

# Economic News and A Content Analysis of Spanish General Elections

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## Abstract



### Article Type

Research Article

### Application Date

2021-12-12

### Acceptance Date

2022-03-05

### DOI

10.53306/klujfeas.1035696

One of the newspaper strategies during the election periods is related to how newspapers coverage on economic policies may affect voters' behavior. This study analyzes how two main Spanish newspaper articles position the economy issue in all the news before the last three general elections of Spain through the content analysis. The objectives are the following: how the news that includes the theme of economy and politics differentiates through content analysis and how these newspapers reported the news to the public. To find an answer, the economic news during the official election campaign periods are evaluated and subjected to content analysis. As a result, these two newspapers reveal the good sides of the parties that they are ideologically compatible with, by this way, they may interpret especially the economic news to influence the voting behavior of citizens.

*Key words:* content analysis, Spanish elections, ABC, El Pais, Economic news.

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# Ekonomi Haberleri ve İspanya Genel Seçimlerinin İçerik Analizi

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## Öz

Gazetelerin ekonomi politikalarına ilişkin haberlerinin seçmen davranışlarını nasıl etkileyeceği konusu, seçim dönemlerinde gazete stratejilerinden biri olmaktadır. Bu çalışma, İspanya'nın son üç genel seçimi öncesindeki tüm haberlerde, ekonomi konusunu iki ana akım İspanyol gazetesi haberlerinin içerik analizi yoluyla nasıl konumlandırıldığını incelemektedir. Çalışmanın amaçları ekonomi ve siyaset temasını içeren haberlerin içerik analizi yoluyla nasıl farklılaştığı ve bu gazetelerin haberleri kamuoyuna nasıl aktardığını tespit etmektir. Bu konuyu cevaplamak için resmi seçim kampanyası dönemlerindeki ekonomi haberleri değerlendirilmekte ve içerik analizine tabi tutulmaktadır. Sonuç olarak iki gazetenin de ideolojik olarak yakın oldukları partilerin iyi yanlarını ortaya koyduklarını, bu sayede özellikle ekonomi haberlerini yorumlayarak vatandaşların oy verme davranışlarını etkileyebilecekleri ortaya çıkmaktadır.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* içerik analizi, İspanya seçimleri, ABC, El Pais, ekonomi haberleri.



### Makale Türü

Araştırma Makalesi

### Başvuru Tarihi

12.12.2021

### Kabul Tarihi

05.03.2022

### DOI

10.53306/klujfeas.1035696

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## Introduction

Spain can be accepted as the largest multinational, multicultural, and multilingual state which is ruled by a parliamentary constitutional monarchy in Western Europe. With the European Economic Community membership in 1986, Spain has become one of the dynamic and growing economies of the European countries (CIA World Factbook 2020, Spain). The global economic crisis of 2008 affected Spain as well as many other countries. As a result of this crisis, so many economic problems like unemployment, austerity, tax measures were encountered in Spain.

The purpose of this study is twofold. The first is to determine the Spanish political system and underline the effect of economic issues on the political debates. The second aim is to understand whether the coverage of economic news of the two major newspapers of Spain related to their ideological perspectives influence the shaping of political situation of Spain and the voters' behavior or not. In this respect, this study attempts to show the importance of economic news during the official election campaign periods. The way of using the arguments of the newspapers in Spain that have the highest circulation and reflect different views during the election processes is analyzed by using content analysis. This is a potentially important study for understanding the role of the popular and traditional press (ABC and El Pais) in these last three elections when new citizen-driven parties that born out of social movements related to economic crises received support from voters. Despite the rise of digital media, these two newspapers have still remained equally popular in the country. The study summarizes previous studies involving content analysis of news during the election campaigns in Spain, and is influenced by the work of Gavin and Sanders (1997) on economic news in United Kingdom elections. The articles published by the two important Spanish newspapers during the official election period prior to the 2015, 2016 and 2019 general elections will be analyzed by content analysis method. The percentage and the content of economic news in all news published during the election campaign periods in the last three elections in Spain will be evaluated.

In the study, not only the results of the content analysis will be interpreted but also the economic data of Spain will be analyzed. Thus, it is aimed to differentiate from other studies related to the subject and to understand whether the newspaper articles reflect the facts or not on economy related news. This can clarify if there is bias behind the articles of these newspapers during the pre-election periods. The economy is crucial for not only the political parties but also for the public. Because the economic situation of the country and the economic perceptions of public influence behaviors towards the voting intentions (Gavin & Sanders, 2003). That is why the economic situation of Spain has been investigated and the analysis was focused on economic news.

## Theoretical Framework

In communication theories, the effect of the media is vital. Both television and newspapers are important in shaping a party's election results through news coverage. Thus, the election results and the voters' choices tend to be influenced by the political campaign and political parties' visibility in the media (Hopmann, Vliegthart, De Vreese and Albæk, 2010). To

understand the Spanish media system and its relationship with politics and elections is needed for a better analysis of the effect of newspapers on the voters' behavior.

At the beginning of the 1970s, even when the dictatorship was very weakened, the media was in a situation of inferiority vis-à-vis the political power due to the enormous restrictions imposed by the legal framework on the exercise of journalism. Since the late 1970s, Spanish journalism has experienced a series of changes after decades of control by the Franco regime (Humanes, 2016).

As Gunther, Montero and Wert (1999, s. 14-17) have pointed out, most of the media served as a transmission belt for the political decisions of the government chaired by Adolfo Suárez and as a speaker for the discourse of the political parties. Since the 1990s, the proximity to power or the opposition has marked the development of large communication groups. Various studies confirm that Spanish political journalism is highly politicized and that it responds to ideological alignments with increasing polarization (Casero-Ripollés, 2012; González & Novo 2012; Martínez & Humanes, 2012; van Dalen, de Vreese & Albaeck 2012). As Strömbäck and Dimitrova (2006) have pointed out, national journalistic cultures are a moderating element in the process of mediating news content. The consolidation of a journalism oriented to comment, and conveyed through media channels, in which journalists act as representatives of ideological positions that coincide with those of the political parties (Humanes, 2016).

As Druckman (2005) has underlined, although the television and the internet have changed the traditional media, the newspapers are still an important option that the voters can benefit from for learning certain types of information. In Spain, the media and the journalists can be divided into two sections; the stimulators and the narcotizers of public opinion. This classification shows that the media have a vital role in shaping the voting behaviors of voters (Berganza, Lavín, and Piñeiro-Naval, 2017). Thus, the media have a strategic importance for the construction of political reality (Casero-Ripollés, 2012).

The content analysis has been used widely on communication-related issues, and also applied to international relations and political sciences as a formal methodology. It has been notably used while making some political propaganda analysis. The first and foremost important developer of the content analysis was Bernard Berelson (1952). Some other scholars like Roberts & McCombs (1994) and Neuendorf & Kumar (2015) are also emphasized on the methodology of the content analysis, however, maybe the most generalized definition of the term was made by Krippendorff (2018), "the content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use".

During the literature review, the mentioned articles have helped to understand the ideological/political shifts in Spanish news media reporting. Most scholars in the social and behavioral sciences field are generally applied the content analysis to their researches because it is an objective and replicable technique of both evaluating election speeches and analyzing the political party statements (Moodie, 1971). Both in Spain and in other countries, many studies have been observed in this framework. In the Spanish case; for example, some

studies have investigated both the newspaper stories and television news stories in order to understand the effects of economic policies on the policy debates of Spain (McCombs, Llamas, Lopez-Escobar & Rey, 1997; Lopez-Escobar, Llamas, McCombs & Lennon, 1998; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). There are so many studies which focus on the relation between the voting preferences in the Spanish elections and news reporting by using content analysis (Strömbäck & Luengo, 2008; Orriols & Cordero, 2016; García-Viñuela, Jurado & Riera, 2016; Blasco-Duatis, García & Cunha, 2017; Johann, Königslöw, Kritzinger & Thomas, 2018). López-Rabadán and Casero-Ripollés (2012) analyzed the developments and changes of the articles in the Spanish media between 1980 and 2010. Rodon and Hierro (2016) explained how the Spanish political party system was shaken and began to change, by examining the elections, party structures and election campaigns during the 2015 general election.

Many studies and researches emphasize that economy policies affect the election agenda and election results. Gavin and Sanders's (1997, 2003, 2004) researches focused on the reporting of the economy during election campaigns in the UK. The works of Neil Gavin (2003) who has studied economic news in the UK in the press and on television is crucial to justify why it is important to study economic news in the press in Spain. To assess the significance of the headings it is used a form of content analysis to analyze news touching directly on economic matters (Gavin and Sanders, 1997). MacKuen et.al. (1992) have stated that citizens are embedded in a system of communication about economic news and there is a relation between elite economic forecasts, economic news, mass economic expectations, and voting intentions (Nadeau, Niemi, & Amato, 2000). According to Gavin (1997), in order to assess the impact of economic news, the coverage of the media over time should be analyzed, then public opinion and political support can be determined. Anderson and Hecht (2012) have underlined the effects of economic evaluations on vote choice in the 2009 German election.

Even though there has been so much work done on the relation between news reporting and voting preference, and on the economic news, election results, political issues, or party structure of Spain by using the content analysis methodology; this study is differed from them by analyzing the economic news of the major newspapers of Spain 15 days prior to the last three elections in order to understand the effect of news articles in shaping policy debates and influencing voters' choices. This period of time is chosen in order to make an objective and a comparative evaluation of all these three elections. The content analysis methodology is used in examining economic news of the two major newspapers of Spain 15 days prior to the three Spanish general elections.

According to British politician Harold Wilson, "all political history shows that the standing of the government and its ability to hold the confidence of the electorate at the general election depend on the success of its economic policy". Most of the other politicians and scholars may also accept that the economy has always been a crucial issue during the elections (Gavin & Sanders, 1997). The Spanish case was not an exception. Although there was a decline in the news related to the economy, the issue was a still consistent part of the agenda.

## Case Study

In this section, to understand both the political party system and the economic data of Spain is aimed. It is necessary to evaluate whether the political polarization in Spain and the newspapers are reporting in line with their ideological structures. It is also important to determine how this situation is reflected to citizens through economic news.

### Political Party System

Spain is a European country ruled in the form of a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. The 36-year dictatorship of General Francisco Franco was ended when he died in 1975, and Juan Carlos I took the throne of Spain. The 1978 Constitution, which introduced the new political order of the country, entered into force with the approval of the King. In Spain, the powers of the King are symbolic, and the central authority belongs to the government which assigned by the King (CIA World Factbook 2020, Spain).

In the Spanish election system, every adult citizen has a vote which means direct universal suffrage. There is a proportional representation which means that parties gain seats in the Spanish parliament according to their proportion of votes. The Spanish Parliament has two houses; the lower house, known as Congress, is where laws are presented and debated before they go to the upper house, known as Senate, which can propose amendments and also veto some legislation. Parliament members are directly elected for four-year terms (Linz, Jerez and Corzo, 2003). In order to establish a group in the parliament, the political parties must issue at least five deputies or take at least 5% of the votes. Since 1977, 14 general elections have been held, and the political structure of Spain has gradually changed (Linz & Montero, 1997). From 1982 to 2015 general elections, two large political parties have dominated the Spanish political system. One of the large national parties is the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Worker's Party) and the other one is the PP (Popular Party). While the PSOE is on the center-left, the PP is on the center-right of the political spectrum of Spain (Jiménez & De Haro, 2011).

The roots of the PSOE could be traced back to 1879, but it was constituted as a party by Felipe González and on the political arena of Spain from 17 February 1977 (Field 2013). During its first period in power from 1982 to 1996, the main aim of the party was to be successful in the democratic transition process of Spain, but it was also interested in the economic regulations and aimed the liberalization of the domestic economic regime. The PP was born as Alianza Popular (Popular Alliance AP) in 1976 under the leadership of Manuel Fraga. The AP, which was a rightist party, entered the Spanish party system when Spain was at the democratic transition process (Astudillo & García-Guereta, 2006). During this period, the AP represented a strongly conservative ideology that people thought it was a continuation of Francoism (the political or social policies advocated by the dictator Franco). In 1989, the name of the party changed to Partido Popular (PP), and it succeeded to become the first party of the 1996 elections, after 14 years of the PSOE's rule and 20 years in opposition (Ramiro-Fernández, 2005). The PP won both the 1996 and 2000 elections. However, in 2002, a general strike, which was organized by Spanish trade unions against the government reform of unemployment benefits, weakened the PP electoral basis. It could be

one of the main reasons that the PSOE could win the 2004 general elections which were held three days after the March 11 terrorist attacks in Madrid (Astudillo & García-Guereta, 2006).

In Spain, which became an EU member in 1986, the economy grew with the funds provided by the Union. With the 2008 economic crisis, the economic growth in Spain has stopped, and even the economy has shrunk. The unemployment rates increased strictly, the demand for new housing decreased, the construction sector was damaged, and the banking sector suffered (OECD, 2018). With the 2008 economic crisis, although the economic expectations for the future of Spain were hopeful, the country had still had troubles with the unemployment rate and especially the youth unemployment rate. The PSOE government applied some programs which aimed to reduce the government debt and borrowing costs, but these austerity measures were the reasons for losing the 2011 general elections. The PP's electoral promises were about reducing the austerity measures' effect, but when it won the 2011 elections, the effect of austerity measures was increased. The austerity policies of the PP, which were criticized by the opposition parties and frequently used as election propaganda, have been on the agenda since 2011. The taxes were raised, the regional and local public spending was reduced, and the budget of education, health and the other social assistance services were decreased (Rodon & Hierro, 2016).

According to Orriols and Cordero (2016), three important trends reformed the political structure of Spain between 2011 and 2015. The first one was the economic and debt crisis that has continued since the 2008 economic crisis. The second was the corruption scandals that the PP has been accused of, and the last one was the political crisis related to the lack of trust in institutions. The citizens were discontent with not only the economic situation of the country and the austerity measures but also the corruption scandals and illegal party funding. That is why the 2015, 2016 and 2019 general elections are practically different from the previous ones. Even though the left-right cleavage is still vital in Spain, it began to lose its priority in the political system. This situation was one of the reasons for the formation of new parties like Podemos and Ciudadanos (C's) which could take votes in the 2015 elections. As a result of these circumstances, through the election history of Spain, it was the first time that a party which received most of the votes could not form a government (Orriols & Cordero, 2016).

Table 1. Number of Parliamentary Seats of the Spanish Parties in General Elections, 2011-2019

Parties/Years	2011		2015		2016		2019	
	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats
PP	44.6	186	28.7	123	33.0	137	16.7	66
PSOE	28.8	110	22.0	90	22.6	85	28.7	123
Convergència i Unió (CiU)	4.2	16	-	-	-	-	-	-
La Izquierda Plural (IU-LV)	6.9	11	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ciudadanos	-	-	13.9	40	13.1	32	15.9	57
Podemos	-	-	20.7	69	-	-	-	-
Vox	-	-	-	-	-	-	103	24
Unidas Podemos (PODEMOS-IU-EQUO)	-	-	-	-	21.2	71	14.3	42
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Sobiranistes (ERC-SOBIRANISTES)	-	-	-	-	2.6	9	3.9	15
Junts per Catalunya (JxCAT-JUNTS)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.9	7
Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea-Partido Nacionalista Vasco (EAJ-PNV)	-	-	1.2	6	1.2	5	1.5	6
Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya (CDC)	-	-	-	-	2.0	8	-	-
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya-Catalunya Sí (ERC-CATSI)	-	-	2.4	9	-	-	-	-
Democràcia i Llibertat (DL)	-	-	2.2	8	-	-	-	-

Source: authors' own elaboration based on data from the Spanish Ministry and Home Affairs (<http://www.infoelectoral.mir.es>).

The reason why the 2016 general election was held, was the failure of Spanish parties to reach an agreement to form a coalition in the 2015 general election. The 2016 general election resulted with the success of the PP who won the election with 137 seats and 33% of the vote (Simón 2016).

### Economic Situation of Spain

In this section, the performance of the Spanish economy will be analyzed because of the need to understand whether the coverage of both newspapers is influenced by their

ideologies or not. Thus, the details of this performance and its relation to the findings of the study could be further explored to illustrate the concept of bias.

Table 2. The Economic Indicators of Spain

Economic data/years	2008	2011	2015	2016	2018
GDP	1.537.7	1.498.9	1.626.8	1.706.6	1.908.8
Annual growth rate (%)	1.12	-1.00	3.43	3.27	2.6
General government debt Total, % of GDP	47.2	77.7	116.4	116.6	113.2
General government deficit Total, % of GDP	-4.42	-9.64	-5.28	-4.51	-2.5
General government spending, % of GDP	41.2	45.8	43.8	42.2	-
General government revenue, % of GDP	36.7	36.2	38.5	37.7	38.9
Health spending government/compulsory, % of GDP	6.104	6.708	6.510	6.342	-
Inflation (CPI), Annual growth rate	4.08	3.20	-0.50	-0.20	1.7
Tax revenue Total, % of GDP	32.11	31.18	33.81	33.48	-
Tax on personal income, % of GDP	6.937	7.131	7.191	7.164	-
Social security contributions, % of GDP	11.792	11.739	11.425	11.432	-
Unemployment rate, % of labour force	11.3	21.4	22.1	19.6	15.3
Employment rate, % of working age population	64.47	58.02	57.80	59.55	63.42
Youth unemployment rate, % of youth labour force	24.48	46.23	48.35	44.45	34.41

Source: authors' own elaboration based on data from the OECD Spain economic indicators (<http://www.oecd.org/spain/>).

When statistical data that are shown on the table 2 are evaluated, it is understood that the austerity policies do not have as negative results as it is said. Although annual economic growth is not rapid, when the PP is in power, it has increased and it has seen an unprecedented acceleration after 2008. In 2011, when the consequences of the crisis were felt most intensely, Spain was in the position of the fifth largest EU member, and the 4th largest economy in the Euro Zone, with a GDP of \$ 1.5 trillion and income of around \$ 32 billion (OECD 2018, Gross domestic product).

The issues that were criticized by the opposition party between 2011 and 2018 can be analyzed by showing the general profile of the country's economy. First of all, in order to understand the areas in which the austerity policies are made, public expenditures should

be examined in detail. In this respect, the ratio of expenditures made in education, health and defense is essential. The expenditures on education decreased from 76 billion dollars in 2008 to 72 billion dollars in 2011, and spending of 59 billion dollars was made in 2014. The discontinuation of health expenditures within the framework of the austerity policy is one of the points where the PP is mostly criticized. Considering the expenditures, the situation may be considered to be correct, but it is understood that the stringent austerity rules are not applied in this area by examining the percentage allocated to health expenditures in the government budget. As of 2011, the number of health expenditures was 100 billion dollars, and in 2014 it was reduced to 87 billion dollars. However, in 2011, health expenditures accounted for 6.7% of the budget, while in 2014 it was 6.36%. This situation shows that the ratio of health expenditures in the budget has not changed so much. The public expenditures in the defense field also decreased from 2011 to 2018, and the expenditures which were 19 billion dollars in 2011 decreased to 16 billion dollars in 2018. However, it is observed that there is an increase in the defense expenditures allocated to the budget. While the rate of defense expenditures in 2011 was 6.74%, this rate decreased to 5% in the following years, but in 2018 it increased again to 6%.

With the effect of the anti-austerity movement in Spain, which also referred to as the 15-M Movement, Podemos began its political life in January 2014; a group of professors founded it from the Complutense University, in Madrid, and the leader of the party is Pablo Iglesias. At its first election, Podemos which is on the far left of the political spectrum of Spain featured as the fourth largest party of Spain. The other important party in the 2015 elections was Ciudadanos (C's) which was founded in 2006 in Catalonia as an alternative to Catalan nationalism. While the electoral campaign of Podemos was based on the reduction of corruption and protection of low-income families from poverty and high taxes, the electoral campaign of Ciudadanos was about immigration, taxation, and health issues (Rodon & Hierro, 2016). As a result of these campaigns, it is accepted that most of the protest votes of PP and PSOE were taken by Podemos and Ciudadanos both in the 2015 and 2016 general elections. There are some other newly found parties like Vox or Catalan-based parties, but due to the emphasis on the effects of the economic news of this study, the Catalan sovereignty issue is excluded.

One of the significant criticisms of the ruling party and one of the reasons of the protest votes is that the young population leaves the country due to the increasing unemployment. However, when the statistical data are analyzed, the proportion of young people between the ages of 15-24 who are both unemployed and who are not benefiting from any education and training activities was around 17.1% in 2008-2011 period when the PSOE is in power, whereas it was around 15.3% in the period of 2011-2018 when the PP was in power. It is an indication that the unemployment rates of the young population do not change with government policies. Besides, the highest rate of unemployment in the country was seen in 2013 during the PP government, but there is a decline in 2014 and can be expressed as 22% in 2015. (OECD 2018, Unemployment rate)

After the 2016 general election, the leader of the PP Mariano Rajoy was elected as the prime minister; however, with the loss of a parliamentary vote of confidence due to the corruption

scandals, and the economic situation of Spain, PSOE leader Pedro Sanchez became the new prime minister in June 2018. After a vote of no-confidence, Sanchez's minority government has faced an uphill battle related to the rejection of the 2019 budget proposals. Sanchez has called an unexpected election in February 2019, and on 28 April, Spain has held its third general election in four years. As a result of the 2019 general election, even though the PSOE took most of the votes, it was not enough to come to power alone and the government has been formed as a coalition.

## Methodology

It is explicit that the economic issues are one of the main indicators which influence the outcomes of political parties and the voters' choices in general elections. Taking this as a starting point, the study aims to clarify the correlation between economy news and its influence in the outcome of the election of Spain. Spanish major newspapers, El Pais and ABC were selected for the content analysis as two important representatives of Spanish newspapers. El Pais, founded on 4 May 1976, is accepted as having the highest circulation in the media landscape of Spain and close to social democracy, which embodied in Spain by PSOE (Juris, 2005; Salaverría & Baceiredo, 2018). Moreover, there are other important newspapers in a conservative and monarchical ideological spectrum; one of them is ABC which began to be published in 1905, its followers generally have a center-right tendency (Gunther, Montero & Wert, 1999; Batziou, 2014). These two newspapers were chosen because they are the oldest newspapers that have been published in Spain; they also represent two clearly different editorial lines. A content analysis of their published articles on the general elections of Spain is conducted, regarding the two major parties (PP and PSOE), which have been in power for many years in Spain. This study addresses the following question in the reporting of these two most widely read newspapers, the center-right ABC and center-left El Pais: how important was the economy and discussions related economic subjects, in the election campaigns, compared with all the other subjects in the news coverage of the campaigns of 2015, 2016 and 2019? What does the reporting on economic news tell us about the similarities and differences between the coverage in these two major newspapers?

Newspaper articles about Spanish elections were collected using an online database whose name is Lexis-Nexis. It is a database where all newspaper articles of the past can be searched. It is also very useful in terms of allowing word searches for content analysis. The period of analysis includes 15 days from 4 December 2015 to 18 December 2015; 15 days from 10 June 2016 to 24 June 2016; and 15 days from 12 April 2019 to 26 April 2019 which were the official campaigning periods of political parties in Spain before the general elections of 2015, 2016 and 2019.

According to Krippendorff (2018), in content analysis, there should be a distinction between the sampling units, recording/coding units, and context units. Related to the increasing size of the context, the number of neutral evaluations decreased significantly. In order to get a reliable content analysis of large amounts of newspaper articles, giving codes to the units is generally preferred.

The analysis period of this study is two folded. In the first stage, all the news published in the official election periods were subjected to content analysis, and the number of the news are shown in table 3. The number of the news are counted as 7600 during all the official election campaign periods. Thus, while analyzing newspaper data, the categorization of news into themes are made and the themes are divided into sections. This increases the reliability and consistency of the content analysis. The coding process is described as inductive and it has been done manually. As it can be seen in table 3, the newspaper articles are coded and divided into two sections as general policy issues and election campaign issues. There are multiple topics per story, so all news has been classified and coded and all news is shown in which percentage they are included. Finally, the number of topics and sub-topics in the story are identified and analyzed by Spearman rank correlation analysis. The Spearman rank correlation coefficient computes a measure of correlation between ranks instead of rating values. To compute Spearman's correlation, it is firstly converted the list of ratings to a list of ranks, where the highest rating gets rank 1. If there are tied ratings, they get the average of the ranks for their rank. According to its interpretation, when the value is closer to 1, monotonic relationship becomes stronger. So, the result of the analysis describes the strength of the correlation. The interpretation of the value is: 0.00-0.19 "very weak"; 0.20-0.39 "weak"; 0.40-0.59 "moderate"; 0.60-0.79 "strong" and 0.80-1.0 "very strong" (Herlocker, Konstan & Riedl, 2002).

Table 3. All News Stories Concerning the Last Three General Elections of Spain in ABC and El Pais for Fifteen Days Prior to Vote

Themes	Main Topic of Story/Years- Newspapers	04-18 December 2015				10-24 June 2016				12-27 April 2019			
		ABC		El Pais		ABC		El Pais		ABC		El Pais	
		Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
General Policy Issues	Economic Issues	53,83	1	57,09	1	34,48	1	31,92	1	32,20	1	23,82	1
	Social Welfare Issues	8,05	5	4,19	7	3,66	7	2,55	7	1,95	3	2,37	2
	Environment/Energy issues	8,24	4	5,57	5	5,73	6	4,44	5	4,71	2	4,47	3
	Immigration issues	1,70	8	1,60	8	3,28	8	3,64	6	2,40	4	2,16	4
	European Union issues	6,91	6	4,27	6	6,88	4	7,21	2	4,27	5	3,70	5
	NATO & Defense issues	10,33	3	6,56	4	6,80	5	6,26	3	6,85	6	6,28	6
	Security/terrorism issues	20,18	2	7,78	3	10,62	3	5,90	4	8,54	8	5,59	7
	Austerity	0,94	9	0,76	9	0,68	9	2,25	8	0,71	7	1,04	8
	Other issues	4,08	7	10,91	2	14,14	2	1,74	9	3,38	9	2,86	9
	<b>Spearman's Rho</b>	<b>0,7333</b>				<b>0,4666</b>				<b>0,9666</b>			
Election Campaign Issues	Polls or the Horse Race	6,44	4	2,44	5	3,28	5	2,41	6	3,29	4	1,11	6
	Party Leaders	26,06	2	34,12	2	13,68	2	12,24	2	11,20	2	8,17	3
	Campaign trail	17,06	3	3,05	4	11,62	3	6,63	3	8,71	3	10,62	2
	Manifestos	6,35	5	9,31	3	6,11	4	2,84	5	1,24	6	2,65	5
	Party mentions	76,72	1	45,85	1	46,30	1	43,49	1	43,71	1	35,63	1
	Other issues	1,80	6	1,98	6	2,44	6	3,20	4	2,75	5	2,72	4
		<b>Spearman's Rho</b>	<b>0,8286</b>				<b>0,8286</b>				<b>0,7714</b>		
<b>Number of News (N)</b>		1055		1310		1308		1372		1124		1431	

After categorization of all the news prior to the last three elections is made, another search is done to find the economy related news. As a result of this analysis, the number of the economy news are counted as 767 during all the official election campaign periods. The themes and codes generated by reading 767 economic news in total, are analyzed by the second encoder in order to test the reliability. The reliability of the study varies between 0.841 and 0.908 according to Cohen's Kappa coefficient, which is used to determine the reliability of the comparative agreement between the two encoders. The results obtained between 0.81-1.00 are considered as "almost perfect match". Therefore, the reliability of the study has been tested. The articles were examined one by one; the terms related to codes were noted and subjected to content analysis. Even though the terms "economics" and "economy" are used in the content analysis, it is inevitable that political terms are encountered. Therefore, the themes of content analysis are defined as "Economy" and "Politics". As there are multiple topics per article, each article should not be considered as a single code. Therefore, the difference between the number of codes and the number of read articles are related to a variety of topics. More clearly, in the searches made with the terms economy and economics in the 3 pre-election periods, 441 news articles were found in ABC newspaper, 326 in El Pais newspaper and 767 news in total. The distribution of these news can be viewed in table 4. In order to understand the tendencies of the newspapers more clearly, the themes are not limited into a single code. Thus, it should be noted that 18 codes are determined within the scope of the economy theme, and 15 codes are determined in the scope of policy theme.

Table 4. All Economic News Stories Concerning the last Three General Elections of Spain in ABC and El Pais for Fifteen Days Prior to Vote

Themes	Main Topic of Story/ Years-Newspapers	04-18 December 2015				10-24 June 2016				12-27 April 2019			
		ABC		El Pais		ABC		El Pais		ABC		El Pais	
		Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
ECONOMY	Rebuild the welfare state	7,42	4,5	1,76	9,5	2,12	8,5	1,83	9,5	3,06	7,5	1,92	10
	More stable Spain	7,42	4,5	5,30	7,5	2,12	8,5	1,83	9,5	-	-	-	-
	Economic confidence and growth	8,91	2,5	1,76	9,5	1,41	10,5	0	13,5	2,04	9,5	6,73	3
	Corruption scandals	2,47	9	14,15	2	2,83	6,5	7,33	3,5	0	13,5	0,96	12
	Austerity problem	6,43	6,5	28,31	1	4,96	2,5	10,09	2	0	13,5	4,80	6
	Advantages of austerity	8,91	2,5	0	12,5	0,70	12,5	0	13,5	-	-	-	-
	Unemployment problem	1,98	10,5	12,38	3	1,41	10,5	7,33	3,5	3,06	7,5	6,12	4
	Job creation	13,86	1	0	12,5	2,83	6,5	0,91	11,5	2,04	9,5	1,92	11
	Investment	6,43	6,5	0,88	11	4,25	4,5	0,91	11,5	1,02	11,5	3,84	8
	Economic crisis	0	13	7,07	5	0	14	13,76	1	-	-	-	-
	High tax policies	1,98	10,5	7,96	4	0,70	12,5	2,75	8	-	-	-	-
	Public debt	0,99	12	5,30	7,5	4,96	2,5	3,66	7	4,08	5,5	0	13
	Uncertainty	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,08	5,5	0	14
	New tax measures	-	-	-	-	4,25	4,5	6,42	5	5,10	3,5	2,88	9
	Economy policies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16,32	1	13,46	1
	Fiscal policies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,10	3,5	6,73	2
	Budgetary policies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,02	11,5	4,80	5
Other	4,45	8	6,19	6	5,67	1	4,58	6	6,12	2	3,84	7	
<b>Spearman's Rho</b>		<b>(-)0,6524</b>				<b>0,1670</b>				<b>0,2044</b>			
POLITICS	Catalan and Basque Issues	0,49	9	11,50	2	2,12	10,5	7,33	5	2,04	10,5	4,80	8
	Criticism about politics of PP	10,89	2	17,69	1	6,38	4	9,17	4	1,02	12,5	0,96	13
	Appreciation of the politics of PP	11,38	1	0,88	9	4,25	7	0	12,5	-	-	-	-
	A chance to new parties	4,95	3	7,96	4	1,41	12,5	1,83	10,5	17,34	2	6,12	6
	Democracy	1,48	7,5	9,73	3	3,54	8	3,66	9	6,12	6,5	2,88	10,5
	Terrorism	1,48	7,5	3,53	6,5	1,41	12,5	0	12,5	0	14	1,92	12
	Alteration demand in bipartisanship	-	-	-	-	4,96	5,5	1,83	10,5	14,28	3	15,38	2
	Tactics of election campaign	1,98	6	2,56	8	17,02	1	16,51	2	20,40	1	19,23	1
	Tactics of election campaign in the regions	-	-	-	-	9,92	3	4,58	7,5	5,10	8,5	3,84	9
	Predictions of coalition formation	-	-	-	-	11,34	2	18,34	1	6,12	6,5	6,73	5
	Policies of extreme right parties	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,02	12,5	9,61	3
	Criticism about politics of PSOE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,18	4	0	14
	Immigration	2,47	5	6,29	5	4,96	5,5	10,09	3	2,04	10,5	2,88	10,5
	Regulations on social rights	-	-	-	-	2,12	10,5	5,50	6	5,10	8,5	7,69	4
	Other	3,96	4	3,53	6,5	2,83	9	4,58	7,5	7,14	5	5,76	7
<b>Spearman's Rho</b>		<b>(-)0,2208</b>				<b>0,6113</b>				<b>0,4275</b>			
<b>Number of News (N)</b>		<b>202</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>-</b>

The news published in two newspapers with the term “economy” were analyzed in detail. When the visibility of economic news within the newspaper is evaluated; in general, the economic news of both newspapers in three elections have concentrated on the same pages. When table 3 is examined, although the economic news is high in all three elections, the average number of news on economy that is used on cover page is around 5. Economic news was concentrated on certain pages in two newspapers. These pages are designated as 2, 4, 16, 17 and 18. It should also be noted that the economic news is also on similar pages outside the election period. Within the scope of the study, paper editions of ABC and El Pais were subjected to content analysis and digital publications were excluded. And it is noteworthy to underline that 80% of the news items are considered as opinion columns.

The taken data through the content analysis can help to correlate the link between news of these newspapers and economic performance of Spain. The details of this correlation will be given in the analysis results section.

### Analysis Results

The content analysis of the news is made in two stages. First, all news stories concerning the last three general elections of Spain in ABC and El Pais for fifteen days prior to vote are subjected to analysis. Table 3 shows the ranking of two newspapers in three general elections according to Spearman rank correlation analysis and the percentage of news coverage on both general policy issues and on election campaign related issues. Accordingly, in all elections, two newspapers reported the highest level on economic issues.

As a result of the Spearman Rho analysis of the news; the relationship between the two newspaper news was “strong” on general policy issues in 2015 election and election campaign issues in 2019 election; the relationship between the two newspaper news was “very strong” on election campaign issues in 2015 and 2016 elections and the general policy issues in 2019 election. However, it is noteworthy in this table that the relationship between the two newspaper reports on general policy issues in the 2016 election is “moderate”. This is an indication that the topics covered by the two newspapers on general policy issues in 2016 are not very compatible with each other. As it can be seen on the table 3, even though the overall number of economic news is decreasing, the majority of the news in three election periods is still related to the economy. This supports the notion that the results of the elections may be influenced by economy policies. Therefore, it is considered that content analysis should be handled within the framework of economic news.

According to the table 4 in which economic news is analyzed, the relationship between the two newspaper reports is the weakest in the 2016 general elections. In this election period, the economic news reports that El Pais mostly focused on the economic crisis, the austerity problem and corruption. On the other hand, ABC did not report any news about the economic crisis, but rather focused on new investments and new tax policies. Accordingly, the date of the most differentiated news was determined as 21 June in the news published by two newspapers prior to the 2016 election and the headings of the opinion columns published were given as examples.

ABC (21 June 2016): “Montoro announces new tax cuts”; “Pedro Sanchez will not support the PP either by active or passive”; “Before there was the emergency exit repeat elections now would be hard to imagine that we can afford to vote three times; Ciudadanos lower chest despite his promise”; “Susana Diaz and Ximo Puig, united by the Mediterranean Corridor; The president approaches the act to send messages to PSOE campaign”; “Cifuentes Báñez and boast of the works of the AVE to Huelva.

El Pais (21 June 2016): “Differentiation of young people; Is not defined as conservative or socialists are especially liberal or progressive”; “Sanchez argues that support a Government PP would ‘betray voters’”; “The trap of corruption”; “Reality and perspectives, the crisis has hit especially young people, who have suffered more unemployment and more cuts than other age groups. The idea of retreat must be added the absence of improvement expectations”; “Rajoy and children”.

When the newspapers are evaluated with cross-reading, it can be seen that the problems in the country are handled differently in newspapers and even some issues are not mentioned. For example, before the 2015 general elections, El Pais did not report any article of the advantages of the austerity policies; the ABC newspaper, however, does not include any article of the economic crisis affecting the country's economy. Spearman analysis was performed to prove this situation statistically.

As a result of the Spearman Rho analysis of the economic news; the relationship between the two newspaper news was “strong” on economy issues in 2015 election and on politics issues in 2016 election; it was “moderate” on politics issues in 2019 election; it was “weak” on politics issues in 2015 election and on economy issues in 2019 election; it was “very weak” on economy issues in 2016 election.

This shows that although the percentages of word numbers in the news are close to each other, the contents of the news and the meaning of the words that are used by the two newspapers are totally different. In particular, in the 2016 elections, when the coalition government could not be established and the elections were renewed, the content of the two newspapers on the theme of the economy was almost completely different from each other.

While there was a “strong” relationship in the economic news published by two newspapers in the 2015 elections; there is a “very weak” relationship in the economic news in the 2019 elections. By presenting the economic news from their own ideological frameworks, it can be said that the newspapers want to influence the perceptions and also the voting behavior of citizens. This, as Gavin points out, reinforces the assumption that how economy policies are reflected in the election campaign may have an impact on the election results.

As a result of the content analysis and news reviews, even if the economic and political news could not be clearly separated from each other, it was examined the importance of economic news in the last three Spanish general elections and the content of newspapers published during the election processes that was evaluated through economic news.

## Discussions

Based on the work of Gavin and Sanders, it is known that news on economy policies has an impact on voters' behavior. Economic news also has the highest percentage during the Spanish general elections. However, this situation changed in the last election and despite the highest percentage, the rate of economic news declined with the emergence of new focuses like the emergence of new parties. This can also be demonstrated by the increase in the number of news about 'a chance to new parties' in Table 4. Compared to previous election periods, there has been a significant increase in the number of news about new parties, especially in ABC. However, the fact that the rate of economic news in the election campaign processes is very high in two newspapers shows that it is one of the important tools used to influence the voters' behavior during the elections campaign periods.

As it can be understood from the results of the content analysis, the coverages of the newspapers reveal two dimensions to economic stories. These economic and political dimensions show that even when only economic news is analyzed, the political emphasis in the news is remarkable. In order to underline the differences between the coverage in these two prominent newspapers, the newspaper articles should be analyzed in detail. For example, during the 2015 election, the El Pais has mostly mentioned the "austerity problem" and "corruption scandals" within the economy theme and "criticism about politics of PP" within the policy theme. However, the ABC has generally published articles about "job creation" within the economy theme and both "criticism about politics of PP" and "appreciation of the politics of PP" within the policy theme. During the 2019 election, while the ABC included reports of economic uncertainty; the El Pais did not make any article about it. The ABC has published articles about a great deal of criticism of the PSOE's policies, the El Pais has not published articles criticizing the PSOE. When the findings obtained by the content analysis method are examined, it is understood that the El Pais, who is left-leaning, supports the left-wing parties in the expected direction and it criticizes the right-wing parties' policies. Although the ABC is a right-leaning newspaper, it has also criticized the PP and has acted impartially to reflect its ideological view. This situation has changed before the 2019 general elections. Because of its ideological structure, the ABC generally criticizes the policies of the PSOE which is the ruling party. However, the El Pais, who published articles according to the ideology of the ruling party, draws attention to the policies of the PSOE that will improve the economy of Spain.

The literature on media bias can be classified into three types: gatekeeping bias, coverage bias and statement bias. Most of the studies are concentrated on the coverage bias that deals with the political realm and some of the specific areas of partisan politics, especially in a two-party electoral system (D'Alessio and Allen, 2000). Spanish media may be an example of this situation. Through many years, Spanish political system was shared between PP and PSOE. When all the economic data of Spain in table 2 are analyzed, these newspapers are sometimes biased in their articles. During the PP rule, both newspapers had a similar distribution in the criticisms of PP policies. However, it is seen that the news about the appreciation of the politics of PP was given much more in the ABC newspaper than in El Pais. Moreover, during the PSOE rule, El Pais did not criticize any of the PSOE policies. And this

situation proves that both newspapers try to show the better sides of the party policies which they are ideologically close to and make biased news by putting their bad aspects into the background.

The economic crisis and its effects on the Spanish economy are the major issues that are on the agenda of Spain during ten years. But the content analysis shows that although the percentage of economic issues related news is high, it is seen that during the last three elections, the main arguments of the parties and the media are changing. Perhaps the most important finding from the table 3 is the decline in the number and percentage of economic stories in all the outlets over time. This deserves more attention, especially given the rise of the new left and right parties over this period.

From another point of view, El Pais and ABC published news about the emergence of new parties; therefore, it can be stated that they are not trying to direct elections by simply making traditional party news. As a result of the content analysis, we can say that these newspapers did not hinder the rise of the new political parties in Spain. This is an indication that these newspapers are not only reflected the ideological viewpoints of the traditional political parties, but also the new emerged parties on the center left and the center right. Thus, this underlines that newspapers are not only the supporters of an ideologically close party but also try to show the political situation of Spain.

## Conclusion

Today, although communication channels are constantly improving, the impact of the newspapers on the public is continuing. At a time when the two-party structure began to change, and new parties emerged; election campaigns and results became even more critical than ever, especially because of the economic crisis. In the official election campaign periods, the economic crisis and the effects of the crisis in the country are among the most prominent issues in Spanish written and visual media (Royo, 2020).

There are some limitations of this study. For example, this study only covered the news of the two major newspapers of Spain during the official campaign period (15 days prior to elections), however, many events that happen during the months in the lead up to election campaigns can affect the results of the process. Also, it is a single case study that is related to Spain, it is possible to expand this study to different countries and to include different newspapers. And only how the economic news is expressed by right and left-wing newspapers was examined; it is aimed to exclude political news, especially the views of newspapers on the Catalan problem, which is one of the important problems of Spain, as far as possible from the study. Related to this issue, Rovira and Sorribes (2012) have studied the status of Catalonia in their work and tried to examine the arguments of 12 Spanish newspapers about this subject, it can be investigated by the content analysis methodology, because it is one of the most important political issues influencing the voters' choices.

To summarize, media is one of the most important influencers of the voters. When there is a crisis in a country, it is generally followed through media tools. Newspapers are still vital for the societies, and the ideological perspectives of them can be mostly seen in their news coverage. How parties and traditional newspapers affect the election results cannot be

evaluated very clearly. But it is possible to answer this question through a survey to be applied to the voters by examining the circulation of newspapers and voters' buying rates in more detail. Whether this situation can be observed only in the economic crisis times or it can be applied through other policy issues is also a new kind of research area.

The literature review shows that most of the time, economic news is used as a tool to affect the voting behaviors of citizens by media channels (Gavin and Sanders 1997; Gavin, 1997), and by the content analysis, the interpretation of the newspapers can be evaluated. According to the content analysis results, it can be concluded that these two newspapers are reporting in favor of the parties that they are ideologically compatible with. During all the last three pre-election periods, both the content analysis and Spearman Rho analysis results indicate that these two newspapers made news defending the parties close to their ideological views, highlighting their policies and criticizing the policies of the opposition parties. The content analysis revealed that different interpretations were made, especially on economic issues, on the same dates in Spain. Taking the studies related to economic news, voting behaviors of citizens and the effects of making biased news as a starting point, this research has stated that the newspapers still attach importance to how economic news is interpreted in influencing the voting behavior of citizens.

### Ethical Statement Information of the Article Titled As “Economic News and A Content Analysis of Spanish General Elections”

	This study has been prepared in accordance with the values of “Research and Publication Ethics”
Acknowledgement	“Economic News and A Content Analysis of Spanish General Elections” was not reproduced from any paper or thesis.
Conflict of Interest Statement	There is no conflict of interest in the study titled as “Economic News and A Content Analysis of Spanish General Elections”.
Author Contributions	I declare that I, Mehlika Özlem ULTAN, prepared the work titled as “Economic News and A Content Analysis of Spanish General Elections” by myself.
Support	Not any.
Ethics Committee Certificate Of Approval	Ethics Committee Permission is not required for the study titled as “Economic News and A Content Analysis of Spanish General Elections”.
Scale Permission	Not any.

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# Ekonomi Haberleri ve İspanya Genel Seçimlerinin İçerik Analizi

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## Genişletilmiş Özet

### Çalışmanın Amacı ve Önemi

Bu çalışma, 2008 ekonomik krizi sonrası ekonomik zorluk yaşayan İspanya'da seçim dönemleri öncesi yapılan ekonomi haberlerinin, sağ ve sol görüşlü gazeteler tarafından vatandaşlara nasıl aktarıldığını incelemektedir. 1986 yılında Avrupa Ekonomik Topluluğu (AET) üyeliği ile Avrupa ülkelerinin dinamik ve büyüyen ekonomilerinden biri haline gelen İspanya, birçok ülke gibi 2008 krizinden olumsuz etkilenen ülkeler arasında yer almaktadır. Bu kriz sonucunda İspanya'da işsizlik, kemer sıkma ve vergi önlemleri gibi pek çok ekonomik sorunla karşılaşmıştır. Bu bağlamda çalışma, öncelikle İspanya'nın siyasi sisteminin ortaya konmasını amaçlamaktadır. Bu siyasi yapı içerisinde ekonomik konuların ne derece etkili olduğunun incelenmesi de önem teşkil etmektedir. Ayrıca, İspanya'nın sağ ve sol görüşlü iki büyük gazetesinin ideolojik bakışları çerçevesinde ekonomi haberlerini vatandaşlara nasıl yansıttıklarını anlamak da önemli görülmektedir.

Çalışma, İspanya'daki seçim kampanyaları sırasındaki haberlerin içerik analizini içeren önceki çalışmaları özetlemekte ve Gavin ve Sanders'ın (1997) Birleşik Krallık seçimlerinde ekonomi haberleri üzerine yaptığı çalışmasından etkilenecek ilerlemektedir. Genel seçimler öncesi belirlenen 15 günlük resmi seçim kampanyası sürelerinde gazetelerin yaptığı haberlerin, seçimlerde kendi ideolojilerine yakın olan partileri destekleme yönünde olup olmadığını incelemeye yönelik yapılan bu çalışma içerik analizinden yararlanmaktadır. Lexis-Nexis veri tabanı kullanılarak, İspanya'nın en yüksek tirajlı iki gazetesinde yayınlanan haberler içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Bu doğrultuda, sağ görüşlü ABC gazetesi ve sol görüşlü El Pais gazetesinin 2015, 2016 ve 2019 genel seçimlerinin resmi seçim kampanya dönemlerinde yaptığı haberler incelenmiş ve tüm haberlerdeki ekonomi haberlerinin yüzdesi ve içeriği değerlendirilmeye çalışılmaktadır. Tüm bu bulgulardan hareketle varılması düşünülen sonuçlar sadece yorumlanmamış, aynı zamanda İspanya'nın ekonomik verileri de analiz edilmiştir. Böylece gazete haberlerinin içerik analizi yapıldıktan sonra varılan sonuçların, gerçek ekonomi verileriyle karşılaştırılması amaçlanmıştır. Böylece konuyla ilgili diğer çalışmalardan farklılaşması ve ekonomi ile ilgili haberlere ilişkin gazete yazılarının gerçekleri yansıtıp yansıtmadığının anlaşılması beklenmektedir. Ekonomi sadece siyasi partiler için değil, halk için de çok önemli olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bunun temel sebeplerinden biri de ülkenin

ekonomik durumunun, vatandaşların oy verme niyetlerine yönelik davranışlarını etkilediği düşüncesinden kaynaklanmaktadır (Gavin ve Sanders, 2003). Bu nedenle İspanya'nın ekonomik durumu araştırılmış ve analiz ekonomi haberlerine daha fazla odaklanmıştır.

## Çalışmanın Metodu

Ekonomik konuların siyasi partilerin seçimlerde elde ettikleri oy oranlarını ve genel seçimlerde seçmen tercihlerini etkileyen temel göstergelerden biri olduğu kabul edilmektedir. Bu noktadan hareketle çalışma, seçim süreci öncesi yapılan ekonomi haberleri ile bunların genel İspanya seçimlerinin sonucuna etkisi arasındaki ilişkiyi netleştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. İspanya'nın önde gelen gazeteleri sol görüşlü El Pais ve sağ görüşlü ABC gazeteleri içerik analizi için seçilmiştir. İspanya'da uzun yıllardır iktidarda olan iki büyük partiye (PP ve PSOE) ilişkin İspanya genel seçimlerine ilişkin yayınladıkları haberlerin içerik analizini yapmak çalışmanın yöntemini oluşturmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda araştırma soruları da 2015, 2016 ve 2019 İspanya genel seçimlerinden önce ABC ve El Pais tarafından yapılan haberlerin ekonomi konusuna ne kadar vurgu yaptığını anlamak ve iki farklı görüşe sahip gazetenin haberlerinin içeriklerinde yakın oldukları partileri ne derece destekler nitelikte haber yaptıkları üzerine şekillenmektedir.

İspanya seçimleri ile ilgili gazete haberleri, geçmişe yönelik tüm gazete yazılarının taranabileceği, Lexis-Nexis adında çevrimiçi bir veritabanı kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Bu veritabanı, içerik analizi için kelime aramalarına izin vermesi açısından da oldukça kullanışlıdır. Çalışmanın içeriğini oluşturan son 3 İspanya genel seçim dönemlerine ilişkin resmi seçim kampanya dönemleri şu şekilde sıralanmaktadır: 4 Aralık 2015 tarihinden 18 Aralık 2015'e kadar olan ilk dönem 2015 seçimleri öncesi dönemi kapsamakta; 10 Haziran 2016 tarihinden 24 Haziran 2016'ya kadar olan ikinci dönem 2016 seçimleri öncesi döneme tekabül etmekte; ve son olarak 12 Nisan 2019 ile 26 Nisan 2019 arasındaki 15 günlük süre ise 2019 genel seçimlerinin resmi kampanya dönemini teşkil etmektedir. Bu dönemlerde Lexis-Nexis veritabanından yararlanılarak toplanan haberler okunmuş ve içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur.

## Tartışma ve Sonuç

İletişim kanallarından bir tanesi olan gazeteler, halk üzerindeki etkisini halen sürdürmektedir. Günümüzde seçim kampanyaları ve sonuçları, özellikle ekonomik kriz nedeniyle hiç olmadığı kadar kritik hale gelmiştir. İçerik analizi sonucunda da görüleceği üzere, resmi seçim kampanyası dönemlerinde, ekonomik kriz ve krizin ülkedeki etkileri İspanyol medyasında en çok öne çıkan konular arasında yer almaktadır.

İçerik analizi sonuçlarına göre, bu iki gazetenin ideolojik olarak uyumlu oldukları partiler lehine haberler yaptıkları sonucuna varılmıştır. Son üç genel seçim öncesi dönemde de hem içerik analizi hem de Spearman Rho analizi sonuçları, bu iki gazetenin ideolojik görüşlerine yakın partileri savunan, onların politikalarının olumlu yönlerini öne çıkaran ve muhalefet partilerinin politikalarını eleştiren haberler yaptıklarını göstermektedir. Çalışmanın sonucunda İspanya'da aynı tarihlerde farklı görüşlerdeki gazetelerin özellikle ekonomik konularda farklı yorumlar yaptığını ortaya koymuştur.