

Turkish Studies Symposium 2020

TEACHING THE CHALLENGES OF MODERN TURKEY

13th Annual Turkish Studies Symposium

June 24, 2020

3:00-5:00 P.M. CDT



Zoom link: <https://tinyurl.com/ycjezzuh>

Meeting ID: 995 8546 5574

Password: TSS2020

Organized by:

European Union Center at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Co-sponsored by:

Center for Global Studies; Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies; Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; Department of History; Department of Linguistics; Department of Sociology; and Summer Institute for Languages of the Muslim World

SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

3:00-3:10 P.M. — Welcoming remarks

3:10-3:30 P.M. — “Turkey, Iran, and the Politics of Comparatism”

Perin E. Gürel, Associate Professor of American Studies and Gender Studies, University of Notre Dame

3:30-3:40 P.M. — Q&A

3:40-4:00 P.M. — “The State of Less Commonly Taught Language Programs in the U.S.”

Ercan Balci, Lecturer of Turkish, Boston University

4:00-4:10 P.M. — Q&A

4:10-4:30 P.M. — “Heritage Language Programs: Establishing Pedagogical Policies and Practices for Successful Programs in the U.S.”

Ozge Evcen, PhD Candidate in Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

4:30-4:40 P.M. — Q&A

4:40-4:55 P.M. — Cultural Activity: The History and Preparation of Ayran

Ozge Evcen, PhD Candidate in Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

4:55-5:00 P.M. — Closing remarks

ABSTRACTS

Perin E. Gürel, Associate Professor of American Studies and Gender Studies, University of Notre Dame

“Turkey, Iran, and the Politics of Comparatism”

This presentation will examine how, at least since the early Cold War, both U.S.-based and Turkish opinion-leaders have sought to explain Turkey through comparisons with other Muslim-majority countries, most notably Iran. Such comparativism has often operated to both obscure and justify international hierarchies and connections, with deep policy implications. Noting comparative methodology's disturbing heritage in the service of racism and imperialism, Prof. Gürel will investigate how we can compare more ethically with attention to the nexus of knowledge and power.

Ercan Balci, Lecturer of Turkish, Boston University

“The State of Less Commonly Taught Language Programs in the U.S.”

This talk will address the state of Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) in the U.S., discussing the need for exposing K-12 students to these languages in collaboration with regional universities either in after-school programs or in summer language camps with accommodations for younger participants. Since it might be too costly for individual schools or school districts to have sufficient funds to provide instruction for a small group of students, it is possible to offer language instruction to the learners of languages other than Spanish and French through collaboration with other K-16 institutions and local communities. Based on the recent research on Second Language Acquisition, Dr. Balci will also touch upon what the college language programs aspire to do in language classes. The main goal of college language instructors is to help students achieve Advanced level proficiency in all four skills and eventually take content courses in the target language. Dr. Balci strongly believes that this can only be accomplished if students have an opportunity to take some formal LCTL courses during middle and high school so that may be placed in second year language courses when they start college.

Ozge Evcen, PhD Candidate, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, UIUC

“Heritage Language Programs: Establishing Pedagogical Policies and Practices for Successful Programs in the U.S.”

This research study discusses the importance of heritage language programs and the micro-level policies that support them, focusing on a case study of a program in the USA to make this argument. The value of recognizing students' heritage languages, cultures, and identities in mainstream schools is also argued in terms of the correlation between heritage language education pedagogies and students' characteristics. By mentioning an overview of the current status of heritage language programs, the case study of Turkish heritage speakers is shared. The participants here attend a Complementary School on Sundays for their literacy skills and cultural exposure to their Heritage language. Not only the challenges of the program but also

the strengths of the program are mentioned to display how language policies are influencing the pedagogical practices in heritage language classrooms. Multiple factors are discussed as are the positive effects of the students' identities and their literacy skills and the negative effects after leaving the program. The research study concludes with the considerations for the designing curriculums for Heritage Language Learners. This study provides various suggestions for reform in an effort to foster students' learning and high-quality Turkish heritage language contexts. The ideas coming from the case study provide a basis for not only the guiding principles and approaches to use to create the base of the curriculum but also how to incorporate a mix of strategies, activities, skills to create a research-based Heritage Language Education curriculum to support and provide the best type of instruction for Turkish Heritage Language Learners.

"Cultural Activity: The History and Preparation of Ayran"

This activity will involve not only a recipe for a refreshing drink that will benefit your health but also a short historical journey in time. We will spend five minutes preparing our drink. (Be ready with two cups of plain yoghurt, one cup of cold water, and salt.) Then, the symposium audience will have a chance to learn why and how this drink is a popular one in Turkey while enjoying their drinks on the other side of their screens. There will be a short Q&A at the end. This activity is designed with the participants of the EU Center's concurrent K-14 Summer Curriculum Workshop in mind, but all audience members are welcome to participate.

PRESENTER BIOS

Perin E. Gürel, Associate Professor of American Studies and Gender Studies, University of Notre Dame

Perin E. Gürel is associate professor of American Studies and Gender Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Her research focuses on the cultural aspects of U.S.-Middle East relations, with focus on modern Turkey and Iran. She is the author of *The Limits of Westernization: A Cultural History of America in Turkey* (New York: Columbia UP, 2017). Her work has also appeared in *American Quarterly*, the *Journal of Transnational American Studies*, *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, *Journal of Turkish Literature*, *American Literary History*, and elsewhere. She is currently working on her second book project, tentatively titled "America's Wife, America's Concubine: Turkey, Iran, and the Bounds of Middle Eastern Solidarity," which examines the influence of U.S.-led political discourses on Turkey-Iran relations, from the Cold War to the War on Terror.

Ercan Balci, Lecturer of Turkish, Boston University

Ercan Balci is currently Lecturer of Turkish at Boston University. He has been teaching English as a Second language and Turkish as a Foreign Language for more than 20 years since he received his MA and PhD in Linguistics from Boğaziçi University. He recently served as the Director of Center for Language Studies at Brown University. During the same time, he also served as the Executive Secretary of the American Association of Teachers of Turkic. Prior to Brown, Ercan was the Director of the Less Commonly Taught Languages program and Senior Lecturer of Turkish in the Department of Linguistics at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign between 2006 and 2014. He is a co-founder of the Center for Language Instruction and Coordination at Illinois, which came to fruition after he left. In addition to developing and teaching Turkish language courses at all levels, Ercan has created and taught Turkish culture classes, pedagogy courses and led short-term Global Studies study abroad trips to Istanbul. Some of his research interests are Turkish Linguistics, Phonology, Second Language Acquisition, Foreign Language Curriculum Development and Heritage Language Learners.

Ozge Evcen, PhD Candidate in Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Ozge Evcen is a doctoral candidate in the Curriculum and Instruction department with a specialization in Language and Literacy. She is originally from Turkey and moved to the U.S. in 2010. Her research focuses on heritage language speakers with a particular emphasis on children's language and culture, curriculum design, family involvement, heritage language acquisition, and bilingualism. She has worked as a Turkish Language Instructor for Turkish Studies Programs for all levels in the Linguistics department at UIUC. She has served as a TA for elementary education program courses where she had many opportunities to work with pre-

service teachers. Prior to entering the program, Ozge worked for nine years in Teaching English as a Second Language field as a college level language instructor, advisor, curriculum specialist, and coordinator in various institutions including elementary school, a public university and a private university in Turkey. As an educator, her mission is to cultivate critically conscious educators who rewrite the narrative on how heritage languages can be a language of power in the language arts classroom, as well as unveil how institutions of schooling often operate to reinforce historical linguistic oppression among the children of immigrants.