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## UNIVERSITY IN THE NEWS

### III- ARRESTED STUDENTS

2021

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Photo Credit: Beyza Kural

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Cover Photo: from a student protest in Istanbul/2015

# 1. Introduction

Impediments to access to education and the right to education are still one of the leading problems in Turkey. The bureaucratic, class-based, economic, cultural, geographical, legal, and linguistic obstacles to education and problems regarding it have deepened and become chronic along with the Covid-19 pandemic and the related measures taken/cannot be taken. Turkey laid the foundations of an intellectual destruction that will spread over many years by not showing its determination to keep shopping malls open and universities closed during the pandemic. Frequent and arbitrary restrictions on freedom of assembly and demonstration under the ordinary state of emergency led to a deepening of another problem in access to education: students under arrest and convict students. While the severity of the problem augments, we do not have up-to-date and clear information about the number of university students in prisons. And students continue to be arrested for various reasons.

11 students were arrested because of the protests that started on January 4, demanding the resignation of the controversial name Melih Bulu, who was appointed as the rector of Boğaziçi University by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Many students spent their time under house arrest with electronic handcuffs until their first hearing. While the arrested students were released in various timespans within two months, the trials proceed. On the other hand, lawsuits continue to be filed against other detained students.

We devoted the third report of our research, examining how student protests and activist students are represented and handled, to the arrested students. To carry out the framing and discourse analysis, we scanned the news about LGBTI+ students in *A Haber*, *Akşam*, *Yeni Şafak*, *Takvim*, *Sabah*, *Yeni Akit* and *Akit TV* between January 4 and March 31, 2021, and collected 51 news items. Most of these news covers the demonstrations at Boğaziçi University. The majority of the news items covers the detention and arrest processes as part of student protests at Boğaziçi University.

In the discourse analysis part of the research, we focused on the linguistic strategies, namings, metaphors, adjectives, phrases, and the patterns formed by them in the news about the arrested students. We took a closer look at some of the news that we think they represent these patterns.

While the violations experienced during the detention and arrest processes are not covered, we observe that news are frequently reported in a manner proving the accusations faced by the students as charged, and the violations encountered are covered under the headings of “slander.” While the media put themselves either in the place of a judge or a prosecutor in the presence of students, similar statements by government representatives are also their sources. In this situation, where the informing

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function of the news media is replaced by the judging and condemning function, we found that an exclusionary, offensive, humiliating, and stigmatizing language is used against the arrested students.

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## 2. The scope and methodology of the research

Within the scope of the study, we scanned the news about *detention and arrest of students* in *A Haber, Akşam, Yeni Şafak, Takvim, Sabah* and, *Yeni Akit* between January 4 and March 31 and collected 51 news. We carried out a content analysis by coding all collected news on an individual basis with a detailed coding scale. We also carried out a discourse analysis on a smaller number of news pieces, which we think represent the patterns encountered in the news. We answered each of the following questions for 51 news pieces reviewed.

- What is the tone of the news? (positive, negative, neutral)
- What is the predominant theme of the news? (Terror, provocation, crime etc.)
- How are detained and arrested students defined in the news? (Suspect, terrorist, provocateur, etc.)
- What are the sources in the news? (Government representatives', police's, and governorship's statements, etc.)
- What are the prominent approaches in the news about detention and arrest? (Emphasis on "they are not students", "they are related to terrorism", using the phrases that they committed a "crime" instead of accusations)
- Are the violations encountered by students during detention and arrest included in the news? How are they covered?

We examined the discursive structures of the news underlining each question and setting examples as we think. In the discourse analysis we dealt with news headings, photographs, details of news language, linguistic strategies, and the rhetoric.

If we briefly summarize the general findings of the research:

- 47 of 51 news items are negative toned and 4 is neutral.
- The most predominant theme in the news is provocation.
- Students who were detained or arrested are mostly defined as suspects and provocateurs. While words such as "terrorist", "LGBT pervert", "protestor" and "vandalist" are also used among the definitions, only two of these news stories define students as "student".

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- In 18 of 51 news pieces, the statements of government representatives or other official institutions and their representatives are included. In 5 news stories, what happened at the hearing and the indictments are the main source of the news.
  - In 20 of the news items about the detention or arrest of students, it is common to emphasize that they are not actually students and that they are “related to terrorism.” Instead of “charged against”, the phrase “detected to have committed a crime” is also frequently used.
  - Violations such as strip search, beating, and prevention of the right to education, which students encountered while being detained or during their arrest and trial processes, are generally not covered in the news and in fact, these violations are mentioned in eight news stories with the comments that they are “denied” and actually “slanders”.

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## 3. Analyses of the news

### 3.1. The tone of the news

We created categories as negative, positive, and neutral as part of the first step of the analysis, which is identifying the tone of the news.

**Of the 51 news items analyzed, 47 are negative toned.**

We defined the news as **positive**, which assumes that students have the right to demonstrate and assembly, includes the violations they encounter during detention and arrest, does not have an accusatory tone, and does not express uncondemned charges as crimes. However, there are no examples for this category in 51 news articles we examined.

47 of 51 news stories are **negative**. The news items that define the students with words such as “provocateur”, “terrorist”, reflect the accusations as a condemned crime, and do not include the violations encountered during these processes form this category.

Haberler ▶ Gündem Haberleri ▶ Son dakika: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi provokasyonunda yeni gelişme! Terör örgütünün tetikçileri hesap verecek

## Son dakika: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi provokasyonunda yeni gelişme! Terör örgütünün tetikçileri hesap verecek

GÜNDEM

Giriş Tarihi: 07.01.2021 13:31 Güncelleme Tarihi: 07.01.2021 13:37

ABONE OL

Google News



*“Newsflash: New development in Boğaziçi University provocation! Terrorists will be held accountable. They were exposed as supporters of a terrorist organization. Boğaziçi provocateurs will be held accountable” [A Haber / 7.1.2021](#)*

We determined neutral toned news as news that do not use discriminatory statements against students and that do not label students with disproved crimes. There are 5 news items in this category. Important to note here, we do not mention that these news stories include students' words.

08 Ocak 2021 Cuma 18:54 | Son Güncelleme: 08 Ocak 2021 Cuma 18:54

## Boğaziçi Üniversitesi'ndeki gösterilere ilişkin yeni gelişme



*“21 suspects, who were detained on charges of committing the crimes of ‘opposing the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations No. 2911’ and ‘resistance to the officer in charge’ during the press release and protests made after the rector was appointed to Boğaziçi University, were released on bail.” [Akşam / 8 Ocak 2021](#)*

*The news titled “New development regarding the demonstrations at Boğaziçi University” is among the neutral toned examples because it does not use a discriminatory expression against students, stating that the accusations are ‘claims.’*

## 3.2. The predominant theme

The most predominant theme in the analyzed news is “provocation”, which is followed by “terror”.

Examining what the predominant theme is in the news, we observed three main themes: **provocation**, **terror**, and **crime**. Although more than one theme can be encountered together in a news piece, we focused on the most prominent theme, which occupies the broadest space in the news in terms of volume and emphasis.

We observed that the most predominant theme in 51 news items examined is “**provocation**” with 23 articles. It is followed by the category of “**terror**” with 16 news pieces. While the predominant theme is “**crime**” in 5 articles, 7 news stories are placed in the “**other**” category.

In the news where “**provocation**” is the predominant theme, what happened is defined as “provocation” in the headline or the text of the news items and students are defined as “provocateurs”.



*“Critical development in the provocation at Boğaziçi University! 16 people detected” [Sabah / 5.1.2021](#)*

“In the news where “terror” is the predominant theme, students are often accused of “associated with terror”, and it is claimed that those detained or arrested are “related to terror, not students”. In these news pieces, the statements of government representatives, police or governorships are distinguished as sources. Statements of official sources are directly quoted not as claims, but as indisputable truths that are the source of the news.



*“Newsflash: The person detained in Boğaziçi provocation were revealed as a member of a terrorist organization” [Sabah / 5.1.2021](#)*



*“Newsflash: The person detained in Boğaziçi provocation were revealed as a member of a terrorist organization” [Sabah / 5.1.2021](#)*



In the news pieces where the predominant theme is “crime”, protests during which students were detained and then arrested are often described as “illegal” or “unauthorized”.



*“21 of 45 suspects detained during the investigation conducted after the rector was appointed to Boğaziçi University were referred to the courthouse.” [Akşam /8.1.2021](#)*

### 3.3. How are students defined?

Students are defined as “student” in only 2 of 51 news stories we examined. The definition of “suspect” is used in 18 of the news, “provocateur” in 14, “terrorist” in 3, “vandalist” in 1, and “LGBT pervert” in 1 news quoting Interior Minister Soylu's sentence.

Videolar ► Gündem Videoları ► Boğaziçi Üniversitesi'nde provokatörlere gözaltı

### **Boğaziçi Üniversitesi'nde provokatörlere gözaltı**

*“Provocateurs at Boğaziçi University were detained.” [A haber / 5.1.2021](#)*

**İçişleri Bakanı Süleyman Soylu: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi'nde Kabe-i Muazzama'ya yapılan saygısızlığı gerçekleştiren 4 LGBT sapkını gözaltına alındı!**

*“Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu: 4 LGBT perverts were detained for disrespecting the great Kaaba at Boğaziçi University!” [Akşam / 30.1.2021](#)*

## **3.4. What is the source?**

The most well-known strategy for the news to reproduce the official discourse is that those who are taken or cited as sources in the news or whose views are often directly referred are official persons or institutions. We observed that 18 of 51 news items we examined include statements by government representatives or other official institutions and their representatives. In 5 news reports, what happened at the hearing and the indictments are cited as sources.

Statements by government representatives or other official institutions often contain examples of targeting, discriminatory language and hate speech. In the news suggesting “the detainees were not actually students” and “they are related to terrorism”, these statements became prominent as a source.

In the text below of the news titled “Only 7 out of 108 provocateurs are students”, the Governor's Office statement is cited as the source for the heading.

Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü'ne Melih Bulu'nun atanmasının ardından başlayan protesto süreci yeni bir boyut kazandı. Önceki akşam rektörlük binasını basmak isteyen öğrencilere polis müdahale etti, 159 kişi gözaltına alındı. Dün şüphelilerden 98'i Emniyet'ten, 10'u da savcılık tarafından adli kontrol şartıyla serbest bırakıldı. 51 kişinin sorgusunun devam ettiği açıklandı. Valilik, 108 kişiden sadece 7'sinin Boğaziçi Üniversitesi öğrencisi olduğunu, 101 şüpheliden 15'inin de üniversite düzeyinde eğitim görmediğini vurguladı. Rektör protestolarına destek için Ankara'da toplanan bir gruba da polis müdahale etti, 69 kişi gözaltına alındı. Kadıköy'de gösteri yapmaya kalkışan gruptan

*“The Governor's Office emphasized that only 7 of 108 people are Boğaziçi University students, and 15 of 101 suspects do not study at a university.”*  
*[Akşam / 3.2.2021](#)*

Police violence and blockade against students are also given along with the statements of politicians in an affirmative manner. Süleyman Soylu's statement “The Turkish police did it right” was published in the news websites we examined.

Giriş Tarihi: 6.1.2021 17:55 Son Güncelleme: 6.1.2021 18:37

## Bakan Soylu'dan son dakika 'Boğaziçi' açıklaması: "Türk Polisi, doğru yapmıştır"

HALİT TURAN



*“Last minute statement by Minister Soylu: ‘The Turkish police did it right’”*  
*[Sabah / 6.1.2021](#)*

### 3.5. What is the common attitude in the news of detention and arrest?

In the news pieces about detention, the emphasis on how many detainees are students and their “relation to terrorism” is prominent.

While the news titled “Newsflash: Breaking truth about those detained in Boğaziçi University protests” include information about how many of those detained are Boğaziçi University students, it is also emphasized that there are “names related to terrorist organizations”.

#### Son dakika: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi olaylarında gözaltına alınanlar hakkında flaş gerçek

Son dakika haberleri... **Boğaziçi Üniversitesi**'ndeki olaylarda gözaltına alınanların sicilleri kabarık çıktı. Kampüs önünde gözaltına alınan 108 kişiden sadece 7'sinin Boğaziçi Üniversitesi öğrencisi olduğu belirtildi. Dün gözaltına alınan 159 kişiden 130'unun da çeşitli terör örgütleriyle bağlantılı olduğu ortaya çıktı.

- *“Newsflash: Breaking truth about those detained in Boğaziçi University protests. Newsflash... The records of the detainees during the protests at Boğaziçi University are mile long. It was stated that only 7 of 108 people detained in front of the campus are Boğaziçi University students. It was revealed that 130 of 159 people detained yesterday are linked to various terrorist organizations.” [A haber / 2.2.2021](#)*

In another news article titled “22 people detained related to the demonstrations in front of Boğaziçi University”, the emphasis on “terror affiliation” is included in the news text with the expression “detected”.

- Gözaltına alınan şüphelilerden bazılarının örgütsel faaliyetlerde buldukları belirlendi

Operasyon kapsamında gözaltına alınan şüphelilerden bazılarının, geçmiş yıllarda sol-sosyalist terör örgütlerinin kırsal yapılanmalarında faaliyet yürütmekteyken ölen kişilerin cenaze ve anma programlarına katıldığı, terör örgütlerinin açık alan yapılanmaları tarafından organize edilen çeşitli toplumsal olaylarda yer aldığı belirlendi.

Ayrıca zanlılardan bazılarının, terör örgütleri adına pankart asma, yazılama, korsan gösteri gibi illegal etkinliklerde yer aldıkları ve yine şüphelilerden bazılarının "terör örgütüne üye olmak" suçundan haklarında yargılamaların sürdüğü tespit edildi.

***"It was detected that some of the suspects detained were involved in organizational activities. It has been found that some of the suspects detained during the operation participated in the funeral and commemoration programs of people who died while they were working in the rural structures of left-socialist terrorist organizations in the past years and took part in various social protests organized by the public structures of terrorist organizations. In addition, it was detected that some of the suspects took part in illegal activities such as hanging banners, street writing, and illegal demonstrations on behalf of terrorist organizations, and some of the suspects were prosecuted for the crime of "membership of a terrorist organization." Yeni Akit / 5.1.2021***

The social media posts of the detainees are also frequently reported with the allegations of "affiliation with terrorism."

In the news pieces related to this issue, the expressions "they are being held accountable" and "they will be held accountable" are also frequently used. With these definitions, these news items take a position by acting like a prosecutor or a judge.



***Provocateurs are rendering account: 4 people were detained. In the protest of Prof. Melih Bulu's appointment as a rector, 4 of the provocateurs, who laid down Kaaba photo on which they attached homosexuals' symbols, were detained. The prosecution requested arrest for 2 suspects. While the reactions to this ugly provocation continued, emblems of the terrorist organization PKK were found in the raid of Boğaziçi LGBTI+ club. [Yeni Şafak / 31.1.2021](#)***

While the information on how the students were detained and the practices such as beating and rear-handcuffing during the detentions are not covered in the news, photographs of the house raids carried out by the police at night appear in many news items.



**A Haber / 6.1.2021** (Photo description: Five policemen in camouflage uniforms and with caps are standing in front of the iron door of a one-story house with the Turkish flag on the door.)

It is also common in the news to use expressions as if the guilt were “proven” and a verdict was given. The expressions “11 people attacking the police” and “the vandal who damaged the police vehicle was arrested” are among the examples in these news stories. In these news items, statements mentioning the guilt was proven in the protests of the students, the verdict was given and even the punishment was imposed are frequently used.

İSTANBUL

## Kadıköy'deki Boğaziçi eylemlerinde polis aracına zarar veren vandal tutuklandı

*“The vandal who damaged the police vehicle during the Boğaziçi protests in Kadıköy was arrested.” [Yeni Şafak / 10.1.2021](#)*

*While the words “vandalist”, “provocateur” and “suspect” are used in the news of detention and arrest, it is rarely stated that these people are students in the news about the arrests.*

Haberler ► Gündem Haberleri ► Kadıköy'de terör estiren Boğaziçi provokatörlerinden ikisi tutuklandı

### Kadıköy'de terör estiren Boğaziçi provokatörlerinden ikisi tutuklandı

Son dakika haberi... **Kadıköy**'de düzenlenen yasa dışı gösterilerle ilgili gözaltına alınan 23 şüpheliden 2'si tutuklandı, diğerleri adli kontrol şartıyla serbest bırakıldı.

GÜNDEM  
AA

Giriş Tarihi: 05.02.2021 08:46 Güncelleme Tarihi: 05.02.2021 09:08 ABONE OL: [Google News](#)



**KADIKÖY'DE TERÖR ESTİRMİŞLERDİ**  
**BOĞAZIÇI PROVOKATÖRLERİYLE İLGİLİ**  
**FLAŞ GELİŞME**

*“Two of Boğaziçi provocateurs terrorising in Kadıköy were arrested Newsflash... 2 of 23 suspects detained related to the illegal demonstrations in Kadıköy were arrested, the others were released on bail.”*

*[A haber/5.2.2021](#)*



### 3.6. How are violations reported?

During the detention and arrest processes, there were many violations such as rear-handcuffing, naked search, and blockade on the right to education. During their arrests, some students were brought to the exams with handcuffs, their university was extended due to the exams they could not take due to arrest, they could not go to work due to house arrest and faced economic difficulties and psychological problems. These violations are not reflected in the news. When the statements of the students' lawyers on these issues are rarely reported in the news, they are given with comments such as “slander” and “lie.”

**Provokatörler uslanmıyor! Çıplak arama yalanına sarılacak kadar alçaldılar**

*“Provocateurs do not settle! They lowered themselves as to cling to the naked search lie” [Yeni Akit / 6.1.2021](#)*

**Boğaziçi provokatörleri sapkınlardan medet umuyor: Şerefli Türk polisine alçak iftira!**

Prof. Dr. Melih Bulu'yu bahane eden CHP, HDP ve yasa dışı örgütlerin desteklediği Boğaziçi provokatörleri, eşcinsel sapkınlardan medet umuyor.

*“Boğaziçi provocateurs hope for the support of perverts: Despicable slander to the honorable Turkish police! Boğaziçi provocateurs, supported by CHP, HDP and illegal organizations, who use Prof. Dr. Melih Bulu as an excuse, also hope for the support of homosexual perverts.” [Yeni Akit / 25.1.2021](#)*

| Gündem

## Boğaziçi provokatörleri hafif kızarıklık bir el fotoğrafı ile bunu iddia ettiler: Müvekkilim feci şekilde darp edildi

*“Boğaziçi provocateurs claimed this with a photograph of a slightly reddened hand: My client was badly beaten” Yeni Akit / 17.1.2021*

