

Socio-Political Representation of the Turkish Diaspora in Germany: A Critical Discourse Analysis on the Program 'Bakış Açısı' on Kanal Avrupa TV (2005-2012)

Şengül Şenol

¹Munzur University, Faculty of Communication, Tunceli/Türkiye,

Email ID: sengulsenol@munzur.edu.tr

ORCID: 0000-0001-8688-8263

ABSTRACT

This study examines the socio-political representation of the Turkish diaspora in Europe, focusing on the program 'Bakış Açısı' broadcasted on Kanal Avrupa between 2005 and 2012. Structured around Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis and Socio-Cognitive Approach, the research meticulously analyzes the discourses developed in the face of integration policies, political participation, and traumatic events such as the Neo-Nazi organization (NSU) murders. The findings demonstrate that the Turkish community in Germany has shed its image as passive laborers and transformed into active agents with academic aspirations who demand their rights. The extensive program archive, featuring high-ranking politicians such as Christian Wulff and Armin Laschet, was analyzed at both micro and macro structural levels within the framework of the 'Ideological Square.' Conclusively, this study reveals that diaspora media transforms the discourse of victimization into a practice of resistance and rights-seeking, thereby offering a strategic arena of struggle within the host country. The study academically documents how the positive self-presentation of the Turkish community in Germany is empowered through the media and highlights their efficacy within the public sphere.

Keywords: Kanal Avrupa TV, Bakış Açısı TV Program, Critical Discourse Analysis, Turkish Diaspora in Germany, Socio-Cognitive Model.

INTRODUCTION

In our age, the communication sector consists not merely of channels that transmit information, but has transformed into strategic areas where reality is reconstructed, ideologies are produced, and power relations are reinforced or problematized. Especially immigrant or, in other words, diaspora media functions as a counter-public sphere that goes beyond the bond immigrant communities establish with their homeland, shaping their relations with the dominant society in which they live. Myria Georgiou, an academic from the London School of Economics (LSE) who has qualified studies in this field, makes important observations regarding the role and effects of diaspora media. According to Georgiou, diaspora media, with its increasing influence, has reached a power to determine the bond between the society in which immigrants live and their homeland in a multifaceted manner (Georgiou, 2018, pp. 45-57).

Although there is an extensive literature on Turks living in Northern and Central European countries, the number of scientific studies examining the effects of media outlets on the Turkish community in the context of immigration and diaspora is quite limited. Following the Recruitment Agreement signed between Turkey and Germany in 1961, the Turkish community that settled in Germany constructed its own media outlets over time. Turkish media in Germany began to take shape from the 1970s and 1980s onwards through newspapers (European editions of publications such as *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Tercüman*), magazines, and radio programs. The early 2000s represent digitalization, local broadcasting, and the rise of a new generation of integrated Turkish-German media. Diversifying since the 2000s, this media structure has transformed into an alternative public sphere that transforms and structures the relations individuals establish with the dominant society in which they live. Jürgen Habermas defines the public sphere as a domain where social issues are discussed and a rational-critical environment is formed (Habermas, 1991, pp. 27-30). Diaspora, or immigrant media, expands this traditional sphere, transforming it into a polyphonic medium where minorities can make their voices heard and gain institutional representation. In this context, it can be said that Turkish diaspora media in Europe plays a critical role in the development of civic consciousness in individuals and the increase in demands for political participation.

As one of the concrete examples of this transformation, Kanal Avrupa TV was established in 2004 under the leadership of businessman Ali Paşa Akbaş (Akbaş Music Group) in Duisburg, Germany, and began test broadcasts. Entering its main broadcasting life at the beginning of 2005, Kanal Avrupa holds a pioneering position in diaspora visual media as the first German-licensed Turkish television channel. Stepping into broadcasting life with the motto 'The First Television Channel of European Turks', the channel constituted a significant turning point in Turkish broadcasting. Established under the leadership of Ali Paşa Akbaş—a second-generation member of a family that migrated to Germany in the 1980s—and his family, the channel constitutes an exemplary initiative

for the institutionalization of Turkish diaspora media beyond being merely an entertainment or news channel. Furthermore, before the digital media age, the channel filled an important gap in the media in terms of amplifying the voice of Turks in Europe and supporting their socio-economic integration.

Producing content for the Turkish community in Western Europe, Kanal Avrupa TV includes programs featuring experts that address bureaucratic and legal processes, primarily dual citizenship, retirement, visa/travel permits, integration, and working life. In addition, it facilitates the establishment of a strong communication network among the Turkish community in Germany by supporting candidates of Turkish origin in elections across Germany and the European Union (EU), creating public opinion regarding the fight against racism and xenophobia, and announcing the activities of hometown associations, mosque societies, cemevis, and sports clubs (Kanal Avrupa TV Promotional Brochure, p. 2). Having initially started its broadcasting life in Duisburg-Rheinhausen, one of the industrial cities of the North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) state, the channel currently continues its activities in the city of Mülheim an der Ruhr, where approximately one million immigrants of Turkish origin live. Thanks to the power of the TÜRKSAT satellite's 'Europe Wide Beam', Kanal Avrupa TV broadcasts uninterruptedly to more than 25 countries in Western and Central Europe. Addressing a potential population of 550 million and 6 million Turkish immigrants in the region, the countries where the channel is most watched are Germany, Turkey, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, and France (Kanal Avrupa TV Mediendaten, p. 3). The program 'Bakış Açısı' (Perspective), examined in this study, brings the political, social, and cultural agenda of Turks in Germany under scrutiny while also bringing the community's relations with Turkey to the screen within this framework. When examined in terms of broadcast concept, the production displays a highly original format. Indeed, the topics covered and the guest profile in the program were not limited solely to Turkish diaspora intellectuals or businesspeople. In the broadcasts, space was opened for different social strata of both Turkish and German society; prominent German politicians, scientists, and bureaucrats were also hosted, and interviews were conducted bilingually (Turkish-German). Thus, the perspectives of both the country of residence and the country of origin were simultaneously conveyed to the audience. Beyond being communication-oriented, this pluralistic structure of the program provides a platform that allows for a situational analysis with an interdisciplinary (multidisciplinary) approach.



Figure 1. Current logo image of Avrupa TV (Source:

https://www.facebook.com/kanalavrupacomtv/?locale=tr_TR Channel, Access, 20.07.2026.)

METHOD

This research is based on a review of the 300-episode broadcast archive of the program 'Bakış Açısı' (Perspective), which was broadcast live on Kanal Avrupa TV between 2005 and 2012. This period under examination holds strategic importance as it coincides with a time when Turkey-EU relations gained momentum, the new Immigration and Integration Act (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*) was heatedly discussed in Germany, and historically the most intense dialogues were established on the Ankara-Brussels line. On the other hand, the section in question is also noteworthy in that it corresponds to a time frame in which the serial murders and dark actions of the racist far-right organization NSU (*Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund*) opened deep wounds in social memory. Considering that Turkey-EU relations follow a more stagnant course today, bringing this active period under scrutiny makes the research unique.

In the examined broadcasts of the program; Christian Wulff, who was the Prime Minister of Lower Saxony at the time and subsequently the President of Germany, Sylvia Löhrmann, Deputy Prime Minister of NRW, Armin Laschet, who served as the NRW Minister for Integration and in the following process rose to the NRW State Premiership and Chancellor candidacy, former Minister of Integration and Labor Guntram Schneider, Director of the Center for Turkish Studies and Integration Research (ZfTI) Prof. Dr. Hacı Halil Uslucan, and former NRW Member of Parliament Arif Ünal, as well as numerous representatives of non-governmental organizations and experts featured as guests.

The main purpose of this study is to reveal through which discursive strategies the 'Bakış Açısı' program addressed the socio-political issues of the Turkish immigrant community in Europe. In line with this, the research adopts the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method of Teun A. van Dijk, who argues that discourse is not merely a

linguistic structure, but rather a cognitive process that constructs social reality through mental models (Van Dijk, 2009). While examining the micro (word choice, syntax, rhetoric) and macro (thematic structure) levels of media texts, Van Dijk's 'Socio-Cognitive Approach' allows for decoding how these texts are articulated with social memory, ideological schemas, and power relations. The broadcast archive between 2005 and 2012 analyzed within the scope of this study reveals the discursive struggle entered into with dominant state mechanisms (state premierhips, ministries, youth welfare offices, etc.). In the research, it is analyzed how themes such as the defense of minority and immigrant rights, the fight against racism, equality of opportunity in education, and brain drain were constructed along the axis of Teun A. van Dijk's 'Ideological Square' strategy (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 33).

THE BAKIŞ AÇISI PROGRAM

Broadcast live on Kanal Avrupa TV between 2005 and 2012, Bakış Açısı is one of the most important television programs that set the agenda of the Turkish diaspora in Europe and left a mark on social memory. Coming to the screens every Saturday between 19:00 and 21:00 from the channel's Duisburg studios at the time, the program guided the intellectual world of the diaspora for seven years. In the promotional booklet of the programs published by Kanal Avrupa Television, the following promotional text was included regarding the Bakış Açısı program:

"The social, political, economic, and cultural agenda of European Turks is brought to the screen live every Saturday with Bakış Açısı. In the program prepared and presented by Şengül Şenol, your perspective on life will change" (Promotional Booklet of Avrupalı Türklerin Televizyonu, 2006, p. 19).

The Bakış Açısı program etched itself in memory with its dynamic and analysis-oriented format that went beyond the conventional in European Turkish media. The fundamental elements that made the program's content and operation unique are as follows: The program offered a polyphonic discussion environment by hosting four different guests who were experts in their fields around a main theme determined each week. Going beyond news bulletins, weekly developments were conveyed primarily to the Turkish audience through in-depth analysis rather than superficial reporting. This approach enabled the Turkish audience, especially in Europe and Germany, to grasp the behind-the-scenes of events and their potential consequences. Topic headings were determined not at a desk, but directly in line with the agenda priorities and social needs of Turks in Germany and Europe. In order to strengthen the bond established with the audience, the program attained an interactive structure through telephone connections conducted during the live broadcast; the voice of the public was brought directly into the studio. With Germany's Turks as its primary target audience, Bakış Açısı adopted holding the social, political, and cultural pulse of this audience as its core mission. The program's sphere of influence was not limited solely to local diaspora issues; macro topics such as Turkey-Germany relations, European Union processes, and other political, economic, social, and cultural developments were also at the focus of the program. This program served as an intellectual platform where the Turkish community in Germany both discussed its own internal issues and analyzed its ties with the country of residence and the homeland, Turkey.



Figure 2. Former logo of the Bakış Açısı Program (2005-2012), Kanal Avrupa TV.

In addition, the Bakış Açısı program broke new ground in the Turkish media in Germany by bringing German state prime ministers, deputy prime ministers, and integration ministers of different political parties together at the same table with representatives of the Turkish community. The fundamental success of the program lies in its

ability to address critical issues such as migration and integration directly with their counterparts and with the highest level of political participation.

The recording of the views, analyses, and evaluations of German politicians on this platform transformed the program from being merely a television production into an invaluable source of data for both Turkish and German academic circles. For this reason, the Bakış Açısı program broadcast on Kanal Avrupa Television bears the characteristic of an important knowledge laboratory in the field of social and human sciences. The fact that the program, primarily in Turkish, occasionally exhibited a bilingual character depending on the German guests hosted is also important to evaluate from the perspective of communication science regarding the reach of the message to the target audience (Hogg, Vaughan, 2007, pp. 624-625). Here, multicultural broadcasting is in question, making it a production that established an intercultural communication bridge between the German society and the Turkish community that left the heart of Anatolia and settled in Germany, strengthened integration, and sustained their relations with their homeland Turkey through the media.

Furthermore, it constructed a real intercultural communication bridge between the Turkish community that migrated from Anatolia to Germany and the German society. Putting the principle of multicultural broadcasting into practice from theory, the Bakış Açısı program supported the integration processes of the diaspora community in Germany, ensured the maintenance of ties with Turkey on a rational ground through the media, and encouraged the democratic participation of the immigrant Turkish community. Moreover, beyond being the voice of European Turks throughout its broadcasting period, the Bakış Açısı program put forward a pioneering model demonstrating how integration and social peace can be built via the media.



Figure 2. Bakış Açısı program (2009): from left Hıdır Kalay, Prof. Dr. Hans Bohrmann, Prof. Dr. Uğur Tekin, Hamdi Maskar, Presenter Şengül Şenol. Topic: Collapse of the Cologne Historical Archive Building and the archive of Turks in Germany (DOMİT) and its work.

The table below is a selected archive listing of the Bakış Açısı program between 2005 and 2012. Nearly 300 live broadcast programs were produced from the studio in the city of Duisburg between these years. The programs selected using the Purposive Sampling method are shown in the table below. In this study, since Critical Discourse Analysis is a qualitative (in-depth) method of analysis rather than a quantitative (numerical) listing, benchmark episodes that most intensely and characteristically reflect key themes such as political representation, racism, education, and cultural memory have been included.

Table 1. Bakış Açısı Program Archive and Content Breakdown (2005-2012)

Date	Program Topics	Guests / Participants
29.09.2005	NRW Minister for Integration Dr. Armin Laschet's immigrant policy and the demands of Turks (Special Interview at the NRW Ministry).	Dr. Armin LASCHET, NRW Minister for Integration at the time, Former Prime Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia and Candidate for Chancellor of Germany (Christian Democratic Union of Germany - CDU)

Date	Program Topics	Guests / Participants
25.03.2006	Integration policy in Germany and NRW, social and cultural demands of Turkish immigrants.	Dr. Armin LASCHET, NRW Minister for Integration at the time, İsmail Zengin, representative of the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DİTİB), along with other Turkish NGO representatives on Kanal Avrupa TV
March 2006	Violence in German schools and the situation of Turkish students.	Educators and Experts
April 2006	Istanbul-Cologne Sister City Events, joint projects, and proposals.	Dr. Norbert BURGER, Former Mayor of Cologne (Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD), NGO Representatives
May 2006	TİDAF (Federation of Turkish Employers' Associations in Europe) European strategies and employment.	A. Serdar Yenice – President of TİDAF (Federation of Turkish Businessmen Associations in Europe) at the time Fikret EKİN – Former President of ATİB (Union of Turkish-Islamic Cultural Associations in Europe) Presidents of the TİDAF Federation in Europe: Yılmaz KILIÇ – Germany Ziya AKŞAHİN – United Kingdom Mustafa DUMAN – Romania Dursun ALTINIŞIK – Czech Republic
21.04.2007	Hannover Fair Opening: Energy technologies, R&D, and industrial automation.	Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN – Prime Minister of Turkey at the time, President of Turkey (AK Party); Angela MERKEL – Chancellor of Germany at the time (CDU); Christian WULFF – Prime Minister of Lower Saxony at the time and later President of Germany (CDU); Murat YALÇINTAŞ – President of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce at the time
22.11.2007	Maria Böhmer's visit to Turkey and the demands of Turks in Germany.	Turkish NGOs and Politicians
01.12.2007	Belgian political crisis and its impacts on the Turkish community.	Fatma PEHLİVAN, Senator of Belgium; Mahinur ÖZDEMİR GÖKTAŞ, Brussels Schaerbeek Municipal Councillor at the time, Minister of Family and Social Services of the Republic of Turkey (AK Party); Hüseyin DÖNMEZ, NGO Representatives
26.01.2008	Layoffs at the Bochum Nokia factory and the strike process.	Mustafa ÇÖZMEZ, IG Metall Ford Representative, Turkish Workers and Union Representatives
07.02.2008	Prime Minister Erdoğan's Cologne meeting and the demands of European Turks.	NGO Representatives and Journalists
16.02.2008	Prime Minister Erdoğan's statements on integration policy and the debates.	Fikret EKİN, NGO Representatives and Experts
08.03.2008	French local elections and the programs of Turkish candidates.	Turkish Candidates and NGO Representatives
19.04.2008	OECD Education Report: Educational status of Turkish children and recommendations.	Teachers, Metin ÖZSINMAZ, Hıdır ŞENOL, NGO Representatives
10.05.2008	Holiday season: Border gates and the journey to the motherland Turkey.	Retired Turks and NGO Representatives

Date	Program Topics	Guests / Participants
24.05.2008	Friendship Award presented to Mother Mevlüde Genç, who lost 5 family members—her children and grandchild—in the house burned down by racists in Solingen, and rising racism in Germany.	Mevlûde GENÇ's interview, Politicians and NGO Representatives
14.06.2008	The passing of Chingiz Aitmatov, his position in world literature, and the ceremony.	Cengiz AYTMATOV (Archive Interview), Aynura TURSAVA, Deputy Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan in Bonn at the time, Yusuf POLATOĞLU, Orhan BAHÇIVAN, Poet-Writer, Orhan ARAS, Writer
21.06.2008	Euro 2008: Turkish National Team's success and march to the cup.	Nuri ŞAHİN, Footballer, Dr. Hıdır AKBAŞ, Coach
05.09.2008	Language test requirement for German citizenship and the perspective of Turks.	Erkan KOCALAR, Deputy Mayor of Duisburg at the time, and NGO Representatives
12.09.2008	Anti-Islamic march in Cologne and democratic responses.	Politicians, Faith and NGO Representatives
08.11.2008	The passing of M. Kemal Atatürk to eternity, the founding of the Republic of Turkey, and the reforms carried out.	Mehmet Ali ÖLMEZ (President of ADD), M. Ali SELBUZ, and NGO Representatives
22.11.2008	Brazilian Participatory Budgeting model and practices in Germany.	Prof. Antonio ADRIOLI, Politicians
06.12.2008	International Day of Persons with Disabilities: The situation of disabled Turks in Germany.	Experts and NGO Representatives
28.02.2009	"Turkish immigrants are non-integrated" research and responses from migration experts.	Prof. Dr. Faruk ŞEN (Former Director of TAM), Politicians, NGO Representatives
March 2009	March 8th Women's Day: Examples of successful Turkish women entrepreneurs.	Four Successful Women Entrepreneurs
20.04.2009	UN Geneva Racism Conference and the Canadian immigration model.	Migration Experts and NGO Representatives
June 2009	Collapse of the Cologne Archive Building, the archive of Turks in Germany, and DOMİT initiatives.	Prof. Dr. Hans BOHRMANN, Institute of Communication Sciences at Dortmund University, Prof. Dr. Uğur TEKİN, Hamdi MASKAR, Dipl. Pedagog Hıdır KALAY
October 2009	The murder of 8 Turkish shopkeepers (pre-NSU), Neo-Nazi threat, and security.	Politicians, Experts, and NGO Representatives
05.12.2009	Swiss Minaret Ban Referendum and freedom of religion.	Diyanet Representatives (Switzerland and Germany)
16.01.2010	European Capitals of Culture: Istanbul and Essen (Ruhr Region).	Municipal Representatives and Cultural Experts
13.02.2010	Imam and Religious Education Teacher Training Projects in Germany.	Council of Science and Diyanet Representatives
27.02.2010	Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), its establishment, and diaspora expectations.	Sayit YUSUF, Vice President of the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities at the time, Mehmet BAŞ, Journalist, and NGO Representatives

Date	Program Topics	Guests / Participants
27.08.2010	Chancellor Merkel's contacts in Ankara and their reflections in Germany.	Arif ÜNAL (MP), Tayfun KELTEK (President of the NRW Integration Council), NGO Representatives
25.09.2010	Youth Welfare Offices (Jugendamt) and the issues faced by Turkish families.	Victim Families and Expert Pedagogues
09.10.2010	Minority government plans in the Netherlands and Turkish politicians.	Düzgün YILDIRIM, Dutch Senator, Songül AKKAYA, Member of the Dutch Provincial Council, NGO Representatives
November 2010	Perspectives on immigration in Germany and academic research.	Prof. Dr. Hacı Halil USLUCAN (Director of ZfTI), Arif ÜNAL, Member of the NRW Parliament at the time
11.12.2010	PISA results regarding education among OECD countries, the status of Turkish students in Germany, and demands for multicultural education.	Metin ÖZSINMAZ and Educators
29.01.2011	Prohibition of the screening of the movie 'Valley of the Wolves: Palestine' in Germany and censorship debates.	Producer Representatives, Cinema and Art Critics
26.02.2011	NRW State Integration Act and evaluation of the new concept.	Guntram SCHNEIDER, NRW Minister of Employment and Integration (SPD), and NGO Representatives
12.03.2011	Media Service Awards Ceremony for Turks Abroad. Presentation: A. P. AKBAŞ (Founder of Kanal Avrupa TV), Hikmet EREN, President of the Eco-Eurasia Association, Ankara.	Award recipients: Mehmet AKTAN, Prof. Dr. Korkmaz ALEMDAR, Muhsin CEYLAN, Veyis GÜNGÖR, Mehmet KOCA, Bayram Ali ÖNGEL, Şengül ŞENOL, Fevzi TANPINAR, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kürşat ZORLU
09.04.2011	'Alevi Workshop Report' prepared by the State Ministry and its evaluation.	Faruk ÇELİK, Türkiye Minister of State at the time - Phone Connection (AK Party)
21.05.2011	NRW Education Policy and the status of Turkish children in schools.	Sylvia LÖHRMANN, NRW Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of School and Education (Green Party), NGO Representatives, and Experts
26.09.2011	Establishment of Tunceli University (today Munzur University) and regional development goals.	Prof. Dr. Durmuş BOZTUĞ, Founding Rector of Tunceli University, Dr. Hıdır AKBAŞ
14.11.2011	Khidr Fast and the Hearth (Ocak) System tradition in Germany.	Nazife Ana, Gülperi ÇAPAR, Rüstem POLAT, Hüsnüye ŞENOL
04.02.2012	Chancellor A. Merkel and the 5th Integration Summit: Round Table meeting with Islamic institutions.	Mehmet YILDIRIM, DİTİB Cologne, Mahmut AŞKAR, ATİB Representative, Mehmet IRMAK, President of European Ja'fari Community, and other Representatives of Islamic Religious Institutions
24.03.2012	Reverse Brain Drain: The status of academics returning to Türkiye.	Academics and Experts Returning to Türkiye

Source: Perspective (Bakış Açısı) Program DVD Archive (2005-2012), Kanal Avrupa TV, Duisburg/Germany.

Theoretical framework: Van Dijk and the socio-cognitive approach

Teun A. van Dijk states that while he refers to Critical Discourse Analysis also as Critical Discourse Studies later on, it specifically represents the socio-cognitive paradigm, which is based on the thesis that the relationships between discourse and society are cognitively mediated[1]. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary field that examines not only the grammatical structures of texts, but also the power, dominance, and ideological struggles behind these structures. Teun A. van Dijk, who forms the foundation of this study, places the concept of social cognition in between rather than directly linking discourse with society. Van Dijk grounds the concept of social cognition as follows:

¹<https://discourses.org> (Teun A. van Dijk), Accessed, 15.06.2026

"A media text does not directly reflect the social structure; it first passes through the filter of mental models in the mind of the journalist or the institution. These models are structures that represent individuals' personal experiences and social beliefs regarding specific events" (Van Dijk, 2003, p. 24).

When examining discourse in Van Dijk's model, it is stated that there is an interaction between text, context, and cognition. Every discourse produced in a diasporic media outlet such as the Perspective (Bakış Açısı) program is nourished by both the collective memory of the Turkish community—in terms of migration history and cultural codes—and the current political atmosphere of the host society (Germany) (Havilland, Mcbird, 2008, p. 240). Therefore, the concept of bilingualism is seen as one of the key elements that forms the unique and main axis of this study. The themes of integration, discrimination, or education in the program reproduce or transform social attitudes by interacting with the schemas that already exist in the viewer's mind. Furthermore, the Ideological Square, which is one of the most powerful tools in Van Dijk's analysis method, explains how discursive strategies create an "Us" and "Them" distinction. The technical explanation of the "Us" and "Them" distinction is as follows: "The Ideological Square strategy explains the polarized structure of discourse. This strategy is based on four fundamental principles: Emphasize our good properties and their bad properties; de-emphasize/conceal our bad properties and their good properties" (Van Dijk, 2000, p. 44).

This assessment by Van Dijk should be accepted as a natural consequence of the concept of social cognition, which is one of the socio-psychological characteristics of human beings. The field of social psychology defines the concept of social cognition in detail. We can say that these topics are explained through both social cognition and different concepts in social psychology studies. Taylor, Peplau, and Sears address them as components of prejudices and stereotypes. Their evaluations regarding the emergence of these concepts, which Van Dijk does not touch upon, are notable. According to them, stereotypes—which constitute the essence of the Ideological Square—are cognitive, whereas prejudices are affective. Discrimination, which is their natural outcome, is behavioral (Taylor, Peplau, Sears, 2008: 179). Especially in environments where cultural differences, intercultural communication, and migration concepts are experienced, social cognition renders the reflections of the Ideological Square more complex and powerful:

"The first step in prejudice is the creation of groups—that is, putting some people into one group based on certain characteristics and putting others into another group based on different characteristics. This type of categorization lies at the foundation of social cognition in humans" (Aronson, Wilson, Akert, 2012, pp. 762-763).

The Perspective (Bakış Açısı) program holds a distinct importance in that it virtually records and archives the extremely complex and intense encounters of Turks living in Germany with the phenomena of the concept of social cognition within debate environments.

Thematic distribution of the research sample

As stated above, the DVD archive recordings of the Perspective (Bakış Açısı) program from 2005–2012 will be examined and evaluated through macrostructure (themes), microstructure (lexical choices), and socio-cognitive analysis of the programs selected as examples for the study.

Table 2. Thematic analysis table of the Perspective (Bakış Açısı) program

Thematic Category	Representative Examples / Guests	Analysis Focus (Van Dijk)
Political Representation & Diplomacy	R. T. Erdoğan, A. Laschet, C. Wulff, G. Schneider, S. Löhrmann. Topics: Integration Laws, EU Negotiations.	Elite Discourse, Discursive Access, Legitimation Construction.
Crisis & Rights Advocacy	NSU Murders, Solingen (Mevlûde Genç), Youth Welfare Offices (Jugendamt), Minaret Ban.	Ideological Square (Us vs. Them), Counter-Discourse, Shift from Victimhood to Resistance.
Cultural Memory & Achievement	Chingiz Aitmatov, Euro 2008, Munzur Univ., Brain Drain, PISA Results.	Positive Self-Presentation, Collective Memory, Representation of Intellectual Capital.

Findings of the Perspective (Bakış Açısı) Program: Discourse analysis of top-tier Turkish and German politicians

In the live broadcasts of the "Perspective" (Bakış Açısı) program on 29.09.2005 and 25.03.2006, Armin Laschet, the Minister for Integration at the time, transformed integration from a peripheral topic into a primary political agenda, framing immigrants as the saviours who sustain the pension system. By securing access to diaspora media and employing the term "potential citizens" instead of "foreigners," he sought to symbolically reduce the hierarchy between the governors and the governed. The program mediated the minority group's direct access to dominant

political actors, thereby transforming a unilateral imposition of integration into a process of mutual negotiation and scrutiny.

In the Bakış Açısı program dated 21.04.2007, the coverage of the Hannover Fair, where Turkey was the partner country, enables the discourse to shift from a local (within Germany) dimension to an international (Turkey-Germany) dimension. Here, an interstate representation is at play. The Prime Minister of Turkey at the time, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, took part in the fair opening alongside German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Christian Wulff, the Minister-President of Lower Saxony—one of Germany's 16 federal states. The speech delivered by Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdoğan, combined with the interview conducted with Minister-President Christian Wulff on the Bakış Açısı program—which was broadcast live and examined in depth with experts for two hours—constitutes a strategy of legitimation, to use Van Dijk's formulation (Van Dijk, 2008, pp. 212-214). For the Turkish audience in Germany in particular, this television footage reinforced the mental model that "our leader" and "their leader" hold equal status, while simultaneously functioning as a visual media discourse of strong leaders conveyed by the media.

Furthermore, the comprehensive evaluation of the Hannover Fair—where Turkey was the partner country—on the Bakış Açısı program and the emphasis on technical topics such as energy technologies and industrial automation serve as a clear example of Turkish media in Germany altering social perception. The Bakış Açısı program conducted effective media work against the perception of the Turkish community in Germany solely as "döner shop owners" or "manual laborers" (as the majority of the German press generally portrays them), proving that it played an active role in bringing Turks to the fore as technological and business partners. Additionally, then-Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdoğan presented Turkey not as a hierarchical candidate country, but as an equal-level strategic partner and an indispensable security actor alongside Germany. In particular, the program's framing of Turkish immigrants—shifting them from being a locus of problems to a strategic bridge that provides power between the two states and an indispensable asset—can be viewed as a crucial message for the integration of Turks into German society.

Christian Wulff, who was the Minister-President of Lower Saxony at the time, appeared as a guest on the same program, expanding German identity beyond ethnic origin through a success-oriented Positive Us-Presentation and greeting successful Turkish professionals as co-founding partners of the system. However, while offering cultural recognition, he pursued a strategy of conditional acceptance that stipulated political loyalty and commitment to Western values in return. This situation emerges as an important example for socio-cognitive perception.



Figure 3. Bakış Açısı Program (2007). Dr. Christian Wulff, the Minister-President of Lower Saxony at the time, and Presenter Şengül Şenol at the Hannover Fair, where Turkey was the Partner Country.

In the Bakış Açısı program dated 26.02.2011, Guntram Schneider, the Minister of Integration and Labour for the State of NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia), framed the integration process not as a matter of benevolence, but as an economic necessity and a rational investment for the future of the German economy. He viewed the young immigrant population as an insurance policy for the continuity of the export-oriented system, and presented dual citizenship as a standard norm that respects emotional ties.

In the Bakış Açısı program dated 21.05.2011, Sylvia Löhrmann, the Deputy Minister-President and Minister for School and Education of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, recognized Muslim children as legal subjects by equating Islamic religious classes with those of other faiths. She positioned immigrants not as passive recipients of education, but as active stakeholders with access to decision-making mechanisms and as role models.

In response, the Turkish Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DİTİB) and NGOs founded by Turks present on the program with the minister exhibited discursive resistance by questioning the positive discourse constructed by political elites through concrete shortcomings on the ground. Shifting from a guest-worker status to a discourse of settled rights demands, they subjected the gap between state discourse and action (discriminatory tests, lack of representation) to critical scrutiny.

In the program broadcast in April 2006 on the theme of the Istanbul–Cologne Sister Cities, featuring Dr. Norbert Burger, the Mayor of Cologne, as a guest, the rhetoric of neighborhood and a shared future is utilized at the micro-structure level. Norbert Burger, who served as the Lord Mayor of Cologne for 19 years, signed the sister city agreement in 1997 with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was the Mayor of Istanbul at the time. The metaphor of brotherhood employed in the Bakış Açısı program functions, in Van Dijk's framework, as a discursive tool that reduces conflict and establishes emotional proximity (Van Dijk, 2000, p. 64). Furthermore, such political programs—specifically those involving local participation and municipal politics—align with Van Dijk's theory of Elite Discourse (Van Dijk, 1993, pp. 42-45). German elites (politicians) viewed prestigious programs like Bakış Açısı as bridges to articulate their policies directly, primarily to the Turkish community in Germany.

Discourse analysis of violent incidents in diaspora media

In the Bakış Açısı program dated October 2009, the murders targeting eight Turkish döner shop owners were brought to the agenda. The phrase "Döner Murders" (Döner-Morde), which was used for these murders in the mainstream German media of the period, is, according to Van Dijk, a strategy that associates the victim with the perpetrator and conceals the racist background of the incident (Van Dijk, 1988, pp. 82-84). The Bakış Açısı program, on the other hand, eliminated this ambiguity by clarifying the perpetrator with an emphasis on the neo-Nazis behind the murder. This divisive discourse constructed by the mainstream German media was highlighted in the Bakış Açısı program, and the situation of the victimized Turkish immigrants was voiced in the program. Furthermore, by bringing the state's neglect (blind spot) on this issue to discussion, the Bakış Açısı Program executed Van Dijk's principle of "emphasize Their (Out-Group/State institutions) bad properties" (Van Dijk, 2000, p. 46). At the same time, this situation overlaps with the function in J. Habermas's theory of the counter-public sphere, where truths remaining outside the official discourse are brought to light by minority/diaspora media (Habermas, 1991, p. 37). This program realized the rights-seeking discourse by taking the call to express victimhood and find those responsible as its subject. Thus, the emergence of Turks in Germany as rightfully victimized and demanding subjects became visible through the media.

In the Bakış Açısı program dated 25.09.2010, we see that the issue of children taken from Turkish families by the youth welfare offices of federal municipalities and families whose integrity was disrupted was addressed. In this program as well, the statements of victimized mothers and fathers bring the following critical discourse to the fore: The contradiction between the affectionate family model in the minds of the Turkish community and the cold, bureaucratic structure of the German bureaucracy appears as a clear message. Evaluating the subject through Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis method, he explains it as different cultural groups interpreting the same event differently through their own mental models. Here, he states that victimization and defense mechanisms play a central role. He indicates that a semantic ambiguity comes to the fore, and that this situation fuels conflict between the two (Van Dijk, 2003, pp. 28-30).

Additionally, inviting victimized parents to the Bakış Açısı program and letting them speak is evaluated within the context of J. Habermas's theory of communicative action as the inclusion of excluded voices into the public sphere. This also expresses that the immigrant community, namely the minority, gains discursive power at the point of expressing its own reality (Habermas, 1991, pp. 52-54). The public perception of such a program broadcast on Kanal Avrupa Television is for the Turkish community to claim its own rights. Bringing these issues to the fore in the press in this manner led to the establishment of an association for victimized families in the state of NRW, which is important in terms of showing that diaspora media has other functions beyond the duty of merely providing news.

As for the discourse constructed through the Friendship Award given in Germany to Mevlüde Genç, who lost five family members after the racist attack in Solingen, in the Bakış Açısı program dated 24.05.2008, Van Dijk expresses this as the pinnacle of the Positive Self-Presentation strategy. Accordingly, Mevlüde Genç's messages of peace are the pinnacle of Van Dijk's positive self-presentation strategy (Van Dijk, 2000, p. 33). Furthermore, according to rhetorical analysis, a mother who lost five children and grandchildren in a house set on fire by neo-Nazis in Solingen in 1993 giving messages of peace and friendship grants an ethical superiority to the Turkish community according to Van Dijk's approach. The contrast between the barbaric and destructive act of the

German far-right and the constructive and forgiving discourse of Mevlüde Genç becomes distinct through micro-structural word choices centered on "friendship."

The way the minaret ban referendum in Switzerland was handled in the Bakış Açısı program dated 05.12.2009 constitutes an example for Van Dijk's concept of Political Coercion. As for the discursive strategy, while the ban decision is analyzed at the micro level through the concepts of Islamophobia and discrimination, European Muslims' demand for Freedom of Belief is presented in the program as a legitimate pursuit of rights. This constitutes the most concrete example of the minority's/immigrants' right to make their voice heard (Access) here (Van Dijk, 2008, pp. 65-67). Analyzing these criticized and at the same time crisis topics in the Bakış Açısı program aimed to transform the perception of oppression in the minds of the Turkish community into the perception of a conscious, rights-seeking society. Looked at through Van Dijk's method, it is observed that the program constructs the victimized yet dignified Turkish image as a focal point of resistance against the criminal/problematic foreigner image created by the dominant German discourse.

In addition to this, between the years 2005 and 2012, the Bakış Açısı program constructed the Turkish community not merely as a group experiencing problems, but as an agent producing value in the worlds of literature, sports, and academia. In cultural memory and the discourse of achievement, it is observed that the construction of positive self-presentation is brought to the fore. In Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model, how a group defines itself (Self-representation) determines that group's social status in the society it lives in. The last group of programs analyzed shows that the labor identity of the Turkish community in Europe is reinforced with an identity of intellectual and cultural capital.

The statements of Arif Ünal, the NRW State MP of the period, broadcast in the Bakış Açısı program in November 2010, are a typical example of Van Dijk's counter-discourse strategy. Ünal rejects the assimilative integration imposition of German politics and reconstructs the concept on the basis of participation: Arif Ünal interprets the problematic minority image created by the word "integration" through the first generation. With the metaphor of "people who are afraid to run a red light," he emphasizes that the Turkish community is a law-abiding group with no debt to the state. This is the transformed state of Van Dijk's Positive self-presentation strategy into a collective defense mechanism. Arif Ünal directs the discourse that seeks fault in the immigrant toward the state that wasted 35 years. This is the operation of the principle of "emphasize Their (the state's) mistakes" in the ideological square. While presenting integration not as a favor, but as the state's obligation to provide equality of opportunity (German language courses, legal rights), he expresses the matter over the ground of legal and political rights.

The socio-psychological perspective of Prof. Dr. Hacı Halil Uslucan, Director of the Centre for Turkish Studies in Essen, who participated in the same program, is explained through an intergenerational evolution in line with Van Dijk's theory of mental models. According to Uslucan, who specializes in the cross-cultural interaction dimension of social psychology, the mental model of the first generation is an acceptance summarized by the sentence "thankfully, they gave us work." Because this group coded itself as guests, it did not object to inequalities and was consequently characterized as "good foreigners" by the dominant society. The attitude of the third generation, which is seen as rebellion, is actually the result of what Van Dijk calls Discursive Belonging. The youth, who sees themselves as equal to German youth, is branded as unadapted by the dominant discourse when making demands for rights. Uslucan demonstrates a scientific counter-stance by characterizing this labeling as a cognitive distortion. The problem of not being able to find a vocational training placement despite a good report card shows how a micro-level success story is undermined by macro-level systematic obstacles and can be considered structural discrimination. Uslucan thus decodes the myth of "unadapted Turks" in the German public sphere through psychological and sociological truths.

Another program reinforcing the "good report card" example is the Bakış Açısı program dated 14.06.2008. The special broadcast conducted on the passing of Chingiz Aitmatov, who holds an important place in world literature, can be shown as an example for Van Dijk's Cultural Heritage and Prestige analysis. We can say that addressing a giant of world literature like Chingiz Aitmatov in diaspora media created the perception of "we are partners in a world-class literary heritage" against the question "who are we?" in the minds of Turkish viewers. The effect created by this program aligns with Van Dijk's theory of Group Identity Construction, particularly in the Turkish diaspora (Van Dijk, 1998, pp. 118-120). The emphases of "common voice of the Turkish world" and "world literature" used for Aitmatov elevate a local identity to a universal plane. The ideological square here, in accordance with Van Dijk's principle of "emphasize Our good properties," conveys to the viewer the mental model that the Turkish community is not just a labor force, but also the inheritor of a deep-rooted literary and civilizational heritage.

In addition, the coverage of the Turkish National Team's advancement to the Euro 2008 semi-finals as a topic in the Bakış Açısı program dated 21.06.2008 conveys the message that it is related to Van Dijk's emotional memory of social groups. The rhetoric of "we succeeded" constructed through football is an emotional discursive tool that repairs the social self-confidence of Turks in Germany. At the same time, it can be interpreted as the expressed form of the manifestation of collective excitement discourse in diaspora visual media (Van Dijk, 2003, p. 45). The impact of this achievement of the Turkish National Team also reminds us of the period after the World Cup

matches in 2002 when the Turkish National Team came third in the world. The impact of this success on Turks in Germany has been the subject of many studies by scientists of German and Turkish origin and has revealed results supporting the findings in the article (Şen, 2002), (Goldberg-Halm, 2003).

Discursive findings of the Bakış Açısı program

In this study, the content of the Bakış Açısı program was analyzed using Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and the discursive findings obtained have been analyzed under the following main headings:

1. Discursive Subjectivity and Political Interlocution: The program rapidly distanced the Turkish community from the position of passive recipients or objects in the face of institutional and political elites. By establishing direct interlocution with powerful political actors of the period, such as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Christian Wulff, Armin Laschet, Sylvia Löhrmann, and Guntram Schneider, the diaspora community was transformed into an active political subject capable of asking questions, seeking rights, and holding authorities accountable.
2. Ideological Square Strategy and Macro-Structures: In the language of the program, the Ideological Square strategy conceptualized by Van Dijk was operated systematically. In line with this, a sharp distinction between "Us" and "Them" was constructed in favor of the interests of the Turkish community. In the discourse, "Us" symbolized Turks who were rightful despite their victimhood, peaceful, and economically and socially successful; whereas "Them" was positioned to represent discriminatory groups against immigrants, the rigid German bureaucracy, and prejudiced politicians.
3. Reversal of the Ideological Square: The Turkish community, which was generally coded and stigmatized as "Them" (problematic, unintegrated immigrants) in mainstream German media, was deconstructed through the alternative discourse of Bakış Açısı. By reversing this dominant hegemony in the media, the Turkish diaspora was redefined through the elements of rightful victim, successful entrepreneur, and equal citizen.
4. Intergenerational Bridge and Socio-Political Rationalization: The program reconciled on a rational ground the socio-political difference between the quiet and accepting integration practice exhibited by the first generation and the rightful and visible resistance of the third generation. Potential intergenerational conflicts within the diaspora were presented to the audience not as an element of crisis, but rather as a process of social awareness and identity acquisition.
5. Construction of a Counter-Public Sphere: In accordance with Jürgen Habermas's (1991) projection of a rational-critical debate ground, Bakış Açısı produced an alternative counter-public sphere on a diaspora scale. Particularly during crisis periods, such as the Neo-Nazi NSU murders and the practices of the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt), it challenged the dominant institutional discourse by exposing the legal and political blind spots of official German authorities.
6. Transformation of Social Cognition and Image Management: Through the participation of intellectual and political actors such as Arif Ünal and Prof. Dr. Hacı Halil Uslucan, the program shattered the criminal/problematic third-generation stereotype produced in mainstream German media. In its place, it established the image of a subject who seeks rights, is integrated, and feels a sense of belonging. As noted by Van Dijk (2000), this provides a concrete demonstration of minority media's power to transform social cognition by problematizing the dominant ideology.
7. Socio-Cognitive Impact and Equal Citizenship: In the 2005–2012 period, the Bakış Açısı program served as a strategic platform that theoreticized the socio-political demands of European Turks, provided access to elite discourse (ministers, academics), and reconstructed the mental models of the diaspora on the axis of equal citizenship. Shattering the passive foreigner/other model in the minds of the audience, it aimed to instill the model of a European or German-based Turk who seeks their rights and possesses high cultural capital. The critical stance adopted, particularly toward educational issues and institutional discrimination/racism, directly contributed to the awakening of a collective social consciousness.

Evaluation and Conclusion

In the collective evaluation of the programs analyzed in this study using the method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), it is possible to present the following key findings:

Characterizing nearly all media and social media outlets operating in Western Europe centered around Kanal Avrupa Television merely as technical communication tools would be an inadequate approach. It must be acknowledged that these outlets have multifaceted and dynamic effects on the intergenerational communication of families who migrated from Turkey to European countries as workers starting in the 1960s. This function maintains its validity today for the Turkish community residing in Western European countries due to various socio-economic and political reasons. These broadcasting bodies, conceptualized as diaspora media, contribute significantly to their target audience's preservation of their cultural presence and identities, and have also become the most important tool in their efforts to make themselves visible and accepted by the society in which they live. Kanal Avrupa Television, centered in Germany—which constitutes the universe of this article—and Bakış Açısı, one of its longest-running productions, serve as extremely rich social laboratories for sociology, social

psychology, and cultural anthropology, as well as communication science. The program also functions as a living archive of the multidimensional problems and quests for rights faced by Western European Turks in the historical process. As a result of the critical discourse analysis conducted, it can be comfortably stated that the Bakış Açısı program broadcast between 2005 and 2012 went beyond merely being a native-language broadcasting medium for European Turks, creating a "Line of Discursive Resistance" against hegemonic discourses. The timeframe in which this line of discursive resistance was constructed carries great importance for the historical context of the analysis. Indeed, this period coincides with the most intense days of Turkey's European Union journey and a process of intensified relations with Germany, one of the founding and strongest members of the European Union. In this context, in the critical discourse analysis applied to the speeches of German state minister-presidents, deputy minister-presidents, integration ministers, and federal institution officials hosted on the Bakış Açısı program, it is observed that positive and constructive messages predominantly came to the fore. The emphasis by these high-level political actors on the contributions provided by the Turkish community to the German socio-economic structure—chiefly economic and commercial achievements (exports, etc.)—is a concrete reflection of the parties' efforts to present themselves as open to dialogue and cultural interaction. In the same period, the address delivered by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, at the Hannover Fair being juxtaposed/layered with the statements of German officials on the program and presented in a mutually complementary manner signifies, in terms of discourse analysis, that both parties exhibited openness to integration and a shared future. Conversely, when programs covering the racist attacks carried out by the Neo-Nazi NSU organization are examined, a distinct differentiation and fracture in the institutional and social discourses of the parties draw attention. This discursive divergence can be clearly traced in the media text reflections of the Solingen tragedy and the NSU assassinations, which were manipulated in the public sphere as "döner murders." In the headings of integration and security, the discursive differences between the approach of Federal German institutional authorities to the issue and the demands for justice and equality by the Turkish diaspora have been analytically set forth in the article. On the other hand, extensive coverage given to the achievements of the Turkish National Team in the international arena on Bakış Açısı programs created a discursive space that reinforced Western European Turks' excitement in sharing collective success and their sense of belonging. Similarly, broadcasting a special program on the passing of Chingiz Aitmatov, one of the most respected figures in world literature, hosting Kyrgyz Deputy Ambassador Aynura Tursava and Turkish authors, and the messages delivered during the broadcast are remarkably striking in terms of discourse analysis. Commemorating a globally recognized literary genius and bringing the program presenter's previous private interview with Aitmatov out of the archive to share with the audience created a strong cultural perception among viewers. This aesthetic and intellectual discourse holds strategic importance in strengthening the bond of belonging among Western European Turks to a deep-rooted, grand, and universal arts/cultural sphere.

As a result of this study, it has been determined that the Turkish media in Germany is not merely a simple news source, information tool, or medium; on the contrary, it is an arena of representation struggle waged by minority groups against dominant discourse, assimilation policies, and exclusion. The Bakış Açısı program broadcast on Kanal Avrupa Television between 2005 and 2012 formed a powerful "line of discursive resistance" against hegemonic structures. This critical discourse analysis demonstrates that the period in question has been recorded as one of the most dynamic and robust phases in the migration history of Germany's Turks from an institutional, political, and discursive perspective.

DECLARATION:

The author of this article served as the presenter of the Bakış Açısı program broadcast on Kanal Avrupa TV between 2005 and 2007. I hereby declare that I have examined and analyzed this study while adhering strictly to the rules of scientific ethics and maintaining academic objectivity.

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