

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF TURKIC LANGUAGES

NEWSLETTER, DECEMBER 2019 ISSUE

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THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S NOTE

BY ERCAN BALCI

Happy holidays!

I hope you are enjoying a well-deserved winter break with your family and friends. As you might know, 2019 is my fourth and last year serving as the Executive Secretary. I would like to thank you all for your support and selfless contributions to AATT over the years. Having a leadership position at our association has been my privilege, and I am grateful that you trusted me with this responsibility.



I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow officers: our current Treasurer and incoming President Feride Hatiboğlu for her industrious efforts to ensure the financial health of AATT by securing institutional memberships; our President Roberta Micallef for being an astute leader in our field, and for taking the lead to bring the new version of the Language Learning Framework to fruition; the Executive Board Members for stepping up whenever they are asked to extend a hand to carry out various tasks; and last but not least, our Honorary President Erika Gilson, for being the rock of family for decades, and for continuing to contribute to the day-to-day functions of AATT.

Now, it is time for me to pass the baton to the new administration starting January 1, 2020. I am confident that AATT will continue to get stronger and continue to be both a reliable resource and a welcoming community for all the teachers of Turkic languages in the years to come.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

BY ROBERTA MICALLEF
BOSTON UNIVERSITY

2019 was a busy year for AATT! We hosted two conferences, the 14th Graduate Student Pre-Conference (see p.9 for further information) and the 4th AATT Conference (see p.8 for further information), and completed our organization’s updated Language Learning Framework (LLF). Once we incorporate our reviewers’ comments, we will make the LLF available on the AATT website. The most exciting news for AATT, however, is that the new year brings with it new leadership for the American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages. Roberta Micallef, the President, Ercan Balci, the Executive Secretary, and Feride Hatiboğlu, the Treasurer, will all be stepping down. Feride Hatiboğlu will assume the role of President, Saadet Ebru Ergül, the position of Executive Secretary, and Jeannette Okur will be our new Treasurer.

Feride Hatiboğlu, an energetic and enthusiastic colleague who built a very successful multi-level Turkish language program at the University of Pennsylvania, has been an extraordinary Treasurer for AATT. She has guided our financial well-being with a firm hand and successfully found us new donors and funders. She will now be able to apply her program building skills to AATT from a difference vantage point.

Saadet Ebru Ergül has been teaching Turkish language and conversation courses at Stanford University. She will bring her expertise in oral proficiency assessment, curriculum development and technology enhanced language learning to AATT. Last but not least is our new Treasurer, **Jeannette Okur**. Dr. Okur has been the Turkish language coordinator at UT-Austin since 2010. In

addition to her foreign language education expertise and interest in instructional material design, she brings an interest in a culture-focused interdisciplinary approach to the study of literature and film.

Feride Hatiboğlu, Saadet Ebru Ergül and Jeannette Okur have all been dedicated and active members of AATT for several years and they have earned our confidence in their skills to lead. They are all three outstanding colleagues and we look forward to seeing their vision for AATT flourish. There is no doubt in my mind that they will engage our members, expand our horizons and take AATT in new and enriching directions. We wish them the best of luck and look forward to the journey.



NEW AATT EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY
SAADET EBUR ERGÜL

NEW AATT
PRESIDENT
FERİDE HATİBOĞLU



NEW AATT
TREASURER
JEANNETTE OKUR



MANY THANKS TO OUR OUT-GOING BOARD OFFICERS

BY ERIKA GILSON, UPENN
ON BEHALF OF AATT

Since the founding of AATT in 1985, our organization has been led by a President elected by the Executive Board, together with an Executive Secretary-Treasurer, appointed by the Executive Board. The five members of the Board are elected by the membership for a three-year term. Let me mention here that all serve the profession by volunteering their services, and we should extend our gratitude to all for their selfless service.

Now, we would like to give special thanks to **Roberta Micallef**, who will be leaving the presidency this coming January, and to **Ercan Balci**, who will leave the post of Executive Secretary at the same time. Roberta was appointed our Executive Secretary in 2011, and in 2013 Feride Hatiboğlu was appointed to take on the position of Treasurer, as it was decided that dividing these duties afforded less of a strain on the volunteers. In 2017, Roberta was elected President and has since been very involved with projects. Most importantly she, together with Ercan, initiated an annual AATT Conference, the fourth one of which took place in November 2019 at Tulane University.

Ercan Balci was appointed Secretary in 2014. He has been instrumental in making the annual AATT Conferences a reality. With his perseverance, reaching out to colleagues here and abroad, he made the association more visible everywhere.

We would like to let Roberta and Ercan know that we value their work very highly and wish them the very best in their future endeavors.

THANK YOU!



OUT-GOING AATT PRESIDENT
ROBERTA MICALLEF



OUT-GOING AATT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
ERCAN BALCI

MLA ENROLLMENT DATA

In 2019 the MLA released its full report on language course enrollments in colleges and universities in the United States. Click [here](#) to for this latest report.

To access MLA's Language Enrollment Database (1958-2016) and search enrollments in foreign languages, click [here](#).

For questions regarding enrollment data of Turkic Languages, please contact [Saadet Ebru Ergül](#).



INTRODUCING NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS OF THE AATT

Nilüfer Hatemi

Nilüfer Hatemi is a Turkish language lecturer in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. She was previously the Ertegun Visiting Assistant Professor in the same department (Spring 2013–Spring 2014). Nilüfer received her Ph.D. in Near Eastern Studies at Princeton in 2000 and worked as an assistant professor at Yeditepe and Kadir Has Universities, Istanbul, Turkey. At Princeton, she teaches courses on Turkish and Ottoman language and literature. Her articles have appeared in the *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, the *Journal of Turkish Studies*, and various conference publications. In May 2019, she completed ACTFL's Oral Proficiency Interview training, and made a presentation at the 26th ICC Conference in Berlin, titled "Teaching Ottoman Turkish in the United States: Princeton University Case Study."

Banu Özer Griffin

Banu Özer Griffin is a Turkish language lecturer in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Cornell University. She has an M.A. in Turkish Languages and Literature. Her academic interests include teaching Turkish as a Second Language, curriculum design and development, test design and development, and intercultural competence in the language learning process. She is an advisor for the Turkish Student Association and the Translator–Interpreter Program at Cornell University.

NEW AATT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER Nilüfer Hatemi



NEW AATT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER Banu Özer Griffin



AATT TREASURER'S REPORT

By Feride Hatiboğlu
UPENN

I am happy to report another successful year for our Association in 2019. Our balanced budget and continuing strong numbers will perfectly support our upcoming events and obligations in 2020.

We are proud to cooperate and collaborate with our supporting institutions: Institute of Turkish Studies, Princeton University, Georgetown University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Arizona, University of Texas at Austin, Cornell University, University of Michigan, and Indiana University. With their support and encouragement, AATT has continued to grow. However, we need **your** support more than ever this coming year since, as we all know,

we are losing one of our greatest supporters: the Institute of Turkish Studies has supported our Association since its very first days. Before ceasing operations, ITS will be extending its support to us for another year, which will help fund our 2020 AATT and Graduate Student Conferences, and our AATT Roundtable and Panel during the MESA conference. I would like to extend my gratitude to ITS and its director, Dr. Sinan Ciddi, for their support throughout the years.

We will continue with our efforts to organize conferences, create workshops, and support necessary research and material for the field. We have a great member base and I am sure with everybody paying their membership dues regularly, we will be able to increase our activities. Hence, we would appreciate all of your efforts to obtain additional support from your respective institutions to pick up the slack of ITS's departure. With your continuing support, I believe that we will experience a new year of prosperity and growth for our Association. Membership and revenue are inextricably linked to our future, as we depend solely on our member base for our revenue stream and would like to see our members' continued support to our organization.

This is a great opportunity for me to thank you and wish you all a Happy New Year.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

The American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages would like to thank the institutions below for their generosity and support:

Institute of Turkish Studies
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Georgetown University
University of Texas at Austin
University of Pennsylvania
Indiana University Bloomington
Princeton University
Cornell University
University of Arizona, Tucson

Teşekkürler

If you would like to contribute an article, news item, or share an announcement with AATT Newsletter, please contact editors Dr. [Esra Predolac](#) and Dr. [Jeannette Okur](#). For previous issues of our newsletter, click [here](#).

2019 HALIDE EDİP ADIVAR SCHOLARSHIP AWARD BY THE OTTOMAN AND TURKISH STUDIES ASSOCIATION

BY ERIKA GILSON, UPENN

The annual scholarship from the [Ottoman & Turkish Studies Association](#)'s Halide Edip Adivar fund provides an introduction to Turkey for qualified undergraduate students who have not had extensive prior experience in Turkey or in Turkish studies. The award is to be used for travel to Turkey and while there, to supplement participation in a program in Turkish language, a study-abroad program, or a work internship; or for study or research in any aspect of Turkey's history, culture or society.

The 2019 Adivar Scholarship Committee was chaired by Emine Evered and the committee members included Sylvia Önder, Yeşim Bayar, and Fariba Zarinebaf. The Adivar Scholarship Committee was impressed by **Hannah Ni'Shuilleabhain's** application:

"As a student pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Journalism at Northwestern University, she is also pursuing a minor in Middle East and North African Studies. Aspiring to be an audio journalist either based in Turkey or covering Turkey, she attended the Turkish language program at the Boğaziçi University in summer 2019. Hannah discovered Turkish through Turkish literature and pursued six semesters of coursework by the time of her application. It was timely for her to explore the language where it is spoken and observe the culture on the ground. Her letter-writers noted that she is the kind of

student who is willing to take the extra mile when necessary. In studying a foreign language, such a habit will, for sure, come in handy."

The award sum of \$1,500 helped make **Hannah Ni'Shuilleabhain's** summer 2019 Turkish language study in Istanbul possible.

AATT STUDENT AWARDS

HALIDE EDİP ADIVAR SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

The annual scholarship from the OTSA Halide Edip Adivar fund (\$ 1,500) provides an introduction to Turkey for qualified undergraduate students who have not had extensive prior experience in Turkey or in Turkish studies. The award is to be used for travel to Turkey, and while there, to supplement participation in a program in Turkish language, a study-abroad program, or a work internship; or for study or research in any aspect of Turkey's history, culture or society. To learn more about this award, click [here](#).

THE JAMES W. REDHOUSE STUDENT PRIZE

The Redhouse Prize for Best Progress in Turkish was established by the Turkish Studies Association (now Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association) in 1991, and four such prizes continue to be available annually, two for each of two regions in North America, designated as East and West. Although the monetary value is not large (\$100), outstanding students deserve the public recognition that being a winner brings. To learn more about this award, click [here](#).

To learn more about various awards and funding opportunities, visit our [website](#).

2019 REDHOUSE STUDENT PRIZE FOR BEST PROGRESS IN TURKISH AWARD

The Redhouse Prize announcements took place during the Ottoman & Turkish Studies Association meeting at the Middle Eastern Studies Association Annual Meeting on November 14, 2019. Each year, lecturers at U.S. institutions nominate students whom they consider to have made exceptional progress in learning Turkish at their level. The names of student-nominees studying at institutions in the Eastern United States are forwarded to a designated colleague in the West, and vice versa. These are then forwarded to the Award Committee, made up this year of the following members:—Roberta Micallef, Boston University, and Melike Yücel, University of Washington, Seattle.

This year's winners for the best progress in Turkish language were:

Hazem Saleh (University of Texas at Austin, student of Jeannette Okur) ♦ Hazem Saleh had attained Intermediate Mid speaking and writing proficiency and Intermediate High reading and listening proficiency within a year. In 2018-2019, he leaped from a language course in the Fall to a content course in Turkish in the Spring, displaying a deep knowledge of the Turkish cultural milieu as well as language. The supporting materials for his nomination included contributions by Hazem to an online Turkish newspaper which were beautifully written and demonstrated his linguistic and cultural prowess.

Sophia Mauro (Georgetown University, student of Zeynep Gür) ♦ Sophia Mauro was recommended by both of her instructors of

Turkish at Georgetown University, Dr. Sylvia Önder and Dr. Zeynep Gür. The impressive supporting materials provided by both instructors demonstrate how much progress a dedicated, smart and ambitious student can make within the space of a year. Sophia is a deserving Redhouse Prize winner because her materials reveal that she has shown consistent motivation and progress in her Turkish language journey.

Sulayman Qazi (University of Michigan, student of Nilay Sevinç) ♦ Sulayman received this award because he is an outstanding student committed

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to reaching a high level of proficiency in Turkish. Sulayman is pursuing a B.A. degree in International Relations. Due to his academic and personal interests, Sulayman availed himself of the opportunity to learn Turkish at the University of Michigan and did truly exceptional work in his beginning Turkish courses (Turkish 101 and Turkish 102). He has consistently been one of the top students in his class, and the supporting materials demonstrate how much progress he made in one year.

Simone Salman (UCLA, student of Beyza Lorenz)

◆ Simone is a graduate student in ethnomusicology with a focus on Turkish and Sephardic classical music. Simone, whose program requires her to read books and articles in academic Turkish, volunteered to read and translate an academic text from Turkish to English, in addition to her regular homework assignments. A top student in her class, she also wrote a book report in Turkish, which demonstrates her good grasp of the academic text she translated.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

4TH AATT CONFERENCE: PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES TO TURKIC LANGUAGES

*BY ERCAN BALCI
BOSTON UNIVERSITY*

The first AATT conference in our association's history was organized in 2016 at Harvard University. After the second one at Georgetown University, the 3rd AATT Conference took place at UT-Austin. In November 2019, we gathered at Tulane University in New Orleans for the 4th AATT Conference. All these conferences became possible thanks to the hosts in these institutions, organizing committee members, our sponsors and our presenters joining us from far and near. I believe the most significant success of these conferences is that colleagues not only from the United States but also from Kazakhstan, Turkey, Israel and Canada have presented their research and experience with the rest of us.

Although it was a smaller gathering this year, we had the pleasure of listening to

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF TEACHERS OF TURKIC
LANGUAGES**

**Williams Hall
255 S. 36th St. Room 847
Philadelphia PA 19104-6305
United States**



presentations on topics ranging from “The Kazakh Latin Alphabet” to “Cultural Identity in Omer Seyfettin’s Short Stories” and from “A Turkish Global Simulation Project” to “Technology in Flipped Language Classes”.

It is my only hope that yearly AATT conferences will continue to bring colleagues from all over the world together to exchange innovative ideas and valuable experiences. I would like to end this short summary by expressing my gratitude to Tuğba Yıldırım. All these conferences have been possible thanks to Tuğba, who has worked tirelessly since the inception of the idea, designing fliers and creating programs and certificates.

AATT GRADUATE STUDENT PRE-CONFERENCE 2019

BY ERIKA GILSON
UPENN

The Graduate Student Pre-Conference was established in 2005 to mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of AATT and takes place immediately before a [MESA](#) or [CESS](#) annual conference. It is designed to encourage research that makes significant use of sources in Turkish or other Turkic languages by graduate students enrolled at institutions in North America in a range of disciplines. It promotes contact between students at various institutions and allows for feedback from faculty discussants participating in the Pre-Conference. Another goal is to help students progress towards more formal presentations at national conferences, such as those of [MESA](#), [CESS](#), and organizations devoted to specific disciplines. Up to now, the Pre-Conference has been generously supported by the [Institute of Turkish Studies](#) as well as AATT.

This year’s pre-conference took place at Tulane University in New Orleans, close to where the MESA conference was taking place. With the help of Prof. Yiğit Akın, we were able to obtain a suitable venue at the university’s Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life.

The selection committee—comprised of Hakan Karateke, University of Chicago, Sylvia Önder, Georgetown University; Roberta Micallef, Boston University; and Erika Gilson, Princeton University—selected five graduate students to participate. All papers were distributed among members involved, which included the Pre-Conference chair, Yiğit Akın, Tulane University, and Tolga Cora, the discussant, from Boğaziçi University.

As usual, all participants met the night before for dinner at a local restaurant to get acquainted with each other. This year, also present were the participants of the 4th Annual AATT Conference.



2019AATT GRADUATE STUDENT PRE-CONFERENCE

The Pre-Conference took place on November 14 from 9:00am to 12:30pm, starting with breakfast. After welcoming remarks by Roberta Micallef and Feride Hatiboglu, Yasemin Akçagüner, Columbia University, was introduced as the first speaker. Her presentation was titled “In Search of Lost time: Looking for the Muvakkit in the Late Ottoman Empire.” The second speaker, Efe Balıkçioğlu, Harvard University, presented a challenging topic: “Word Choice and Politics: The Use of Different Registers in the Turkish Translations of Pound’s Cantos”. The third presenter, Reilly Barry, Harvard University, was unable to present, although she had submitted a paper with a novel approach to early reforms in Turkey: “On the Creation of the Modern Turkish Language.” Yasemin Çelikkol, University of Pennsylvania, was the next speaker with a fascinating topic: “To Loosen, Tighten, or Abandon the Shalvar? Modernity and Turkish Women’s Clothing in Bulgaria and Turkey.” Ufuk Erol, Indiana University, was the final speaker and tackled a neglected topic: “The Development of Popular Literature on Alevism (Alevilik) from the 1980s to the Present Time.”

There was a lively Q&A session after each

presentation. The discussant, Tolga Cora, commented at length on each speaker’s paper at the end of all presentations. After closing remarks, including a request to spread the word among their colleagues, all were invited to lunch, continuing discussions among themselves.

The Pre-Conference is open to interested AATT colleagues, and several who were at MESA did participate. Next year’s Pre-Conference will be at Georgetown University, as MESA is meeting in Washington, D.C. We hope the word will spread, and we will have another solid group of academicians-in-the-making participate.

AATT RECOGNIZES PROFESSOR ULI SCHAMILOGLU’S CONTRIBUTIONS



From left to right: Honorary AATT President **Erika Gilson**, Professor **Uli Schamiloglu**, and New AATT President **Feride Hatiboğlu** during the 4th AATT Conference.

Professor Uli Schamiloglu was awarded a plaque in recognition of his generous and unwavering contribution as President of AATT between 2003-2007 and as a member of the Executive Board between 1994-1997 and 2001-2004. Under his leadership, AATT benefitted from his knowledge and vision for the field as well as his strong advocacy on behalf of language professionals. Thanks to his support and hard work, AATT has continued and prospered.



2019AATT GRADUATE STUDENT PRE-CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

From left to right: Efe Balıkçioğlu (Harvard), Yasemin Çelikkol (UPENN), Yiğit Akın (Tulane), Ufuk Erol (Indiana Bloomington), Yasemin Akçagüner (Columbia), Tolga Cora (Boğaziçi)

AATT ROUNDTABLE AT MIDDLE EAST STUDIES ASSOCIATION (MESA) 2019

NÂLÂN ERBİL
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

This year's AATT Roundtable, entitled "Assessment(s) for 21st Century Literacy in Teaching & Learning Turkish," took place in the New Orleans Sheraton Hotel on November 16, 2019, in conjunction with MESA's annual meeting. The roundtable was organized by Nâlan Erbil and chaired by Feride Hatiboğlu (in lieu of Roberta Micallef). Five presenters shared their pedagogical practices regarding literacy assessment.

Based on her blended first year course at Indiana University, **Zeynep Elbasan** discussed the feasibility and desirability of online Turkish language instruction by introducing a draft of a hybrid online language course snapshot. She gave examples of user-friendly online language practices, useful online tools, and visual design elements used in the Canvas learning management system, and evaluated the media effectiveness of the tools she used for online language learning tasks, sharing student survey results.

Nâlan Erbil investigated the definition of critical literacy and lack of assessment tools for it beyond the normative interpretation of literacy, which is oftentimes summarized by foreign language educators in North America as proficiency in the four communication skills. An intermediate level lesson plan on "housing," which she designed at UW-Madison, demonstrated that students can improve their critical literacy skills based on comparison of cultures as defined by the World Readiness Standards.

Analyzing a set of semester-length e-mail correspondence between learners of Turkish at UCLA and native speakers of Turkish at Kadir Has University, **Beyza Lorenz** illuminated the purposeful uses of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills beyond the textbook and the classroom. She demonstrated how her students managed, analyzed, and synthesized learned grammar and cultural fluency, and built cross-cultural connections with the tools of technology through their encounters with native speakers.

Jeannette Okur discussed best practices for introducing Advanced Low proficiency learners to linguistic diversity and multimodal forms of linguistic expression and representation as they are manifested in Turkish film and short critical texts about Turkish film. Explaining the pedagogical design of an in-class discussion task, a reading assignment involving learners' use of the digital social reading tool, eComma, a sequence of "Learning Via Subtitling" partner activities, and an analytical writing assignment from her Turkish Cinema course at the University of Texas at Austin, she illustrated key strategies for the successful development and assessment of learners' critical viewing skills in tandem with other literacies.

Nilay Sevinç talked about what "proficiency" in the language classroom entails, noting that it is tied to consistent, relevant and efficient instruction to elicit desired student performance. Giving examples of practical assessment tools she used in her first year Turkish class at the University of Michigan, where she incorporated online tests which assess overall language use in a variety of circumstances and situations, she emphasized the complexity of assessing learners' overall language abilities.

2019 ACTFL CONFERENCE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

BY SAADET EBRU ERGÜL
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

The 52nd Annual Convention and World Languages Expo of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) was held November 22-24, 2019, at Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC.

The ACTFL Convention featured various professional learning and collaborative networking opportunities. It was an international event bringing together more than 7000 language educators from all languages, levels and positions, more than 250 exhibitors, and more than 800 educational sessions in a variety of formats focusing on innovative programs, emerging trends, and research-informed practices.

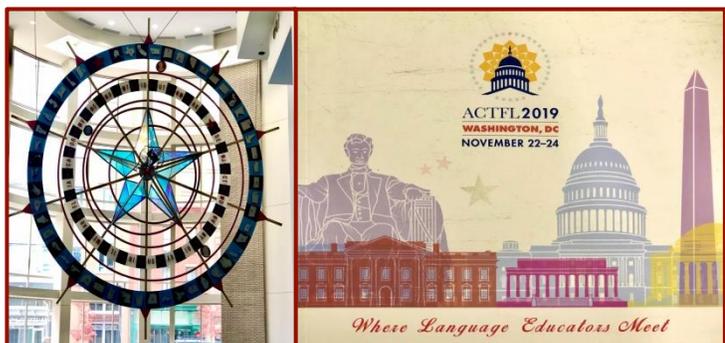
During the opening ceremony, ACTFL expressed the goal of the convention as follows: “Our goal is to provide a comprehensive professional development experience that will have an impact on language educators at all levels of teaching and in turn help their students to succeed in their language learning process.”

The program started with the opening of the general session on Friday morning, followed by the announcement of our 2020 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year. Then Raghida



Dergham, Founder and Executive Director of the Beirut Institute, columnist for *The National*, political analyst, and contributor to numerous international publications delivered a keynote presentation titled “Dare to Differ: Empowerment, Respect, and Inclusion.” This year the convention featured a closing general session for the first time ever, at which Dr. Christopher Emdin, a professor of science education at the Teachers College of Columbia University, social critic, public intellectual, science advocate, and author gave a speech about “Teaching and Learning from the Student’s Standpoint”.

Nineteen Special Interest Groups (SIGs) convened at ACTFL. SIG members with shared interests are encouraged to network, share information and take advantage of continuous networking opportunities. The Special Interest Groups are: African American Students, Cinema, Community College, Comprehension-based Communicative Language Teaching, Critical and Social Justice Approaches, Teaching and Learning of Culture, Distance Learning, Greek, Heritage Languages, Immersion, Korean, Language Learning for Children, Less Commonly Taught Languages, Portuguese, Research, Small Undergraduate German Programs, Spanish for Native Speakers, Teacher Development.





The 2019 ACTFL Convention offered numerous pre-convention workshops, sessions, interactive roundtable discussions, electronic posters, practice-oriented paper presentations, and research-oriented paper presentations.

There were also many networking activities at the Social Media Lounge, the ACTFL Collab Zone, and the ACTFL Career Café, where professionals had the chance to speak with experts. In terms of networking, professional development and addressing national level language learning and teaching practices, ACTFL 2019 provided many opportunities for language professionals.

ACTFL also offers a [First Time Attendee Scholarship Program](#) and a [Student Stipend Award Program](#).

The proposal submission deadline for ACTFL 2020 is January 10th, 2020, at 23.59 EST. Proposals addressing the needs of today's learners and educators by focusing on innovative programs, emerging trends, and research-informed practices are encouraged. You may find more details at [ACTFL's site](#).

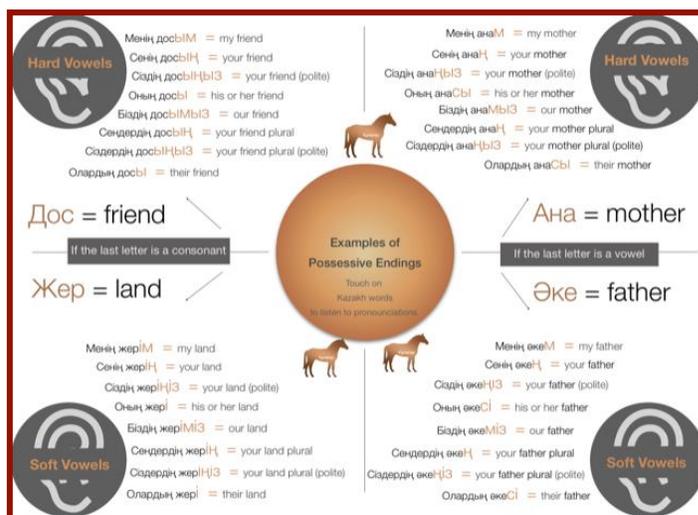
The 2020 Annual Convention will be held November 20-22, 2020, at the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in San Antonio, TX.

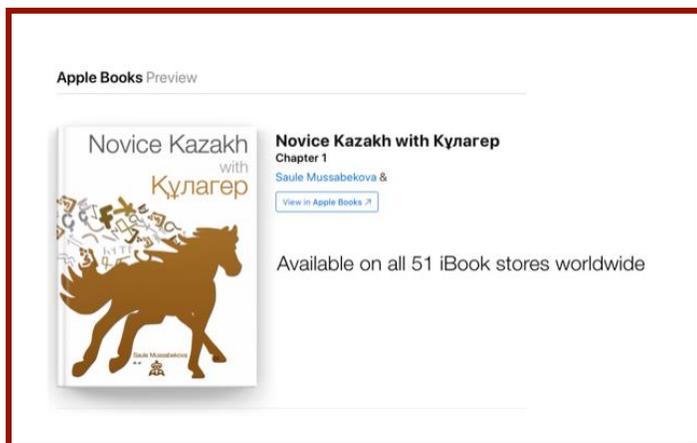
NEWS FROM THE PROFESSION

iBOOK FOR NOVICE KAZAKH PUBLISHED BY NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY

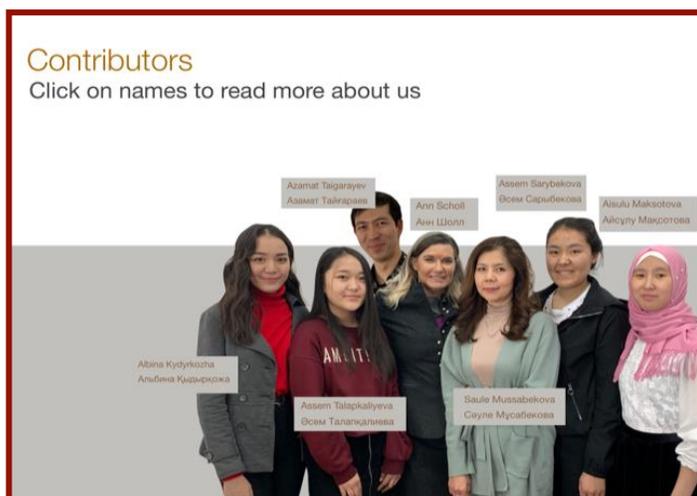
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NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY

Novice Kazakh with Құлағар is an iBook developed at Nazarbayev University in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan and designed for foreign students who want to learn Kazakh via self-study. It is a multimedia multitouch electronic textbook that includes sound, videos, and interactive multimedia self-test exercises and quizzes. It is authored by Saule Mussabekova, who has been teaching Kazakh as a foreign language since 2012. Mussabekova researched and developed learning materials to package them for non-native learners of Kazakh language. Ann Scholl and a group of Kazakh students she trained assisted with the technology and electronic textbook graphic and curricular design to create this fantastic intellectual product. The Kazakh grammar explanation was completed in cooperation with Paul Skinner, and the materials were piloted by English-speaking faculty members.





Nazarbayev University is an English language university established in 2010 and located in the capital city of Kazakhstan. The Department of Kazakh Language and Turkic Studies offers academic and professional Kazakh courses, as well as Kazakh language courses for foreigners (KFL). According to the Kazakh Language Policy issued in June 26, 2019, “Students who have no ability in Kazakh when they enter NU are required to complete KFL 201 Intermediate Kazakh as a Foreign Language I”. Nazarbayev University offers KFL courses during the academic year and in the summer. Internationally experienced instructors and members of the university student club *Shyraq* teach the novice level courses.

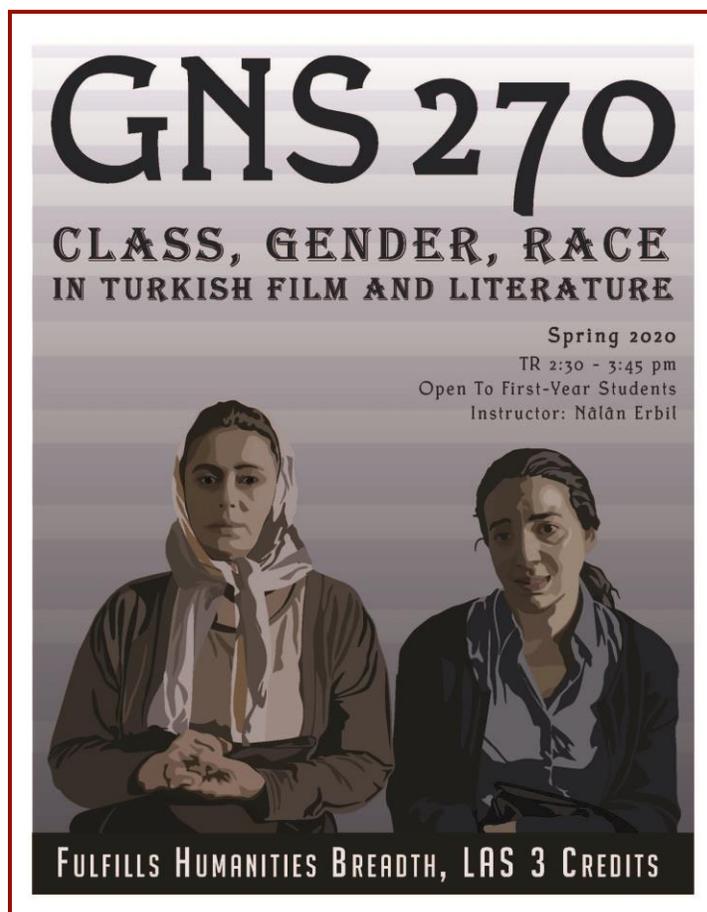


News from the University of Wisconsin-Madison

By Nâlân Erbil
University of Wisconsin-Madison

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has been awarded the **Turkish Flagship Language Initiative (TURFLI) Grant** for the summer of 2020. The University will administer the domestic and overseas programs in Madison and Azerbaijan respectively. TURFLI students will participate in a full-time domestic summer program offered at UW-Madison through [APTLI](#). Students will then travel abroad to Baku for a full-time fall semester of language and culture study. More information can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

The University of Wisconsin-Madison shared its first-year Turkish course with the University of Minnesota in Fall 2019 through



the **Big Ten Academic Alliance’s CourseShare program**, and will continue to serve as the host institution for this CourseShare in the Spring of 2020. The program allows students to take less commonly taught language courses in a synchronized online setting in classrooms with built in videoconference technology. More information on BTAA can be found [here](#).

The Department of German Nordic and Slavic at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will offer a new content course entitled **“Class, Gender, Race in Turkish Film and Literature”** in English translation in Spring 2020. The course will be taught by Dr. Nâlân Erbil.

between 2011 and 2016. As of 2018, reported Turkish undergraduate enrollment had increased slightly, but was still 48% lower than 2011.

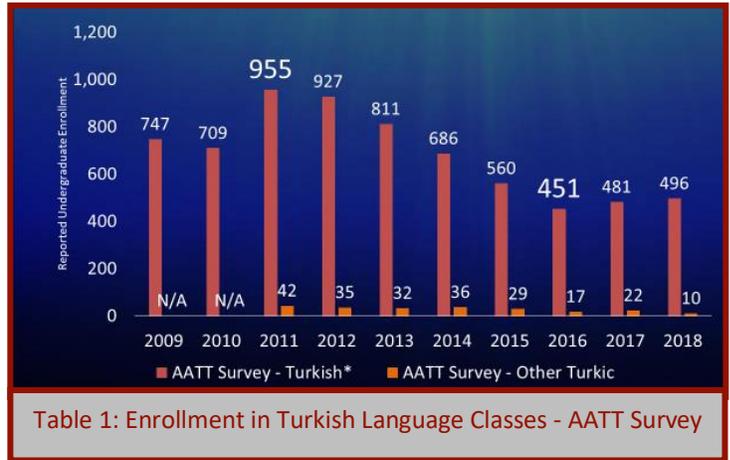


Table 1: Enrollment in Turkish Language Classes - AATT Survey

POST-SECONDARY TURKISH PROGRAMS IN THE USA: STATUS AND OUTLOOK

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There has been a dramatic enrollment decline in post-secondary Turkish programs in the U.S. It is critical for language teachers to understand the reasons behind this decrease so that precautions may be undertaken to reverse enrollment patterns and attract more students. This study and its accompanying survey of Turkish instructors aim to understand trends and variables that drive enrollment and program visibility and to identify possible strategies for improving enrollment, visibility, and retention in U.S. post-secondary Turkish programs.

Recent Turkish Enrollment Statistics

AATT has been collecting statistical data of student enrollment in Turkish Programs in U.S. post-secondary institutions since the 1980s. According to the AATT survey, there was a 53% erosion in Turkish undergraduate enrollment

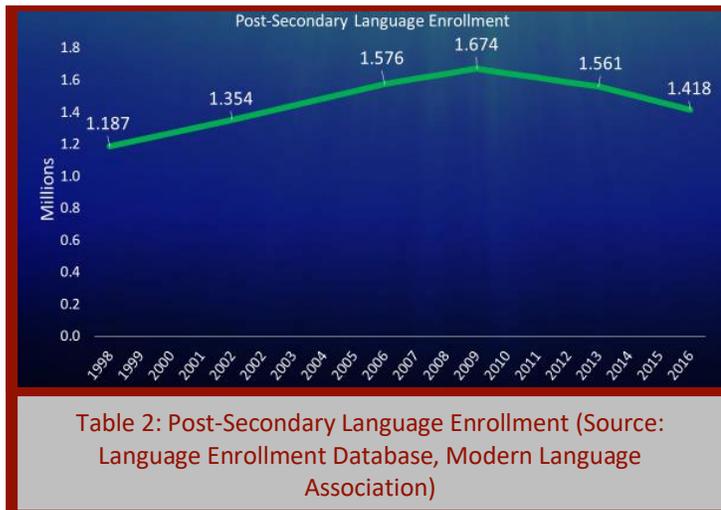
The Modern Language Association, which conducts a survey of enrollment for 325 languages, also reported a decline in enrollment in Turkish, although the decrease was lower (12% between MLA’s last two surveys in 2013 and 2016).

Despite the different magnitudes of the AATT and MLA survey results, which may be due to methodological approaches such as frequency of the surveys conducted (annually versus every three or four years), scopes of research (Turkic programs versus all languages), and the target survey respondents (Turkic program instructors versus university administrators), both survey results nevertheless confirm an alarming drop in enrollment numbers.

“Macro” Context of Declining Turkish Enrollment

What is the wider context of the decline in Turkish language enrollment? A number of factors have combined to create a challenging environment for Turkish programs. According to the National Center for Education Statistics at the Department of Education, overall student enrollment at US post-secondary undergraduate

institutions reached a historical high in 2010 but has declined every year since then, for a total contraction of 7.3% between 2010 and 2017. MLA reported that enrollment in post-secondary language programs declined 15.3% between 2009 and 2016, and LCTL enrollment numbers declined 11.6% in the same period. MLA also reported a decline in enrollment for Near-Eastern languages such as Arabic and Hebrew.



There have also been challenges in the funding situation for foreign language studies. The Department of Education’s Title VI International Education Funding was cut 41% from \$110.5 million in 2010 to \$65.1 million in 2018. Fulbright-Hays funding was cut 54% from \$15.6 million in 2010 to \$7.1 million in 2018. The applicable Language Resource Center (LRC) for Turkish, the National Middle East LRC at Brigham Young University, lost its Title IV funding and was forced to shut down. In 2015 the Institute of Turkish Studies, which was founded over 35 years ago to promote Turkish language programs at U.S. institutions, suffered the termination of one of its primary funding sources, a Turkish government-initiated trust, and announced its impending closure as of 2020.

The relationship between decreased funding and program enrollment and visibility is the chicken and the egg dilemma of foreign language

programs. It is difficult to determine which causes which: is low enrollment the cause of university and government disinvestment from language programs? Or is program disinvestment the cause of low enrollment? Regardless of the original impetus, language programs risk facing a potentially infinite downward spiral of reduced funding and enrollment. Reduction or closure of language programs is often considered to be “low-hanging fruit” by cash-strapped universities. Among other languages, LCTLs such as Turkish are generally the most vulnerable because of a perception of low student demand and interest.

Structural Challenges in the US Educational System That May Inhibit LCTL Programs

According to survey respondents, another factor which might negatively impact Turkish programs at the post-secondary level is the structure of foreign language teaching in U.S. secondary schools. The American university system seemingly encourages students to pursue the study of languages taught in high school and usually offers no incentive to students willing to risk learning languages with which they have no experience.

Survey respondents observed that when students seek to study a different language than they studied in high school, Turkish lacked the allure of “prestige” languages such as French or German, and world languages are increasingly devalued in the American educational context. Moreover, American high school students are rarely, if ever, exposed to Ottoman or Turkish history and their knowledge of Turkey is consequently limited or nonexistent, making it less likely that they would exhibit an interest in studying the Turkish language.

Although the survey did not reveal a clear correlation between enrollment and specific events, it is possible that geopolitical and economic considerations may impact Turkish enrollments. Geopolitical and economic phenomena which might theoretically have a

positive impact on enrollment are the critical language status of Turkish at the U.S. Department of State and in the Intelligence Community, as well as the currently favorable exchange rate of the Turkish lira which makes it an attractive destination for visitors. On the other hand, Turkish enrollment could be negatively impacted by other recent geopolitical and economic challenges which may have served to frighten students as well as parents, such as the coup attempt, terror attacks, Turkey-US reciprocal visa restrictions, and State Department travel warnings, as well as regional instability and the Syrian Civil War.

Survey Methodology

A survey was conducted and sent to 40 Turkish instructors, of which 18 responded.

There were 29 questions in the survey which consisted of open-ended, multiple-choice, Likert scale, and rating questions. An open-ended comment section was added at the end of each question to elicit any additional comment by the participants. In a brief demographics section, respondents indicated their years of teaching experience and how many years they had worked at their current institution. Participants were not asked to identify themselves or their institutions.

The survey questions elicited information on participants' thoughts about current enrollment trends, internal factors (i.e. within the university) and external factors affecting enrollment numbers, the primary challenges facing the programs, students' motivation for learning Turkish, incentives to increase student motivation, and strategies to improve Turkish programs' enrollment and visibility.

Participants: Respondents to the survey had extensive teaching experience and low turnover. A total of 94% of respondents have been teaching Turkish for 5 or more years, and 83% have been at their current institution for 5 or more years. Most respondents (72%) were the only instructors in their program, although 28% reported one other

Turkish instructor colleague. The class sizes of the respondents ranged from 0 to 35, with an average of 11.

Levels and Types of Turkish Classes Offered: 44% of respondents' institutions offered more than just Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced levels. This included Ottoman, accelerated, and intensive courses. All of the respondents' institutions offered Elementary I and II, and almost 90% offered Intermediate I and II, while almost 70% offer Advanced I, and 50% offer Advance II Turkish classes.

61% of respondents' institutions offered English-language Turkish culture/seminar classes such as Contemporary Turkey, Istanbul, Culture & Society, Media & Pop Culture, Islam & Islamism in Modern Turkey, Turkish Literature & Film, Orhan Pamuk, Turkish Cuisine, etc.

Current Enrollment Trends: Respondents were asked to rate the current enrollment trends in the Turkish programs. The responses were balanced: 39% of the respondents reported decreasing enrollment, 39% reported steady enrollment, and 22% reported increasing enrollment.

Student Associations & Extracurricular Activities: 100% of respondents' institutions had Turkish student associations or Turkish cultural associations, and 88% of respondents' Turkish language departments organized extracurricular activities, which almost always included Turkish tea or food events. Other reported extracurricular activities in descending order of frequency were speaking clubs, cultural workshops, film screenings, conferences, and panels. The perceived campus-wide interest level for these extracurricular events was 38% low, 50% moderate, and 12% high.

Primary Challenges Faced by Turkish Programs: Participants were given six tasks associated with Turkish programs and asked to determine how challenging those tasks were on a Likert scale. Attracting students to the Turkish program (89%) and ensuring the campus-wide visibility of the

Turkish program (61%) were identified by a majority of respondents as “significant” or “moderate” challenges in Turkish programs. Meanwhile, a minority of respondents believed that retaining students in the Turkish program (39%), preparing Turkish courses (curriculum and syllabi) (33%), preparing extracurricular activities (22%), and teaching Turkish courses (5%) were “significant” or “moderate” challenges.

External Geopolitical and Economic Factors’

Impact on Enrollment: Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the following statement: “Enrollment in Turkish language courses is driven by factors beyond my control (e.g. politics, economics, security)?” All respondents agreed with the statement, including 33% expressing “strong” agreement.

Respondents were asked to express agreement or disagreement with six hypothetical statements regarding the impact of external geopolitical and economic factors. The majority of respondents agreed with two of the six statements: 65% of the respondents agreed that “When there is widespread Turkish cultural success (such as internationally popular films, novels, etc.), student numbers increase,” and 53% agreed with that “When there is positive news about Turkey, student numbers increase.” The remaining four statements elicited agreement from a minority of respondents: 47% agreed that “When there is negative news about Turkey, student numbers decrease,” 35% agreed that “When there is regional instability in the Near East/Middle East, student numbers decrease,” 35% agreed that “When the economy in Turkey is strong, student enrollment numbers increase,” and only 18% agreed that “When the US dollar is strong in Turkey (i.e. when Turkey becomes cheap for foreigners), student numbers increase.”

Internal Factors Impacting Enrollment (i.e. within the University): Among the four hypothetical statements presented, a majority of respondents agreed with each: 89% of the respondents agreed

that “The university’s support of the Turkish program affects enrollment,” 89% agreed that “The availability of related classes (Middle Eastern/Near Eastern Studies, Middle East/Near Eastern political science classes, etc.) affects enrollment,” 83% agreed that “Students’ perception of workload or course difficulty affects enrollment,” and 67% agreed that “The quality of the Turkish instructor and/or course evaluations affect enrollment.”

In the comment section of this question, respondents identified internal strategies that had succeeded in improving enrollment. They included course advertisements and attracting more heritage students. The internal factors that resulted in decreased enrollment were disadvantageous course scheduling (e.g. more weekly classes than other languages and/or morning classes) and the cancellation of their university’s study abroad program in Turkey.

Students’ Motivations for Learning Turkish:

Respondents were asked to identify students’ perceived motivations for enrolling in the Turkish program. On a scale of importance, 89% of the respondents reported that “complementary educational purposes e.g. to further studies in linguistics, history, comparative literature, archaeology, religion, etc.” was fairly or very important as a student motivation for learning Turkish. Half (50%) said that “job opportunities, increase job prospects, or other economic reasons” were fairly or very important for students. Half (50%) also said that “job opportunities or job prospects in a critical-language field (e.g. State Department, Intelligence Community, military)” were fairly or very important, and 50% reported that “communicating with family” was fairly or slightly important as a student motivation.

The rest of the potential motivational factors presented in the survey were reported by instructors to be less important: to learn Turkish culture (39%), to communicate with new or prospective romantic partners (39%), to

communicate with friends (33%), to be able to learn multiple languages (22%), for travel purposes (22%), for fun (17%), to be able to watch Turkish soap operas (11%), or as a challenge (0%).

Incentives to Increase Students’ Motivation: In an open-ended question, respondents were asked what incentives increase student motivation in an open-ended question, and the following answers were given: scholarships/grants/fellowships, study abroad opportunities in Turkey, offering major/minor degrees, and ensuring that students are invested in studying Turkish by identifying opportunities in which success in Turkish may be a prerequisite to students’ success in other fields or projects.

Instructor concerns about the continued (future) existence of the Turkish program at their institutions: 78% of the respondents evaluated the continued (future) existence of the Turkish programs at their institution either somewhat of a concern or a serious concern. Respondents indicated that this concern was due to declining enrollment, low visibility, challenges in retaining students, decreased funding, and the lack of major/minor program.

among all faculty and staff 2.5 stars. Low visibility of the program is a concern in most institutions.

Conclusion: Based on the results of the survey as well as a literature review, strategies that could possibly improve the enrollment levels, visibility, and retention rates of U.S. post-secondary Turkish programs may include:

- Seek to attract heritage learners
- Leverage cultural success, following the example of the “Korean Wave” (Korean enrollment levels have increased in recent years)
- Publicize examples of successful students and overcome the perception that students don’t become adequately proficient
- At the student level, emphasize the employment and research value of Turkish
- At the university level, develop interdisciplinary courses and promote interdepartmental cooperation
- At the national level, emphasize the critical national security and economic importance of producing enough proficient Turkish speakers
- Increase the stability of programs by employing full-time faculty who can foster long-term program development
- Seek to expand and leverage governmental, corporate, and philanthropic funding opportunities for the improvement and expansion of Turkish programs



Visibility of Turkish Programs: On a scale of 1 to 4 stars, respondents were asked to rate the visibility of the Turkish programs among all students, as well as among all faculty and staff at their institutions. The respondents rated visibility among the students at 2 stars, and visibility



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