



1973

CUKUROVA
UNIVERSITY
School of Foreign Languages

CU SoFL
MAGAZINE ONLINE



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A Word from the Director

Dear Reader,

This issue of our newsletter, *Food and Nutrition*, explores why what we eat and drink is crucial to our body and psyche. Since the time we stepped onto the face of this Earth, we have primarily been concerned with sustaining our existence, like other species, by being in constant search for food and discovering ways to plant, harvest, forage, and consume. The urge that began millions of years ago is embedded in our DNA and is certain to remain with us for many more millions of years. Years back, when technology was either obsolete or nascent, humans trusted their guts, based on their ancestors' experiences, about what to eat and drink and what to abstain from. Yet, with the advancement of 'science' and the creation of consumer-oriented culture, humans found themselves in the crosshairs of the artificial food industry, with little or no choice regarding what is truly conducive to their physical and mental well-being. The industry had a so-called plausible rationale: to meet the demand felt by the ever-multiplying world population. After all, you either starve or succumb to what is dictated to you by the food conglomerates. Sadly, the result is tragic: millions suffering from nutrition-related diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular illnesses, and mental and psychological breakdowns, and a few reaping the benefits from the miseries of the millions. This is why, instead of falling into this trap, it is essential to rely on traditional, minimally tampered-with products and to observe and contribute to sustainable farming in a sustainable environment. The adage "eat well, sleep well, and you shall almost certainly rise well" has never been so relevant... Happy reads...

Prof. Dr. Yonca ÖZKAN

Director

Institutional News in Brief

Collaboration Meeting: Strengthening Communication with Our Stakeholders

6 May 2026



As CU SOFL, we came together with our stakeholders from faculty departments for a collaborative meeting and exchange of ideas. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity to strengthen communication, share feedback, and support continuous improvement through cooperation.

Dr Canan YOĞURT as Invited Speaker at “90 Years of Turkish Indology: Historical Foundations and Contemporary Dynamics in Türkiye–India Relations”

9 May 2026



**ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE
IN ACTION**

IN COLLABORATION WITH
THE EMBASSY OF INDIA,
ANKARA

**INVITED SPEAKER AT
ANKARA UNIVERSITY
Dr. Canan Yoğurt
Panel on Turkish
Indology and
Türkiye–India
Relations
8 May 2026**

Dr. Canan YOĞURT participated as an invited speaker in the panel titled “90 Years of Turkish Indology: Historical Foundations and Contemporary Dynamics in Türkiye–India Relations”, held on 8 May 2026 at Ankara University Faculty of Languages, History and Geography. The panel was organized in cooperation with the Embassy of India, Ankara, Ankara University Department of Indology, and Ankara University Asia-Pacific Research Center (APAM). Such academic engagements, in line with the mission and vision of our School of Foreign Languages, make a significant contribution to strengthening intercultural communication. We congratulate Dr. Canan YOĞURT on her academic work and valuable contributions to the field, and wish her continued success.

Welcoming Students from Adana Melikşah Anatolian High School.

9 May 2026



We were pleased to welcome students from the foreign language track at Adana Melikşah Anatolian High School to CU SOFL. During their visit, we shared information about our preparatory program and exchanged ideas about language learning and university life.

CU SoFL at Unifest 2026

13 May 2026

YABANCI DİLLER YÜKSEKOKULU

CU SOFL AT UNIFEST 2026

13-15 MAY 2026

ORGANIZED BY ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH, CULTURE AND SPORTS DEPARTMENT

CU SOFL was proud to be part of Day 1, joining the energy, creativity, and excitement across campus. From student activities to unforgettable festival moments, it was a great day to connect, celebrate, and enjoy university life together.

Upcoming LfAC'26 Conference Supported by TÜBİTAK

14 May 2026

PROF. DR. ENCARNACIÓN GUTIÉRREZ RODRÍGUEZ

ASSOC. PROF. DR. DENİZ ORTAÇTEPE HART

PROF. DR. EMMANUEL KEULEERS

DR. SAMANTHA CURLE

2223-B
3RD
TIME


**LfAC'26 RECEIVES
TÜBİTAK SUPPORT**

A proud milestone for
LfAC'26 and CU SoFL.

TÜBİTAK

We are proud to announce that LfAC'26 has received TÜBİTAK 2223-B support for the third time. This achievement reflects the growing impact of the International Language for All Conference and our continued commitment to academic collaboration and innovation in language education. We thank everyone who contributed to this success and look forward to LfAC'26.

16 May 2026



CU SOFL Academic Quality
Coordination Board

SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

DEVELOPMENT SESSION
FRIDAY, MAY 15

FOCUS AREAS

- Quality Assurance
- Evidence Review
- Documentation
- Accreditation Prep

Academic staff collaborated on assigned report sections as part of the self-evaluation and accreditation process.



A Self-Evaluation Report Development Session was organized by the CU SOFL Academic Quality Coordination Board as part of our ongoing accreditation efforts. Academic staff collaborated on assigned report sections, evidence review, and documentation processes to support continuous improvement and institutional development.

Seminar Titled “AI in ELT” by Amir Esmkhani

20 May 2026



As part of the 2025–2026 PDU Events, we hosted the seminar “AI in ELT” presented by Amir Esmkhani. The seminar focused on the evolving role of artificial intelligence in English language teaching and highlighted practical AI-supported approaches that enhance assessment, personalization, and student engagement. Various AI tools, including EssayGrader.ai and GradingPal.com, were introduced and discussed in relation to contemporary ELT practices.

2026 Spring Term SIG Presentations

3 June 2026



FROM IDEAS TO IMPACT

2025-2026 SPRING SIG PRESENTATIONS



SHARING WHAT WE LEARNED
TOGETHER

The Spring Term SIG Presentations brought together colleagues from across CU SOFL to share projects, initiatives, and professional learning experiences developed throughout the semester. Representatives from the Professional Reading, ESP, EdTech, and Research & Publication Groups presented their work, creating a valuable space for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and institutional learning. Thank you to all presenters and participants for contributing to a culture of continuous professional growth.

CU SoFL Attended QUAAS 2026

5-6 June 2026



Our Curriculum Development Unit members, Tuğba Ander and Nazlı Dirim, attended QUAAS 2026 on 5-6 June 2026 at the School of Foreign Languages, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University. This dynamic two-day conference brought together university representatives from across Türkiye to address quality assurance and accreditation in foreign language education. A huge thank you to Conference Chair Mehtap Çiçen, all the inspiring speakers and trainers: Dr. Didem Mutçalıoğlu (Association for Language Education, Evaluation and Accreditation-DEDAK), Ayşen Güven (Director Education at British Council), Prof. Dr. Evrim Üstünlüoğlu (Izmir University of Economics, CELTA trainer, Accreditation Reviewer), İlkay Bülbül DEDAK (Accreditation Coordinator), and Bahar Gün (Founding President of TESOL and DEDAK Board member), and Oxford University Press, for organizing such an impactful and collaborative event.

Welcoming Students from Adana Kız Lisesi

17 June 2026



CONNECTING WITH FUTURE LEARNERS

VISIT & ORIENTATION SESSION WITH ADANA KIZ LISESI

Introducing higher education opportunities, language learning pathways, and student life at Cukurova University.

CU SoFL was pleased to welcome students from the language-track classes of Adana Kız Lisesi for an orientation and motivation session. The visit was honored by the participation of Ms. Fatma Yılmaz, Principal of AKL and Ms. Sema Köse, Vice Principal. Representatives from the CU SoFL administration, Curriculum Development Unit, Speaking Club, and Discussion & Debate Club also took part in the meeting. During the session, students were introduced to Çukurova University and CU SoFL, while learning about academic opportunities, student life, and extracurricular activities. The event also aimed to encourage and inspire students as they plan their future educational journeys. We thank our guests for their visit and look forward to future collaborations.

End-of-Year Evaluation Meeting

19 June 2026



The End-of-Year Evaluation Meeting of the Compulsory Foreign Language Courses Unit was held under the coordination of Inst. Neşe Sonçağ. The meeting brought together instructors to reflect on the 2025–2026 academic year, evaluate achievements and challenges, and discuss future goals for continuous improvement. We sincerely thank all our colleagues serving both on and off campus for their dedication and valuable contributions throughout the year. Through their work, the Unit continues to support students from a wide range of academic disciplines and contributes to the development of foreign language education across the university.

**EXCHANGING
GOOD PRACTICES**

**QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

CU SoFL x University of Granada

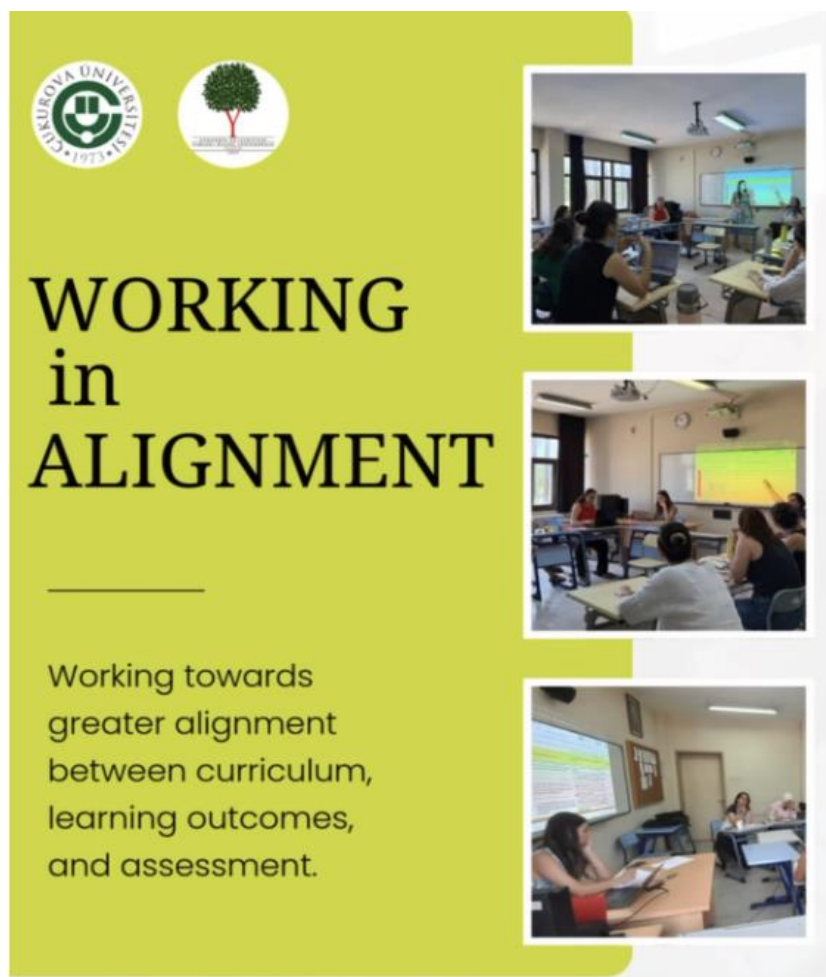
KEY DISCUSSION AREAS

- Quality Assurance Systems
- Stakeholder Feedback
- Evidence-Based Evaluation
- Student Satisfaction
- Continuous Improvement

As part of our ongoing commitment to quality assurance and institutional development, CU SOFL was represented by CU SoFL instructor and PhD Candidate Tolunay Ekiz in a meeting with Ms. Beatriz Escarpenter Suárez, Quality Management Officer at the University of Granada. The meeting provided a valuable platform for exchanging experiences and perspectives on quality assurance practices in higher education. Discussions focused on evidence-based evaluation, stakeholder feedback mechanisms, continuous improvement processes, and approaches to enhancing student satisfaction and engagement. This valuable exchange with Ms. Beatriz Escarpenter Suárez and the University of Granada highlighted the importance of international collaboration in fostering a culture of quality and continuous improvement in higher education.

CDU Meeting on Curriculum Alignment

26 June 2026



The graphic features a green background with two circular logos at the top left: the Cukurova University logo and a tree logo. The main text reads "WORKING in ALIGNMENT" in a large, bold, serif font. Below this, a horizontal line is followed by the text "Working towards greater alignment between curriculum, learning outcomes, and assessment." To the right of the text are three rectangular photographs showing a group of people in a meeting room, seated around tables and looking at a presentation screen.

The Curriculum Development Unit and the Testing Unit came together to review key aspects of curriculum alignment at CU SoFL. The meeting focused on the CU SoFL Curriculum Map, course objectives, Student Learning Outcomes and assessment practices, to ensure greater coherence across the curriculum. Through ongoing collaboration and review, both units continue to support a transparent, outcome-oriented, and student-centred approach to language education.

Book Collaboration June Revision and Review Sessions

26 June 2026



The graphic features the Cukurova University logo (1973) and the Faculty of Education logo. The main title is "BOOKLET COLLABORATION" in large blue letters, followed by "June Revision & Review Sessions" in black. Below the title is a large photo of a classroom with several people seated at desks, some looking at laptops. Two smaller inset photos show groups of people in a meeting setting. A list of key priorities is provided on the right, and a blue button at the bottom reads "June 2026 Sessions".

BOOKLET COLLABORATION
June Revision & Review Sessions

KEY PRIORITIES

- Reading Booklet
- Grammar Booklet
- Writing Booklet
- Cross-Review Process
- Student-Centred Design

June 2026 Sessions

Curriculum development is a collaborative process, and at CU SoFL, it continues well beyond the classroom. Throughout June, our Reading, Grammar, and Writing Booklet teams worked collaboratively to develop, review, and refine learning materials for the upcoming academic year. The process included curriculum planning, cross-review sessions, content standardisation, answer key preparation, APA compliance checks, and the integration of student-centred and interactive learning activities. These collaborative efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to producing high-quality, coherent, and engaging learning resources that support student success and continuous improvement.

Why CU SoFL MAGAZINE?

AIMS AND SCOPE

We wanted to create an online magazine for the School of Foreign Languages at Cukurova University to share experiences, to communicate, to network, and to find useful tips for teaching and learning English.

Aims:

- to create a digital environment for English learners and instructors at schools of foreign languages where they can share their knowledge, experiences, achievements, and useful tips for colleagues and students.
- to create an online magazine for talented prep year students who would like to develop their personal and academic skills.
- to invite both teachers and students for brainstorming about the challenges and achievements at preparatory schools.
- to engage more students into creative projects and organize contests, podcasts and vcasts, video materials.
- to publish the interviews/essays/reflections of English instructors and learners from different cities in Türkiye (also foreign instructors teaching in Türkiye)
- to create a dynamic community, new bridges and exchanges among schools of foreign languages, departments and institutions at Cukurova University and other universities to create a new community based on common personal and professional development goals.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- The submission should be a single-spaced Word document in standard 12-point font, Times New Roman. (Check the template)
- The submission should include your name, affiliation, the title of your work and brief biodata with a photo of the author/s. The biodata should not exceed 5-8 lines. (Check the template)
- The submission should be between 500 and 1500 words. It should not be longer than 2000 words.

Please Follow the Submission Guidelines!

- You can download the template from the following website: https://CU_SoFL.cu.edu.tr/cu/Dergi/Say%C4%B1lar
- We only accept your submissions online via e-mail. Please send all your written works to the following e-mail address: cusoflmagazine@gmail.com

Note!!!

We do not accept submissions from any other platforms.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

All submissions should be original and authentic content. Plagiarism software is used to analyze the similarity index. The similarity index should not be more than %25. Please share the sources of any content, photos, graphics, etc. that you benefited from. If not, your submission will not be accepted for publication.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Lect. Ezgi ÖKSÜZ: Managing Editor, Office 31
Lect. Dr. Cemile BUĞRA: Team Leader, Office 12
Lect. Dr. Neslihan GÜNDOĞDU: Copy Editor, Office 12
Lect. Dr. Ali AVŞAR: Copy Editor, Office 16

MESSAGES FROM CU SoFL MAGAZINE EDITORIAL TEAM

Dear students,

Our online magazine is open to you all. We accept all your creative written works such as news, memories, stories, letters, book or film reviews, poems, songs, scenarios, interview reports, etc. You are all welcome to send us any creative work of yours at any time during the academic year. You can even work collaboratively with your classmates or friends in other classes in our school. We would like to publish your creative works regularly.

We will have prompts or themes from time to time for the students who need some kind of inspiration but you can touch upon different kinds of issues that can grab the attention of your readers. You can also send your reaction letters to the written works for each issue. We will be happy to read and share them in the following issues.

Why should you write for this magazine?

- It can be an opportunity for you to improve your writing skills and share your creative skills and ideas with others on a platform.
- It can be an opportunity for you to realize your boundaries and maybe go beyond your limits through these writing experiences.
- It helps you explore yourself and discover your own voice as both a language learner and a writer.

Dear Colleagues/Contributors,

We are all looking forward to your contributions to our online magazine. It would be a great opportunity for our readers to benefit from your ideas and experiences. Let's create an inspiring space for each other!

Contact Info:

For all your inquiries, please send an email to cusoflmagazine@gmail.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We want to express our deepest appreciation for the efforts of everyone who contributed to our magazine.

The Theme of the Sixteenth Issue:

Food and Nutrition

Biodata



Damla TOPAL is a third-year Journalism student at Çukurova University. Her academic interests include digital communication, social media studies, and the impact of media on everyday life. She is particularly interested in researching how digital platforms influence human behavior, communication patterns, and everyday lifestyle choices.

WHEN FOOD BECOMES A TREND: THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON EATING HABITS

Today, social media is an important part of our daily lives. Millions of people spend hours on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. These platforms influence not only what we watch, wear, or buy, but also what we eat. Food has become one of the most popular types of content online, and social media plays a major role in shaping our eating habits.

In the past, food choices were mainly influenced by family traditions, local culture, and personal preferences. Today, social media has become one of the strongest influences on eating habits, especially among young people. Every week, a new food trend appears online. One day, everyone wants to try matcha, and the next day, a different dessert, drink, or restaurant becomes popular. Viral food videos attract millions of views and encourage people to try foods they may never have considered before.

As a university student, I often notice how social media affects the food choices of my friends and me. Sometimes we want to try a food not because we are hungry, but because we have seen it repeatedly online. Social media can turn ordinary foods into trends and create a culture of constant consumption. In many cases, people visit certain restaurants or buy specific products simply because they have become popular online.

At the same time, social media can have positive effects. Healthy recipes, nutrition advice, and cooking tutorials are now easier to access than ever before. Many people learn how to prepare balanced meals and become more aware of healthy eating habits. Social media can also introduce users to different cultures through food and encourage creativity in the kitchen.

However, not all information shared online is reliable. Some influencers promote unrealistic diets and quick weight-loss methods that may be harmful to health. Young people are particularly vulnerable to these messages and may follow unhealthy trends without understanding the risks. In addition, food companies often use influencers and attractive advertisements to promote highly processed foods and fast-food products. As a result, unhealthy eating habits can sometimes appear normal or even desirable.

Another important issue is the pressure to present a perfect lifestyle online. Many people share aesthetically pleasing meals and expensive dining experiences. This can create unrealistic expectations and encourage unnecessary spending on food. Instead of eating according to their needs, people may choose foods that look attractive on social media.

In conclusion, social media has transformed the way people think about food. It helps us discover new flavors, learn useful information, and connect with different cultures. However, it can also encourage unnecessary consumption and spread misleading nutrition advice. For this reason, young people should approach online content critically and make informed decisions about their eating habits. In a world where food trends change every day, the most important thing is not following what is popular online but making healthy, conscious choices for ourselves.

Damla TOPAL

Biodata



Sara HERRERA, English Teacher at YADYO, graduated in Language Sciences with a major in English Translation and Interpretation, from the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León in Monterrey México. Certificated by TEFL to Teach English as a Foreign Language with over 14 years of experience and currently studying her Master degree in English Language Teaching and a European Master in Language Teaching.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE: A Personal Reflection on Where Food, Culture, Faith and the Heart Come Together.

For the past four years, I have lived in Türkiye while carrying a deep longing for my home country, Mexico. Like many people who move abroad, I have missed my family, my traditions, my language, and, of course, my food. Food is often one of the strongest ties to our identity because it connects us to memories, relationships, and a sense of belonging. When I first moved to Türkiye, I expected to encounter a culture very different from my own. However, as the years passed, I discovered that despite the geographical distance between Mexico and Türkiye, both cultures share a remarkably similar understanding of food and its role in human relationships.

In my opinion, Mexico has one of the richest gastronomic traditions in the world. Yet what makes Mexican food special is not only its flavours, ingredients, or recipes. The true value of Mexican cuisine lies in what surrounds it. Food is deeply connected to family, community, and hospitality. In many Mexican homes, the kitchen is the heart of the house. It is where stories are told, memories are created, and relationships are strengthened. Preparing food is considered an act of love, and sharing a meal is a way of opening one's heart to others.

When family and friends gather around a table in Mexico, they do not simply share food. They share their lives. Conversations flow naturally between bites, laughter fills the room, and meals often last much longer than necessary because people enjoy being together. Food becomes a vehicle for connection, joy, and affection. Growing up in this culture shaped my understanding of what it means to welcome others and care for them.

After moving to Türkiye, I was surprised to discover many of these same values in Turkish culture. Although the languages, histories, and traditions of our countries are different, the importance placed on hospitality and shared meals feels remarkably familiar. In Türkiye, sitting around a table is also about much more than eating. It is about creating relationships, strengthening community, and making people feel welcome.

One of the places where I experienced this most clearly was through my church community. Every Sunday after the service, we spend time together in what Turks call sohbet. While the word can be translated as “conversation,” it represents something deeper than simply talking. Sohbet is a time of sharing, listening, connecting, and building relationships. Food is often an important part of this experience. Over the years, these gatherings have helped me feel accepted and cared for, even while living far from my homeland.

The Turkish language itself reflects the cultural importance of food and hospitality. One expression that has deeply impressed me is “Eline sağlık,” which literally means “health to your hands.” People say this to someone who has prepared food as a way of expressing appreciation. I find this phrase

beautiful because it recognizes not only the meal itself but also the effort, care, and generosity behind it. In Spanish, I cannot think of an equivalent expression that carries exactly the same meaning. The phrase acknowledges the value of serving others and honours the hands that prepared the food. It reflects a culture that understands cooking as an act of giving.

Another expression that has become meaningful to me is “Afiyet olsun.” Although it is often translated as “enjoy your meal,” it carries a richer cultural significance. It is a phrase that creates connection among those sharing a table. Whether spoken before, during, or after a meal, it reminds everyone present that eating is a shared experience rather than an individual activity. These simple expressions reveal how deeply food is woven into Turkish social life.

My experience has been especially shaped by living in Adana, a city in southeastern Türkiye. In my perspective, this region has some of the finest food in the country. One reason I feel connected to the local cuisine is that many of its flavours remind me of Mexico. The use of spices and spicy foods creates a sense of familiarity that I did not expect to find so far from home. Yet what impresses me even more than the flavours is the attitude behind the food. Meals are prepared with care, generosity, and pride. In every bite, I can sense the effort and affection that went into the cooking.

This experience reminds me of an important value in Mexican culture: food should be prepared with the heart. A good meal is not judged solely by its taste but also by the love and dedication invested in making it. In both cultures, food carries emotional meaning. It reflects the desire to care for others and make them feel valued.

Over these four years, I have learned that hospitality is not only something I receive; it is also something I can offer. Living in Türkiye has influenced the way I welcome others into my own home. I enjoy inviting friends to share meals with me, often preparing Mexican dishes using whatever ingredients I can find locally. Although it is sometimes difficult to reproduce recipes exactly, cooking allows me to share a part of my identity and introduce others to my culture.

At the same time, I have incorporated lessons from Turkish hospitality into my own approach to hosting. I have learned that sharing food means sharing more than recipes. It means sharing stories, experiences, and pieces of ourselves. Every time a guest sits at my table and says “Eline sağlık,” I feel encouraged and appreciated. Moments like these remind me that food has the power to build bridges between cultures.

This understanding extends beyond my home. I have also experienced the unifying power of food in my workplace. Small gatherings with colleagues, where we bring and share different dishes, have helped create meaningful relationships and a sense of community. These experiences have shown me that food can connect people regardless of differences in language, nationality, or background. Around a table, conversations begin naturally, friendships grow, and barriers start to disappear.

As I reflect on my years in Türkiye, I realize that the meaning of the table extends beyond culture and cuisine. For me, it also carries a spiritual significance rooted in my faith. One of the most powerful ideas my faith has taught me is that there is always a seat available at God's table. It is a place of welcome, acceptance, and belonging, where everyone is invited and no one is forgotten.

Over the past four years, I have encountered reflections of that idea in both Mexican and Turkish culture. In Mexico, hospitality is expressed through the warmth of a shared meal and the generosity of opening one's home. In Türkiye, I have experienced a similar spirit. There always seems to be room for one more guest, one more cup of tea, one more serving of food, and one more conversation. Even when the table appears full, people find a way to make space for another person.

One thing I have learned is that Turkish hospitality goes beyond making sure guests have enough food. Hosts often insist on offering more, not because people are still hungry, but because generosity is a way of expressing care. Their goal is not only to satisfy the stomach but also to nourish the heart. This reminds me of the values I grew up with in Mexico and of the message of welcome that is central to my faith.

These experiences have shaped the way I think about hospitality. I want my own table to reflect the same openness that I have received from others. I enjoy cooking not only because I love food, but because preparing a meal gives me an opportunity to bring people together. Every dish becomes an invitation to connect, to listen, to share stories, and to build relationships. In those moments, I am reminded that food nourishes much more than the body; it nourishes community.

Some of my favourite Turkish meals are not the ones I have found in restaurants. They are the meals prepared in the homes of people who welcomed me into their lives. They are the Adana Kebab of Selahatin abi, or the kısır of Berna abla, or even the Ispanak başı that Ülkü Hocam's mother-in-law prepared to share in the office. What makes those dishes memorable is not only their flavour but the people behind them. Through their cooking, I have come to know their generosity, their values, and their hearts. I hope that when others sit at my table and taste the food I prepare, they experience something similar. I hope they see not only a recipe, but an expression of care, gratitude, and friendship.

Ultimately, my experience in Türkiye has taught me that sharing a meal can break down barriers of language, nationality, culture, and even belief. Around a table, strangers become friends and differences become opportunities for understanding. Whether in Mexico or Türkiye, I have learned that the most meaningful gift we can offer one another is not simply food, but a place to belong.

That is why the image of a table remains so powerful to me. A table represents hospitality, community, and connection. It reminds me of my family in Mexico, of the friends who welcomed me in Türkiye, and of the faith that teaches me there is always room for one more person. No matter where I am in the world, I hope to keep a seat available at my table for anyone willing to share a meal, a conversation, and a piece of their heart. In the end, the greatest meals are not remembered because of what was served, but because of the people who gathered around the table together.

Lect. Sara HERRERA

Biodata



***Başak BOR** is a third-year Journalism student at Çukurova University. Her academic interests include studies examining the effects of social media on everyday life, gender and media, and the psychological problems caused by social media. She is particularly interested in researching socially constructed norms shaped by media and the role of media in perception management.*

HIRISE: MORE THAN A MEAL, A SYMBOL OF COMMUNITY

Hirise (also known as herise/hrisi in some regions and similar to a dish called keşkek) is one of the oldest traditional foods of Anatolia. It is prepared by slowly cooking wheat and meat together for many hours. Its origins can be traced back to the ancient culinary traditions of Mesopotamia and the Middle East. Over the centuries, it has been adopted by different communities throughout Anatolia and has become a symbol of sharing, solidarity, and abundance.

In Alevi culture, hirise is much more than just food. It has an important place in community life and is often prepared during Cem ceremonies, vow offerings (adak), Hızır (Khidr) commemorations, and other special gatherings. The dish is cooked in large cauldrons and shared with everyone as a lokma, a sacred offering of food. The preparation of hirise is also a community activity. People come together to clean the wheat, prepare the meat, set up the cauldrons, and stir the dish for hours. This collective effort represents cooperation, solidarity, and the spirit of working together. In Alevi belief and culture, such shared work strengthens social bonds and creates a sense of belonging. The long cooking process symbolizes patience, while the shared meal symbolizes unity and generosity.



Today, hirise continues to be an important cultural heritage. More than a traditional dish, it serves as a reminder of the values of sharing, community, and solidarity that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Başak BOR

Biodata

*My name is **Berfin KONAK**. I study Economics at Çukurova University. I enjoy learning new things and improving myself.*

SOCIAL MEDIA AND EATING HABITS

In today's world, social media become an important part of our daily lives. Millions of people use platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube every day. These applications are not only used for entertainment but also for sharing information about food and nutrition. Consequently, social media has a significant impact on people's eating habits, especially in young people.

On the one hand, social media provides easy access to information about healthy eating. Many nutritionists, dietitians, and fitness influencers share useful tips, healthy recipes, and meal plans. Through short videos and attractive posts, people can learn how to prepare balanced meal. For university students who often have busy schedules, some practical suggestions can be very helpful. In addition, social media can motivate people to exercise regularly and pay more attention to their health.

On the other hand, social media can also have negative effects on nutrition. Some influencers push unhealthy diets or advertise products without offering scientific evidence. Young people may follow these trends because they want to look like their favorite influencers. This can lead to unhealthy eating habits and nutritional problems. Although, food-related contents often include fast food, sugary drinks and high-calorie snacks. Seeing these foods constantly may increase people's desire to consume them. Another issue is that social media sometimes creates unrealistic body standards, which can make peoples feel dissatisfied with their appearance and choose extreme diets.

In conclusion, social media plays an important role in shaping eating habits today. While it offers opportunities to learn about healthy nutrition, it can also encourage unhealthy behaviors and unrealistic expectations.

Berfin KONAK

Biodata

Dilek Dilara DENİZ is a 3rd year Journalism student at the Faculty of Communication, Çukurova University. She has a passion for photography and writing. For her, the lens is not just a tool — it is her perspective. She believes there is a profound difference between looking and truly seeing, and it is this eye for detail that shapes both her writing and her photography.

KEŞİK

This piece looks through the eyes of my six or seven-year-old self. It belongs to those moments I could not yet put into words, but felt deeply. To the days when I lived the feeling of belonging in its purest form, before I even knew what it meant...

— Dilara

Belonging is not learned in a single moment. It is felt. And most of the time, you find it in the early light of a morning, somewhere between the dough resting beneath a damp cloth, waiting.

It all began the evening before. Hands would sink into the dough, knead it, shape it into rounds. They would be covered with a damp cloth — as if they too were put to rest, preparing themselves for the morning, for that moment.

Before the sun had even risen, at five in the morning, my mother would wake. No alarm was needed. She simply knew. And one by one, the others would arrive. Four or five of them would gather around the table, rolling the dough into thin, wide sheets with practiced hands. Two would stand by the fire, watching, turning, tending the bread as it cooked. There was a rhythm to it — quiet, unhurried, ancient.

There was no need to call anyone. Everyone knew — today was keşik day. It was not an invitation, nor a reminder. It was an agreement. An unspoken agreement, passed down through generations, written not in words but in the memory of hands.

At that age, you could not fully understand what was happening. But you could feel it. Those hands work the same dough. Those voices blending into one another in the early morning quiet. Someone humming, someone laughing softly, someone simply being there — and that being enough.

And then there was the smell. It is difficult to describe, but impossible to forget. The scent of bread on open fire does not just fill a room — it fills something deeper. It is the smell of belonging itself. Of being held by a place, by a people, by a moment that asks nothing of you except to be present.

The bread was not made from flour alone. It was made from coming together. Everyone brought their share — their labor, their time, their presence. And that presence stayed somewhere inside that dough.

In the end, everyone would sit down. Together. When you tore a piece from that bread, you were not simply filling your stomach. You felt that you belonged — to that moment, to those people, to that soil.

Perhaps belonging was exactly this — something that could not be explained, could not be taught. Something that could only be felt at five in the morning, with fire, with flour, with the people who showed up without being asked.

Dilek Dilara DENİZ

Biodata



Elifnur ÇİFTÇİ is a student in the English Preparatory Program at the School of Foreign Languages (SOFL), Çukurova University. She is majoring in Computer Engineering and is pleased to contribute to the university magazine with this article.

THE HIDDEN PRICE OF OUR PLATES: DIET, WATER, AND THE LUXURY OF TOMORROW

In today's rapidly changing world, our dietary habits have shifted towards monoculture and overconsumption. However, this lifestyle carries a hidden ecological cost that goes unnoticed. Behind this phenomenon, every modern meal brings along an invisible environmental footprint that threatens our global resources.

The most significant part of this footprint is definitely the water we use for food production. Every single food item requires thousands of gallons of water to reach our plates. A known example is certainly beef. In other words, too much water is used in order to produce just one kilogram of beef. Moreover, a rapidly growing global population triggers severe inevitable consequences; for instance, food shortages, scarcity, and climate crisis. In addition, what we consider normal today like coffee will become an unreachable luxury for us, owing to people's unsustainable eating habits.

Taking all these points into consideration, it is clear that unless humans take precautions, this situation will get worse and worse day by day. Thus, individuals should take responsibilities such as reshaping their food preferences as well as enhancing their awareness regarding the impacts of their dietary choices on nature for future generations.

Elifnur ÇİFTÇİ

Biodata

*My name is **Meryem Buse YILMAZ**. I am from Adana and I live in Adana. I am currently studying at the Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages and my department is Nutrition and Dietetics. In my free time, I enjoy learning new things, listening to music, and reading books. At the same time, I am interested in healthy living, nutrition, and helping people improve their lifestyles. I believe that healthy eating improves quality of life. Therefore, gaining more knowledge in this area is very valuable to me.*

THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN SUSTAINABILITY

The Mediterranean diet is a traditional way of eating in countries around the Mediterranean Sea, such as Türkiye, Greece, Italy, and Spain. It includes a lot of vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, olive oil, nuts, and herbs. Fish and seafood are eaten regularly, while red meat and processed foods are eaten less often. The Mediterranean diet is not only about food. It is also about lifestyle. Eating with family, being physically active, and choosing local foods are important parts of this diet.

Sustainability means meeting our needs today without harming the environment and without reducing the opportunities of future generations. In nutrition, sustainability means choosing foods that are healthy for people and also good for the planet. It includes using water and energy carefully, reducing food waste, protecting nature, and supporting local farmers. Eating seasonal foods and buying local products are also important for sustainable nutrition.

The Mediterranean diet is one of the best examples of sustainable nutrition. This diet is mostly based on plant foods such as vegetables, fruits, legumes, and whole grains. These foods need less water and energy to produce compared to animal-based foods. They also create less pollution. The Mediterranean diet also encourages people to eat local and seasonal foods. This reduces transportation and helps local producers. In this way, the Mediterranean diet protects both our health and the environment.

The Mediterranean diet has many health benefits. First, it helps protect heart health. Olive oil and fish contain healthy fats that can lower bad cholesterol. Second, it supports weight control. Foods rich in fibre help people feel full for a longer time. Third, it is good for brain health. Fish, walnuts, and olive oil may improve memory and concentration. It also strengthens the immune system. Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins and antioxidants that help the body fight diseases.

Finally, the Mediterranean diet is good for the environment because it includes more plant-based foods. In conclusion, the Mediterranean diet is a healthy and sustainable way of eating. It protects heart health, supports weight control, and strengthens the immune system. At the same time, it helps protect natural resources and reduces environmental damage. For these reasons, the Mediterranean diet is a great choice for both our health and the future of our planet.

Mediterranean diet pyramid: a lifestyle for today
guidelines for adult population



(Photo: Mediterranean Diet Foundation)

Our Teachers and Their Health Keys.

Several teachers from our school participated in an interview about healthy eating and nutrition. Based on their responses, healthy eating is generally defined as maintaining a balanced diet, consuming natural foods, and avoiding excessive processed food.

Most participants reported following healthy habits such as drinking enough water, eating balanced meals, and maintaining regular eating routines. Some teachers also mentioned controlling portion sizes and choosing lighter meals in the evening.

The interview revealed that all participants consider nutrition essential for a strong immune system. They believe that healthy eating helps prevent illness, improves energy levels, and supports overall health.

When discussing the most useful nutritional advice they had received, many participants emphasized that healthy eating is about balance rather than perfection. They stated that moderation and consistency are more important than strict dieting.

Furthermore, all interviewees agreed that healthy eating has a positive impact on mood. They reported feeling happier, more energetic, focused, and productive when they maintain healthy eating habits.

In conclusion, the interview findings show that healthy eating is strongly connected to physical health, mental well-being, and daily performance. The participants highlighted the importance of balance, moderation, and regular healthy habits for maintaining a healthy lifestyle

Meryem Buse YILMAZ

Biodata



Özgün GÖKSEN ERCAN - is a US educated, Netherlands based Nutrition Consultant. Born in Ankara in 1986, she built a career in banking before pursuing her passion for nutrition. She earned degrees and certificates in Nutrition Science in California, and gained experience working at various institutions. Özgün has run her nutrition consulting company, Eat-Right since 2021.

A NUTRITIONIST WHO IS ACTUALLY “AGAINST” DIETS

Let me tell you a secret.

As a nutrition consultant, I have been against strict diets since the very first day I founded my company! Sounds ironic, right? People usually expect nutritionists to hand out endless lists of forbidden foods and unrealistic meal plans. But honestly, I have never believed that happiness comes from saying goodbye to pizza forever or feeling guilty after eating dessert.

My philosophy has always been simple:

- ✓ Eat consciously
- ✓ Learn portion control
- ✓ Enjoy everything in moderation
- ✓ And most importantly — don't disconnect from life while trying to be “healthy”

Because real life is not lived inside perfect meal plans.

Sometimes life gets stressful. University exams happen. Work becomes overwhelming. Sleep schedules collapse. People move abroad, experience heartbreaks, feel lonely, lose motivation, or simply become too busy to cook healthy meals every single day. And during those moments, eating habits naturally change.

That is completely normal.

What matters is not being perfect all the time. What matters is learning how to come back to balance without punishing yourself.

Unfortunately, social media constantly pushes extreme trends:

“No carbs.”

“No sugar.”

“Detox teas.”

“Summer body diets.”

But the truth is, nutrition is deeply **personal**. What works perfectly for one person may be completely unsustainable for another. Everybody, lifestyle, culture, routine, and emotional relationship with food is different.

That is why I strongly believe nutrition should never feel like a prison.

You should still be able to:

- Go out with your friends
- Travel and try local food
- Eat birthday cake without guilt
- Enjoy your morning coffee
- And create healthy habits that actually fit your real life

For me, healthy eating is not about restriction. It is about balance, sustainability, and building a lifestyle you can maintain for years — not just for two weeks! And honestly? Sometimes the healthiest thing you can do is stop chasing perfection. Food is not the enemy. It is fuel, culture, comfort, memories, and connection. Learning how to enjoy it mindfully without extremes is probably one of the most valuable things we can do for ourselves. Because at the end of the day, a healthy life should still feel like a life worth enjoying.

Özgün GÖKSEN ERCAN
Founder of Eat-Right
Eindhoven, Netherlands

Biodata

Dr. S. Alper ZEREYALP graduated from the ELT department at Çukurova University in 2003. He has been working as a lecturer at the School of Foreign Languages, Çukurova University, and has held various administrative positions at the school for nearly a decade. He holds an MA in English Language Teaching and a PhD in Educational Sciences with a focus on educational management. He particularly enjoys engaging in interdisciplinary and collaborative studies.

BEYOND BEING HUNGRY: FOOD AS CARE, ORDER, AND CONNECTION

Food and nutrition are essential components of human life. The common saying, "you are what you eat," is not a simple biological observation. The way we eat and our diet extend far beyond the mere provision of biological fuel; how we eat is an indicator of the respect we attribute to our bodies and our environment. Our dietary habits shape not only our physical health but also the quality of our lives and our inner self-perception.

Our dietary patterns act as a mirror reflecting the value we place on our own lives. Having a consistent eating schedule and consciously selecting nutritious foods is fundamentally an act of treating one's body as a "sacred temple." When an individual really cares for what is on their plate, they also care for their own existence. Conversely, careless eating habits often reflect a lack of order in other aspects of life. By practicing discipline at the dining table, individuals enhance their self-esteem and cultivate a sense of structure that positively influences their overall well-being.

Nutrition is not only about what we consume but also how we consume it. Sticking to regular meal times while creating a calm environment may help balance the biological clock and support mental clarity. In contrast, rushing through meals, eating fast food or eating without mindfulness can be seen as a disregard for one's own quality of life. Dedicating adequate time to a meal is a form of self-care and self-respect. A regular eating rhythm reduces stress levels and fosters a more focused mindset and allows for a more orderly and planned daily life.

By nature, eating can be seen as a shared experience. Whether enjoyed with family or friends, a meal serves to strengthen emotional bonds rather than just satisfy one's hunger. Our food culture reflects the values, hospitality, and affection of our society. Gathering around a table is one of the most effective antidotes to loneliness and mental health. This social interaction transforms the act of eating from a biological necessity into a meaningful ritual, bridging the gap between a physiological need and genuine human connection.

In summary, eating reflects our commitment to our bodies, our time, and our loved ones. Every choice we make when we eat is a promise we make to ourselves. Showing care for our nutrition is a testament to the respect we hold for our inner selves. When we prepare a healthy, organized, and shared table, we do more than complete a biological process; we engage in the art of living, one that makes our lives more meaningful.

Lect. Dr. S. Alper ZEREYALP



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