD

| Party | Number of Votes | | | Percentage of Votes | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|-------|-------|
| | 1950 | 1954 | 1957 | 1950 | 1954 | 1957 |
| DP | 4.241.393 | 5.151.550 | 4.372.621 | 52.68 | 57.61 | 47.88 |
| CHP | 3.176.561 | 3.161.696 | 3.753.136 | 39.45 | 35.36 | 41.09 |
| MP | 250.414 | - | - | 3.11 | - | - |
| CMP | - | 434.085 | 652.064 | | 4.85 | 7.14 |
| TKP | - | 57.011 | - | - | .64 | - |
| HP | - | - | 350.597 | | | 3.84 |
| Independents | 383.282 | 137.318 | 4.994 | 4.76 | 1.54 | .05 |

APPENDIX 8: RESULTS OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS FOR THE COALITION GOVERNMENTS PERIOD

| Party | Number of Votes | | Percentage of Votes | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------------|-------|
| | 1995 | 1999 | 1995 | 1999 |
| RP (FP) | 6.012.450 | 4.805.381 | 21.38 | 15.41 |
| ANAP | 5.527.288 | 4.122.929 | 19.65 | 13.22 |
| DYP | 5.396.009 | 3.745.417 | 19.18 | 12.01 |
| DSP | 4.118.025 | 6.919.670 | 14.64 | 22.19 |
| CHP | 3.011.076 | 2.716.094 | 10.71 | 8.71 |
| MHP | 2.301.343 | 5.606.583 | 8.18 | 17.98 |
| HADEP | 1.171.623 | 1.482.196 | 4.17 | 4.75 |
| BBP | - | 456.353 | - | 1.46 |
| Independents | 133.895 | 270.265 | .48 | .87 |
| Others | 455.284 | 1.059.608 | 1.61 | 3.4 |

APPENDIX 9: RESULTS OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS FOR THE AKP PERIOD

| Party | Number of Votes | | Percentage of Votes | |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------------|-------|
| | 2002 | 2007 | 2002 | 2007 |
| AKP | 10.848.704 | 16.327.291 | 34.43 | 46.58 |
| CHP | 6.114.843 | 7.317.808 | 19.41 | 20.88 |
| DYP | 3.004.949 | - | 9.54 | - |
| MHP | 2.629.808 | 5.001.869 | 8.35 | 14.27 |
| GP | 2.284.644 | 1.064.871 | 7.25 | 3.04 |
| DEHAP | 1.933.680 | - | 6.14 | - |
| ANAP | 1.610.207 | - | 5.11 | - |
| SP | 784.087 | 820.299 | 2.49 | 2.34 |
| DSP | 383.609 | - | 1.22 | - |
| DP | - | 1.898.873 | - | 5.42 |
| Independents | 302.801 | 1.864.971 | .96 | 5.32 |
| Others | 1.612.686 | 790377 | 5.12 | 2.27 |