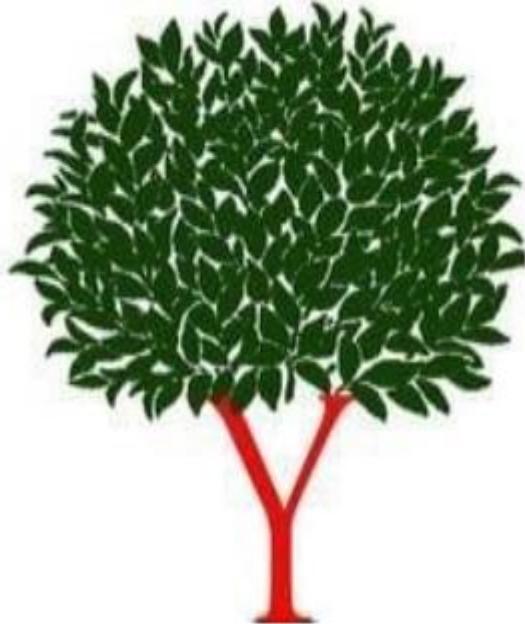




**CU SoFL**  
MAGAZINE ONLINE



NO: 14  
JANUARY 2026

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## A Word from the Director

Dear Reader,

This issue of our newsletter, Sports, is so familiar a topic that it is at the heart of every activity we are involved in. Movement and locomotion exercises are designed to keep the body and mind active and resilient. We play sports for various reasons, such as health, pleasure, or professional purposes. Whatever the reasons, the activity resonates with people from young children to older adults. Local and global competitions are held almost daily, and people of all ages fill the venues to cheer and support their favorite competitors. The joy and relaxation these events bring to the lives of millions is immeasurable. Imagine a day with no sun to wash over you, what can be a better alternative to energize and lift you, and shore your spirits higher and higher! No doubt, an hour of a brisk walk out in the open, an exercise with press-ups, sit-ups, and the like at home, should definitely do you good! If nothing at all, a couple of stretches! Sports, whether played or watched, are undeniably wholesome for the body, spirits, and mind... As the great Atatürk says, a healthy mind can only be achieved through a healthy body...

Prof. Dr. Yonca ÖZKAN

Director

## Institutional News in Brief

### CU SoFL Event as Part of the EU-Funded Project “Green Tales in Action”

3 October 2025



Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages organized a local event on 3 October 2025 at Yüreğir Kazım Karabekir Secondary School as part of the EU-funded Green Tales Project. The event brought together students, teachers, and parents and featured student-written stories, animated films, and diaporama presentations produced within the scope of the project. Coordinated by Dr. Figen Yılmaz and Dr. Eda Kahyalar, the event highlighted how children can develop environmental awareness through art and digital tools.

## **CU SoFL Welcomed the Principal and Vice Principal of İsmail Safa Özler Anatolian High School**

9 October 2025



The Principal of İsmail Safa Özler Anatolian High School, Mr. İsmail Bayar, and Vice Principal, Mr. Cengiz Soy, paid a visit to the School of Foreign Languages. A Cooperation Protocol for Education was signed between İsmail Safa Özler Anatolian High School and the School of Foreign Languages. The school will continue to strengthen its ties with the community and work for social benefit.

## TÜBİTAK 2223-B Grant for LfAC '25

10 October 2025



LfAC'25 has been awarded the TÜBİTAK 2223-B Grant for the organization of scientific meetings in Türkiye. This recognition highlights the academic value, international reach, and research impact of the conference in the fields of language education, linguistics, literature, and translation studies. Notably, this is the second time LfAC has received this prestigious support, reflecting the conference's ongoing commitment to quality research and collaboration.

# The Fourth International Language-for-All Conference

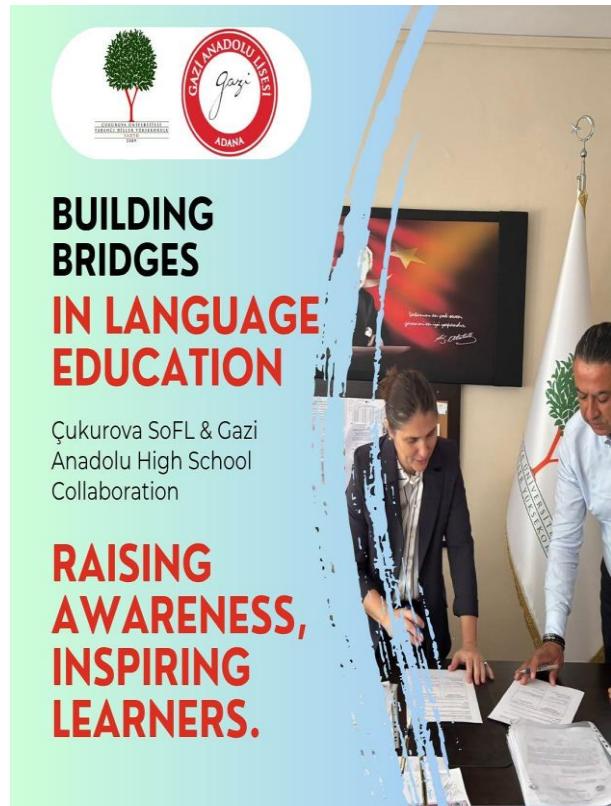
17 October 2025



The Fourth International Language-for-All Conference on “Sustainable Learning – Global Impact” was held at Hasan Kalyoncu University in Gaziantep. The two-day event brought together researchers, educators, and practitioners to discuss sustainability in education and language teaching. Keynote talks were delivered by Prof. Dr. Sarah Mercer on teacher well-being and psychology, Dr. Samantha Curle on EMI and student success, Prof. Dr. Peter Van Petegem on educating for a sustainable future, and Prof. Dr. Betül Balkar on sustainable transformative education. The conference was organized under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Yonca Özkan and successfully concluded thanks to the contributions of all participants and supporters. The event closed with a shared call to continue working towards a more sustainable educational future.

## CU SoFL Welcomed the Principal of Gazi Anadolu High School

21 October 2025



Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages was pleased to host Mr. Abdulkadir Yalçınkaya, Principal of Gazi Anadolu High School, as part of its ongoing collaboration efforts. Under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Yonca Özkan, the partnership continues to develop through meaningful initiatives aimed at strengthening foreign language education. Together, both institutions work to support the next generation of globally minded learners.

## Plaque Presented to Çukurova University Rectorship

28 October 2025



The 4th International Language-for-All Conference (LfAC), initiated and traditionally organized by the School of Foreign Languages at Çukurova University, was hosted this year by Hasan Kalyoncu University. The conference brought together academics, researchers, and students from the fields of literature, translation, cultural studies, and linguistics, aiming to foster scholarly exchange and highlight international collaboration through interdisciplinary dialogue, all under the motto “Science for All, Language for All.” The School of Foreign Languages extends its sincere appreciation to Prof. Dr. Hamit Emrah Beriş, Rector of Çukurova University, for his invaluable support throughout the process. A plaque of appreciation was presented by Prof. Dr. Yonca Çaylaklı Özkan, Director of ÇU SoFL.

## Collaboration between CU SoFL and Adana Kız Lisesi

3 November 2025



A new collaboration has been established between Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages and Adana Kız Lisesi with the shared objective of strengthening English language learning and supporting young learners. The protocol was signed by Prof. Dr. Yonca Özkan, Principal of Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages, and Ms. Fatma Yılmaz, Principal of Adana Kız Lisesi. This initiative aims to build a bridge between secondary and higher education through innovative practices that promote communicative and globally oriented language learning, ultimately supporting the development of confident and future-ready learners.

## CU SoFL Joined the National Afforestation Day

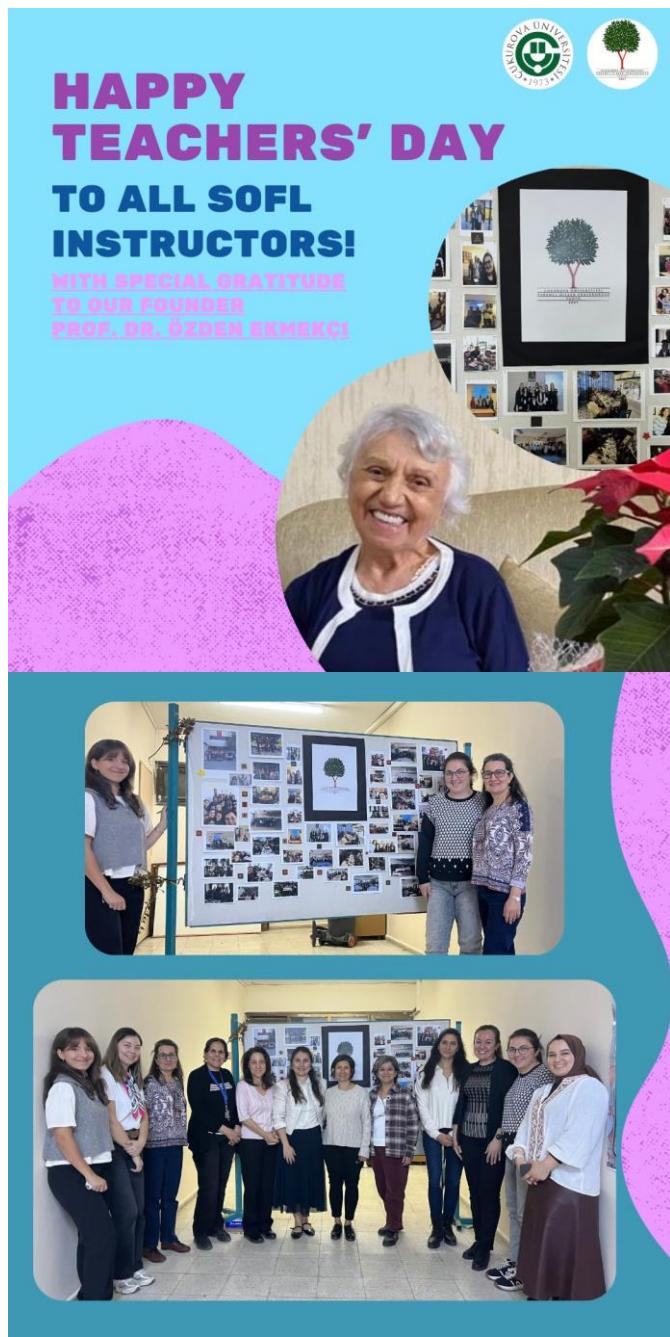
11 November 2025



Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages took part in National Afforestation Day on November 11, contributing to the "Green Homeland" initiative by planting saplings with great enthusiasm. The School joined this meaningful campaign to raise awareness of sustainability and climate responsibility. Sincere thanks are extended to everyone who contributed to making this day possible.

## Teachers' Day at CU SoFL

24 November 2025



On the occasion of November 24th, Teachers' Day, we extend our deepest gratitude to our esteemed academic and the visionary founder of Çukurova University's School of Foreign Languages, Prof. Dr. Özden Ekmekçi. We also celebrate the commitment, dedication, and patience of all SOFL instructors and teaching staff. As a special gesture, the PDU prepared a "SOFL Team Photo Board" as a token of appreciation for the collective spirit and continuous effort that define our community. We are thankful for your invaluable contributions and enduring guidance. Happy Teachers' Day to all our esteemed educators.

## Focus Group Meetings

27 November 2025



# INSIGHTS AND EXPERIENCES SHARED BY STUDENTS



25–27  
NOVEMBER  
2025

A1 – A2 – B1 – B1+ – Pre-Faculty

YOUR FEEDBACK LEADS THE WAY.

Focus Group Meetings were recently held with students from all levels of Module 2. During the sessions, students shared their experiences, discussed what works well for them, and identified areas where they believe improvements can be made. The meetings offered a valuable opportunity to listen, exchange ideas, and gain a closer understanding of student perspectives. We extend our sincere thanks to all students who participated and contributed to these discussions.

## Professional Awareness and Career Planning Event

11 December 2025



ELT PROGRAM MEET-UP:  
GRETA PROJECT TALK

PRESENTED BY DR. FIGEN YILMAZ &  
DR. EDA KAHYALAR

Moderated by Assoc. Prof. Hülya Tuncer

- ✓ Insights into Erasmus+  
GRETA Project
- ✓ Guidance for  
Professional Growth

GREEN TALES  
Raising Environmental Awareness through Art and  
Digital Storytelling  
Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnership Project (No. 101134067)  
Dr. Figen Yilmaz & Dr. Eda Kahyalar  
Çukurova University, School of Foreign Languages  
greentales.eu

CODEGEN

Students of the English Language Teaching Program at Çukurova University came together for a special event organized as part of the Professional Awareness and Career Planning course. Dr. Figen Yilmaz and Dr. Eda Kahyalar from the School of Foreign Languages introduced the Erasmus+ Green Tales (GRETA) project, which they jointly lead, offering students valuable insight into European project culture and international collaboration. Moderated by Assoc. Prof. Hülya Tuncer, the session provided guidance on project design, implementation processes, and academic cooperation. We extend our sincere gratitude to all faculty members who contributed to this event.

## Erasmus Peer Student and ESN Information Meeting

12 December 2025



An Erasmus Peer Student and ESN information meeting was held for B1+ students at the School of Foreign Languages. During the session, students were introduced to Erasmus opportunities, peer support, and the role of the Erasmus Student Network (ESN), gaining insight into international mobility and student life abroad.

## CU SoFL Paid a Visit to Gazi Anadolu High School

22 December 2025



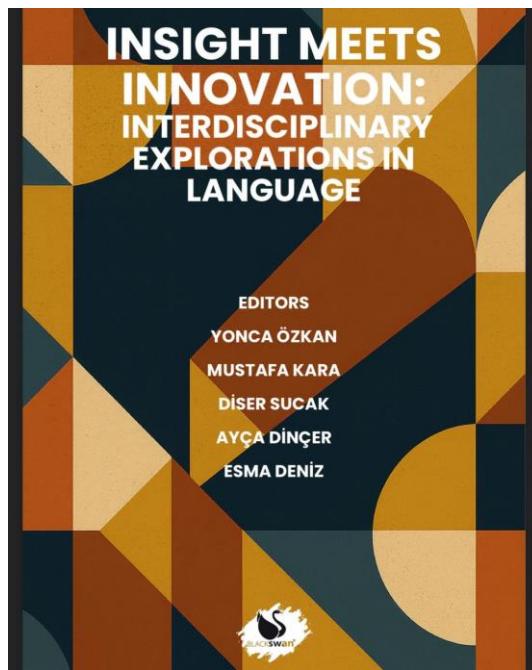
## WHY ENGLISH MATTERS TODAY

*Sharing  
perspectives on  
language and the  
future*  
with Dr. Figen  
Yilmaz

On 22 December 2025, as part of the institutional collaboration protocol, Dr. Figen Yilmaz from the School of Foreign Languages visited Gazi Anadolu High School and delivered a talk on the importance of English in today's world. The session provided students with valuable insights into how English shapes education, communication, and global opportunities. We thank Gazi Anadolu High School for their warm welcome and engagement.

**Edited Volume *Insight Meets Innovation* Published by BlackSwan Publishing**

26 December 2025

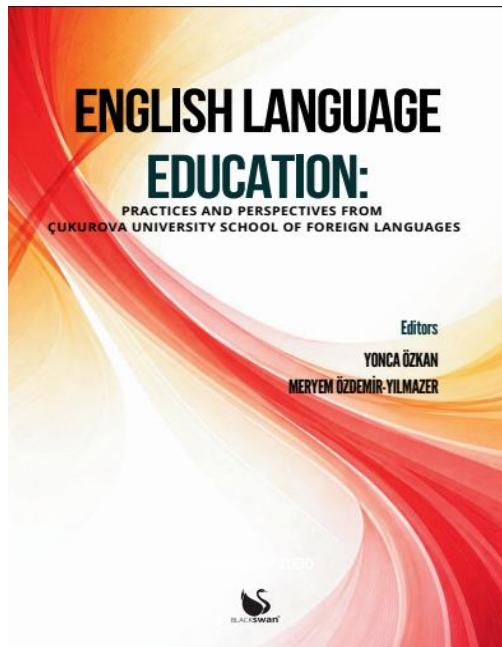


The edited volume *Insight Meets Innovation: Interdisciplinary Explorations in Language* has been published by BlackSwan Publishing. Edited by Yonca Özkan, Mustafa Kara, Diser Sucak, Ayça Dinçer, and Esma Deniz, the book brings together interdisciplinary perspectives on contemporary issues in language education and research. We are pleased to share this publication and congratulate our colleagues on their valuable contribution.

<https://lfac.cu.edu.tr/haber-detay/35/new-edited-volume-published-insight-meets-innovation-interdisciplinary-explorations-in-language>

**Edited Volume *English Language Education: Practices and Perspectives from Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages* Published by BlackSwan Publishing**

30 December 2025



The book English Language Education: Practices and Perspectives from Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages has been published by BlackSwan Publishing, featuring contributions from our colleagues at Çukurova University School of Foreign Languages. This book brings together practices, perspectives, and scholarly reflections on English language education, and aims to support professional development and knowledge sharing within the field. Edited by Yonca Özkan and Meryem Özdemir-Yılmazer and published by BlackSwan Publishing, this volume represents a valuable contribution to ongoing work in language education. We extend our congratulations to all contributors for their efforts and commitment to academic development.

<https://yadyo.cu.edu.tr/storage/ENGLISH%20LANGUAGE%20EDUCATION/ENGLISH%20LANGUAGE%20EDUCATION.pdf>

## Special Interest Group (SIG) Presentations

7 January 2026



Colleagues gathered for the Special Interest Group (SIG) presentations, where each group shared its activities and progress from the first academic term. Spokespersons outlined ongoing work, key focus areas, and planned initiatives, contributing to a structured exchange of ideas and coordinated academic planning.

## 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](https://CUSoFL.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](mailto: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 GÜNDÖĞDU: 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](mailto: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 Fourteenth Issue:**  
**Sports**

## **Biodata**

***Mithat Doğan HAKVERDİ*** is a student in the Mechanical Engineering Department at Çukurova University. His interests include engineering, sports, and especially boxing.

## **BOXING**

Boxing is an exciting sport. Many people say that boxing is dangerous, but I think they do not really know the truth. When boxing is done correctly, it is not very dangerous. On the contrary, it gives many benefits to people. Boxing improves reflexes and strength, and it also helps people feel more confident.

Some people box for different reasons. For example, some people do boxing to lose weight fast, because it is a good way to burn calories. Others join boxing because they like action. When a person starts boxing from zero, they improve their skills and also build their body. They learn how to fight and how to protect themselves if needed. This also makes them stronger in daily life. If they want, they can even try a professional career and join matches to win championships. Because of these benefits, boxing has become very popular among people who love combat sports.

Mithat Doğan HAKVERDİ

## Biodata

**Fatma YAĞIZ** is 21 years old and from Adana. She is studying Nutrition and Dietetics and enjoys sports.

## IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS AND DIET

My name is Fatma, and I am a student in the Nutrition and Dietetics department. I love sports, and I also love healthy food. In my opinion, these two things are very important for a happy life.

First, when we do sports, our bodies use a lot of energy. We need to eat healthy food to get this energy back. For example, athletes eat protein for their muscles and fruits for vitamins. As a future dietitian, I want to help people eat the right food for their sports.

Second, sports and nutrition make our hearts stronger. If you only exercise but eat junk food, you cannot be healthy. But if you eat well and walk or run every day, you will feel great. It is not just about losing weight; it is about feeling energetic and strong.

In conclusion, sports and healthy eating are like a team. You need both of them. I hope everyone at our university starts to eat better and move more. Let's stay healthy together!

Fatma YAĞIZ

## **Biodata**

*Alp Cumali BOZDOĞAN is 19 years old and from Adana. He is studying Political Science and International Relations.*

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS AND FOOTBALL**

Sport is very important for our health. It helps us stay healthy. When we do sports, our body becomes more energetic and we feel better. Sport gives us discipline. Team sports teach us teamwork. Among team sports, football is the most popular one.

Football is one of the most popular sports in the world. Many people enjoy playing football. Many organizations around the world are organized through football, and football makes a big contribution to the world economy. Football helps people make friends and work together as a team. Also, because we run and move a lot, it improves our physical health. In conclusion, sport is important in our lives, and football has a special place in sports.

Alp Cumali BOZDOĞAN

## Biodata

**Emir OĞUR** was born in 2007. He is currently studying in the Preparatory (Pre-Fac) Class and continues his education in the English Language Teaching (ELT) Department.

### THE FASTEST GAME ON EARTH

Many of us have heard about Hokey but do we know how to play? It is regularly labeled as the world's fastest sport. It is a game that requires the perfect blend of physical strength, high-speed skating, and delicate skill. Played on a sheet of ice, its basic premise is simple: two teams of six players each attempt to shoot a hard rubber disk, more commonly known as a puck, into the other opponent's net with hooked sticks.

Its intensity is what makes hockey particularly interesting. Unlike other sports, where the action stops frequently, hockey is fluid and dynamic. Players skate across the ice rapidly, and because so much energy is used in skating, lines of players are changed every few minutes to keep the pace high. It is also a contact sport. "Checking," using the body to separate an opponent from the puck, is part of the key defense, adding one more level of toughness to the game.

However, hockey is not all about aggression. There is immense strategic thinking involved, and it is a game of teams. Normally, a goal that is scored well has its origin in sure passing and positioning rather than some individual effort. Traditionally popular in places with cold climates, it enjoys a huge following in the USA, Canada, Russia, and Scandinavia. It is, nevertheless, gaining global appeal. Ultimately, hockey is an exciting event that mingles the grace of gliding with the power of combat to make it really unique in athletic effort.

Emir OĞUR

## Biodata

**İkra SİMİ** is a third-year student in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Çukurova University. She is also pursuing a minor in Business Administration. Her interests include writing, playing the guitar, singing, and staying active through sports.

## AT WHAT AGE DO WE PLAY IT MOST?

Whistles, slogans, and anthems—  
in thousands of bodies, people become one heart.  
Breaths are held;  
cheers are set free.  
Some are fanatics.  
Some are spectators.  
Some are players.  
Sometimes we are at home,  
sometimes away—  
it is life's most real  
and the most joyful side, after all.  
The mind turns into a battlefield:  
Some are black, some are white.  
Some, like pawns, move slowly  
but push on, steady and sure.  
Some, like queens, are swift,  
clever, and cunning.  
We imagine ourselves sliding on grass  
while dribbling on the muddy pitch of our neighborhood.  
And when we grow up, we drift into the past and remember,  
passing by a school gate  
as children run outside.  
Sometimes we cannot see ahead,  
as if our eyes were tied.  
When our friends call out,  
we try to find them.  
Even in the dark, we still try to win the game of blind man's buff.  
At what age do we play it most?

İkra SİMİ

## Biodata



*My name is **Mehmet Yiğit Özsoy**. I am studying in the preparatory school at SoFL. My department is Political science and international relations. I'm interested in many sports, especially football, basketball, tennis and combat sports.*

## TURKISH-DUTCH KICKBOXER GÖKHAN SAKİ – THE REBEL

Gökhan Saki is a famous Turkish-Dutch kickboxer and fighter. He was born in 1983 in the Netherlands, but his family is from Turkey. Many people know him because he is very strong and very fast. He started training when he was a young boy. He liked sports, and he liked fighting sports even more. When he was about ten years old, he began to train in kickboxing and Muay Thai. He worked very hard every day. He trained with good coaches, and he learned many skills step by step. Gökhan Saki became a great fighter because he never gave up. He always tried to be better than the day before. He fought many strong opponents, but he stayed brave in every fight. His nickname is “The Rebel,” because he fights with a lot of power and energy. People enjoy watching him because he moves quickly and hits strongly. Even “Khabib Nurmagomedov”, who is the champion of “UFC” in 2018, said he had tough punches and he made those rapidly. Because of that, his rivals were afraid of him. His kicks and punches are very famous. He also shows good technique and smart thinking in the ring. During his career, he won many big titles in kickboxing. He became a champion in Europe and also a world champion. Many young fighters look up to him because he works very hard and stays focused. After many years in kickboxing, he decided to try something new. He started fighting in mixed martial arts, also called MMA. In MMA, fighters use many different skills, like boxing, kickboxing, wrestling, and jiu-jitsu. It is a difficult sport, but Gökhan Saki wanted a new challenge. He joined the UFC, which is one of the biggest MMA organizations in the world. In his first UFC fight, he won by knockout. And that was incredible especially for him. This made many people very excited, because it showed that he could be strong not only in kickboxing but also in MMA. Gökhan Saki is also known for his discipline. He trains for many hours every day. He eats healthy food, and he takes good care of his body. He knows that a fighter must be strong in both the body and the mind. He believes that success comes from hard work, patience, and respect. Outside the ring, he is also a friendly person. He likes spending time with his family and friends. He is proud of his Turkish roots and sometimes talks about his culture. Many Turkish people feel happy when he wins, because he represents them around the world. Gökhan Saki also inspires young people. He shows them that they can follow their dreams if they work hard. He often says that nothing is impossible. He teaches that people should believe in themselves and stay positive. Because of his success, many children and teenagers start training in kickboxing. They want to be like him one day. Even though he has had many fights, he still continues to learn and grow. He knows that every fight is a new lesson. Today, Gökhan Saki is one of the most respected fighters in the world. Fans admire his strength, speed, and courage. His story shows that, with passion and hard work, a person can achieve great things. Gökhan Saki’s journey is long, and many people believe he will continue to inspire others for many years.

Mehmet Yiğit Özsoy

## Biodata

**Selin TURAN** is a first-year student in the Cukurova University Faculty of Communication Sciences. Her interests include: volleyball, books, travel, and films. Her academic interests focus on human psychology, sports, and effective communication.

## THE EFFECTS OF SPORTS ON HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY

Sport is a very important activity in human life. People may engage in sports for various reasons, such as physical and mental development. In this text, I'll talk about the effects of sport on human psychology. The socializing aspect of sport strengthens an individual's self-confidence. In group activities such as team sports, people build stronger social bonds by working together. From a psychological perspective, studies show that people can be more productive when they feel like members of a group. Sport increases individuals' sense of belonging and strengthens their social connections.

In addition, sport reduces negative tendencies such as depression, anxiety, and stress and gradually eliminates them. Regular physical activity improves mood. In the article titled "The benefits of chronic sport participation and acute exercise on mental health and executive functioning in adolescents," the results of these effects, especially on adolescent individuals, are presented. Research has proven that sport contributes not only to mood but also to concentration. As Michael Jordan once said, "Mental toughness and heart are a lot stronger than some of the physical advantages you might have."

In summary, sport is an inevitable part of not only the physical development but also the mental development of young adults and adolescents. Individuals who engage in regular sports activities consistently demonstrate higher-quality mental functioning.

Selin TURAN

## Biodata

*My name is **Saadet YILMAZ**, and I am proud to be a part of CU SoFL, teaching English to preparatory classes for more than 30 years.*

## TRENDY SPORTS: WHAT'S EVERYONE PLAYING THESE DAYS?

In 2025, the world of sports looks like someone gave it a double shot of espresso. Sports are no longer just about football fields and basketball courts. The sports world is full of new trends that are exciting, surprising, and sometimes a little funny. In recent years, new and trendy sports have taken over playgrounds, parks, and social media feeds — and some of them might surprise you.



One of the most popular trendy sports right now is **pickleball**. It's a mix of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong, played with a paddle. It looks like tennis, but the court is smaller, the ball is lighter, and the rules are easier to learn. Many people say it's the perfect sport because you can play seriously or just for fun — and you don't need to be super fit to enjoy it. Some students joke that it's the only sport where you can compete with your teacher and still win!

Another rising star is **paddle**, a sport that looks like tennis but is played in an enclosed court with glass walls. The ball can bounce off the walls, which makes the game faster, funnier, and sometimes completely unpredictable. Many young people enjoy paddle not only because it's exciting, but also because it's very social. Winning a match feels great, but winning a match and posting it online feels even better.



On the digital side, eSports are still booming. **Competitive video gaming** is now watched by millions online, and some players train like professional athletes. The funny part? Their “warm-up” might be clicking a mouse instead of running laps. Still, the competition is real, and the prizes are huge. Some students dream of becoming professional gamers, proving that fast fingers and quick thinking can be just as valuable as strong muscles.

Traditional sports are also changing. Football players now use advanced technology, such as smart watches and AI analysis to improve performance, and women's sports are gaining more attention than ever, inspiring young athletes around the world. Even fans are involved, using apps to follow players, vote in polls, and share reactions in real time.

In short, modern sports are faster, more social, and more creative than ever. Whether you enjoy running on a court, holding a controller, or cheering from your phone, there's a trendy sport out there just for you. Who knows? The next big sports trend might start in our school!

Lect. Saadet YILMAZ

## Biodata

*My name is **Mihriban DURSUN**. I am 28 years old. I grew up in Istanbul and have been living in Adana for the past four years. I am a senior student in the Department of Communication Studies at Çukurova University, Faculty of Communication. I am interested in fitness, yoga, and philosophy. I maintain regular writing practices and take an active role in projects related to communication studies. I am definitely a cat person.*

## LIKE US

One of the most common misconceptions we fall into when it comes to fiction is forgetting that it is, in fact, drawn from real life. This kind of forgetting makes us say things like “it was just like a movie” when something extraordinary happens. But movies are actually just like us. Starting from this thought, I can easily say that if the last five years of my life were turned into a TV series, the central theme would undoubtedly be self-actualization. So, what is this concept we hear everywhere—“self-actualization”? And what does one need to do to truly realize their own existence? I suppose there are millions of answers to these questions. For me, however, this journey began after a period of uncontrollable weight gain, which eventually led me to step into the world of fitness.

### **Fitness And the Surprise That Followed**

Among dozens of things going wrong in my life, eliminating at least the physical discomfort felt like the most logical thing to do. I was stuck in a vicious cycle, and I couldn’t even make sense of it at the time. Once I realized that I couldn’t resolve what was going on internally, I somehow found the motivation to start exercising—for the body I was unhappy with back then.

To make sure this wouldn’t turn into a short-lived decision, I signed up for a gym quite suddenly and without much research. The first month was almost unbearable. I constantly found myself trying to convince myself just to keep going. In the following months, things became easier. Going to the gym started to make me happy; in fact, I felt incomplete on days I couldn’t go.

But then, a new problem appeared: joint pain. Even though I believed I was doing proper cooldown exercises, they were no longer enough. Around that time, a girl I met at the gym suggested yoga, something she had been practicing for years. For her, yoga helping with joint pain was secondary. What really mattered was being able to become one with herself on the mat.

At first, her spiritual approach to yoga made me hesitant. But the way she moved—so flexible and at ease—was convincing enough, especially considering my joint pain. Soon, after every workout, we started doing at least 20 minutes of yoga together.

### **Becoming One with the Mat**

From the very first day, I could tell this was different from simple stretching exercises. It didn’t take long for me to realize that yoga demanded even more effort than fitness. Shaking legs, shoulders burning like fire, and poses where I wondered if I might actually break a bone...

According to my friend, I was already naturally flexible, and with daily practice, I could improve even more. What started as a way to relieve joint pain gradually transformed into a pursuit of going deeper into each pose—asking myself how I could become more flexible within it. Before I knew it, I was sharing the same pleasure and sensations on the mat that my friend had described.

### **An Evolved Form of Self-Actualization**

At some point, I found myself truly internalizing this teaching rooted in Far Eastern culture—something I initially couldn’t quite make sense of. I started reading about yoga, and certain concepts slowly became part of my everyday language. That sense of unity on the mat began to affect not only my joints but also my inner world.

For a long time, I continued fitness and yoga together. It felt as though fitness allowed me to lift the emotional burdens I couldn't handle in life by lifting weights in the physical world. Yoga, on the other hand, offered me awareness—and the calm that follows awareness.

I became so immersed in these practices that I forgot why I had started in the first place. Yet there was a fundamental reason behind it all. Whatever I did, I needed to do it to actualize myself—and not drift away from that purpose.

Almost a year had passed, and I had reached an advanced level in both practices. One day, while talking to my friend about yoga, I shared my feelings with her. I told her how I could recognize myself in the moment on the mat, and how this awareness had started to carry over into my daily life. That was when she said something that reminded me of my original motivation.

“So, you feel yourself. You recognize your own reality, right? Is that what you’re talking about?”

After a brief moment of shock, I realized how significant my own words actually were. Because yes—that was exactly what I meant. Was this what self-actualization was supposed to feel like?

It felt like it should be something final, something completed. But it didn’t feel that way. So maybe what’s real is not the end point, but the process itself—feeling your own existence directly, within the moment.

### **The Myth of Self-Actualization**

Looking back now, I see that even the life philosophies the modern world offers us in the name of “being unique” often do nothing more than standardize us. The journey I began with thoughts like “This can’t go on, I need to do something and be happy like everyone else” might have been shaped by the fitness videos I endlessly scrolled through on Instagram—perhaps even more than by my conscious intentions. I don’t really remember. And honestly, that’s not important anymore.

What matters is that through sports, I learned to notice myself and my body in the present moment. The bodily awareness that came with physical practice manifested itself in my life. And it wasn’t just my body that became aware.

For you, this might not be sports. Maybe you start writing, or building model airplanes. But every moment you recognize your own existence in the now, you are, in fact, actualizing yourself.

And yes—that is the most important thing of all. Because the hero of your own series is you. And series, just like you.

Mihriban DURSUN

## Biodata

**JC Kyle Olofernes GARCIA** is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year international student from the Philippines in Çukurova University from the department of Political Science and International Relations. She graduated high school from the Sports and Recreational Leadership Track in MSU-Marawi Senior Highschool.

### A THREAT IN THE BLUEPRINTS OF HISTORY: ACADEMIC DEFOCUS ON SPORTS

The price of progress always comes at the cost of abandoning tradition and embracing modernity. Many things in the past have been replaced by digitalized platforms but one thing remains the same: the drive for connection through a shared sense of community--and what represents this the best is Sports.

Historically, sports has been the representation of human ambition, of hard-work paying off through discipline, while crowds of people watch the victors celebrate the reaps of their efforts. Even now, stadiums still cheer for their Achilles, podiums still roar in celebration. However, as time changes, so does the mindset people associate Sports with. Gone are the days when Sports used to be the measure of human capacity, be it mentally or physically. Now, through its commercial success and monetization, it has lost the core of its purpose: the raw, undying pursuit of excellence, where the reward was internal discipline and communal recognition, not a means for monetary gain.

Slowly, as schools tend to focus less on sports and shift towards a strict academic-based curriculum, they signal a societal devaluation of athletics, discouraging even the passionate while simultaneously neglecting a building-block of holistic human development for all students. Further exemplifying how sports is now a forgotten foundation of developing human character as it not only builds integrity through sportsmanship but is an avenue to stay healthy while simultaneously having fun. Through sports, students are taught strict adherence to rules which is essential for a functional society. More than that, they are taught equality within the game: the main principle the world lives by, of no one being worth more than anyone despite our differences.

Furthermore, as these policies that neglect or exclude athletics manifest themselves in the future as a domino effect, an existence outside of the academe with barely any presence of sports could cause serious harm to their quality of life as well as their ability to handle challenges and adversities. Studies have shown the effectiveness of sports in regulating the body when dealing with stress as it serves as a tool to stabilize mood-affecting hormones like cortisol and serotonin. Oftentimes, sports is even used as part of treatment plans for those who are dealing with depression and anxiety, signifying how it influences a person not only physically but also mentally. Most importantly, discipline and consistency enable a person to maintain a good relationship with their bodies and their mental state. This stability serves as their anchor as they go through life's challenges with grit and resiliency.

Ultimately, the argument for sports goes past an individual and institutional scale as we begin to understand its importance as a communal activity. It brings people together not only in a playing field but most importantly in communities, neighborhoods, schools, friendships, and families. It is the rope that binds strong bonds through entertainment, understanding of camaraderie, and historically, the proof of human adversity and perseverance. To denounce its importance would be to reject the conditions of human existence reflected through the lens of sports: we are diverse, multi-faceted, and most of all, willing to push past our capacity in spite of our humanly limits. The continuation of these policies and the lack of foresight on its effects could mean a degradation in our understanding of the foundation of our existence.

As we not only live for the thrill of sports, we live for the peace it brings.

JC Kyle Olofernes GARCIA

## Biodata



*My name is **Efetürk AKYOL**. I'm a 21-year-old university student. I was interested in different kinds of sports during my school years. Mainly, I sailed and played water polo for long periods. First, I started with swimming and sailing, but due to my interest in water polo, my path started to go that way. Personally, I am a great team player. I can adapt to different conditions immediately, which comes from my sailing background.*

## AGAINST MOTHER NATURE

Sailing is a sport that involves planning, discipline, physical activity, and adaptation. As a sport, it starts with single-handed dinghies. Sailing has different classes, the most popular being the Optimist. You can race in the Optimist class until you turn 15; after that, you have choices of various courses. You can sail double-handed or single-handed throughout your adult life. There are ILCA classes for single-handed. For double-handed, you have more. You can see a 6-year-old child sailing with a small dinghy alone. In the middle of the sea, in harsh weather conditions and big waves. You do not usually expect such a thing, but, typically, 6 years is not alone; she is with Mother Nature, the mother of all of us. If you do sports that involve Mother Nature, you will face some conditions you have to adapt to. Sailing gives you this type of adaptation at a young age. As it provides adaptation, it gives one the power to make self-decisions and manage crises from early childhood. Physically, your immune system stays strong by being at sea in all seasons of the year.

In the middle of the sea, you cannot control weather conditions or water parameters. If you are 7 years old, alone at sea in a nearly uncontrollable dinghy because of strong winds and your light bodyweight, life is unbearable, trust me. After hours of living through these years, you will be physically and mentally strong. You can cry a lot, but it won't change anything. You sailed away once, and from now on, you should find a way to return to shore. Cold is not your enemy; it has to be your friend. If you fight a cold, you will be ill. If you fight the waves, you cannot go fast. You have to dance with waves. Mother Nature is your mother; do not fight with her, dance with her. Sailing teaches this, not how to sail, not how to steer, not how to rig your dinghy. That's why even a 7-year-old can sail.

Having been an active sailing club member for many years, I strongly recommend that children receive sailing training and spend time on the sea for their self-improvement in every way. Teenagers can also spend their time on valuable activities like sailing and racing for their clubs and themselves. When they become adults, they will have the joy of sailing as well.

Efetürk AKYOL

## Biodata

**Dicle DERAN** is an undergraduate student in the Department of Communication Sciences at Çukurova University. Her hobbies include reading, writing, and traveling.

## MORE THAN A SCOREBOARD: THE INVISIBLE BOND OF SPORTS

Since the earliest periods of human history, sports have been more than just a display of physical strength; they have served as a mirror reflecting the very character of societies. From the Olympic Games of Ancient Greece to the massive stadiums of the modern world, sports have become symbols of peace, discipline, and the collective spirit. Looking at sports today, it would be one of the greatest misconceptions of the modern world to view them solely through the lens of scoreboards. In its essence, sport is a cultural bridge, a social laboratory, and a unique model of education.

Take a look around as you walk through the university campus. We are thousands of young people from different cities, studying in various departments, with vastly different perspectives on life. Have you ever noticed how characters who wouldn't normally even say hello to each other transform into teammates under a basketball hoop or at the edge of a volleyball net? This is exactly where the magical power of sports comes into play.

From a social perspective, sports are one of the few fields that soften the sharp lines of social stratification. A neighborhood basketball court or a volleyball court on a university campus offers a completely democratic environment where hierarchy does not exist. Sports instill a sense of belonging to a group. This "sense of us" is one of the most powerful antidotes to the isolation of modern life. The modern world pushes us toward individualism, screens, and loneliness. However, sports pull us out of that comfort zone. From a sociological perspective, being part of a team satisfies the most fundamental human need: the sense of belonging. It is not just about supporting the same colors; it is about sweating for the same goal, embracing each other in victory, and silently touching a teammate's shoulder in defeat... This is a profound form of social education that cannot be learned from textbooks. The sports field is one of those rare places where hierarchy is reset. It doesn't matter who is wealthier, what department they study in, or how popular they are. The only things that matter are the accuracy of a pass or the solidarity in defense. This dynamic forms the smallest but most resilient cell of social peace.

When we look at traditional Turkish sports, we see that this social fabric has existed throughout every period of our history. For instance, traditional Turkish archery is not just about hitting a target. The "archery lodges" (tekkeler) where archers gathered were also social solidarity centers. A kemankeş (archer) learns patience and self-discipline before even drawing the bow. In this sport, the essence is not just defeating an opponent but "reaching the range" (menzil)—surpassing one's own limits. This mindset replaces raw competition with self-improvement and mutual aid in social life. Another example is Matrak, a social game inherited from the Ottoman era that combines intelligence and agility. Matrak is a defense and attack sport that involves no violence; it is a rule that opponents must embrace once the game ends. This is the most concrete example of the social function of sports in reducing social tensions and channeling energy into a positive outlet.

We can carry that spirit of bravery and solidarity from our traditional sports into today's campus football matches or faculty tournaments. Sports build a bridge of trust between people who do not know each other. A friend you pass the ball to today can turn into a confidant who stands by you in your toughest moment tomorrow. University life is not just about midterms and finals. We must not miss out on the sincere social environment that sports provide. Scoreboards eventually reset and trophies gather dust, but the friendships formed in those sweat-soaked jerseys and the culture of "achieving together" stay with us for a lifetime.

Ultimately, the struggle on the field might just be a game; but the social bonds created by that game are life itself. Let's not view sports merely as a spectacle watched on television. Let's step onto the field, join a team, or experience the tradition of a heritage sport because the friendships we gain and the social ethics we learn in that field will be the most valuable "life certificates" we hold after graduation.

Dicle DERAN

## Biodata

*I am Büşra SAKİN DEMİR. I graduated from the Department of Public Finance at Gazi University. Now, I am a final-year student in the Department of Communication Sciences at Cukurova University. I have always been interested in writing, even when I was a child. During my high school years, I wrote articles for my school magazine. Today, I will try to continue this interest in digital media.*

## RETHINKING SPORT: A MENTAL PERSPECTIVE

When we hear the word sport, most of us first think of physical activities or different types of sports, such as football, basketball, or body movements like Pilates and yoga. Sport is usually associated with the body, strength, and movement. I want to take it from a different perspective.

As most of us know, sport is closely connected to the mind and mental activity. Our minds also need to stay active, just like our bodies. Unfortunately, this aspect of sport is often ignored. Especially in recent years, with the rapid growth of digitalization, the mental movement of individuals has slowed down. Screens have become a central part of daily life, and many people spend long hours passively consuming content instead of actively engaging their minds.

This situation affects people of all ages. Among older individuals, problems related to memory and mental health have become more common. On the other hand, children experience attention difficulties at earlier ages. Long hours spent in front of screens reduce their ability to focus, imagine, and think creatively. Adults are not excluded from this cycle either. Many adults spend their free time scrolling through social media platforms, watching short videos, or constantly switching between applications.

In this sense, writing plays a significant role. Writing helps individuals organize their thoughts, express emotions, and reflect on their experiences. It is an active mental process that keeps the mind engaged. Similarly, activities like art, music, or strategic games require focus and creativity, making them powerful tools for mental movement.

That is why I love writing in my free time. In addition, keeping an agenda and a diary is very important for mental health. In today's digital world, we usually do not choose to write on real paper. Instead, we use mobile phones, notebooks, or laptops. However, many studies have shown that taking notes with a pen and paper is more effective for memory.

As a result, sport should not be limited to stadiums or gyms. It should also be understood as a balance between body and mind. In a world that never stops, sometimes the most powerful movement is the one that happens within the mind. Perhaps the most important form of sport today is learning how to keep our minds awake in a digital world.

Büşra SAKİN DEMİR

## Biodata



**Arda YILDIZ.** I am currently studying English preparatory class at YADYO. My department is Electrical and Electronic Engineering. My biggest goal is to work in the defense industry because I want to be a useful individual for my country. My hobbies include playing basketball and football. I also enjoy working with software.



**Müferrih Can ORMAN.** I am studying in the preparatory class of YADYO. My department is mechanical engineering. I love watching and playing football. My favorite team is Galatasaray.



**Kemal Yağız ÖZDESTİCİ.** I am studying in the preparatory school at YADYO. My department is econometrics. I have loved playing and watching football since I was born.

## GALATSARAY'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 2000s

Football is the most popular sport in today's world, but its story began many years ago. Early forms of the game were played in ancient China, Greece and Europe. However modern football started in the 19th century in England. Schools and universities started to create clear rules for the game. In 1863 The Football Association was founded and football became a more organized sport. Over time the game spread to all over the world and became an important part of world culture. Today football is a sport that brings people together and creates strong memories. One example of these memories comes from Galatasaray's great achievements in the year 2000.

As the world entered the new millennium, Galatasaray already had a powerful squad and great motivation. At the beginning of the year, the team played in the Millenium Cup, a special tournament organized to celebrate the start of the 2000s. Although it was not an official UEFA tournament, the event offered an important opportunity for Galatasaray to show their strength. With good play and strong teamwork, Galatasaray won the cup and started the year with high energy and motivation. Fans believed this was only the beginning of something bigger and they were right.

Just a few months later Galatasaray made both Turkish and European football history by winning the UEFA Cup. No other Turkish team had ever lifted a major European trophy before. The journey to the final was long and difficult. Galatasaray faced difficult opponents but continued to fight with discipline and courage. Under the leadership of coach Fatih Terim, the team played with strong tactics and great belief.

The final match in Copenhagen, against English club Arsenal, was full of tension. Both teams created chances, but after 90 minutes and extra time, the score remained 0–0. Everything came down to penalty kicks. At this moment, Galatasaray players showed incredible calmness and focus. When the final penalty went in, Galatasaray became the champion of Europe. This victory was a historic moment not only for the club but for the entire country. Turkey celebrated one of the greatest sporting achievements in its history.

Galatasaray's success in 2000 continued later that year with the UEFA Super Cup. This match was played between the winners of the UEFA Cup and the Champions League. Galatasaray's opponent was Real Madrid, one of the strongest and most famous football clubs in the world. Many football fans expected Real Madrid to win easily. But Galatasaray once again showed that they were not afraid of big challenges. With smart tactics and a strong fighting spirit, the team won the game 2–1 and they added another important trophy to the collection.

These three victories, the Millennium Cup, the UEFA Cup, and the UEFA Super Cup, turned the year 2000 into a golden chapter for Galatasaray. The team had many star players who became symbols of this success. Gheorghe Hagi, the leader on the field, inspired his teammates with his talent and experience. Captain Bülent Korkmaz showed strong leadership and never-ending effort. Taffarel made unforgettable saves, especially in difficult matches. Ümit Davala and other players also played key roles throughout the season. However, the real strength of the team came from unity. The players trusted each other, shared the same goal, and played with passion.

For Turkish football, these achievements were more than just trophies. They showed that Turkish clubs could compete with the biggest teams in Europe. They inspired young players and brought great pride to millions of fans. Even today, Galatasaray's 2000 season is remembered as one of the greatest moments in Turkish sports history.

In conclusion Galatasaray wrote an unforgettable story. Starting with the Millennium Cup, continuing with the historic UEFA Cup victory, and ending with the UEFA Super Cup triumph, the team created a legacy that still shines today. Galatasaray proved that with teamwork, belief and strong character, even the biggest dreams can come true.

Arda YILDIZ  
Müferrih Can ORMAN  
Kemal Yağız ÖZDESTİCİ

## Biodata

*Aykut DEMİRYÜREK graduated from the Department of ELT at Cukurova University and completed his MA degree in the same department at Hakkari University. He has been working in the field of education for almost 12 years. Currently, he is holding his PhD in ELT.*

## SPORT BEYOND THE SCOREBOARD

We are mostly stuck in results, cups, and tribunes while talking about sport. However, it is beyond cheering, training, or a match. Sport is one of the mirrors that reflect a society's culture, values, traditions, customs, and contradictions. The behaviors we have observed in the field or in the tribunes are not coincidental; they are the continuation of what has been learned within the family, outside, and at school. It will not be realistic to expect sports to be fair and calm in a culture where winning is considered everything and failing is a weakness. Sport is loyal to culture because it comes from it. The unfairness, intolerance, and violence we encountered in sport today cannot only be attributed to issues of the sport. Those are a result of the condensed state of attitudes normalized in daily life. It becomes impossible to see respect in a society where rules and boundaries are faint. The culture in which smashers are dominant manifests itself in sport as well. Anger, intolerance, and the desire for superiority are showing themselves not only in the field but also in relationships in society. Declarations of fair play are not the only foundation of what we call sports culture. It is shaped by what we think is normal, by what we applaud, and by our silence in any situation. Sports boundaries are blurred by an understanding that celebrates success in every situation. Sports become an arena for settling scores and a field of development and struggle in a society that cannot learn to accept defeat. Therefore, we must first examine the culture that gave rise to sports if we wish to change them. Last but not least, sports can be played, but only if people are not afraid to look in the mirror.

Lect. Aykut DEMİRYÜREK

## Biodata

**Hasan AHKEMOĞLU** works as an English instructor at the School of Foreign Languages, Çukurova University, where he also serves as an academic advisor to SAHNEDİL, one of Çukurova University's student clubs focusing on language and performing arts. He holds an MA degree in English Language Teaching from Çukurova University and is a graduate of Bilkent University, Department of American Culture and Literature.

In 2001, he earned a certificate in presenting and broadcast announcing from the Ankara Dialog Institution. He also completed the International Diploma Program in Marketing at UC Berkeley and undertook his academic internship program at the Oakland Film Office.

After returning to Türkiye in 2002, he received professional training in theatre and musical acting at the Müjdat Gezen Art Center (Actors Studio). Alongside his academic and artistic background, he has maintained a lifelong engagement with sport, exploring and practicing various disciplines to enhance overall well-being and quality of life.

His long-standing dedication to Aiki Jutsu reflects a deeper interest in practices that integrate physical discipline with awareness and balance. He holds the rank of black belt, 2nd Dan (Level 2) in Aiki Jutsu and approaches martial arts as a path of discipline, equilibrium, and mindful engagement rather than competition.

## AIKI JUTSU: DISCIPLINE, BALANCE, AND HUMAN RELATIONS

Martial arts are often associated with conflict or physical confrontation. This perception is understandable, as many disciplines emphasize visible strength and competitive outcomes. However, beyond the outward appearance of structured techniques lies a quieter practice—one grounded in balance, awareness, and responsibility. Aiki Jutsu represents such an approach, offering not only physical training but also a framework for understanding human relations and personal development.

Sport has been a constant element in my life from an early age. I was introduced to athletics during primary school, around the age of eight, and at the same time began swimming through Adana Tenis, Dağ ve Su Sporları Kulübü. Swimming became one of my earliest life skills, teaching rhythm, controlled breathing, and respect for physical limits. Even at that stage, sport revealed an important principle: sustainable progress is achieved not through force alone, but through continuity and balance.

During middle school, I played table tennis and became a member of the school team. Around the ages of eleven and twelve, I began playing tennis, which I practiced actively until my late teens. I also recall spending an entire summer—around 1991 or 1992—attending an intensive tennis school program at Bakırköy Sports Club in Istanbul. The training was demanding, yet equally enjoyable, and it left a lasting impression on how discipline and enjoyment can coexist within sport. Although tennis later assumed a less central role in my life, I continue to play regularly. What remained from those years was not competition itself, but discipline, repetition, and patience. Gradually, sport shifted in meaning—from a contest with others to a process of self-refinement.

During my university years, training became less performance-oriented and more focused on maintaining physical and mental balance. Regular gym practice supported clarity and resilience. Today, while working as an English instructor at the School of Foreign Languages, Çukurova University, sport remains an indispensable part of my life and has gained even greater importance over time. Looking back, I can clearly see how experience across different sporting disciplines continues to influence me—particularly in activities that require cardiovascular endurance. These effects persist not as a means of impressing others or drawing attention, but as a source of personal stability and inner calm.

In 2008, my engagement with physical practice entered a new phase through martial arts—an area in which effort is measured not by intensity alone, but by awareness, timing, and restraint. My introduction to Aiki Jutsu also dates back to this period. I trained as a student of Sensei Cihangir Yardım until 2017. Over time, I came to understand that Aiki Jutsu is not primarily concerned with winning or losing. Instead, it focuses on understanding direction—of movement, of intention, and ultimately of oneself. Progress in this art is subtle; it does not announce itself, but becomes visible through consistency and sustained practice.

From a practical perspective, Aiki Jutsu training is structured around principles rather than isolated techniques. Practice emphasizes balance disruption, joint control, and body alignment rather than raw muscular strength. Circular motion, precise distance, and timing allow force to be guided rather than opposed. Falling and receiving techniques (ukemi) are practiced with the same care as controlling techniques, reinforcing mutual trust and responsibility between partners. Through repetition, the body develops efficiency while the mind cultivates restraint.

An aspect that may be misleading to an external observer is the nature of physical endurance involved. Aiki Jutsu does not rely on visibly prominent muscular strength. Instead, it develops deep muscular stability and internal coordination. This form of endurance is less apparent, yet it forms the foundation of sustainable movement, balance, and control. Although the practice may appear calm or restrained, its demands are cumulative and profound.

The use of the sword, staff, and falling practices in Aiki Jutsu also carries significance beyond technical application. The sword functions as a tool for understanding distance, measure, and intention, demanding clarity and responsibility. Staff practice emphasizes rhythm and reciprocity, highlighting the importance of maintaining connection without domination. Falling practices, or ukemi, perhaps offer the most understated lesson: adaptation rather than resistance. Learning how to fall without injury becomes a way of understanding how challenges in life may be met with flexibility and composure.

These principles extend naturally beyond the dojo. In Aiki Jutsu, the individual in front of us is not an opponent, but a partner through whom learning becomes possible. A similar dynamic exists in everyday life. The people we encounter—whether supportive or challenging—can be understood not merely as obstacles, but as experiences that reveal our balance, reactions, and capacity for measured response. In this sense, maintaining equilibrium in human relationships becomes an extension of practice.

Martial arts are sometimes perceived as harsh or even unhealthy disciplines. Training may appear rigid or overly demanding. Lived experience, however, often suggests otherwise. Aiki Jutsu is grounded in cooperation and gradual development. Physical endurance grows alongside sensitivity, while mental resilience develops together with calmness. What emerges is not an aggressive stance toward the world, but a more grounded individual—physically capable, mentally attentive, and socially aware.

Today, I hold the rank of black belt, 2nd Dan (Level 2), recognized through a certified institute and the Turkish Budo Federation. This is mentioned not as a distinction, but as a reminder that rank carries responsibility. In Aiki Jutsu, advancement does not grant authority over others; it requires greater care, consistency, and awareness within oneself. In this sense, a black belt signifies not completion, but conscience.

Ultimately, Aiki Jutsu is not merely a martial discipline. It is a practice of alignment—between body and mind, action and intention, the self and others. Its lessons are gradual and understated, yet enduring. Perhaps its quiet strength lies in this reminder: true balance is achieved not through resistance, but through awareness, measure, and care.

Lect. Hasan AHKEMOĞLU

## **Biodata**

*Cemile AŞAN is a student at Çukurova University, Department of Political Science and International Relations. She is interested in social issues, education, and cultural studies.*

## **WHY SPORTS MATTER TO ME**

Sports have always been a small but important part of my daily life. I've never seen them as something professional or competitive. It's more about feeling good and clearing my head. On stressful days, even a short walk after classes helps me relax. Sometimes just watching a game is enough. It's often the only thing that makes me slow down and breathe for a moment. Sports bring people together in a very natural way. For me, they're simple and comforting, just like everyday life.

Cemile AŞAN

## **Biodata**

**Zarina Zamirbek KYZY** is 19 years old and from Kyrgyzstan. She is interested in sports, education. She loves cats.

### **HOW TABLE TENNIS CHANGED MY HIGH SCHOOL LIFE**

I first discovered table tennis when I was in high school. At the beginning, it was simply a way to pass time, but over three years it became an important part of my daily life. With constant practice, I started to play very well—not only among girls, but also competing confidently with boys.

My school usually did not allow students to stay after classes, so I played during breaks between lessons. Even these short sessions made a difference. Table tennis significantly improved my physical reaction and coordination. As someone who is short-sighted, I also noticed that the fast-paced nature of the game helped train my eye focus and attention. After playing, I always felt recharged and more prepared for the next class.

Beyond physical benefits, table tennis had a strong social impact on me. I was not very talkative before, but the sport helped me connect with others. Through playing, I made new friends and built meaningful connections. I met people who inspired me, and in turn, some were inspired by my playing. One of my proudest achievements was teaching one of the best players in my school. With my help and guidance, that player later earned a place in a tournament. This experience showed me that sports are not only about personal success, but also about sharing knowledge and supporting others. Most importantly, I believe I proved that girls can be just as successful in sports. In my school environment, this was not always taken for granted. Table tennis gave me confidence, visibility, and a strong sense of self-belief.

In short, table tennis changed my life for the better. It shaped me physically, socially, and personally, and its lessons continue to influence who I am today.

Zarina Zamirbek KYZY

## Biodata

*I am **Fadime AK**, currently a second-year undergraduate in the Department of Journalism at Cukurova University. My academic focus is deeply rooted in investigative reporting and environmental journalism. Beyond my scholarly pursuits, I cultivate a profound appreciation for music and instrumentation. However, as articulated in this essay, athletic discipline constitutes the cornerstone of my lifestyle. Drawing upon a background in swimming, Pilates, and tennis, I rigorously maintain these practices today, viewing them not merely as hobbies but as essential components of mental and physical fortitude.*

## BEYOND THE BOOKS: BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH SPORT

In university, our lives are often defined by exams, deadlines, and the pursuit of academic excellence. Many perceive education as a process confined strictly to lecture halls, studios, and PDF textbooks. However, for me, the concept of education is quite different. The most effective classroom in my mind has been the silence of a swimming pool, the competitive atmosphere of a tennis court, or the solitary hours on a running track. While society often views sports as physical activity, this journey has profoundly changed my perspective. Over time, I began to perceive it as a form of mental construction. I found my greatest support for psychological resilience in sports.

My athletic journey has been a mental training process rather than a mere routine. I believe the disciplines I engaged in have significantly influenced my character. Swimming taught me to remain calm and manage my breath, even when submerged and cut off from the world's noise. Later, tennis taught me how to make rapid decisions in the face of life's instantaneous developments; it demonstrated how, if I choose, I can easily focus and handle everything with agility. Subsequently, through Pilates, which became a central interest, I integrated true patience into my life. Today, as a student truly dedicated to their work, the ease these experiences add to my life brings me joy.

The greatest paradox I rely on in sports is that physical exhaustion leads to mental rejuvenation. To someone who has never played sports, claiming that expending energy on a long run results in a more disciplined and energetic mind might sound a bit illogical. Yet, this dynamic is the center of my daily life. The rigorous effort required in sports has also led to an increased level of self-control in other areas of my life. The drive needed to finish the final kilometers of a run is the same determination I use to complete a challenging essay or study for a difficult exam. By exhausting the body, I silence the crowd in my mind and experience a form of rest that I believe sedentary relaxation simply cannot provide.

The necessity of this discipline becomes most apparent in its absence, during periods when I excluded sports from my life, however briefly—whether due to academic intensity or other distractions—I experienced not just physical but significant psychological detriment. Without the regulatory structure of sports, I faced a decline in mental sharpness and an increase in anxiety. This situation highlighted for me that sports are not merely a physical activity or a luxury, but a fundamental requirement for maintaining psychological equilibrium.

Ultimately, while building resilience is a difficult process both physically and mentally, sports provide both. My journey, starting in the pool and continuing on the running tracks, has demonstrated this to me. If I were to give one piece of advice to any student struggling with the pressures of academic life, it would be this: do not train your mind solely in the library or lecture halls. I believe the body and mind should be trained through discipline because a resilient mind allows you to go much further with every attempt, every step, and every stroke. And sports are the very foundation of this.

Fadime AK

## Biodata

**Begüm ETİZ** is a lecturer at the School of Foreign Languages, Çukurova University. She holds BA, MA, and PhD degrees. Her primary research interests include English language teaching, instructional design, and learner autonomy.

## FITNESS AS A LIFESTYLE

In today's world, fitness has become more than just a popular trend; for many people, including myself, it has turned into a meaningful lifestyle choice. I started doing fitness not only to support my physical health but also to feel healthier, more energetic, and mentally stronger. Over time, I realized that fitness offers numerous benefits that go far beyond the gym.

One of the most noticeable advantages of fitness is its positive impact on physical health. Regular exercise has helped me increase my stamina and strength while improving my overall body balance. Activities such as strength training, cardio workouts, and stretching exercises have contributed to better muscle tone and flexibility. As a result, I feel more active throughout the day and less affected by physical fatigue.

Beyond its physical benefits, fitness also contributes significantly to mental well-being. From my experience, exercising regularly helps reduce stress and anxiety. After a busy day, a workout session allows me to clear my mind and focus on myself. Physical activity increases the release of endorphins, which improves mood and promotes a sense of happiness. Fitness has become a natural way for me to manage stress and maintain emotional balance.

In addition to physical and mental benefits, fitness has positively influenced my daily habits and self-discipline. Having a regular workout routine has encouraged me to plan my time more effectively and adopt healthier lifestyle choices. I pay more attention to my sleep patterns, hydration, and nutrition. This holistic approach to health has made me more aware of how interconnected physical activity and overall well-being are.

Another significant benefit of fitness is its positive effect on concentration and academic performance. Regular physical activity helps me stay mentally alert and improves my ability to focus for longer periods. I find it easier to engage in reading, writing, and problem-solving tasks after exercising. As a result, fitness supports not only my health but also my effectiveness and productivity in academic life.

Fitness plays a crucial role in supporting overall health and functional capacity. Regular physical activity contributes to the development of muscular strength, cardiovascular endurance, and metabolic efficiency. These physiological adaptations enhance energy levels and support the effective functioning of major body systems. In addition, consistent exercise is associated with improvements in cognitive functioning, including attention, memory, and information processing speed. Increased blood circulation and oxygen delivery to the brain support mental clarity and cognitive performance. Therefore, fitness should be regarded not only as a physical practice but also as an essential component of holistic well-being and long-term health maintenance.

In conclusion, fitness has had a highly positive impact on my life, improving my physical health, mental well-being, and daily habits. It has taught me the importance of consistency, self-care, and balance. Rather than seeing fitness as a temporary activity, I now view it as a lifelong investment in health and personal development. For anyone seeking a healthier and more balanced life, fitness is a powerful and accessible starting point.

Lect. Begüm ETİZ

## **Biodata**

**Mustafa DAĞDELEN** is a preparatory class student at the School of Foreign Languages, Çukurova University.

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORTS, PSYCHOLOGY AND ANXIETY**

Today, many people experience stress and anxiety in their daily lives. School, work and social responsibilities can affect our psychology in a negative way. Because of this, people need activities that help them relax. One of the best activities is doing sports.

Sports have a positive effect on both the body and the mind. When people do sports, their body produces endorphins, which are known as happiness hormones. These hormones help people feel better and calmer. As a result, people who do sports regularly usually have a better mood.

Sports are especially helpful for people who have anxiety. While doing sports, people focus on their movements instead of their problems. This helps the mind relax. Activities like walking, running, swimming and yoga can reduce stress and anxiety. After exercising, people often feel more peaceful and energetic.

Another important benefit of sports is increased self-confidence. When people see improvement in their physical health, they feel more confident about themselves. Team sports also help people socialize and make new friends. This can reduce feelings of loneliness and anxiety.

In conclusion, there is a strong relationship between sports, psychology and anxiety. Doing sports regularly can improve mental health and reduce anxiety. Therefore, sports should be an important part of everyone's life.

Mustafa DAĞDELEN

## Biodata



**Sara HERRERA**, an 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. She is 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 Teaching Languages.

### FROM THE COURT TO THE CLASSROOM: LEARNING THE POWER OF PERSEVERANCE

How my experience as a high school tennis player shaped my approach to teaching English abroad

More than fifteen years later, I still find myself repeating the same phrase in my classroom: “Do you want to go far? Then you need to learn not to give up.” I was fifteen years old when I started high school and faced my first real challenge — paying the school fees. Because of my financial situation, I needed a scholarship to continue my studies. Determined to finish high school and eventually attend university, I explored my options and decided to apply for a sports scholarship.

I was never particularly passionate about sports, but my father always spoke — both through his words and his example — about the benefits of being active. A former soccer player and coach, he constantly encouraged us to play sports, stay active, and live a healthy lifestyle. I kept his advice close to heart: “Doing sports helps us enjoy life.” Motivated by both necessity and curiosity, I decided to give myself an opportunity in this new world.

I studied at High School No. 9 in Monterrey, Nuevo León, the city where I was born. Entering this new stage of life felt exciting and full of promise. I was eager to learn, especially in the subjects I loved most — languages and literature. I had always been a dedicated student, aiming for excellence, but high school brought a new kind of challenge: balancing academics with athletics.

Unlike many students who played sports for fun, I did it out of need — to keep my scholarship and continue pursuing my dream of higher education. Among the sports available, I chose tennis. It seemed to me the most “feminine” and “simple” option — two assumptions I quickly learned were completely wrong.

For two years, I lived the dual life of a student and an athlete. My daily routine was intense: morning training sessions began with an hour of warm-up and physical exercises, followed by gym workouts and on-court practice. After training, I rushed to classes, studied in the afternoons, and did homework in the evenings. It was exhausting, and there were many moments when I wanted to quit. I gave my best effort, but I wasn’t the most talented athlete. Still, I knew there was a deeper purpose — I wasn’t chasing medals; I was chasing growth.

One phrase from my coach stayed with me forever: “Do you want to go far? Then you must learn not to give up.” He repeated it whenever I felt discouraged or frustrated by my slow progress. There were days when I didn’t want to compete, afraid of showing I wasn’t “good enough.” But he never let me quit. With patience and honesty, he reminded me that his goal wasn’t to make me a champion, but to teach me perseverance — the strength to keep trying even when things got tough.

That lesson became the foundation of my identity as both a learner and, later, as a teacher. As I balanced sports and academics, I began noticing clear benefits. My concentration improved, I felt more energetic, and my performance in class got better. Research supports this connection: Donnelly et al. (2016) note that “evidence suggests positive associations among physical activity, fitness, cognition, and academic achievement.” Likewise, Tomporowski et al. (2008) argue that “systematic exercise programs may enhance the development of specific types of mental processing known to be important for meeting academic challenges.” My personal experience mirrored these findings perfectly.

Beyond the physical and cognitive gains, tennis taught me valuable life lessons — resilience, consistency, and persistence. I learned not to give up after the first mistake, to accept failure as part of growth, and to push myself even when results didn’t come easily. These lessons extended far beyond the tennis court. They became habits of mind that shaped how I approached my studies and, eventually, how I approach my teaching.

Playing tennis also helped me manage the emotional ups and downs of adolescence. Sports became a form of release — a way to “breathe,” both physically and emotionally. It helped me reduce anxiety and develop a healthier mindset. Biddle et al. (2019) explain that physical activity significantly contributes to emotional well-being in young people, and I can confirm that through lived experience.

Perhaps most importantly, I gained a sense of community. My teammates and coach became part of a lifelong support network. My coach, in particular, taught me the value of effort, dedication, and passion — qualities I now try to embody in my teaching. His influence still echoes in my classroom today.

Now, as an English teacher working abroad, I see many of my students facing similar internal battles: frustration, self-doubt, or the temptation to give up when learning feels hard. I often think back to my coach’s words and realize that my role is not so different from his. Like him, I must guide my students to understand that true success is not measured by “medals” — grades or fluency scores — but by the personal growth that comes from perseverance.

In this sense, I see myself as both a teacher and a coach. My classroom is the court where students practice resilience. I push them — kindly but firmly — because I know that pressure, when balanced with support, helps them grow. As Eccles and Barber (1999) remind us, the developmental outcomes of activities depend on their structure and context. The right balance of challenge and encouragement leads to learning that lasts.

More than fifteen years have passed, but my message remains the same: Do you want to go far? Then you must learn not to give up. Whether on the court or in the classroom, that lesson continues to serve me — and, I hope, my students — every single day.

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Lect. Sara HERRERA

## Biodata



*My name is **Sümeyye YILDIRIM**. I am eighteen. I am from Çorum. I am in the econometrics department at Çukurova University. I love sports, especially boxing.*

## MY BOXING LIFE

Sport plays an important role in the lives of most people. It is the same for me. I do boxing as a sport. I started doing it 4 years ago. When I started boxing, I felt like I found the missing piece of my life. I was so excited when I saw the boxing ring and put on my gloves. It was very difficult at first, but I felt really good once I started learning. Boxing boosted my self-confidence and helped me believe in myself. Boxing also increases our mental and physical strength. Of course, my coaches also had a big influence on this. I was lucky to have them. I also want to become an athlete who represents our country in the Olympics in the future. I hope I can make our national anthem known to the whole world.

Sümeyye YILDIRIM

## **Biodata**

*Neşe SONÇAĞ YAZAN is a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages and has been working as an ELT instructor for over 25 years. She currently leads the department of Compulsory English Classes. She loves podcasts and is interested in learning. She volunteers in an NGO which works to provide support for university students.*

### **SLACKLINE & HIGHLINE – HOW DID I LEARN TO HOLD MY BREATH AS A PARENT?**

When my daughter Ada started university in 2018, I expected many surprises as she has always been an adventurous girl and open to new and unusual experiences. What I did not expect was a phone call saying “Mom, I’m walking on a rope.” That was my introduction to slacklining.

Slackline is a sport where a flat, flexible line is stretched between two fixed points - usually trees - and the goal is to walk, balance, or even perform tricks on it. The line moves and bounces, which makes balance a challenge. Slackliners say it improves concentration, posture and inner calm. As a parent, I think it improves your ability to be ready for the worst-case scenarios.

At first I saw slackline as a creative way to break a leg or an arm. My mind was full of dramatic images like emergency room visits and phone calls saying she broke her leg. However, later I learned that slackline is generally practiced close to the ground. It requires patience, and focus. The qualities I was happy that my daughter can develop.

Two trees and a rope was never enough for Ada. Later, she started an extreme version of slackline, which is called HIGHLINE. Highlining is a form of slacklining done at great heights, such as between cliffs or buildings, using several safety equipment. I was watching videos of her walking on the rope, but this time between cliffs. She was almost walking in the sky!

What still makes my heart beat faster is watching her walk on that thin rope. Yet, I learned to hold my breath and trust her. And yes, I still hold my breath – just a little less than before.

Lect. Neşe SONÇAĞ YAZAN

## Biodata

**Cemre ATLI** is a Business Administration student at Çukurova University.

**Kübranur DÖNMEZ** studies Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning at Çukurova University.

**Kadriye Ceren ARI** is an Economics student at Çukurova University.

## 12 GIANT MAN

Sport is very important to everyone. Today, we would like to talk about playing basketball. Basketball has two teams. There are five people in one group. A game has four quarters and one quarter is 10 minutes long.

Playing basketball has many advantages. Firstly, basketball helps people stay healthy and strong and also it is good for the heart. Secondly, playing basketball is a team sport so players work together and help each other. This is important in our daily life and at work because we do team work in our jobs too. Finally, playing basketball in our life gives self-confidence. When we play basketball, we feel good.

In conclusion basketball is an exciting and popular sport. Many people enjoy playing and watching basketball. We love (12 Giant men) (12 Dev Adam). The 12 Giant men is the nickname of the Turkish national basketball team. Today, the team is led by captain Cedi Osman. They play with strong teamwork and great effort. This year, they came second in an international tournament. Many people in Türkiye are proud of the 12 Giant men.



Cemre ATLI  
Kübranur DÖNMEZ  
Kadriye Ceren ARI

## Biodata

**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.

## LESSONS FROM SPORT: REFLECTIONS ON LEARNING

Beyond its contributions to physical and mental health, I am among those who believe that sport closely resembles life itself. Especially in team sports, elements of competition, belief, perseverance, and the struggle to win strongly mirror real life. In both contexts, success is rarely accidental; it requires continuous effort, physical and mental resilience, and the ability to come back after moments of desperation. To succeed, one must work hard, remain physically and mentally resilient, be able to stand up after falling, and always be prepared.

Having engaged in different sports as an amateur during different periods of my life, I strongly believe that these experiences have taught me invaluable life lessons. Each of these sports demanded discipline, patience, and commitment. Even in moments when winning seemed extremely difficult, I repeatedly experienced—both as someone who actively practiced sports such as football, tennis, and table tennis in some periods of my life and as a sports spectator—that perseverance and hard work are key to success. These experiences consistently demonstrated that seemingly impossible goals can be achieved through hard work, determination, and consistency, and that “impossible” is often just an illusion shaped by fear or lack of confidence.

I've had the chance to test the connection between sport and life which became particularly evident during the early years of my teaching career. While working as a high school teacher, I had the opportunity to coach the school football team. Although coaching was outside my academic field, guiding students in a sport they cared deeply about brought about unexpectedly positive outcomes. The training sessions provided a shared space where effort, responsibility, and mutual trust became visible and meaningful. I was genuinely surprised to observe how students with whom I previously had difficulty establishing any meaningful connection began to relate to me differently and respect me even more after my role as a coach. Their interest in my classes increased noticeably as well. This change was not solely the result of the unifying power of sport. Rather, it resulted from engaging with an area that held meaning in the students' lives and acknowledging their strengths beyond academic performance. Through this experience, students began to see me not only as a language teacher, but also as someone who understood their interests, struggles, and potential. As a result, the sense of trust and motivation established on the field gradually transferred into the classroom environment.

Consequently, I can say that my teaching practice and my teaching philosophy were shaped by the mindset of an athlete. Even today, I frequently use sports-related metaphors when giving examples to my students, as these metaphors provide familiar and concrete frames of reference. Just as athletes must train effectively and consistently to address their weaknesses in order to perform well in a match, students must pay attention in class, reflect on feedback, and study regularly to overcome the challenges they face. Another equally important aspect is patience; meaningful progress in sport does not happen overnight, and neither does learning. In this respect, sport, education, and life itself share a common pattern: sustainable success requires persistence, self-discipline, and self-confidence.

Lect. S. Alper ZEREYALP

## Biodata

**Kewin MADEJ** is from the Silesian University of Technology in Katowice. “I’m a sports enthusiast who loves both playing and writing about the games I’m enthusiastic about. Whether I’m outside or behind the keyboard, I’m always looking to share the excitement and insights of the sports world with others. Writing articles allows me to dive deeper into the things I love, while competing keeps me focused and driven.”

## THE WEIGHT OF THE FINAL GOAL

Hockey has always been a part of my life. I inherited my father’s passion for the sport; he used to be a goalie when he was my age. I have been skating ever since I can remember, and my parents signed me up for a hockey team as soon as I was old enough. Since then, we have gone to a regional hockey tournament once a year. But this time, it was going to be different. I wasn’t just going to show up and play; I was out to prove to myself and to everyone else that I had the skills to compete on a higher level. After all, I wanted to become a professional hockey player.

The road to that competition, however, was far from easy. I knew from the very beginning that this would require preparation unlike anything I had done before. My coach, Coach Miller, had always demanded a lot from our group, but once I told him about my intention, he pushed me even harder.

Our training sessions became tough in ways I hadn’t anticipated. We worked relentlessly on the fundamentals: skating drills, stick-handling, power plays, and penalty kills. Coach Miller insisted we simulate real match conditions, where the goal wasn’t just to win, but to execute every pass, every shot, every movement with flawless precision.

The mental grind was equally intense: Coach Miller would never let up, always telling us it was the mental game that separated the genuinely talented players from the merely good. He made me watch hours of game footage, studying opponents’ plays, taking apart their tactics, and breaking down every little detail of their game. I sometimes wondered if I could keep up with the pressure at all.

The closer to the tournament, the more my anticipation mixed with fear. The event was being held at a small rink about an hour’s drive from town. The stadium was far from perfect, with worn bleachers, a somewhat uneven ice surface, and the sour smell of stale locker rooms. The conditions did not make the players lose focus. Team after team arrived from the far parts of the region, each one wanting victory. Some teams seemed like they’d been playing together for years, with their moves almost synchronized.

It was an elimination tournament, and the deeper we got, the tougher the competition became. We found ourselves grinding through the early rounds, facing teams with a level of intensity we weren’t expecting. Every match felt like a battle – a high-speed contest of strength, strategy, and pure willpower. Nothing could have prepared us for the final.

That last game was exhausting. We exchanged goals back and forth. Every goal seemed like it could be the decisive one. With every minute that passed, everyone was even more exhausted. I felt like I was going to collapse from lack of energy. Down by one goal in the decisive moments, I could feel the slipping away of opportunity. Yet we refused to let go. A well-timed pass found its way to me in the dying seconds of the game. I hit the puck as hard as I could, but somehow, the goalie made an incredible save.

That was it. The match ended. We came second. I’ll never forget how it felt in those last moments; the weight of disappointment that comes with losing after having fought so hard. Although we were defeated, I realized our effort was something to be proud of: we had pushed ourselves to the limit, left everything on the ice, and fought all the way to the end. In many ways, it was the real victory.

Sometimes, the most challenging part of chasing a dream is accepting that things don't always go your way, no matter how hard you work. Looking back, I still can't get over the goal I missed. It would have been like a movie scene. Even though we didn't win the tournament, the hours of arduous work were worth it. I proved to myself that I can do it, and when a new opportunity comes, I will not give up.

Kewin MADEJ

## Biodata

**Tomasz GASIOROWSKI** studies Informatics at the Silesian University of Technology.

*“I like reading books, cooking, and sports, especially martial arts.”*

## THROUGH BOREDOM AND PAIN: THE PRICE OF MASTERY

Every day, we see sports superstars; probably everyone has had a moment when they wanted to be like one of them. We know that they are rich, they have recognition, and overall, they have an ideal life we probably would like to have. Unfortunately, we see only the bright light; we can't see the shadow that follows the brightness. We see only the fruits of their hard work, sweat, and pain. Even though we desire their fruits, are we able to endure their suffering?

When I was in primary school, I started training in table tennis to beat the older kids I didn't like. A brief time passed, and training began to show results. I was winning not only against those kids but also against almost everyone else. My friend and I started training together, and we became the best table tennis players at our school. We were our school's representatives for table tennis. After a few years, we both hit something that separates talented players from the best ones. To be the best, we had to make our every move ideal. We had nothing new to learn. It wasn't fascinating. Imagine doing the same thing for a few hours weekly. Because of this, frustration grew bigger. I couldn't endure that. I stopped training in table tennis.

In my opinion, the ability to endure boredom and the emotions that come with it is a giant sieve that distinguishes skillful players from the best players. As we can see, I have not become the best table tennis player. Currently, I don't even consider myself a talented player because I haven't played for a long time. In contrast, the best players in many different sports never stop training, even though they probably want to. Their spirit is unbreakable.

The most interesting thing is that it correlates with almost everything we do in life. Do you want to become the best mathematician? You must endure demanding work. Do you want to learn a new language? You must endure the pain. Same with cooking, every school subject, everything we don't know, everything we want to master.

When you try something for the first time, you will also face a sieve. It won't be as drastic as the previous one. The entry-level sieve is the first big obstacle, for example, weird grammar in a foreign language or a new move in some sport.

There is one recipe for success in both cases. Don't give up! It is both complicated and straightforward. It requires a lot of willpower and strength. After all, you don't have to be the best, and you don't have to continue things you don't want to.

If you can remember one thing from this text, let it be this: if you want to do something but it's hard, don't give up.

Tomasz GASIOROWSKI

## Biodata

**Sebastian LEGIERSKI** studies Industrial Informatics at the Silesian University of Technology in Katowice, Poland. Sebastian is interested in reading books, politics, mathematics, and actively participating in academic life.

## SPORTS AROUND THE WORLD

Sports are a part of our everyday lives, whether we play with friends, exercise, or cheer for our favorite team. Yet, the most popular sports differ around the world, shaped by geography and history. In Poland and across Europe, that sport would be soccer, widely known and popular worldwide. However, that's not the case for every country.

Let's start with the country with the vast population: India. Surprisingly, hockey is considered the national sport due to its historic Olympic successes. Anyway, the most popular sports in India are cricket and kabaddi.

A common misconception is that cricket is simply hitting balls through loops, but there's much more to it. It shares similarities with baseball in the sense that it's also a bat-and-ball game. Cricket is played between two teams of 11 players each, on an oval-shaped field with a slight pitch in the middle. Both teams have a "batter" and a "bowler" on each end of the strip. On the ends of the strip, there are three wooden sticks topped with two smaller pieces, which form the wicket. The game goes like this: a player from team one, the bowler, throws a ball towards the wicket of the rival team. The enemy team's batter then attempts to hit the ball with a flat bat, and if they do, they proceed to run back and forth on the pitch, depending on where the ball first lands. The fielders try to catch the ball or hit the opposing team's wicket to get the batter out. If the ball, either by the bowler or a fielder, hits the wicket before the batter finishes running, the batter is also out. The team with the most runs wins.

Kabaddi, unlike most sports, doesn't use a ball at all. Instead, it's a contact sport. Kabaddi is a game in which two teams take turns sending a player, called the "raider," onto the opposing team's side to tag opponents and run back before being caught. The raider must do this in one breath while repeatedly shouting "kabaddi." If the raider tags players and gets back safely, their team scores points. If they're caught, the other team scores. Being caught is done by tackling the raider, often called a "super tackle." You could say Kabaddi is like an advanced version of tag.

Staying in Asia, but moving East, we found another country with interesting national sports, Japan. Despite the widespread media stereotype that Japan is more interested in martial arts, its most popular sport is baseball. Alongside it, there's a high interest in soccer and sumo wrestling, with the latter being the national sport due to its cultural and historical significance.

Sumo wrestling takes place in a circular ring where two wrestlers face off. Before the match, wrestlers perform rituals, such as throwing salt into the ring to purify it. The goal is to push the other wrestler out of the ring. This is why sumo wrestlers are known for their size and strength. Matches are short, sometimes lasting only a few seconds.

Travelling south to Australia, an interesting case emerges: the entire continent of Oceania plays rugby as its most popular sport. Often, rugby and football are confused with each other due to many similarities. The main differences between the two are the team sizes (15 in rugby, 11 in football) and the fact that passing forward is allowed only in football. In rugby, players try to carry or kick an oval-shaped ball to the other team's end to score points. You can run with the ball, but you can only pass it backward to teammates. The other team tries to stop you by tackling. Points are scored by touching the ball down in the opponent's goal area or by kicking it through the goalposts. It's a fast-paced, physical-contact sport that requires both strength and teamwork.

Oceania is on the smaller side, but they are not the only continent where all the countries are like-minded. South America is quite the same. Soccer unites everyone here much the same as it does in Europe. This is further amplified by the fact that some of the most legendary soccer players come from here, and by South American countries consistently being among the top performers at the World Cup.

Moving up, in North America, it gets interesting. Sports in the USA are popular due to their globality and surprising influence on fashion. Team sports are also an essential part of students' lives in high school and university, because sometimes the outcome of your games can determine your scholarship or position as a student. While basketball, baseball, and American football shine in the states, ice hockey reigns as the most popular sport up north. This makes Canada stand out as one of the few countries where a winter sport takes center stage.

Sports unite, may spark rivalry, but most importantly, they bring people together. Whether as teammates or fans, they enjoy something popular or unique to their region. They reflect not only our physical abilities but also our culture, traditions, and passions. From the roaring stadiums of Europe to the crowded cricket fields of India and the sumo arenas in Japan, sports tell the story of who we are and what we value. No matter the country or the rules, the excitement of competition and the joy of victory remain universal. In the end, sports are more than just games; they're a global language that everyone can understand.

Sebastian LEGIERSKI

## Biodata

**Wojciech JANSON** is a second-year Computer Science student at the Silesian University of Technology in Katowice.

*“I decided to pursue these studies because they take place at the Faculty of Electronics, which has always been of interest to me, allowing me now to acquire more precise knowledge regarding my area of interest. In my free time, I am interested in the automotive field, particularly its Japanese segment. However, during the winter season, my passion for skiing is more significant, which I will elaborate on further in the article.”*

## SKIING IS MY PASSION

My name is Wojtek, and I would like to share my passion for skiing and explain why I enjoy this winter sport so much. Unfortunately, I cannot practice it as often as I would like, because I live in central Poland and travelling to the mountains takes a considerable amount of time. Due to this distance, I only have the opportunity during the winter break to spend about one week skiing and fulfilling my passion.

Let us begin from the very start – what were my first steps in this sporting discipline?

When I was six years old, I travelled to the Polish mountains for the first time. My stay there brought me immense joy, as I loved being active and had always possessed an abundance of energy. My parents were excellent witnesses to this because, while they were already quite tired, I would run a little ahead, then return to them, continuing in this manner all the way to each mountain peak. It was then that I realized that time spent in the mountains could be enjoyed in various active ways. That was how I discovered skiing, which fascinated me from the very beginning.

Returning to the start of my skiing journey, the place where I first learned to ski was the gentle beginner slope on Mount “Nosal” in Zakopane, which had a T-bar lift. It was an ideal place for learning because it was not as flat as the designated learning areas in large resorts. Thanks to this, I was able to take my first steps in skiing within almost one week, which contributed to more effective progress in learning the following stages of skiing. During that trip, I became very proficient in the “pizza” style of skiing. At that time, I was unaware of my progress. Still, during my next trip, which was to a different location, the instructor informed me that there was no longer any need to continue practicing that style and that I should begin learning the parallel style.

After that trip, when I had mastered the next level of skiing, I took a break from sports for a few years. It was only when I attended a skiing camp several years later that I returned to the slopes. I very quickly recalled how to ski, to the point that I took sixth place out of approximately sixty participants, many of whom had far greater experience. It turned out I was the best skier on my team, even though we had been regarded as one of the less skilled teams. I attended the same camp again, and this time I took first place. Since then, I have not participated in another camp, as it was no longer organized due to a lack of interest. These experiences gave me strong motivation to continue pursuing my passion. For the past several years, I have been going to the mountains with my parents, both in Poland and abroad. Up to this day, my favorite ski slope is “Chopok” in Jasné, Slovakia.



When I ski, everything else ceases to matter to me, which is why I love this sport so much. On the slope, I can fully concentrate on improving my technique and speed while admiring the scenery, set in a beautiful winter atmosphere. I deeply regret not having many opportunities to ski, as it is the best form of active recreation, combining travel with the exploration of novel places.

In conclusion, I would like to make a small but essential appeal to all those who are beginning, or planning to begin, their skiing adventure. Everyone should become familiar with the “Skiing Decalogue.” By doing so, skiing will become safer not only for others on the slope, but most importantly for the person just starting. Over the years, I have witnessed many dangerous situations that could have resulted in injury or serious accidents due to a lack of knowledge of basic rules. Let us also remember that whenever we see someone fall on the slope, we should always ask whether everything is all right and whether they need help.

I wish everyone enjoyable skiing or learning experiences, and I hope to see you all on the slopes!

Wojciech JANSON

## INSIGHTS FROM OUR PARTNERING SCHOOL, GAZI ANADOLU HIGH SCHOOL, ADANA

Below you will find the biodata of Esen İşık COŞANAY, English teacher at Gazi Anadolu High School, along with two student compositions. We thank Esen İşık COŞANAY for her valuable contribution.

### Biodata

*My name is **Esen İşık COŞANAY**. I have been working as an English teacher for 19 years. I'm currently working at Gazi Anatolian High School in Adana. I'm into travelling, exploring new cultures, traditional art, gardening and plogging, and I'm also passionate about teaching, learning and inspiring young minds. My teaching philosophy is based on creating a supportive and engaging environment where all students feel valued and are aware of their potential. Over the years, I have taught learners from a wide range of backgrounds, which has strengthened my belief that language is not only a tool for communication but also a bridge between cultures and perspectives, and it also opens doors to unique opportunities. Thus, I have been trying to make my students understand the importance of language for years. I believe that effective teaching requires continuous growth, and I'm committed to learning just as much as I teach. Lastly, I would like to say it is a great honor and a pleasure to be a part of this work for me and my pupils. I extend sincere thanks to the valuable journal team for this enjoyable collaboration.*

## Biodata

*My full name is **Merve Saadet YUKSEL**, and I am a 10th-grade student at Gazi Anatolian High School. I love swimming, drawing, playing chess, reading and writing. I am passionate about understanding how physical activity affects human health, as I have experienced it firsthand. In the future, I plan to be a cardiovascular surgeon, and I am going to serve my country.*

## THE SOCIAL ROLE OF SPORT

To be honest, I was never someone whose life revolved around sports. I was always the girl hunched over a desk, wrestling with a mathematics textbook for hours. Until I realized after the high school entrance exam, my body had grown sluggish. For example, I could not run as much as my friends. I would tire quickly and struggle to catch my breath. Mentally, I also felt depleted. No matter how much I studied, my grades just stopped improving. It took me quite a while to leave my comfort zone. Over time, I realized this was not only my personal problem. It was something a lot of people deal with today. Many people spend most of their day sitting and that kind of routine affects both body and mind. A lack of regular Physical activity can cause things like losing focus. It also can cause stress and pain. At that point I understood that sport is not just a physical thing. It's also a way to build confidence and endurance. After I learned this, I joined a government project called "Let No One Remain Unable to Swim" and I started swimming lessons. At first, swimming for an hour every day was really tiring, but later it started to make me feel great. After some time, I felt almost one with the water. It did not make me feel tired anymore and I didn't just stop there. I also began walking regularly. Those walks felt like little meetings with myself. After a while, if I skipped a walk I felt like my day was wasted. But the effects of sports aren't only personal. Sport also connects people. It brings cultures together and helps communities grow stronger. International events like the Tokyo Olympics show how sports can unite the world and make people from different backgrounds understand each other better. Sports also tells us something about old class divisions. Some were traditionally reserved for who are in high altitude. Like tennis, golf, fencing ...They even have complicated and abstract scoring systems. However, games like wrestling are simple and just bring your opponent to the ground. These differences show that understanding some sports requires not only physical skill but also experience and knowledge. Through sport, we improve our health, clear our minds and connect better with others. As the old saying goes "A Sound Mind In A Sound Body". That's why making sport a part of our everyday lives and encouraging everyone to take part is truly important.

Merve Saadet YÜKSEL  
Gazi Anatolian High School  
10th Grade Student

## Biodata

*My name is Arda AKDEMİR, I am a high school student and this year is my second year in high school. I am 15 years old and I attend Gazi Anatolian High School, I love playing and watching soccer, and when our English teacher says I can write about something I like I wanted to give it a try, that's why I wrote this essay and why I choose soccer. I hope you like my essay about soccer and this essay has been helpful.*

## SOCCKER

Soccer is a simple game that 22 men/woman run before the soccer's main thing "ball" but it's really that simple? In fact, yes, soccer really that simple but of course like other sports, soccer also has a lot of details in its own. First, in soccer you can't use your hands but if you're a goalkeeper, then you can use your hands or don't play aggressive because other players can get hurt easily and we don't want to end that players career, right? Anyway, soccer is a popular sport so I won't waste your time by telling you it. In soccer, in my opinion players' stories and hopes are more interesting. Think a minute, you are a poor boy in Africa, your opportunities are limited, you live in Africa, you can work in other countries but let's be honest, it's quite hard to get there, right? Or not? No matter how poor you are, you can play soccer and it's not a hard thing at all- there is a high chance to discover your talent by team that we call it scout in soccer. After you discover these scouts, you can start playing professionally. In soccer, there are four positions. Goalkeeper, Defender, Midfielder and Forward. To explain these positions simply, goalkeeper should stop the ball and prevent a goal from being scored, defender its same as goalkeeper but can't use their hands, midfielders should direct the game, set up the play, and pass the ball to forwards, and lastly forwards should score; that's it. Anyway, let's go back to our story, as a Professional soccer player, you can play in these 4 main positions if you are tall and flexible you can be goalkeeper, if you are tall, well-built you can choose defender, if you can take risks and you have a great speed you can choose midfield lastly if you are calm, fast, if your technique is good, you can score while the ball is with you, you should choose forward. That's all, if you choose one of them, you can be a great soccer player.

Soccer is one of the most favorite and popular sport in the world. If you achieve something and join a big club, your name will be very valuable, and even if you were poor before in a place like Africa, you would become a person known by almost everyone in the world. In the world. Of course. while you are doing that, do not harm other players because they are also a human, they also have a dream like you, soccer is a dangerous game and with your wrong move, other players can get injured and even the players' careers can end this be cautious. Anyway, there are a lot of players' success like Mo Salah, Samuel Eto'o, Didier Drogba and other players. Besides all these, you should definitely include sports in your life, by doing sports you will feel safer both physically and mentally.

Arda AKDEMİR  
Gazi Anatolian High School  
10th Grade Student



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