

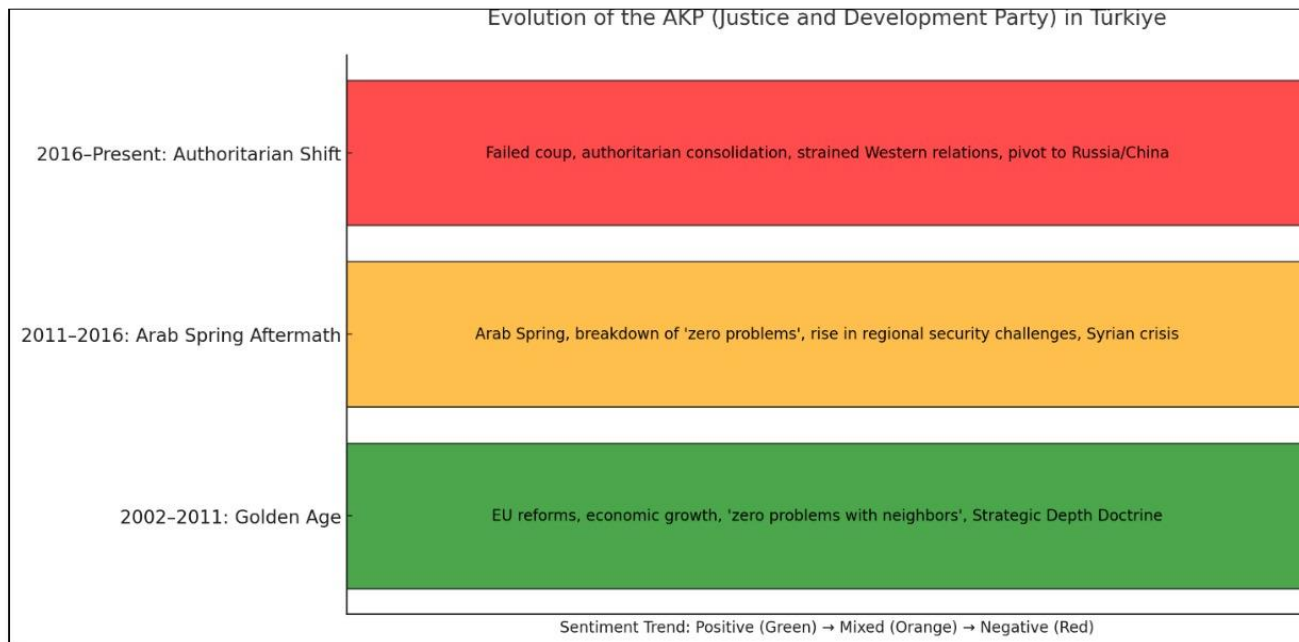
# Digital Thorns: The Rise of Sarcasm as Political Protest in Türkiye



# The Rise of Sarcasm – Turkish Politics

## Why Sarcasm?

- **Political Landscape in Türkiye:** Transitioning toward a hybrid democracy with authoritarian tendencies.
- **Risk of Open Criticism:** Increased suppression of dissent and imprisonment for political speech.
- **Irony as a Tool:** Sarcasm and irony provide a safer way to critique political leaders and policies.
- **Public Discontent:** Sarcasm uncovers hidden patterns of criticism and public sentiment.
- **Freedom of Expression:** Reflects how citizens adapt to constraints on free speech in challenging socio-political conditions.



# Research Design

## Data Scrapping & BERT

### 1.Data Collection:

- Scraped 100,000 entries from Ekşi Sözlük
- Politus-Twitter

# of tweets	has_erdogan_keyword	has_kk_keyword
10.67M	TRUE	FALSE
1.16M	FALSE	TRUE
0.40M	TRUE	TRUE
<b>12.23M</b>		

### 2.Preprocessing:

- Cleaned and normalized text.
- Very short & long entries, contains URL, authors with so many entries

### 3. Annotation:

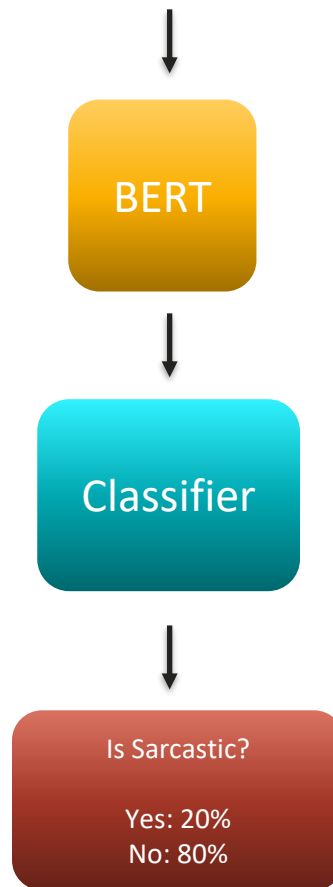
- Annotated 2,5k entries approx.
- Trained the model on this annotated dataset.
- Used the trained model to predict sarcasm on the remaining data.
- Validated the predictions by comparing them with the annotated data to assess model performance.


### 4. Sentiment Analysis using BERT:

- Fine-tuned BERT for sarcasm detection.

### 5. Trend Analysis

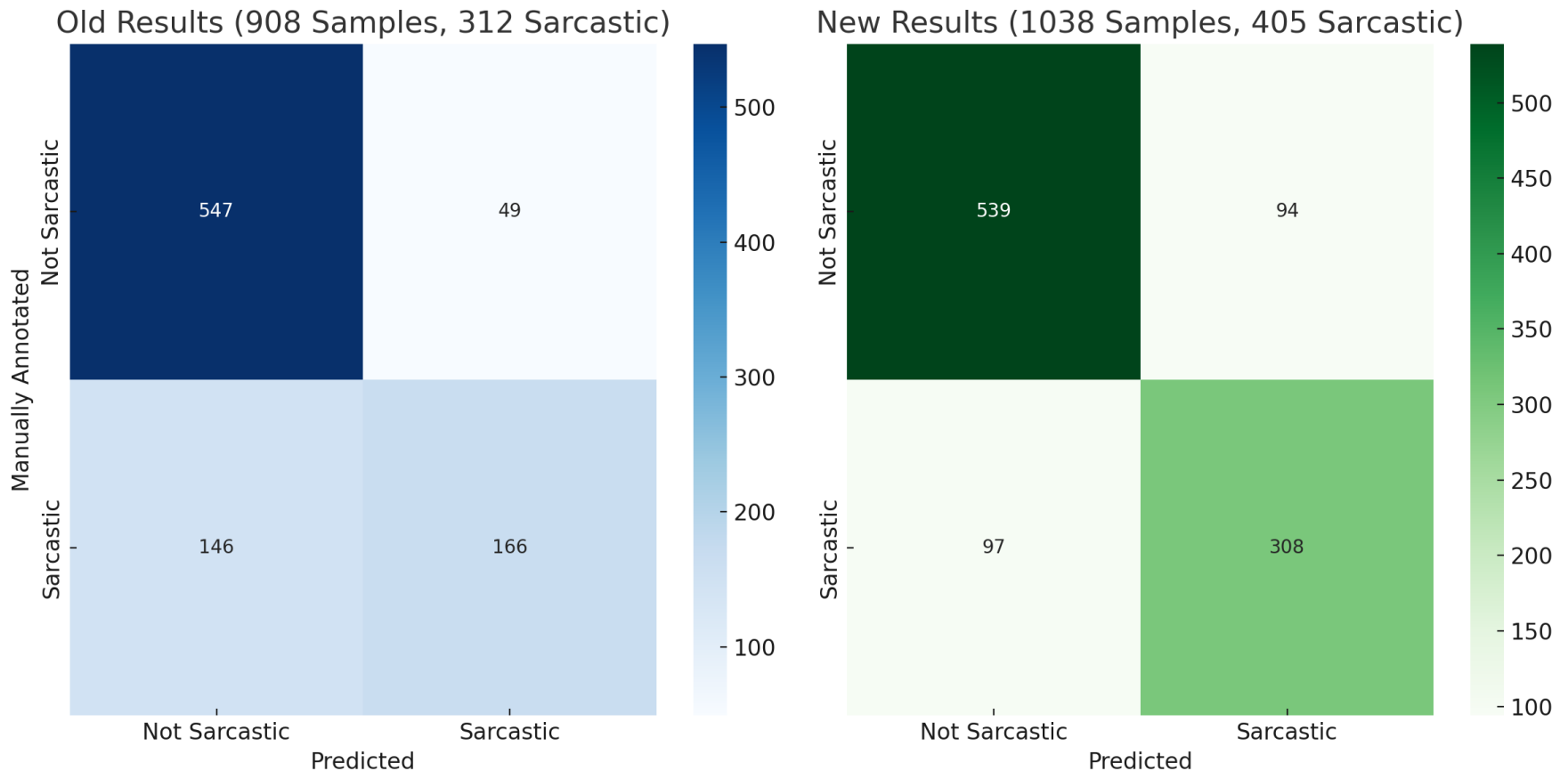
sultanlar sultanı, hakanlar hakanı padişahım yine 48 boyutlu satranç oynadı ilmek ilmek işledi ve bugün suriyeyi fethetti. asrın lideri.



 Embedding

# Model Results

## Improvement in Sarcasm Detection After Re-annotation and Balanced Training



**Table 1:** Performance Improvement in Sarcasm Detection by Increasing Annotated Entries

Number of Entries	Annotated Sarcastic Entries	Precision	Recall	F1-Score	Accuracy
908	312	0.77	0.53	0.63	0.79
1038	405	0.77	0.76	0.76	0.82
2529	864	0.79	0.82	0.80	0.86

**Table 2:** Sarcasm Analysis by Topic

Topic	Total Entries	Sarcastic Entries	Sarcasm (%)
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	57,319	16,157	28.1%
Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu	50,113	4,632	9.2%

# Literature Review

“Surprisingly, the case of Venezuela demonstrates that satire in semi authoritarian states, instead of experiencing a decline proportional to decreasing civil freedom, instead continues as critical if not more critical than before. Humor is a bastion of freedom, especially in a country that is familiar with political instability and quick to recognize oppression. Satire operating within a restricted space does not change to reflect oppression, instead, it grows and expands as a challenge to the oppressor. It is as if having tasted democracy encourage satirists to redouble their efforts maintain the last political voices that they have.”

“Satire, unlike other forms of press, is protected by its veil of humor and can exist even under authoritarianism (although under much harsher restrictions than a democracy). Ultimately, political satire is shaped by the political regime under which it operates – and, in some cases, also shaping the politics it criticizes. Political satire, then, is not just relevant to the study of censorship and freedom of speech, but should also be explored in its role as a form of protest and as an active influence on the political landscape.”

Country	Regime Type	Satire Criticism	Satire Quantity	Censorship Type
USA	Democracy	High (targets many, openly critical)	High	Social (taboos)
Venezuela	Semi-authoritarian	Very High (sharp, bold)	Medium	State + Social
Cuba	Authoritarian	Low (vague, cautious)	Low	State (strong restrictions)

Aspect	Change in Semi-Authoritarian Regimes
Criticism level	▲ Increases – satire becomes sharper and bolder
Directness	▲ More direct naming of political actors
Courage of content	▲ More daring despite risks
Audience impact	▲ High engagement due to shared frustration

Villavicencio Pérez, V. (2017). *Laughing in the face of oppression: The nature of political satire under different types of political regimes* (Honors thesis). Rollins College. <https://scholarship.rollins.edu/honors/55>



# Graffiti and Political Sarcasm as Tools for Political Participation in Egypt

28 DECEMBER 2019 | POLICY BRIEF | ENGLISH

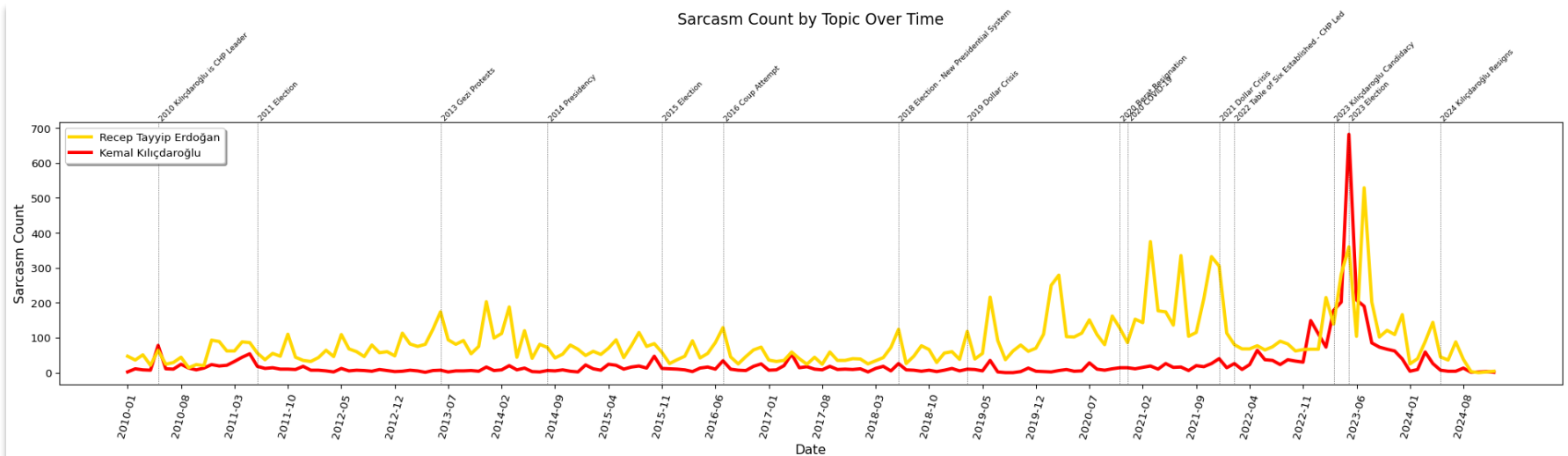
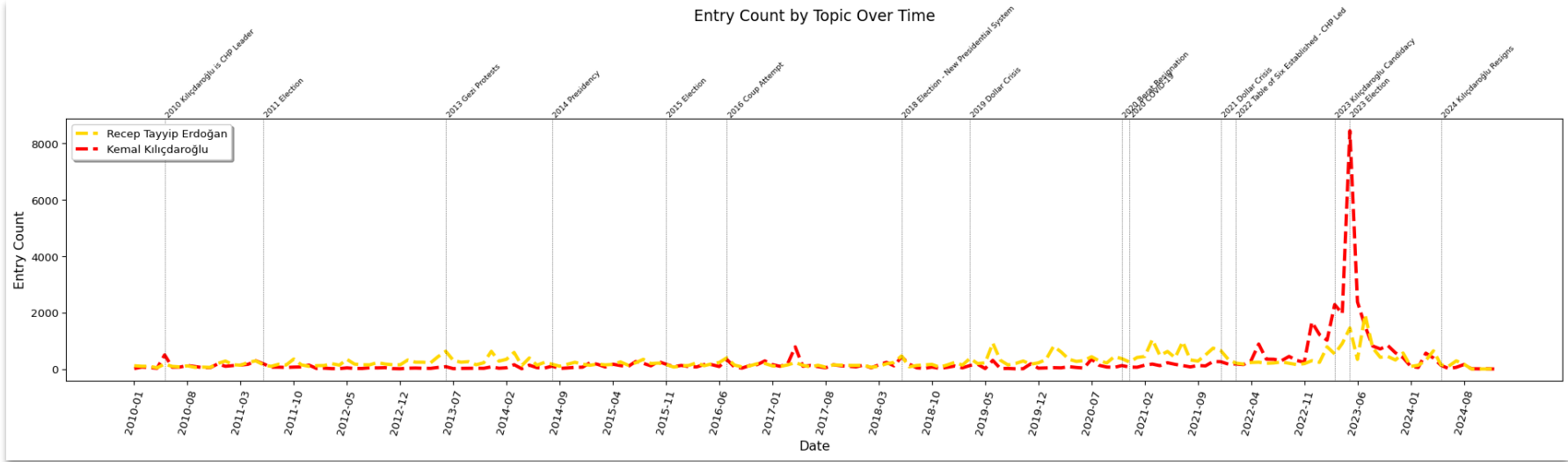


“Social media was also considered for a certain time a safe space to express political opinions. Nevertheless, the authorities started to control online space, closing pages and arresting online activists. Hence, the new tools – political sarcasm and graffiti – helped push the boundaries to continue commenting on political developments. As shown by the above analysis, these forms of expression have also been increasingly suffering from suppression.”

Eldemerdash, N. (2020). *Graffiti and political sarcasm as tools for political participation in Egypt*. European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed).  
<https://www.iemed.org/publication/graffiti-and-political-sarcasm-as-tools-for-political-participation-in-egypt/>

# Sarcasm Trends Over Time

## Erdoğan vs Kılıçdaroğlu





# THANK YOU



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ÜNİVERSİTESİ