

Tuğçe Nur Pekçetin

Madison, WI, USA
✉ pekçetin@wisc.edu
Google Scholar
Personal Website

Education

- 2024 **Ph.D., Cognitive Science**, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
GPA: 3.86 | Advisors: Assoc. Prof. Murat Perit Çakır, Assoc. Prof. Burcu A. Ürgen
Thesis: *Dynamics of Mind Perception in Human-Robot Interaction: Investigating Determinants Related to the Perceiver and the Perceived Using Real-Time Implicit and Explicit Measurements*
- 2017 **M.S., Cognitive Science**, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
GPA: 3.79 | Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Cengiz Acartürk
Thesis: *The Effects of Word Length and Suffixation on Eye Movement Control in Turkish Reading*
- 2013 **B.A., Foreign Language Education**, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey | GPA: 3.60

Employment

Research

- Sept. 2025 – Present **Fulbright Postdoctoral Research Fellow**, *People and Robots Laboratory*, Department of Computer Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, USA.
○ Advisor: Prof. Bilge Mutlu
- Oct. 2024 – Sept. 2025 **Postdoctoral Research Fellow**, *Cognitive Computational Neuroscience Lab*, Aysel Sabuncu Brain Research Center, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
○ Project: *Multisensory Contributions to the Perception, Identification and Classification of Human and Robot Actions: An Investigation into Auditory Information and Visual Contextual Cues*; TÜBİTAK Grant No. 124C427 (PI: Dr. Tuğçe Nur Pekçetin; Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Burcu A. Ürgen)
○ Designed and executed six multimodal online studies (N=600); supervised project team members and mentored students on affiliated projects
- Sept. 2021 – Sept. 2024 **Doctoral Researcher**, *Cognitive Computational Neuroscience Lab*, Aysel Sabuncu Brain Research Center, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
○ Project: *How Do We Perceive Social Robots? Inter-Generational and Inter-Individual Differences in Mind Attribution to Robots*; TÜBİTAK Grant No. 120K913 (PI: Assoc. Prof. Burcu A. Ürgen)
○ Designed and executed online and in-person studies; collected data from 750 (online) and 166 participants across four generations in a real-time Wizard-of-Oz HRI study
○ Coordinated the HRI group and the social robotics project; co-established a “real-world” lab and co-developed the HR-ACT (Human-Robot Action) Database with a diverse team of graduate and undergraduate students
○ Trained research assistants and interns, mentored undergraduate students, and managed administrative tasks for the lab and affiliated projects

- Sept. 2015 – **Graduate Research Assistant**, *TURead (Turkish Reading) Lab*, Graduate School of Informatics, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Jan. 2017
- Project: *The Investigation of Cognitive Processes in Reading: Development of a Corpus of Turkish Reading Patterns for Eye Movement Control Modeling*, TÜBİTAK Grant No: 113K723, PI: Assoc. Prof. Cengiz Acartürk
 - Conducted face-to-face eye-tracking experiments with over 200 participants and organized data collection across concurrent projects
 - Trained new lab members and interns, and managed administrative tasks
- Apr. 2015 – **Student Assistant**, *Department of Cognitive Science*, Graduate School of Informatics, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Sept. 2015
- Annotated lexical items according to their morphological properties for a TUBITAK project (Grant No: 113K723), PI: Assoc. Prof. Cengiz Acartürk
 - Annotated eye tracking data for analyses of eye movements in a published journal article (DOI: 10.1080/00220973.2016.1143793).
- Apr. 2015 – **Linguistic Annotator**, *METU Corpora Research Group*, Graduate School of Informatics, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Sept. 2015
- Project: *Enriching Turkish Discourse Bank: Annotating Implicit Connectives*, METU BAP Grant No: BAP-07-04-2015-004, PI: Prof. Deniz Zeyrek Bozşahin
 - Annotated implicit discourse connectives and entity relations in METU Turkish Corpus

Teaching

- Sept. 2021 – **Instructor**, *Department of Translation and Interpretation*, Başkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- June 2022
- Taught English Grammar and Reading and Writing Skills in English I & II courses to 1st year undergraduate students as a part-time instructor
- Sept. 2013 – **Instructor**, *Department of Foreign Languages*, University of Turkish Aeronautical Association, Ankara, Turkey.
- Sept. 2014
- As a full-time instructor, taught Main Course (English grammar and vocabulary) and Skills Courses (reading and writing in English) to undergraduate students of various levels and international graduate students

Industry

- Nov. 2017 – **Linguistic Evaluator**, *Unbabel*, Remote.
- Aug. 2025
- Evaluated the overall quality of translations (EN-TR) and the performance of editors
 - Provided monthly tips and recommendations for editors
- Dec. 2016 – **Linguistic Annotator**, *Unbabel*, Remote.
- Aug. 2025
- Identified errors in human/machine-translated texts (EN-TR) and classify them according to a given typology
 - Provided general linguistic consultancy including guideline preparations, translation memory/glossary translations and validations
- Feb. 2014 – **Content Assessor and Annotator**, *Yandex*, Remote.
- Feb. 2016
- Evaluated the accuracy of web page responses to specific search queries
 - Wrote annotations to guide assessors' evaluations

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

- [J4] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Aşkñ, G., Evsen, Ş., Karaduman, T. D., Barinal, B., Tunç, J., Acarturk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2026). HR-ACT (Human-Robot Action) Database: Communicative and Noncommunicative Action Videos Featuring a Human and a Humanoid Robot. *Behavior Research Methods*, 58, 34. DOI: 10.3758/s13428-025-02910-0
- [J3] Acartürk, C., Özkan, A., **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Ormanoğlu, Z., & Kırkıcı, B. (2024). TUREad: An eye movement dataset of Turkish reading. *Behavior Research Methods*, 56, 1793–1816. DOI: 10.3758/s13428-023-02120-6
- [J2] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Evsen, Ş., Pekçetin, S., Acarturk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2023). A Naturalistic Setup for Presenting Real People and Live Actions in Experimental Psychology and Cognitive Neuroscience Studies. *Journal of Visualized Experiments*, (198), e65436. DOI: 10.3791/65436
- [J1] Ürgen, B. A., & **Pekçetin, T. N.** (2023). İnsan-robot etkileşimine zihin algısı özelinde bilişsel bilimler penceresinden bakış. *Nesne Psikoloji Dergisi*, 11(29), 437-448. DOI: 10.7816/nesne-11-29-06

Peer-Reviewed Conference Papers

- [C6] Özsu, A. B., **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Faydalı, D. Ş., & Urgen, B. A. (2025, March). Distraction by a Human or a Robot: Effects of Perceptual Load and Action Type. In *Companion of the 2025 ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction* (pp. 1171–1175). DOI: 10.5555/3721488.3721640
- [C5] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Evsen, Ş., Pekçetin, S., Acarturk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2024, July). Mind Perception at Play: Exploring Agent and Action Dynamics in Real-Time Human-Robot Interaction. In *Proceedings of the 46th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*. URL: escholarship.org/uc/item/0q88x866
- [C4] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Evsen, Ş., Pekçetin, S., Acarturk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2024, March). Real-World Implicit Association Task for Studying Mind Perception: Insights for Social Robotics. In *Companion of the 2024 ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction* (pp. 837-841). DOI: 10.1145/3610978.3640706
- [C3] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Evsen, Ş., Pekçetin, S., Karaduman, T. D., Acarturk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2024, March). A Naturalistic Laboratory Setup for Real-World HRI Studies. In *Companion of the 2024 ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction* (pp. 1296-1298). DOI: 10.1145/3610978.3641113
- [C2] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Acarturk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2024, March). Investigating Mind Perception in HRI through Real-Time Implicit and Explicit Measurements. In *Companion of the 2024 ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction* (pp. 139-141). DOI: 10.1145/3610978.3638366
- [C1] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Barinal, B., Tunç, J., Acarturk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2023, March). Studying mind perception in social robotics implicitly: The need for validation and norming. In *Proceedings of the 2023 ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction* (pp. 202-210). DOI: 10.1145/3568162.3577001

Refereed Conference, Symposium, and Workshop Presentations

- [Symp. 8] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Kıyılıoğlu K., Robinson M. N., Uçar H. U., & Ürgen, B. A. (2025). When Actions Meet Context: Exploring Visual and Auditory Cues in Human-Robot Action Perception *11th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, June 1, 2025, İstanbul, Turkey [**Poster**].
- [Symp. 7] Çınar G., **Pekçetin, T. N.**, & Ürgen, B. A. (2025). Implicit Minds, Explicit Judgments: How Actor and Action Type Affect Mind Attribution in Human-Robot Interaction. *11th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, June 1, 2025, İstanbul, Turkey [**Poster**].
- [Symp. 6] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Evsen, Ş., Pekçetin, S., Acartürk, C., & Urgen, B. A. (2024). Depends on Who Does What! Real-time Implicit and Explicit Measurements of Agent and Action Effects on Mind Perception. *10th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, June 1, 2024, Ankara, Turkey [**Poster**].
- [Conf. 2] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Aşkın, G., Evsen, S., Eroğlu, A., Karaduman, T., Erdil, D., Barinal, B., Tunç, J., & Ürgen, B. A. (2023). A Set of Communicative and Noncommunicative Action Video Stimuli for Human-Robot Interaction Research. *COGSCI 2023, 45th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, July 26-29, 2023 (Virtual) [**Poster**].
- [Meeting 2] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Aşkın, G., Evsen, S., Eroğlu, A., Karaduman, T., Erdil, D., Barinal, B., Tunç, J., Boran, B., Ürgen, B.A. (2022). A Stimulus Set of Communicative and Noncommunicative Actions for Human-Robot Interaction Research. *METU III Open Research Day*, June 17, 2022, Ankara, Turkey [**Poster**] **🏆–Best Poster Award**.
- [Symp. 5] **Pekçetin, T. N.**, Aşkın, G., Evsen, S., Eroğlu, A., Karaduman, T., Erdil, D., Barinal, B., Tunç, J., Boran, B., & Ürgen, B. A. (2022). A Stimulus Set of Communicative and Noncommunicative Actions for Human-Robot Interaction Research. *8th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, May 29, 2022 (Virtual) [**Poster**].
- [Congr. 1] **Bozkurt, T. N.**, Özge, D. (2019). Türkçede Niceleyicilerin Anlamlandırılma Süreçleri. *33. Ulusal Dilbilim Kurultayı (33rd National Linguistics Congress)*, May 9-10, 2019, Mersin, Turkey [**Oral Presentation**].
- [Symp. 4] **Bozkurt, T. N.**, Çakır, M. P. (2019). Identifying Real and Fake News: A Mouse Tracking Investigation. *6th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, April 28, 2019, İstanbul, Turkey. [**Poster**].
- [Meeting 1] **Bozkurt, T. N.**, Çakır, M. P. (2019). Identifying Real and Fake News: A Mouse Tracking Investigation. *METU II Open Research Day*, May 17, 2019, Ankara, Turkey [**Poster**] **🏆–Worthy of Mention Award**.
- [Conf. 1] **Bozkurt, T. N.** (2019). An Investigation on the Forms of Negation in Turkish: Towards a Formal Representation. *Boğaziçi University Student Conference on Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics*, February 15-16, İstanbul, Turkey [**Poster**].
- [Symp. 3] Ormanoğlu, Z., Acartürk, C., Özkan, A., Kılıç, Ö., **Bozkurt, T. N.** (2018). Perceptual Span in Turkish Reading: A Study on Parafoveal Information Intake. *5th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, May 6, 2018, İstanbul, Turkey [**Poster**].

- [Symp. 2] Acartürk, C., Kırkıcı, B., Kılıç Ö., Özkan, A., **Bozkurt, T. N.**, Ormanoğlu Z., Göl, A. Y. (2017). The Investigation of Cognitive Processes in Reading: Development of a Corpus of Turkish Reading Patterns for Eye Movement Control Modeling. *4th International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, April 30, 2017, Ankara, Turkey [**Poster**].
- [Workshop 1] Acartürk, C., Özkan, A., **Bozkurt, T. N.** (2016). Reading in Agglutinative Languages: Silent Reading and Oral Reading in Turkish. *7th Scandinavian Workshop on Eye Tracking*, June 19-21, 2016, Turku, Finland [**Oral Presentation**].
- [Symp. 1] Özkan, A., **Bozkurt, T. N.**, Acartürk, C. (2016). Reading in Agglutinative Languages: Silent Reading and Oral Reading in Turkish. *3rd International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science*, May 8, 2016, İstanbul, Turkey [**Poster**].

Grants/Scholarships/Fellowships

- Feb. 2025 **Fulbright Postdoctoral Program Scholarship**
Field: Cognitive Science, Human-Robot Interaction
- Jan. 2025 – **TUBITAK 2250 Performance-Based Scholarships Programme for Postdocs**
Aug. 2025 Awarded twice in Period 1 & Period 2.
- Sept. 2024 **TUBITAK 2218 - National Postdoctoral Research Fellowship**
Field: Human-Robot Interaction, Action Perception
- May 2021 – **TUBITAK 1001 Program Doctoral Fellowship**
Sept. 2024 Field: Human-Robot Interaction, Mind Perception
- July 2024 **2224-A Grant Program for Participation in Scientific Meetings Abroad** for participation in the CogSci 2024, the 46th Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society in Rotterdam, The Netherlands
- March 2024 **ACM HRI'24 Pioneers Travel Grants**, for participation in the HRI 2024 Pioneers Workshop within the 19th Annual ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction (HRI) in Boulder, Colorado
- Aug. 2023 – **TUBITAK 2250 Performance-Based Scholarships Programme for PhD**
July 2024 Awarded twice in Period 1 & Period 2.
- Dec. 2023 **Erasmus+ KA131 Short-Term Doctoral Traineeship Grant**
- March 2023 **TUBITAK Travel Grant**, for participation in 18th Annual ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction (HRI) in Stockholm, Sweden
- 2017 – 2021 **100/2000 CoHE Doctoral Scholarship** Field: Human-Computer Interaction
- Sept. 2015 – **TUBITAK 1001 Program Master of Science Fellowship**
Jan. 2017 Field: Eye Movement Control in Reading
- June 2016 **TUBITAK Travel Grant**, for participation in 7th Scandinavian Workshop on Eye Tracking, Turku, Finland
- 2008 – 2013 **The Prime Minister's Scholarship**, awarded for a high ranking in the University Entrance Exam

Recognition/Awards

- August 2025 **Best PhD Thesis Award** in the Category of Contribution to Scientific Advancement, Middle East Technical University Graduate School of Informatics
- March 2025 **Outstanding Reviewer Recognition** awarded by the Program Committee for exceptional reviewing of Full Papers, 20th ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction (HRI)
- March 2024 **Human-Robot Interaction Pioneer**, selected as one of 25 participants for the annual HRI Pioneers Workshop, bringing together top student researchers, ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction

Invited Talks and Events

- T5 **Speaker**, "Dynamics of Mind Perception in Human-Robot Interaction: A Real-Time Implicit and Explicit Investigation" *organized by CONTACT (COgNiTive Architecture for Collaborative Technologies) Unit, Italian Institute of Technology (IIT)* November 13, 2024, Genova, Italy.
- T4 **Speaker**, "Dynamics of Mind Perception in Human-Robot Interaction: A Cognitive Science Perspective" *Bilkent University Psychology Department Colloquium* organized by *Department of Psychology, Bilkent University*, October 18, 2024, Ankara, Turkey.
- T3 **Speaker**, "Dynamics of Mind Perception in Human-Robot Interaction: Real-Time Implicit and Explicit Investigations across Four Generations" *MIRRORLab Speaker Series 2024* organized by *the Mines Interactive Robotics Research Lab, Department of Computer Science, Colorado School of Mines*, June 26, 2024 (Virtual).
- T2 **Speaker**, "Ph.D. research in Human-Robot Interaction: Studying Mind Perception in the Context of Social Robotics" *COGS Research Club* organized by *METU Cognitive Science Department*, August 1, 2023, Ankara, Turkey.
- E1 **Panelist**, "Studying Cognitive Science in Turkey - METU Cognitive Science Master's & PhD Program Introduction" *Fundamentals of Cognitive Science Summer School #2* organized by *CogIST*, July 22, 2022 (Virtual).
- T1 **Award Recipient and Speaker**, "A Stimulus Set of Communicative and Non-communicative Actions for Human-Robot Interaction Research" *METU III Open Research Day Award Ceremony* organized by *METU Graduate School of Informatics*, June 24, 2022, Ankara, Turkey.

Professional Development

- Traineeship **Erasmus+ KA131 Short-Term Doctoral Trainee**, *CONTACT (COgNiTive Architecture for Collaborative Technologies) Unit, Italian Institute of Technology (IIT)*, *Host and PI: Dr. Alessandra Sciutti*, November 10-23, 2024, Genova, Italy
- Organization **Program Committee Co-Chair**, *Pioneers Workshop - ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction (HRI) 2025*, March 4-6, 2025, Melbourne, Australia

- Session Chair**, *12th Student Linguistics Conference*, April 2017, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
- Co-organizer and Speaker**, *Workshop with Peter Gärdenfors*, May 2015, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
- Referee Service **Conferences**: *ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction (HRI)-(2023–2026)*: Main Track, Late Breaking Reports (LBR), Demos and Videos Track; LBR Area Chair for HRI 2026; *The Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci)-(2023–2026)*; *CHI conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (2026)*
- Journals**: *ACM Transactions on Human-Robot Interaction (2024 – present)*
- Professional Membership **Member**, *The ACM Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction (SIGCHI)*, November 2024 – present
- Student Member**, *Cognitive Science Society (CSS)*, May 2020 – present
- Volunteer Service **Student Volunteer**, *ACM/IEEE International Conference on Human-Robot Interaction (HRI) 2024*, March 11-15, Boulder, Colorado, USA
- Student Assistant**, *2nd International Symposium on Brain and Cognitive Science (ISBCS 2015)*, April 2015, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
- Student Assistant**, *16th International Conference on Turkish Linguistics (ICTL 2012)*, September 2012, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
- Student Teacher**: *Gören Eller Primary School*, Sept. 2012 - Jan. 2013, Ankara, Turkey. Taught English to 6th grade students with visual impairment as part of the Community Service Program
- Mentorship **Postdoc Supervisor**: *Zeynep Körismailoğlu*, Master's Thesis, 2025-2026, Medipol University; *Sarp Yenertürk*, Senior Thesis, 2025-2026, Bilkent University; *Gizem Çınar*, Senior Thesis, 2024-2025, Bilkent University.
- Graduate Supervisor**: *Ayaz Karadağ*, Senior Thesis, 2023-2024, Bilkent University.
- Internship **Teaching Intern**: *Bilişim College*, Feb. 2013 - June 2013, Ankara, Turkey. Taught 4th and 6th grade students
- Teaching Intern**: *METU Development Foundation Schools*, Sept. 2012 - Jan. 2013, Ankara, Turkey. Taught 6th and 7th grade students
- Training **Attendee**, *EEG Course for Beginners: One-day training course in EEG data collection and analysis*, December 2018, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey
- Attendee**, *String Ventures Bootcamp*, July 2016, ODTÜ Teknokent, Ankara, Turkey
- Attendee**, *Lean Entrepreneurship Training*, June 2016, ODTÜ Teknokent, Ankara, Turkey
- Attendee**, *UTAA Teacher Learning and Professional Development Programme*, May 2014, University of Turkish Aeronautical Association, Ankara, Turkey

Skills

Programming and Analysis	R, MATLAB, SPSS, JASP, MouseTracker, Data Viewer, Experiment Builder
Software	L ^A T _E X, Microsoft Office, Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, Canva
Robotics	Pepper Robot (programming, interaction, behavior design), Pepper SDK (QiSDK) for Android
Tools	Android Studio, Eyelink 1000 & 1000 Plus
Languages	Turkish (native), English (professional working proficiency)