

Television as an educational vehicle in Turkey: presentation of violence in news bulletins

Fevzi Kasap¹ · Ayhan Dolunay² · Mustafa Kavaz³

Published online: 28 October 2017
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Abstract The violence based news bearing negativity is the mostly presented one in the media which is no doubt influential on societies. As if violence is accepted as the most important ingredient in increasing the ratings in the Turkey's media too. The news bulletins presenting the negativity more negative than its real negative-ness direct and affect the societal psychology. In this study, the TRT 1, ATV, Show TV, FOX TV, NTV and Kanal 7 national channels and their prime-time news bulletins are chosen as the sample for the content-analysis. Terrorism which is the most important element of violence for Turkey is focused. This element is called as the terrorist violence as it is called in the searched national channels. The study is limited with the bulletins including the attacks to Ortaköy Reina in the 1st of January 2017 and Gaziantep Police Department in the 10th of January 2017. The terrorist violence is content analysed on the news communicating structures such as duration, attitude, language, image, repetition, categorizing exaggeration, presenting examples, sound, and the subtitles. On the other hand, in order to obtain the opinions of academicians on the presentation of violence in main news bulletins, in-depth interviews were held with academicians (6 people) who worked at various faculties of Near East University (communication, education, psychology, law, fine arts). Within this scope, it was ensured that while interpreting the presentation of violence in main news bulletins, solutions can also be offered form educative point of view by academicians.

✉ Ayhan Dolunay
ayhan.dolunay@neu.edu.tr

Fevzi Kasap
fevzi.kasap@neu.edu.tr

¹ Faculty of Communication, Head of Radio and Television Department, Member of Communication Research Center and Social Sciences Ethics Committee, Near East University, Nicosia, Cyprus

² Faculty of Communication, Member of Communication Research Center, Near East University, Nicosia, Cyprus

³ Media and Communication Studies Master Program, Nicosia, Cyprus

Keywords TV · News bulletins · Educational vehicle · Presentation of violence

1 Introduction

Despite the existence and effectiveness of radio, cinema, printed press, and new media, television is still reaching the widest audience. Although especially internet technology is becoming popular rapidly, television is increasing its audience by using this area, too. Education, which is among the five basic functions of television, was shaped as a non-formal education method supplementing formal education in the first years in our country.

Simultaneously with the increase in television viewers, persuasion (spreading ideology) and advertisement (making products sell) functions became more prominent. In this process television turned into a mass communication tool which affects masses in terms of ideology and reinforces consumption reflex. At this point, it is possible to claim that the global village concept which was invented in 1960s by McLuhan was realised as the usage of mass communication tools spread within the society rapidly as a result of which the world became a global village.

The global village made everything and everyone related to each other with the introduction of satellite and internet to our lives. Geographical borders vanished as a result of globalization. A new culture is beginning to settle as a result of a brand-new, complicated network of relations and globalisation (Beliktaş t.y.). With globalization, different economies, cultures and education philosophies become interacted, and consumption gained importance. As a result, societies encountered with contents which they were not familiar with in economic, social and educative terms, and in an unconscious manner, they became consumers of these contents. At this point, it is seen that television contents are effective on Turkish viewers. Turkish viewers are exposed to contents based on fiction method which is widely used in cinema. In the quest of increasing advertisement revenues, television channels increased the programmes with violent content and, in response to the rising demand from the views, they increased the dosage of fictions with violent content.

2 General information

2.1 History of television in Turkey

Television was being widely used in several countries in 1960s while in Turkey television did not reach as wide masses as cinema and radio. The first broadcasting trials in Turkey were conducted at İTÜ Electrical Faculty studios in 1952–1953. In late 1960s the first public broadcasting trials were performed 3 days a week. It was not until 1970s when these broadcasts reached wide masses in the entire country.

1970s when television met its viewers in the real sense is also a period when a single-channel system produced content as a public monopoly. TRT was established, broadcasting hours were increased, broadcasting began one very day of the week, and reaching the entire country was aimed; however, full coverage was not achieved yet due to technical and socio-economic problems (Gülizar 1995).

In its first years, television became the tool of intense socialization. In times when household equipment were moderate, on the days when important programmes were broadcasted, people would go and visit families with television and watch that programme

together. In fact the same behaviour is seen today especially when it comes to soccer games by watching them collectively in cafes and/or restaurants.

In the first years of TRT national programmes were given more weight; as the broadcasting hours increased, foreign programmes were also purchased. After 1977 coloured programmes were prepared for trial purposes, and in 1982 some sports activities and news films were broadcasted in colour and after 1984 broadcasting turned fully coloured.

TRT is a television channel which performs public news; it broadcasts the news of political authority. Although opposition parties always criticize this situation, it is seen that when they come to power they also do not make any changes (Çankaya 2003).

With the normalization process following the military coup which is identified with the introduction of liberal economy, Özal governments initiated legal regulations in the field of television broadcasting. In this period of public monopoly, TRT opened its second channel and then a third local channel for south-eastern region. However, it was clear that the expectations of viewers from television were not sufficiently met by TRT. This monopoly de facto ended in 1990 when a private television titled Magic Box/Star began to broadcast in Turkey from abroad through satellite. This channel was not bound by the existing legislations in the country on broadcasting, and became the focus of interest in a short period of time with the different programme options it offered.

2.2 Private television business in Turkey

Between 1980 and 1990, in many European countries including Turkey, public broadcasting monopoly was questioned and then eliminated with various methods. In this period, commercial private televisions using satellite and cable technology became rapidly widespread, and the purpose and content of broadcasting was radically changed. After an experience of almost 30 years, television in Turkey became one of the privileged media areas as a result of the efforts of private entrepreneurs from public monopoly. In the first years of 1990s Turkey met several new channels, and competition between channels on one hand fed new format and content searches and on the other hand it gave an impetus to the communication industry in general.

In mid-1990s, Rumeli Holding, which was owned by Uzan family, began its broadcasting life with Magic Box Star 1 as the first private television channel with great support of the 8th president of Republic of Turkey, Turgut Özal. In the first years Magic Box Star 1 channel was in an unbelievable competition with TRT channel. This competition was felt in several fields from New Year's Day entertainment programmes to soccer games and advertisements. Later Magic Box Star 1 channel included many programmes that people were not accustomed to but adopted very easily (such as "That Much is Acceptable" programme, beauty contests etc.) became much more viewed than TRT. In addition, it broadcasted the Gulf War in 1991 by connecting to CNN channel for 24 h and using simultaneous translation from English to Turkish. This was a broadcasting philosophy which attracted the attention of people and was not tried by TRT before (Erdoğan and Alemdar 2001).

Later, Tele on was established in order to broadcast soccer games. It was followed by other private channels such as Kral TV, Show TV, Cine 5, ATV, KANAL D, and TGRT.

Governments did not remain unanswered the inclination of people towards private channels and resorted to legislation for supervising television channels. Radio Television Supreme Board was created with law as the highest body which supervised broadcasting in Turkey (Özçağlayan 2000).

NTV began its broadcasting life as a news-only channel in 1996; later it showed itself as a successful channel with high-quality news programmes. Another new channel, CNN Türk, began its broadcasting life in 1999 with the partnership of Doğan Group and CNN. All these developments, with the introduction of increasing number of channels offering various broadcasting features through satellite, paved the way for establishment of hundreds of private television channels today.

The first goal of private televisions is profit-making. Reporting, informing, and educating, which are among the basic duties of media, are being ignored. Due to the prominence of commercial goals, televisions are responsible to shareholders and capital-owners.

2.3 Characteristics of television and its non-formal education dimension

Radio addressed wide masses in Turkey for long years; after 1968 when television broadcasting began, it was replaced by television. The emergence of television broadcasting in Turkey as a public service was consistent with the goals of Republic of Turkey which was struggling to create better education policies and organization in every corner of the country; thus, public television emerged as a tool for “non-formal education” supplementing formal education. In general terms, the general administration regulations and systems in a country determine its regulations on mass communication tools (Aziz 2013).

The five general functions of television as accepted by public communication theorists are as follows: reporting, illuminating, educating-accluturization, entertaining-recreation, persuasion and mobilising (Aziz 2013).

It can be claimed that after 1960s, education function has been used frequently especially in developing countries. Particularly in areas where formal education (schooling) cannot reach, television gains importance as a non-formal (non-school–public education) education instrument. Although Turkey is well above the schooling ratios in 1960s and 1970s today, it can easily be asserted that television still has a non-formal education dimension. “Non-formal education”, “adult education” or “public education”, which can be qualified as acculturation function, aims at the education of those who are outside school through programmes which have different contents from one country to another. This, in turn, includes educating people who could not complete school education and educating people in continuing education format in both wider and narrower sense (Aziz 2013).

Today education with television practices (especially in developed countries) is used in order to assist people acquire the basic knowledge, skills and habits required by life and realise the basic education which cannot be provided with formal education. Such employment of television is called “functional education”. Applications as regards functional education have been performed in various subjects and areas from literacy education to vocational education, health-related education, and training on the development of society and production (Yapıcı 2006).

Television broadcasting served this awareness in Turkey until 1980s when it gained a different impetus with the liberalization policies of Özal governments. In this period, new TRT channels were opened. TRT 2 (1986), TRT 3, GAP TV (1989) and, as an education channel, TRT 4 channels began their broadcasting lives in this process. Along with the introduction of satellite broadcasting, they gained importance in terms of reaching every corner of the country. These channels entered the broadcasting picture as a part of supporting public education through television broadcasting.

The development of satellite broadcasting in the world and liberalization efforts in Turkey inevitably brought “commercial television broadcasting” to the agenda. Private

television channels which began broadcasting one after another in a short period of time (Star TV, Kanal 6, Tele On, Show TV, etc.) served the information and entertainment-recreation function of television instead of education function. The contents of these programmes with higher commercial return (advertisement revenues) which were more easily consumed met with great attention from wide audiences as a result of which television channels preferred to increase the number of such contents.

Satellite broadcasting which was effective in television broadcasting and internet which became popular shortly after were effective factors both in the programme contents of television and opening of new channels. This new kind of television broadcasting titled “thematic broadcasting” manifested itself in several areas such as children, music, fashion, economy, movies, education and hobbies. This diversity in broadcasting fully coincides with commercial expectations.

As the case in many countries, television is a mass communication tool which addresses a huge segment of society in our country. For this reason television is still one of the most effective mass communication tools in influencing and directing the society. In recent years new media has also claimed an important place in this area; however, unlike television, it is not accessible by every segment of society yet (Tekiner 2016).

The ability of television viewers in Turkey of watching all channels in the world by means of the mentioned technologies led to an increase in consumption frenzy.

“In consumption society the distinction between real needs and fake needs disappears and the individual believes that purchasing and displaying consumption goods brings social privilege and prestige. In this process people on one hand believe that they distinguish themselves from the rest of the society; on the other hand they integrate with the consumption society. Therefore consuming becomes an obligation for the individual. Interpersonal relations are replaced by relations with materials. Now the valid ethic is consumption ethic itself.” (Baodrillard 1997).

Television contents produced according to the socio-economic structures of different countries meet with huge attention in our country and shape the identity formation of audience through television. Broadcasts with violent content appear frequently on television screen due to the attention they receive become ordinary based on the magazinist and functioning philosophy of television and allows for the viewers to internalize. Taking into consideration the impact of repetition in learning, it can be claimed that the audience which is exposed to many programmes with violent content is under threat.

2.4 Television news-reporting in Turkey

The concept of news which is given different meanings by different people who deal with news reporting has several definitions. News is usually based on an event, idea or problem. Events, ideas, problems are summarised and made into stories for news-reporting (Tokgöz 1994). What makes a piece of news “news” is the worldviews of those who prepare it. Reporters and editors address the “ideal” or “model target” in their imagination, as they think that they share the same worldview with the reader.

Television news-reporting consists of news which is prepared for the programme that will be aired during “prime time” hours with a wide coverage. Unlike newspaper reporting, television news-reporting can bring to the screen an event instantly and with the event is narrated by the reporter through presenting on-foot technique. Thus, viewers can see the event from a different perspective (Şeker 1999).

TRT-1 news is based on politics. TRT is the institution which performs public broadcasting in Turkey. In public broadcasting news bulletins have a content which deals with subjects of public importance aiming at illuminating and directing the public (Şeker 2007). The flow in TRT news is based on a certain hierarchy, or protocol. The news includes the sheer statements of president, prime minister and ministers. The “From Country” section of TRT-1 news consists of 10-12 different pieces of news each of which takes almost 20 s including the statements of ministers or politicians briefly and covers the activities performed by political authority. In addition, TRT gives huge importance to national celebrations and memorials and reminds the national history to the public based on official memory; in this sense it is the channel of the nation and the state.

In 1980s, the new television broadcasting style introduced by CNN in the USA based on satellite technologies for the purpose of airing news continuously was adopted by viewers in a short period of time. The principle of CNN is collecting news from every corner of the world and broadcasting them to the entire world. It showed that a television which broadcasted news only can also be viewed and commercially viable. With the introduction of private television channels in Turkey in early 1990s made some changes in news reporting just like other programme types.

Private television news accelerated the degeneration process of both media and through it the entire society with bringing to the fore sensation, partisanship, violence or obscenity, disrespect for personal rights or private life, misleading information and images, images which are repeated to the extent of creating psychological disorders, judgmental language, a clear effort to direct people, giving the news by interpretation, not skipping the absolute existence of news, or presenting the news in the most primitive or non-principled manner with an understanding of “anything goes” which is based on the understanding that ends legitimize means (Vural 2001).

News bulletins of private televisions appear as reporting news and aim at being the most viewed news bulletin in “prime time”. In addition, the political stances of media boss and news editors and the content of news bulletin of that media institution direct people in conflicting ways. For this reason, each TV channel which struggle for survival and growth has to pay the necessary attention to news-reporting (Dursun 2001).

In order to make news bulletins more interesting, news images are enriched with technological elements and interpretation is added with the wording or body language of the anchor-person, and attention is paid to ensure that anchor-person is attractive at private television channels (Kars 1996).

2.5 Violence in television news-reporting in Turkey

Television is an indispensable element of today’s society; it almost became a “member of family”. The fact that television is so much intertwined with daily life began to create some problems. One of the most important problems is violence.

Before dealing with the relation between television and violence, it would be useful to elaborate on the concept of violence briefly. Providing a general and functional definition of violence is rather difficult. Violence can be found in every human behaviour form words to behaviours and consciously and unconsciously. Violence can be defined as applying force or pressure on a person and making him/her do something outside his/her will; the act of applying violence can be defined as forcing, brute force, agonizing physically or psychologically or torturing, hitting, injuring. In narrow sense violence can be defined as a harsh and agonizing action directed from outside to the physical integrity of a person (Ünsal 1996).

According to researchers, violence can be grouped into four, namely natural, artificial, real and hypothetical. Real violence aims at giving physical and psychological damage or it can be defined as presenting the impact of such damage to the people by media. Hypothetical violence is the presentation of such behaviours to the public as a preliminary condition to the public. Natural violence is the portrayal of real violence events by the media, and artificial violence is unreal type of violence such as the ones shown in cartoons. Individual violence is the general name given to the attempts of a person to give physical and psychological damage to another individual, a living thing or objects (Kunczik 1994).

It is known that television programmes consist of several violent elements. Studies in this area reveal that individuals are affected by television programmes. However, there are two opinions on this effect. One of these opinions claims that television is highly effective in directing individuals to crime and violence. The other opinion claims that the relation between media and violence is actually rather weak. The basic opinion here is the extent to which projection of violence on television affects the aggressive behaviour in real life (Gezgin 1996; İçli 2002).

3 Purpose scope method

The general purpose of the study is examination of main news bulletins of TRT, NTV, ATV, FOX, SHOW TV and Kanal 7 television channels through content analysis.

The goal of this study is to examine the pictographic narration language, subjects and contents of news as a type of television programme which is assumed to convey the reality as it is, and, to investigate whether this narration style affects reality.

In the study content analysis was chosen as the basic method. Quantitative analysis of news texts has a critical place in communication studies. The most important purpose of quantitative content analysis is to reveal the manner with which the question of research is presented. Content analysis can also be used to provide an objective, measurable and verifiable explanation of the open and explicit content of messages (Kasap 2005).

In this paper, terrorism news were taken as example with the purpose of researching the presentation of violent events in television main news bulletins, and the manner with which this news are presented in television main news bulletins was displayed qualitatively and quantitatively.

Based on content analysis method, the terrorism-related news broadcasted in television main news bulletins were evaluated through such categories as their ordering, length, subject, content, actors, as well as image, voice, exaggeration, categorising, exemplification and resorting to expert opinions which establish the narration structure of the news.

As the sample of this study, main news bulletins broadcasted on TRT 1, ATV, Show TV, FOX TV, NTV ve Kanal 7 national channels were observed. The reason taking these channels as sample are as follows: TRT performs public broadcasting, FOX TV has the most viewed news bulletin and is critical towards the government, ATV has broadcasts which are closer to the political authority, Show TV has a mainly entertaining and magazinish news-reporting style, and NTV is the first thematic news channel of Turkey. Kanal 7 is included in the study due to its more conservative broadcasting understanding and target audience.

Content analysis in this study was limited with 1 state channel, 5 private channels and the main news bulletins of these channels which were taken as sample. The period

examined was limited between the New Year's Day terrorist attack (1 January 2017) and Gaziantep terrorist attack (10 January 2017).

On the other hand, in order to obtain the opinions of academicians on the presentation of violence in main news bulletins, in-depth interviews were held with academicians (6 people) who worked at various faculties of Near East University (communication, education, psychology, law, fine arts). Within this scope, it was ensured that while interpreting the presentation of violence in main news bulletins, solutions can also be offered from educational point of view by academicians.

4 Content analyses

4.1 T.R.T. 1 Main news bulletin

1 January Sunday 2017: the first main news bulletin of the year broadcasted on the channel. The anchor-person was Zeynep Bulut Şenel as it was also weekend news. After the anchor-person said "the news with which you can learn what happens in Turkey and in the world begins now", she said as the first news "terror emerged in Istanbul this time". Then Şenel told that in the first hours of the New Year, an attacker entered a night club with barrelled weapon, first killed two persons at the gate including one policeman, then went inside and opened fire at the people at new year's day party. She told that in the attack thirty nine people lost their lives and sixty five people were wounded including four with heavy injuries; she added that the attacker was being searched everywhere. The news enters broadcasting with the subtitle "Terrorist Attack in Istanbul" after a daytime image of the crime scene. Later in the news the "this is a massacre, savagery", statement of Istanbul governor is given. The news continues with the polis search images on the day after the event at the night club accompanies by a top-voice. The dubbing person mentions that there were seven hundred people inside at the time of the attack. When the information given by the Minister of the Interior and Istanbul governor were introduced to the news, the subtitle gave the information that thirty nine people lost their lives and sixty five people were injured. The top-voice told that after security was ensured police entered the place and some people were rescued by sea police; it was also told that medics also arrived. There were also foreigners among the dead and the wounded; Minister of the Interior Süleyman Soyulu and Minister of Health Recep Akdağ also made investigations at the crime scene and gave information. In those moments the subtitle was changed as "Soyulu and Akdağ made investigations at the crime scene, visited the wounded at hospital". The news was ended with the top-voice reporting that security forces were in search of the attacker at large. The news was given in 3 min and 4 s (Fig. 1).

10 January Tuesday 2017: Erhan Çelik presented the first news with the phrase "this time Gaziantep" and a top-voice recorded that a policeman was wounded and the terrorist was killed. It was emphasised that trams performed searches after the incident based on the opinion that the terrorist might be acting with others; the images did not have a voice element (police sirens etc.). As can be seen in Fig. 2, the subtitle reads "one terrorist neutralised", the images consisted of the activities made by policemen in uniform and a bird's eye image of the Gaziantep Police Headquarters. The news was given in 1 min 11 s.



Fig. 1 The interview held with Ministers Süleyman Soylu and Recep Akdağ at TRT 1 main news bulletin



Fig. 2 Post-event photograph of policemen after explosion at TRT 1 main news bulletin

4.2 Show TV main news bulletin

1 January Sunday 2017: The news programme is opened with the anchor-person's phrase "Show news is beginning dear viewers". It enters the broadcast with the statement "terror hurt us in the first hours of the new year". In the giant screen behind the anchor-person it reads "terrorist attack in Istanbul" and the sub-title of the news reads "39 dead in terrorist attack at night club" (Fig. 3). It is seen on the screen that the anchor-person gives information on the incident. It is told that the attacker who entered the famous night club in Istanbul committed a massacre with long-barrelled weapon. It is explained that bullets



Fig. 3 Sensational news headline in Show Main News

were sprayed on the national and foreign tourists who were celebrating the new year, the picture was grave with 39 dead and 65 wounded, and the anchor-person goes silent with a sad image. The news begins with the views of ambulances arriving at crime scene and the first images of the crime scene after the incident. The dramatism of the violence is reinforced with the first shocked images of people after the attack. People fleeing from crime scene, those who search for their relatives and those who lose their relatives at that moment, are next elements in the news. After these images the phrase “massacre on new year’s day” appears in the middle of the screen with large-size letters and news continues with top-voice. After the dubbing, news reporter describes with microphone the crime scene with images from the day after the attack.

Reporter begins his narration by mentioning the personal characteristics of the attacker. He tells that the attacker, wearing a coat, beret and bag, entered inside after killing the policeman Burak Yıldız who was guarding the gate and then opened fire on people. During these narrations the images of people fleeing right after the incident and rushing towards ambulances are being shown in the screen. The reporter likens the attacker to “monster” and explains that he pushed the trigger of the weapon that he directed on the people for two minutes mercilessly. Then interviews are held with survivors. People tell that the party ended with running to the sea and hiding under armchairs. Top-voice tells that after the attack some males were stopped by the police who arrived at the crime scene with the suspicion that they could be the attacker. Top-voice also tells that Istanbul governor’s office made the public declaration at 3.15 and gives the statements of the governor on the screen. The governor explained that 35 people died and more than 40 people were wounded in the first instance. In the news, the cries of people rushing to hospitals for their relatives are given. Ministry of the Interior, Süleyman Soylu, who arrived at the crime scene in the morning, declared at 7.40 with the Minister of Health, Recep Akdağ, that the death toll was 39 and there were 65 wounded, including four heavily injured victims. Then it is reported that the crime scene is closed for traffic. After the incident, the reporter performs an interview at the hospital with a person who was shocked at the attack and was under treatment the day after. The injured person tells that his treatment continues. Finally

in the news it is stated that the attacker came to the crime scene on a cab and the cab driver was under interrogation at the prosecutor's office. Top-voice gives the information that the attacker was being searched within the investigation with the help of security cameras. The news ends with another interview held with a person in the crime scene. The news took 7 min and 32 s.

10 January Tuesday 2017: direct entry is made to the bulletin with the most sensational event of the day, Gaziantep incident. The anchor-person tells that an armed conflict erupted between terrorists who wanted to enter the building and guards, and that one of the terrorists was killed and alarm was declared for the other terrorist. As shown in Fig. 4, the subtitle reads "attack at Security Headquarters", and the operation images with ambulance and police sirens are given after the conflict. The top-voice tells that police is alarmed, ready to pull the trigger, searching for the terrorist fled a few second ago. It is explained that the attack was conducted with long-barrel guns at 15.20 and a section prepared with security camera images is given.

The images of the conflict and operation are shown again and again. It is explained by the top-voice that one terrorist was killed and one police officer was wounded in the conflict, that the conflict between the second terrorist and police continued for 2 min and then the terrorist fled. The top-voice finally gives the information that the incident was similar to the one which took place in Izmir and that "they could not reach their goal again. The news continued for 3 min and 51 s.

4.3 ATV main news bulletin

1 January Sunday 2017: after the credits of the bulletin ended, before the anchor-person begins to present the news bulletin, the news begins with the images of ambulances rushing the people killed and injured in the armed attack to the hospital. Then, music is given which conveys sorrow and savagery. The images of people in shock after the incident are given in slow motion so as to create more dramatizations. While these images are being shown, the text "they will not be able to divide us" appears in the middle of the screen with red and big size letters. The music in the background is increased slightly and the anchor-



Fig. 4 The images of panic after the incident on Show Main News

person in the studio is shown after these grief images, and with the expression “the centre of news, ATV main news centre” is announced by the anchor-person which is the motto of ATV main news. The anchor-person states that he had closed the year 2016 by wishing a good year but after the incident of the past night he would not be able to repeat it and that since the incident ATV news centre was awake. As the anchor-person speaks, the subtitle “terror hits in the first hour of the new year” enters. The anchor-person looks sad and says “I do not know what to say” on his own behalf and on the behalf of his colleagues and displays his sorrow and despair. He asserts that despite all these unfavourable conditions we had to close ranks more and feel sorry for the martyrs that we do not know at all as if they were our relatives. News VTR is entered, beginning with ambulance images, followed by the first statements of Istanbul governor and the first images from the crime scene. Then the top-voice states that it was a “treacherous attack” and the manner with which the events developed is given. In the meantime, such subtitles as “savagely...mercilessly...dastardly...” are entered. Top-voice tells that the address of the attack was a night club in Istanbul, Ortaköy and the statements of Istanbul governor giving the death toll as thirty nine are given. The savagery experienced by people is emphasised with the quavering and choking up of a few citizens with the help of the microphone extended by the reporter at that moment. The same images are being rotated constantly. Top-voice explains that the merciless terrorist entered the place and pulled the trigger constantly, and the subtitle changes as “attack at night club” as seen in Fig. 5. It is reported that the terrorist changed his outfits while fleeing and continued the attack for almost 7 min. In the meantime subtitle changes to “terrorist changed his outfits while fleeing”. It is mentioned that police is after the terrorist at large and the search is continuing at full speed. In the meantime the image of running people rotates on the screen. After a short image from the parties in the club, the crying images of relatives of the dead is given and the subtitle reads “police made a blockade in the region”. Then, the subtitle reads “everyone who heard the news ran to Ortaköy” and the images of dispute between police officers and some people in times of chaos are given. After the incident first images of news reporter and the crime scene are entered but it is also stated that police did not permit taking images and



Fig. 5 The first news on 1 January 2017 at ATV main news

information. At the end of the news, a grieving mother saying “whoever does evil under this flag goes to hell...” are given. Then, the statements of governor Vasip Şahin are given in detail with the subtitle “savagely and mercilessly”. Top-voice reported that the minister of the interior aborted his contacts in Hakkari and came to Istanbul to make a statement followed by the statement in the screen. The subtitle during his statement is “an inhuman and dastardly attack”, “four of the wounded have serious injuries”. The image of the cab which took the terrorist to the crime scene is given and top-voice states that he is taken to the police station; the last subtitle reads “the cab with which the terrorist came is under investigation” and the news ends. The news took 6 min and 22 s (Fig. 6).

10 January Tuesday 2017: before broadcasting the attack in Gaziantep which it chose as the most important headline of the day, ATV main news begins the bulletin with the heavy snows which affected Turkey and the information that schools were declared a day off for the following day. As of the 34th s of 2nd min the attack news is given. It is stated that Gaziantep Security Headquarters was the target of the terrorists this time, that when the two attackers wanted to enter from the back door one was killed in the conflict and the other fled. The subtitle of the news is “terrorist attack repulsed”. It is reported that reporter Ata Gündüz Kurşun and cameraman Mehmet Ali Ba recorded the breath-taking operation after the incident on behalf of ATV News and the video of the news enters. The news opens with bullet sounds and the images of conflict of the police during operation with the subtitle “police repulsed the terrorist attack”. In the news the conversations of police officers during conflict are given with close-up and incidents are conveyed one after another. Successive texts such as “attempted attack at security directorate”, “conflict in front of Gaziantep police headquarters”, “terrorist attack repulsed” appear and top-voice gives the news with crime scene images and siren sounds. It is reported that the event took place at around 3 pm, that the guarding police officers wanted to prevent the conflict, and one terrorist was killed but the other fled; it is also stated that one police officer and a small kid in the crime scene were wounded and hospitalised. The subtitle reads “one terrorist dead, other is searched”. A new subtitle is entered as “hot hours in front of security headquarters” and the reporter gives exact details of the incident from crime scene. Top-



Fig. 6 The image of the clip of ATV main news which dramatized 10 January 2017 terrorist attack

voice gives the information that large scale operation launched for the terrorist who fled after incident and the images of this operation support the news. The crowd who came to the crime scene is given from bird-eye view and it is seen that police officers dissolve the crowd due to the possibility of a bomb nearby. The subtitle “first statement is from Numan Kurtulmuş” gives the statements of deputy prime minister. After conveying Kurtulmuş’s statements with the subtitle “similar to the attack in Izmir”, the news is finalised with the image of a police car and siren sound. The news took 3 min and 10 s.

4.4 FOX TV main news

1 January Sunday 2017: Gülbin Tosun was presenting the main news bulletin as it was weekend. The bulletin opens with the information that once again in a popular place of Istanbul, a bloody-handed terrorist performed a bloody attack in the first hours of the New Year. It is stated that the attacker killed a police officer and a security official at the gate before entering inside and sprayed bullets on hundreds of people, killed 39 people and fled. As shown in Fig. 7, the screen was divided into three showing that there would be live contact before the subtitle changes to “breaking news” and then “FOX news at crime scene”. Contact is made with the reporter Gülşah İnce Birsen who was at the crime scene in Ortaköy. On the other hand, it is seen that another reporter, Beril Özcan, is waiting in front of the Şişli Etfal Hospital as a second live contact. However, before both connections, news is entered with event and post-event images. News video starts with ambulance sounds and the images of shocked, distracted and rushing people. The subtitle is “terrorist attack in night club 39 dead”. The live interviews with people are included in the news while top-voice is giving information on the event from time to time. It is stated that the club was attacked in the first hours of the year. In addition to the images of entry to the New Year, Ortaköy and the night club is zoomed on an Istanbul map and the exact location is given. Top-voice tells that the attacker departed 339 people, including one police officer, from their beloved, and the information of people on the event after the event are given in the news. With the subtitle “Terrorist attack in Istanbul”, a female reporter begins to give



Fig. 7 Multi-directional interview image of FOX main news

information with her microphone in front of the crime scene. It is emphasised that after killing the police officer at the gate, Burak Yıldız, and security officer, the attacker opened fire with his long-barrelled weapon on people randomly. The news explains that the only purpose of the people was having fun, and the savagery of the event is displayed explicitly by emphasising people rushing and even jumping into the sea. Later, it is reported that the first statement by Istanbul Governor Vasip Şahin declared that the attacker massacred 35 people; then, the statements of minister of the interior, Süleyman Soylu, are given and it is emphasised that the grief is even deeper. It is stated that only twenty of the people who lost their lives were identified; some fifteen were Turkish and the remaining five people were foreign nationals. Top-voice emphasises another topic of concern, and, as response, Soylu's statements that the terrorist at large was sought and every effort was being made to catch him are given. Then, top-voice explains that the environs of the club were closed to land, sea and air traffic by the police. The images given in the news continue with some one hundred ambulances and the hospitals they took the injured people. On the other hand, it is seen that police officers stopped and investigated civilian cars within the in-depth investigation of the incident. In the meantime, the subtitle changed to "search for the terrorist continues". The news was given in 4 min and 5 s.

10 January Tuesday 2017: the bulletin of anchor-person Fatih Portakal opens with constitutional change debates which was on the agenda, incidents in El Bab and short comments/expressions that the constitution was being violated. The anchor-person begins to mention the incident in Gaziantep. The anchor-person qualifies the event as terror, conflict or an action committed by a nonsane person and states that he was killed, another person fled but was being searched, and a police officer was wounded. In the video of the news, images are given in the company of siren sounds and a convoy of police cars in addition to a bird-eye view of Gaziantep Security Headquarters. The subtitle is "conflict in front of security headquarters in Gaziantep" a seen in Fig. 8 and the explanations of minister of the interior, Süleyman Soylu, is given. A map of Turkey is zoomed and the city of Gaziantep is shown with the top-voice of firing arms at Gaziantep Security Headquarters. It is stated that conflict erupted between police officers and a terrorist who



Fig. 8 The moment when FOX main news anchor person Fatih Portakal presented the news with his personal opinions

attempted to enter from back door and a terrorist was killed; it is reported that there was suspicion of another action. The images consist of the police officers in uniform in front of the directorate and their investigation. The news gives the statements of Soylu again, and his expression “in a manner of speaking, no difference is left between terrorist organizations” is given. It was mentioned that the attack occurred at 15.20 and with the help of a map the fact that the attack was organized from the back door of the building was reinforced. Top-voice reported that several ambulances were directed to the crime scene and the police officer wounded during the attack was hospitalized by his civilian colleagues. In the images the yelling of reinforcing forces and ambulance sounds are heard. Another piece on the news reported based on Soylu’s statements that there was a second terrorist at large and operations continued with the suspicion that he could be carrying a bomb. The moment when sub-title “police officers are searching the second terrorist”, top-voice explains that police conducted search everywhere including cars in car parks. Finally the news gives the statements of the governor’s office detailing that one terrorist was neutralised, but his affiliated terrorist organization was still unknown. After the video ended, anchor-person Portakal says “this news was first given by Doğan News Agency as an incident conducted by a nonsane attacker”. The news was given in 3 min and 36 s.

4.5 Kanal 7 news hour

1 January Sunday 2017: the anchor-person who presented Kanal 7 weekend news was Hülya Seloni who reported that Istanbul was hit by a terrorist attack in the first hours of the year and police forces mobilized to catch the terrorist who fled after spraying bullets on 600 people. As shown in Fig. 9, while she was presenting the news, a huge Turkish flag appeared on the giant screen behind her, which indicates the willingness to bring nationalist feelings to the fore. The news entered with ambulance sounds and the feverish images of several people being rushed to hospitals, while top-voice referred to the ambulance sounds and stated that terror showed itself in the first hours of 2017. A view of Istanbul taken from Ortaköy is used for almost 2 s, and the reporter at the crime scene



Fig. 9 The image where Kanal 7 main news emphasises nationalist feelings

gives brief information about the incident with the subtitle “terrorist attack in Ortaköy”. Interviews conducted with witnesses after the incident are given. It is stated that the massacre took less than 10 min and the statements of Istanbul Governor Vasip Şahin are given in the news. During the statement of the governor the expressions are given in large size letters. On the other hand, during the statement of the governor, his narration is reinforced with the images of the funeral of the killed police officer and first views after the incident. Top-voice tells that after the terrorist opened fire on the people who was in the club for New Year’s Day party, those who were close to the beach jumped into the sea to escape, which was followed by the statements of minister of the interior, Süleyman Soyulu. The subtitle appears as “bloody attack on new year’s day”. It is emphasised that coast guard tried to save people who jumped into the sea and that there were tens of injuries. Ambulance images were replaced by crime scene investigation team images and the views of the cab in which the terrorist came to the crime scene. It is stated that the cab was taken to the security headquarters with tow truck. Then, the news reporter who had appeared in the beginning of the news and gave information to the viewers from the crime scene appears again. With the subtitle reading “terrorist at large”, the reporter informs that all roads to Ortaköy are closed. The news ends with the images of Turkish flag on the night club which was surrounded with an awning. The news took 4 min and 14 s.

10 January Tuesday 2017: the news with violent content which put emphasis on the day is presented with a huge Turkish flag on the giant screen behind the anchor-person and it is stated that a conflict broke out between the terrorist who attempted to enter the Security headquarters in Gaziantep and police officer and that the terrorist was killed and a police officer was wounded. The news was given as “hot hours in front of Gaziantep Security Headquarters” and the subtitle of the video read “one terrorist captured dead” as seen in Fig. 10. The images are given from bird’s eye view with the siren sounds of ambulances and police cars. Top-voice tells that the terrorist attempted to enter the building from the back door at around 15.20 and responded with fire to the “stop” warning of police officers. It is emphasised that in the conflict a police officer was slightly wounded where the images of nearby roads closed to traffic and the “evacuate here” yelling of rushing officers are



Fig. 10 The image where the size of the incident was given with bird’s eye view at Kanal 7 Main News

given in the news. Top-voice tells that bomb squads arrived at the crime scene and conducted search with the suspicion that the terrorist could be carrying a bomb, and a bird's eye view gives the back door of the security building. The news was given in 1 min and 33 s.

4.6 NTV main news bulletin

1 January Sunday 2017: the reporter stated that the common wish of everyone from the new year was that the terrorist incidents which claimed tens of lives in the previous year would not occur again; however, the first news given was a terrorist entering the famous night club, Reina, in Ortaköy and opening random fire on the people with his automatic rifle. It is stated that 39 people died and 65 people were hospitalised after the attack. During the narration NTV news credits are given under the speech of the anchor-person and on the giant screen behind him the bird's eye view of the night club is given. The anchor-person emphasises that Burak Özcan was waiting at the crime scene to give the latest developments on the incident and Canan Yıldırım was in front of the hospital where most of the wounded were taken for treatment and informs that images of the reactions from the world about the incident would follow (Fig. 11). Later, the news consisting of post-incident images enters and top-voice tells what happened. The subtitle is "terror hits on new year's day". With the help of a bird's eye view-like image of Ortaköy, it is stated that the terrorist came to the night club at around 01.15. The news mentions the police officer Burak Yıldız who was waiting at the gate and is supported with his image holding gun. Generally the news images consist of the bird's eye views (from mobile electronic system integration or security cameras) of the crime scene. The news continued with the street interviews of witnesses of the incident; a woman tells that during the attack the place was filled with gas and they ran to save their lives and did not know how they escaped, while the images of fleeing people after the incident and the wounded being placed in ambulances support the narration. After a few people telling their experience, top-voice emphasises the extent of fear, panic and concern for life. Top-voice tells that a group of



Fig. 11 The image at NTV main news where developments are given from the crime scene

people who did not know what to do jumped into the sea, the people who could run from the front door were shocked and the wounded were hospitalized with the help of nearby people. After the incident inside was given through the narration of a security officer with a torn shirt who witnessed the incident, the statements of Istanbul Governor Vasip Şahin are given. The statement of Mehmet Koçarslan, the owner of night club Reina, that “our hearts bleed, the bullets are fired at our heart” is given. Koçarslan’s photo is given on the screen and his expressions are written on the screen from a to z, and the top-voice reads the expressions before the news video ends. The news took 5 min and 16 s.

10 January Tuesday 2017: after the anchor-person gives the summaries as shown in Fig. 12, as of 1 min and 16 s the violent act in Gaziantep is entered. On the semilunar shaped screen behind her, and accompanied with the photograph of police officers in uniform, it is underlined that the incident was very similar to the event in front of city court in Izmir. Another point which was mentioned is that one terrorist was killed and a police officer was wounded according to the statements from the governor’s office. The news video tells that the possible terrorist links of the incident were being searched and the subtitle read “attack as prevented in Gaziantep”, which is reinforced with top-voice. The searches conducted by police officers in the crime scene and the images of roads being controlled are given with bird’s eye views where siren sounds are heard. It is explained that the attacker was determined to perform the attack at the back gate of the building at around 15.20. Top-voice tells that the first response was given by the guarding police officer and the attacker was killed. Top-voice also emphasises that the wounded police officer was hospitalized and the attacker was killed according to the statement from the governor’s office. The last explanations of the news are that special operation forces took measures in the vicinity and bomb squads made search on the vehicles nearby and on the attacker. The news took 1 min and 29 s.

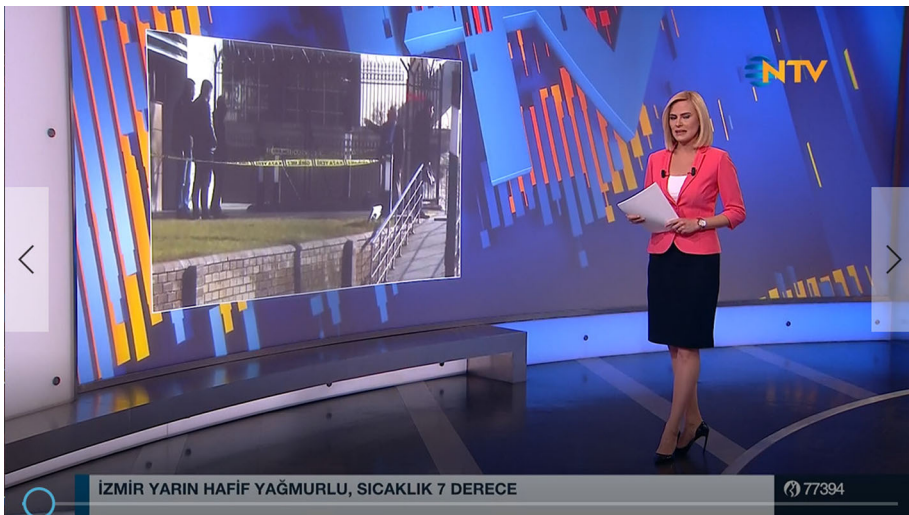


Fig. 12 The usual on-foot presentation of NTV main news anchor person and the summary images of the news on the giant screen behind

5 Interviews

5.1 Sample

In the study, semi-structured interviews were held with an application group consisting of academicians. The application group is determined using “convenience sampling” which is a kind of purposive sample in qualitative studies.

Within this scope, the application group was restricted with Near East University and the following questions were asked to 6 academicians at different faculties of the university (communication, education, psychology, law, fine arts) and the opinions of these academicians have been determined on the “presentation of violence” on main news bulletins of Turkish televisions and the kind of educative measures required in their departments and other departments at universities in order to overcome the problems that they indicate.

5.2 Questions

1. In the main news bulletin that you are following, what is the frequency and pattern of giving news with violent content (terrorism, attack)? Please explain.
2. In the main news bulletin that you are following, do you think that the presentation of violence creates fear, panic and violence in the viewers? Please explain.
3. In your opinion, what is the extent and pattern of presentation of violence in news content and at which minute it should be given in the main news bulletin? Please explain.
4. Based on your answer to the previous question, what kind of measures should be taken in terms of education in your field and other fields at universities?

5.3 Analysis

The analysis of the relevant interviews were conducted under the 3 basic heading given below. The interesting expressions of some participants are also given with their names in the analysis.

- The type and frequency of news with “violence” content at main news bulletins

The entire interview group stated that especially news with violent content such as terrorism, violence against and abuse of women, health professionals, public officers etc. are given” very frequently” in main news bulletins. Some of the relevant opinions are as follows:

Asc. Prof. Dr. Ebru Çakıcı (Near East University Psychology Department): “In main news bulletins, both terrorist acts and attacks (violence against women, attacks on doctors and health professionals etc.) are given frequently and intensely. The story is mostly dramatized”.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Mukaddes Sakallı Demirok (Near East University Faculty of Education): “In the main news bulletin that we are following, violent elements are given too frequently. Some news even creates curiosity about violent elements.”

Lecturer Ayşegül Akçam (Near East University Faculty of Education): “Not only in the main news bulletin that I am following, but in all news bulletins terrorist acts, usurpation, rape, violence against women are like daily events as we see them every day. The country

hears such news in main news bulletins due to such events which are almost experienced on a daily basis.”

- Social effects of news with violent content

In the interview group, it is mostly believed that the news with violent content served in main news bulletins are given for high rating. Within this scope, it is believed that the society is directed towards “violence”, “fear” and “anxiety” for higher ratings. Some of the relevant opinions are as follows:

Prof. Dr. Işıl Özkan (Near East University Faculty of Law): “News with violent content which is given by exaggerating is terrorizing the society. People no more want to see news; the news which distort the peace and health of society are being served.”

Asst. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ufuk Çelik (Near East University Faculty of Communication): “The general presentation of news can be such that, instead of making the news of the violence, violence can be brought to the forefront so that news can be watched. I think that a piece of news where violent element is moderate is blended with more emphasis on violence from time to time. This means that it can be shown as more serious than it really is sometimes. The used wording and the atmosphere created in presentation draws such a picture that the event is sheer violence and the first and foremost element is violence.”

Lecturer Mukaddes Sakallı Demirok (Near East University Faculty of Education): “I think that such news is driving the public to fear and anxiety. For this reason I feel uncomfortable with the children watching news.”

- Organization of news with violent content and responsibilities of universities

5.3.1 Organization of main news

As regards the manner with which news with violent content should be given in main news bulletins, the interview group emphasised “avoiding exaggeration”, “avoiding normalization of violence”, “and “avoiding encouragement for violence”. Some of the relevant opinions are as follows:

Prof. Dr. Işıl Özkan (Near East University Faculty of Law): “news with violent content, especially terrorist acts, must be given “accurately” and without exaggeration, as the most fundamental right is the right to live and, unfortunately, with terrorist acts, we are having heavy losses. They have to be conveyed accurately and the society has to understand that these losses are not normal. For example, in penal law, the principle is to prevent the crime before it is committed; punishing after the crime is committed is not the fundamental solution. The matter is raising awareness. The duty of the press is giving accurate news in this direction and raising awareness in the society. However, I think that when giving news on violence towards women, children etc. we should avoid encouraging and exaggerating news.”

Prof. Dr. Uğurcan Akyüz (Near East University Faculty of Fine Arts): “paying attention to avoid legalization or exemplification of violence would be sufficient. However, unfortunately, violence is at a premium on the screen as it is in the street. The most shouting, the most aggressive, the one with the highest voice, is seen rightful. If the thief or violence-user is his man, there is no problem. Violence has parties. If this is eliminated I think that something will be corrected.”

Doç. Dr. Ebru Çakıcı (Near East University Psychology Department): “As there is violence in the nature of humans, there always will be violence and its news in life. I read that giving suicide news with narration always increased the risk of imitation. In 1999

Marmara earthquake was given with images on the screen for tens of days which caused insomnia and psychological symptoms in people who did not witness the earthquake. On one hand, presenting the news in an influential way can create awareness and public opinion. News on intra-family violence and sexual abuse can make people notice the crimes around them. On the other hand, it has a negative impact of normalizing, accepting violence or suppressing them with fear.”

5.3.2 *Educative responsibilities of universities*

As regards the manner with which news with violent content should be given in main news bulletins, the interview group indicated to the responsibilities of universities and academicians so as to ensure the borders in presentation of news with violent content such as “presenting awareness-raising approaches at undergraduate and graduate courses and in public education activities”. Some of the relevant opinions are as follows:

Prof. Dr. Uğurcan Akyüz (Near East University Faculty of Fine Arts): “I think that avoiding discriminative, provocative, otherising behaviours will create essential benefits. Respecting first to humans, then their diversity, opinions and behaviours will end many problems before they occur. This is valid for art and design with its most peaceful and “without border” nature but also for all areas in terms of education.”

Asst. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ufuk Çelik (Near East University Faculty of Communication): “In a class which we delivered on the presentation as well as content of news, we are trying to discriminate between sensational presentation and real news presentation and what real news reporting is. The news editor is faced with the demand that the news bulletin has to be popular, but we are emphasising that still the editor should not abandon principles and try to combine the ethical values with rating, which is sometimes a paradox.”

Lecturer Ayşegül Akçam (Near East University Faculty of Education): “I think that in or after main news bulletins there should be a short program to raise awareness in the people every day. Information should be given on what violence is, the results of harassment on children, how violence can be prevented etc. Or, after presenting news on violence, instead of switching to the other news, an expert/s in the field should make evaluations on the incident and tell what should be done”.

6 Findings and conclusion

This study examined the presentation of terrorist violence news in television main news bulletins and explored the presentation of New Year’s Day terror disaster and Gaziantep terrorist attack cases on TRT 1, ATV, Show TV, FOX TV, NTV and Kanal 7 main news bulletins through content analysis. These two incidents attracted attention not only with their content but also with their presentation in television main news bulletins and were described as “TERROR DISASTER” by the media, which presented two good examples of reflection of violence in television news programmes.

When the quantitative findings of the study are taken into consideration, it is seen that on the examined days the news of terror violence aired in main news bulletins have a high ratio in terms of number and length. All of the examined main news bulletins gave the terrorist attack which occurred on 1 January 2015 almost the entire bulletin and did not give place to any other news. The length of 1st news is important in our study; thus, we identified that the terrorist violence news of 1 January 2017 occupied 3 min 4 s on TRT,

6 min 22 s on ATV, 7 min 32 s on SHOW TV, 4 min 5 s on FOX TV, 5 min 16 s on NTV and 4 min 14 s on Kanal 7.

However, Gaziantep attack was the first news of the news bulletins and the news bulletin continued with other news from the country. This news was given for 1 min 11 s on TRT, 3 min 10 s on ATV, 3 min 51 s on SHOW TV, 3 min 36 s on FOX TV, 1 min 29 s on NTV and 1 min 33 s on Kanal 7. As a result of the analysis conducted, it is seen that the terrorist attack which occurred on New Year's Day was given much more importance. This is mainly due to the fact that the death toll is much higher and the event interested much large masses. Within this framework, the period reserved for the news was much longer. Taking into consideration that televisions and especially main news bulletins have to use time effectively and make best use of every minute, it is possible to say that the period reserved for news with terrorism content on 1 January 2017 is too much to the point of exaggeration. The fact that terrorist attacks are given so much time in main news bulletins causes the perception of a negative situation by the society as an even graver event, exaggeration and dramatization of the size of the event (Kebapçı 2001).

The crime scene, actors of the event, cries of the wounded and the rush to hospitalize them, the images of the wounded and their tearful relatives were among the elements used in displaying the tragedy of the event. The period spared for terrorism news on television news and the images used in this period as regards the event, interviews made, the sounds used in the news etc. reinforcing the tragedy of the news.

Television news are usually including news with violent content, addressing this expectation which already exists in the society, makes warnings about certain dangers and risks and creates fear and panic in the society. In general sense, violent events are the main course of news bulletins. News directly targets emotions through such events and makes the content inferior and perpetuates the visibility of sorrow. The most important reason for which channels give the first ranks in their bulletins to news with violent content is to appear as if they are informing the people but actually to increase their ratings (Yurdagül 2014).

Another important conclusion of this study is that SHOW TV is showing the images of news with violent content again and again, extends the period given to the news and reinforces it. So it is turned into magazine and violence is given as entertainment. An examination of the subtitles and discourses in ATV shows that its broadcasting policy is closer to the political administration. The exactly opposite situation is seen in FOX TV. Critical approach of Fatih Portakal and the political stance of the channel combine to give more space to broadcasting which opposes the political authority. When Kanal 7 which has a conservative structure is examined, we again see broadcasts close to the political authority. This is due to the fact that the government has a conservative democratic structure and the channel feels itself close to the government. An examination of the first thematic channel of Turkey, NTV shows that it appears as a news channel which can be called as the most accurate and most objective news channel that never changes its direction. TRT 1 is a channel which has to be under political authority and it always has been the voice of each government. In addition, it is the pioneer of protocol broadcasting in Turkey and it continues this tradition today.

In addition to the content analysis as regards the relevant main news bulletins, the interviews conducted with the relevant interview group revealed the following:

- News with violent content have to be given without “exaggeration” and “reaching normalizing effect”,

- As when such news are given by exaggeration, they pose threat towards “health of the society”,
- Universities and educationists are responsible for delivering education in order to raise awareness about the distinction between “news” and “fiction”.

It is also essential in terms of the impact of events on the society that such news with violent content are presented not widely and as the first news but in the further sections of the bulletins and given the same time as other news. At this point, it is expected from the news agent that the news is given in a reliable manner without aiming to stimulate feelings and exaggerating with magazine techniques. Instead of showing fear and violence to people explicitly, channels are expected to bring social psychology to a better level and act with public responsibility as television is not only an entertainment tool, and high ratings do not necessarily show that the content has good quality. With this awareness, considering that television is a tool for non-formal education, the principles mentioned above have to be taken into account.

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