

# COMMUNICATION IN INTERCULTURAL MARRIAGE IN TURKEY

Thesis submitted to the

Institute of Social Sciences

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Sociology

by

Rebecca Kathryn SHAFFER

Fatih University

July 2009

© Rebecca Kathryn SHAFFER

All Rights Reserved, 2009



## APPROVAL PAGE

**Student** : Rebecca Kathryn SHAFFER  
**Institute** : Institute of Social Sciences  
**Department** : Sociology  
**Thesis Subject** : Communication in Intercultural Marriage in Turkey  
**Thesis Date** : July 2009

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

(Assoc. Prof. Ali Murat YEL)  
**Head of Department**

This is to certify that I have read this thesis and that in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

(Prof. Charles Allen SCARBORO)  
**Supervisor**

### Examining Committee Members

(Prof. Charles Allen SCARBORO) .....

(Assoc. Prof. Ali Murat YEL) .....

(Prof. Ömer ÇAHA) .....

It is approved that this thesis has been written in compliance with the formatting rules laid down by the Graduate Institute of Social Sciences.

(Assoc. Prof. Gökhan Bacık)  
**Director**

## **AUTHOR DECLARATIONS**

1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.
2. I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.
3. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Rebecca Kathryn Shaffer

July 2009

## **ABSTRACT**

**Rebecca Kathryn SHAFFER**

**July 2009**

### **COMMUNICATION IN INTERCULTURAL MARRIAGE IN TURKEY**

This thesis investigates communication between spouses of intercultural marriages in Turkey. Two groups of couples are selected: American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. This study integrates research strategies: a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, a writing exercise and a puzzle activity to develop a rich perspective on couples' communication. The findings suggest that among American-Turkish couples, Turkish men are more likely to adapt to American women's communication patterns. American women have a tendency to lead discussion with their husband, and Turkish men have a tendency to confirm information with their wife. American women also tend to involve their husband in discussion by asking their spouse's opinion. In contrast, among Central Asian-Turkish couples Central Asian women are more likely to adapt to Turkish men's communication patterns. Turkish men married to Central Asian women show tendencies to lead discussion with their wife and Central Asian women have a tendency to confirm information with their husband. Central Asian wives have a tendency to interrupt and rebut their husband in order to join a discussion. The communication differences between American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples are likely due to the linguistic and cultural background of women. Because American women come from a cultural background with marked differences from that of their husband and share few linguistic similarities with their husband, they are less likely to adapt to their husband's communication patterns. In contrast, Central Asian women come from a similar Turkic cultural background and share linguistic similarities, thus more likely to adapt to their husband's communication patterns.

**Key words:**

Intercultural Marriage, Intercultural Communication, Intercultural Relations

## KISA ÖZET

Rebecca Kathryn SHAFFER

Temmuz 2009

### TÜRKİYE'DEKİ KÜLTÜRLERARASI EVLİLİKLERDE İLETİŞİM

Bu tez çalışmasında kültürlerarası evliliklerde eşler arasında iletişim araştırılmıştır. Bu amaçla, Amerikalı-Türk ve Orta Asyalı-Türk olmak üzere iki farklı çift grubu seçilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, çiftlerin iletişimiyle ilgili zengin bir bakış açısı geliştirebilmek amacıyla çeşitli araştırma stratejileri birleştirilmiştir. Bu stratejiler anket, yarı-planlı görüşme, kompozisyon ve yapboz çalışmasıdır. Genel bulgular, Amerikalı-Türk çiftelerde, Türk erkeklerin Amerikalı eşlerinin iletişim şekillerine uyma eğiliminde olduğunu göstermiştir. Amerikalı bayanlar, eşleriyle konuşmalarında konuşmayı yönlendirme eğilimindeyken Türk erkeklerin de Amerikalı eşlerine söyledikleri bilgileri onaylatma eğiliminde oldukları gözlenmiştir. Ayrıca, Amerikalı bayanların eşlerinin fikirlerini sorarak onları konuşmaya katılmaya teşvik etme eğiliminde oldukları da ortaya çıkmıştır. Buna karşın, Orta Asyalı-Türk çiftler arasında ise Orta Asyalı bayanların eşlerinin iletişim şekillerine uyma eğiliminde olduğu görülmüştür. Orta Asyalı bayanlarla evli olan Türk erkekler konuşmayı yönlendirme eğiliminde gözükrken, Orta Asyalı bayanların da söylediklerini eşlerine onaylatma eğiliminde oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. Orta Asyalı bayanların konuşmaya katılmak için eşlerinin sözünü kesme ve eşlerinin fikirlerine itiraz etme eğiliminde oldukları görülmüştür. Bu iki çift grubu arasında ortaya çıkan iletişim farklılıklarının bayanların dilsel ve kültürel geçmişlerinden kaynaklandığı düşünülmektedir. Amerikalı bayanların eşlerinininkinden belirgin farkları olan bir kültürden geldikleri ve de eşleriyle hemen hemen hiç dilsel benzerlik paylaşmadıkları için eşlerinin iletişim şekillerine uymaları pek olası görülmemektedir. Diğer yandan, Orta Asyalı bayanlar benzer bir Türkî kültürden gelmektedirler ve de eşleriyle dilsel benzerlikleri paylaşmaktadırlar. Sonuç olarak, bu bayanların eşlerinin iletişim şekillerine uymaya daha yatkın oldukları düşünülmektedir.

#### **Anahtar Kelimeler**

Kültürlerarası Evlilik, Kültürlerarası İletişim, Kültürlerarası İlişkiler

## LIST OF CONTENTS

Approval Page	iv
Author Declarations	v
Abstract	vi
Kısa Özet	vii
List of Contents	viii
List of Tables	ix
List of Appendices	xi
Acknowledgements	xii
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Literature Review	5
Chapter Two: Methodology	18
Chapter Three: Description of Participants	27
Chapter Four: Communication Patterns of Intercultural Couples	46
Chapter Five: Incooperating Instruments	90
Conclusion	113
Bibliography	140



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Age and Educational History of Turkish men and American Women	29
Table 2: Age and Educational History of Turkish men and Central Asian Women	36
Table 3: Age and Educational History of American and Central Asian Women	42
Table 4: Age and Educational History of Turkish men	43
Table 5: Marriage Length and Residency in Turkey	44
Table 6: Frequency of Interview Themes in American-Turkish Couples	47
Table 7: Displays of Affection by American-Turkish Couples	48
Table 8: Rebuttals By American-Turkish Couples	53
Table 9: Confirming Information by American-Turkish Couples	55
Table 10: Frequency of Interview Themes in Central Asian-Turkish Couples	63
Table 11: Rebuttals By Central Asian-Turkish Couples	64
Table 12: Displays of Affection by Central Asian-Turkish Couples	68
Table 13: Confirming Information by Central Asian-Turkish Couples	74
Table 14: Frequency of Interview Themes in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish Couples (Across Groups Analysis)	82
Table 15: Chi-Square Test for Interview Frequencies	83

Table 16: Frequency of puzzle Themes in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish Couples (Across Groups Analysis)	92
Table 17: Chi-Square Test for puzzle Frequencies	93
Table 18: Frequency of Writing Themes in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish Couples (Across Groups Analysis)	108
Table 19: Chi-Square Test for Writing Frequencies	109

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Questionnaire for American Women	120
Appendix B: Questionnaire for Central Asian Women (English)	122
Appendix C: Questionnaire for Central Asian Women (Turkish)	124
Appendix D: Questionnaire for Central Asian Women (Russian)	126
Appendix E: Questionnaire for Men (English)	129
Appendix F: Questionnaire for Men (Turkish)	131
Appendix G: Interview Guide (English)	133
Appendix H: Interview Guide (Turkish)	134
Appendix I: Writing Exercise for Women (English)	135
Appendix J: Writing exercise for Women (Turkish)	136
Appendix K: Writing Exercise for Women (Russian)	137
Appendix L: Writing Exercise for Men (English)	138
Appendix M: Writing Exercise for Men (Turkish)	139

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project has truly proved to be an enlightening adventure. This thesis is like a tapestry, weaving in many elements from the many that have touched its loom. All of their hard work and sincere aid are visible on every page.

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor, Professor Charles Allen Scarboro, for his invaluable inspiration and endless support throughout the entirety of this project. The quality and content of this thesis are in large part due to his dedication and great attention to detail. Dr. Scarboro has a great gift of knowing when to praise and when to discipline an apprentice. While providing the necessary motivation and encouragement to complete this project, he was also there to push me back on track when necessary. Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Scarboro for his wonderful revisions and quick responses to any question.

Many thanks are also due to Associate Professor Ali Murat Yel for his invaluable and insightful advice at the infancy of this project. His advice about the thesis topic as well as research methods is part of the lining of this thesis. Also, Dr. Yel's encouraging words and belief in my ability to complete this project helped me maintain the stamina needed to sew in the last stitch.

Other scholars who deserve recognition are the members of the ad hoc human participants review committee who approved this project to be ethical, including: Assistant Professor Cemal Karaata, Assistant Professor Elizabeth Pallitto and Assistant Professor Clyde Forsberg. In addition, members of the thesis seminar jury gave valuable

insight and advice reshaping certain elements of this thesis, including: Assistant Professor Brigitte Jelen, Professor Allen Scarboro, and Associate Professor Ali Murat Yel. These scholars' criticisms, advice and encouragement had an important impact on the development of this thesis. In addition, I would like to thank Professor Charles Allen Scarboro and, Associate Professor Ali Murat Yel, Professor Ömer Çaha and Assistant Professor and Phillipe Barbé for dedicating their time and effort in order to be a part of the final thesis jury.

I also need to thank those who helped with the development of the research instruments. My colleagues Mehmet Ağpak, Sabahattin Atalay, Gökhan Cansız, Nazmi Kaya, Başak Güven and Ayşe Tuba Demirel Sucu completed pilot runs of the questionnaire correcting mistakes and giving feedback on its general design. In addition, O.P. helped by translating various forms and research instruments into Russian. Assistant Professor Vassil Hristov Anastassov and Olena V. Benedyktova also helped with translation of Russian data into English. I am very grateful to these scholars and friends for their invaluable assistance with translation. Also, I greatly appreciate all those who gave me encouraging words or helped in a multitude of ways who I have forgotten to name.

Of course, I am very grateful to my participants whose lives and words are the threads making up the design of this tapestry. They willingly invited me into their homes and lives in the name of scientific exploration. I hope I have done them justice and fairly represented their stories

Lastly, I owe many thanks to my family for being the rod that holds up this tapestry. Without their endless support, advice and encouragement the final product would not have been displayed. I cannot thank my husband enough for the many hours he spent driving me all around Istanbul to meet participants, waiting for me to finish interviews, give valuable academic advice as well as help with Turkish translations and the statistical analysis. Also, my sister-in-laws Ayşin and Gülşin deserve thanks for their help with transcription of interview tapes, delicious meals and babysitting, all of which made it possible for me to set aside time to write this thesis.

## INTRODUCTION

The essence of human social interaction is communication. Truly a social being, we rely on verbal and non-verbal communication to express our thoughts, needs and desires to others. When conveying a message people process again the contents of the message via their cultural filters which is thus left to be interpreted by the receivers. The receivers then similarly filter the incoming message via their cultural filters, decoding and interpreting the message. Underneath communication lies a much deeper interaction between two individuals who may or may not share the same understanding of a given message. Linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf, greatly influenced by his teacher Anthropologist- Linguist Edward Sapir, believed in linguistic relativity, stating that the “background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual’s mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade” (1940: 213) For Whorf, language is a lens through which the speaker sees and dissects the world. The resulting worldview is thus representative of the shared ‘agreements’ of a speech community by which it must communicate (1940:213-214). Whorf illustrates this with his example of an Eskimo speaker who has three words for snow, but an English speaker only one indicating a difference in the way these speakers understand and perceive snow (1940:210). According to this view, two speakers from different speech communities

could easily run into misunderstandings and misperceptions of the other's message since they essentially 'think' differently through their language.

Attracting much attention from scholars in various fields, Whorf's theory of linguistic relativity has been thoroughly tested and criticized which resulted in its revision. Comparing the naming of colors in English and Tarahumra (a Uto-Aztecan language), Kay and Kempton (1984) found that languages are free to differ semantically and that "linguistic differences may induce nonlinguistic cognitive differences but not so absolutely that universal cognitive processes cannot be recovered under appropriate contextual conditions" (77). Thus, while language does not absolutely prescribe how speakers think, it does have influence over their perception and other mental processes. Also contributing to the reformulation of Whorf's hypothesis, Lucy (1992) observed that grammatical patterns are reflected in what speakers find interesting and presuppose. In his study he showed the same line drawings to speakers of English and Yucatec (a Mayan language) and found that English speakers were more likely to notice the number of lines in a line drawing and Yucatec speakers the substance. Interestingly, the preferences English and Yucatec speakers made reflect grammatical patterns of "pluralization of units in English and unitization of substances" in Yucatec (Hills and Manheim 1992:392). With this modern revision of Whorf's hypothesis of linguistic relativity it appears that language has an important role in how people describe the world and what they presuppose, not only influencing their communication but also the nature of their communication.



Communication between two people of differing cultures and native languages can prove to be difficult if they are not fully aware of the linguistic differences (phonological, syntactical, morphological, semantic, paralinguistic) they may encounter. Moreover, some of these linguistic differences could be those expressing unique preferences like that of English speakers to notice number before substance (Lucy 1992), further complicating the degree of understanding between two speakers. These preferences are likely to stem from culture since language is an expression of cultural reality (Kramsch 1998). Coming to the focus of this thesis, in the case two speakers from different cultures are married the possibility for linguistic differences related to culture to emerge is relatively high due to the intimate nature of their communication. In marriage people take part in many shared activities with their spouses they are not always able to share with other people, often revealing a variety of areas in which they need to communicate. In the case of intercultural couples, the wide range of marital communication can likely be foreign to one or both individuals. Thus, the nature of the communication that takes place between members of intercultural marriages is particularly interesting in understanding how intercultural couples manage to negotiate cultural lines on a daily basis. If a breakdown occurs when trying to cross these lines, serious consequences can result, ranging from minor misunderstandings to irreconcilable conflicts and termination of the marriage. Since communication is a major area of conflict in intercultural marriages (Franklin 1992; Nabeshima 2005; Taweekuakulkit 2005; Telser-Gadow 1992), the topic deserves further investigation.

This thesis investigates communication patterns of American-Turkish and Central Asian couples residing in Turkey to better understand the dynamics of intercultural marriage communication. A review of the literature regarding intercultural marriage and communication follows in chapter one to provide a theoretical and practical background on this issue. Moreover, in order to do investigate communication in intercultural couples in Turkey various research instruments and methods are employed and discussed in detail in chapter two. Next, a detailed description of the participants of this study follows in chapter three. The results from this study presented and discussed in chapter four and chapter five. Finally, a conclusion chapter ties all elements of the thesis together and recaps this study and its findings.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Since this thesis investigates communication in intercultural marriages in Turkey, a review of the literature on patterns of interaction in intercultural relationships is first presented. That review then focuses on what the literature has found regarding the relationship between cultural and interpersonal communication. The review then continues with a brief survey of the literature on the effect of gender and the observer effect on sociological research. Combining these various sections, an overview of previous research into communication in intercultural marriage is presented.

### **INTERCULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS**

In order to get a lay out a general view of the current literature on intercultural communication, literature regarding work groups, marriages and companions is reviewed below. A type of social organization, marriages are constructed and maintained through social acts. Thus, by examining other types of social groups, commonalities between marriages and these groups are found.

#### **Work groups**

In their study comparing American and Chinese work groups Nibler and Harris (2003) found that culture might determine how groups make decisions and negotiate conflict. In particular they found that in the U.S. group's performance improved when

the members were friends, whereas the Chinese group's performance did not change whether the members were friends or strangers. Pillai and Meindl (1998) examined the relation between collective work groups and charismatic leadership. They concluded that based on the shared values of the team a leader's charismatic rating varied. In other words, leaders who shared similar values with their team members was more likely to be viewed as more charismatic than a leader sharing fewer values. Also, communication between leader and team member was a crucial factor in establishing a bond. When returning to the question of this thesis, we see that Turkish and Turkic cultures are fairly collective cultures (Sims and Gegez 2004), especially in comparison to American culture which highly values individualism and egalitarianism (Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn 2001). As seen in work groups, this naturally could naturally play a role in the bond between husband and wife in Turkish intercultural marriages.

Another study looked at the use of teamwork metaphors in pharmaceutical and medical supply corporations with facilities in Puerto Rico, Philippines, France and the United States (Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn 2001). They found that when work teams had to categorize sport, military, family, associate and community metaphors for teamwork into groups, differences in categorization expressed cultural differences. Moreover, when asked to describe teamwork with the metaphors, variety was seen across cultures. For example, while individualistic cultures (*e.g. United States*) showed tendencies to describe their teamwork in sports terms, more collective cultures (*e.g. Philippines*) used militaristic terms. Therefore, these culturally based metaphors are a key in understanding

the way spouses of different cultures may perceive a marriage and expected roles as marriage is a type of teamwork.

## **Marriages**

Intercultural marriages and families have been on the rise around the world (Biever, Bobole and North 1998; Chen 2006; Crippen and Brew 2007; Kelaher, Williams and Manderson 2001; Luke and Luke 1998) In the United States alone, more than half of American adults are marrying partners from a different ethnic group, triple the inter-marriage rate of the early 1970's, and 33 million American adults live with at another adult of a different religion (McGoldrick, Giordano and Garcia-Preto 2005). The general consensus among researchers shows these marriages as a relatively unexplored area of academia (Biever, Bobole and North 1998; Lee, Pei-Wen 2006; Seto and Cavallaro 2007; Sullivan and Cottone 2006). However, the majority of this research investigates couples in the United States and Europe (Jo-Pei et al. 2008:31). Clearly there is a need for more research into intercultural marriages, and in particular couples residing outside the United States and Europe. Thus, this study on intercultural marriages in Turkey adds a new perspective to the current body of literature concerning these marriages.

To begin, intercultural marriages of the past have been investigated. Using public records and personal narratives Kretzler-Bulhimer (1995) investigated Chinese-Paiute marriages from 1860 to 1920. She found that due to Chinese men's legal and social restrictions against marriage to Americans, they alternatively found wives in the

Native-American Paiute community. The Paiute community was also excluded from social integration into American society, so no legal restrictions prevented a Paiute-Chinese marriage. These Chinese immigrants often adapted to their wives' culture while bringing some of their Chinese traditions to the marriage. These couples shared similar beliefs including importance of family and respect for both ancestors and forces of nature. These couples while sharing some cultural characteristics combined unique aspects of each culture resulting in culturally blended families.

When thinking of intercultural marriages, one can naturally think of many areas that may be uniquely different from or even more challenging than those in mono-cultural marriages. This presumption is supported in the majority of the literature regarding intercultural marriages. For instance, Baltas and Steptoe (2000) show intercultural marriages in a pessimistic light, often characterized by conflict and struggle. Some literature is more optimistic. In her doctoral dissertation, Giladi-McKelvie (1987) investigated five successful intercultural couples married for more than 10 years. She found various similarities between the couples including a tendency for the couples: (1) to be only children, (2) to have a feeling of being different or special, (3) to put importance on religion, (4) to center their lives around their family and children, (5) to acknowledge the hard work they put into their marriage, (6) to enjoy people from other cultures and (7) to be flexible with their partner's culture. Similar themes like respect for cultural differences, importance placed on marital harmony and a strong social network have also been documented in successful couples (Nabeshima 2005).

One of the most commonly encountered conflict areas in intercultural marriages seen in the literature is communication (Franklin 1992; Nabeshima 2005; Taweekuakulkit 2005; Telser-Gadow 1992). In her dissertation, Taweekuakulkit found communicative style differences and language barriers to be the biggest conflict area in Thai-North American marriages, with every wife in the study reporting problems with the former issue. The different communicative styles that were identified included North American husbands' verbosity, their use of long sentences with no pauses and humor style. Another communicative problem observed was a lack of communication, best demonstrated by Thai wives' inadequate explanations and incomplete sentences (2005). Similarly, Telser-Gadow (1992) found that the biggest conflict area for American-Norwegian and American-Iranian couples was again communication. Norwegians were perceived to be stoic, cold and often too straightforward and Iranians as hot-tempered and sometimes gossipy by their American spouses. Differences in affection were also observed. Americans found Norwegians rarely expressed their feelings and were not affectionate as often as they would have liked. Likewise, Norwegians were sometimes uncomfortable by American spouses' displays of affection. Americans with Iranian spouses also expressed some dissatisfaction with their spouses' lack of verbal affection in particular. On the other hand, Iranians found their American spouses displays of affection as 'not enough' and expected their American spouse to show their love rather than say it. Also, language barriers were sometimes problematic in American-Iranian marriages. On a similar note, Franklin noted communicative styles as one of the greatest differences between Japanese and American spouses (1992). While Americans were

seen as more verbal, their Japanese partners were seen as more indirect. Moreover, the American spouses chose to express their affection in words, hugging or kissing, differing from the Japanese spouse's preference to display affection through gestures.

Other more mainstream literature that reaches outside academia offers personal accounts from intercultural couples. An article entitled, "Love in a cold and wet climate" published in the *Irish Times* by Arsheen Qasim on March 3, 2006 is an example. In this article, five intercultural couples of very mixed backgrounds residing in Ireland are interviewed. Qasim observed that the very characteristics which attracted them to each other, cultural and linguistic diversities, were simultaneously a major barrier in their relationship.

Literature also sheds some insight into intercultural marriages. The semi-autobiographical novel *Les Neiges de Marbre* (The Snows of Marble) by Algerian born Mohammed Dib, himself married to a Frenchwoman, is about a North African man married to a Finnish woman. The prevalent theme throughout the novel is language and communication. The reader sees how the lack of communication between the main character and his wife as well as his daughter alienates him from his family. Interestingly, the '*mur de langue dresse entre nous*' (language barrier stands between us) is not only shown as the dividing force of the family but also as the element that has the potential to make the family strong (Abdel-Jaouad 1991).



### *Counseling*

Given the amount of research documenting the challenges of intercultural couples, naturally a large body of literature focuses on counseling. A majority of this research emphasizes an inadequate amount of interventions and therapies for the intercultural couple (Bacigalupe 2003; Biever, Bobele and North 1998; Seto and Cavallaro 2007). Some of the literature focuses on new strategies to counsel intercultural couples. A postmodern approach uses social constructionism in order to construct the reality the couple is creating via their interactions (Biever, Bobele and North 1998). In social constructionism the meanings that people give to a particular behavior, event or interaction are determined by the cultural context in which they appear. Applying this approach to intercultural couple therapy, a collaborative interview in which the therapist remains open to alternative understandings and looks for similarities and differences in the two cultures via narratives and clients ideas' is encouraged. Thus, it is essential that a researcher be observant of any narratives that shed light on intercultural marriage communication that may take place between husband and wife during interviews with participants. Bacigalupe (2003) suggests that counselors use alternative metaphors like immigration and nations to help intercultural couples explore the cultural dimensions of their marriage. He also recommends that an analysis of the use of languages at home and between spouses and other family members may shed some light on the relationship. By noting the languages used in various aspects of a couple's marriage (*e.g., conflict resolution, preferred language with children, etc.*) areas where misunderstandings arise may become more evident. Other

suggestions include not assuming cultural differences to be the sole source of conflict within the marriage (Biever, Bobele and North 1998; Seto and Cavallaro 2007).

### *Family and Parenting*

The literature shows that culture plays an important role in parenting styles (Biever et al. 1998; Quah 2003,) and has been documented as a significant area of conflict in intercultural marriages (Bhugra and De Silva 2000; Gaines & Brenman 2001; Romano 2001; Tseng and Hsu 1991). Bornstein (1991) found some similarities in parenting style where seen across gender lines creating both culture-general and culture-specific parenting practices in the United States, France and Japan, clearly showing that despite the existence of more universal parenting techniques, culture is definitely a key role in how one parents. The literature also focused on the importance of the transcultural family, or a third culture family in order to manage parenting differences (Luke & Luke 1998; Owen 2002; Tseng and Hsu 1991). A third culture family refers to a culturally diverse family where in addition to the each parent's culture, a third culture unique to the family emerges, mixing in elements of each parent's culture and perhaps another culture as well. Similar findings were seen by Nabeshima (2005) in her investigation of early parenting in American-Japanese intercultural marriages. She observed a strong commitment to bicultural and bilingual childrearing practices and an overall parenting compatibility in the couples. Both Japanese and American styles of parenting were incorporated into American-Japanese couples parenting styles, resulting

in a unique third culture family. This finding implies that the creation of a third culture plays an important role in different areas of the intercultural marriage.

### *Society*

The influence and effect of society on intercultural marriages has also been explored. Shute and Spitzberg (2003) investigated the effect of social support on relational satisfaction of intercultural couples. No significant relation between social support and relational satisfaction was seen, suggesting a more episodic relation where the nature of social support had a temporary effect on relational satisfaction. Another study focused on socio-demographic characteristics of intercultural marriages in Malaysia (Jo-Pei et al. 2008). They found educational similarities between couples as well as exposure to other intercultural marriages within their families as factors influencing their decision to get married. Interestingly, socio-demographic factors did not appear as a significant influence on such marriages.

### **Companions**

The literature also explores intercultural companionships like friendship. Lee, P. (2006) observed seven activities in a qualitative analysis of 15 intercultural friendships: (1) positivities/providing assistance, (2) shared rituals, activities and the establishment of rules and roles, (3) self-disclosure and sharing of culture and experiences, (4) networking, (5) exploring cultures and languages, (6) emphasizing similarities and exploring differences and (7) conflict/conflict management. She concluded that intercultural friendships are defined via an information exchange in

which past and present cultural experience of the two parties, as well as any third parties (e.g. family, host culture), are shared and shaped into a dyad of its own rules, roles and communication style. In other words, a third culture made up of a potpourri of cultural elements from the two different cultures of the members of the friendship is established. Measuring third culture in intercultural couples proves to be more difficult as a 10-item scale based on the dimensions of equality, commonality and transcendence did not result in any significant findings, with the exception of a correlation of the level of third culture to the years in relationship (Lee, Suman 2006). Thus, individuals of different cultures who come into contact can develop a unique third culture that combines elements of different cultures. So, members of intercultural marriage have a potential to develop a third culture unique to their marriage and family.

This process has been similarly described by Casmir (1997, 1999) as the Third Culture Building Model. In this model individuals in intercultural relationships adapt to one another by negotiating differences, standards and goals, building a mutual third culture from their own original cultural bases in a conversational process. In other words, two individuals of differing cultures come into contact out of a certain need. In this study, these individuals need to contact with each other since they are married to one another. These individuals then interact organizing and understanding the cultural values, rules and norms of one another. Next, these individuals then begin to build a third culture where mutual adaptation to each other's cultural value, rules and norms results in a potpourri of shared third culture elements. This stage is a stage of dependence where the two individuals look to each other for mutual understanding.

Finally, this process finishes when the two individuals establish a third culture interdependence, sharing a common set of values, rules and norms.

## **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE**

Investigating interpersonal communication across cultures is important in understanding the effect a person's cultural background has on their communication with others. Various studies that examine the role of culture in interpersonal communication are reviewed below. These studies suggest culture plays an important part in the nature of interpersonal communication.

Carroll (1987) gives a detailed description of conversation in French and American English identifying deeper cultural meanings to every day communication. Overall, she found that American conversation is a means to exchange ones thoughts and share information whereas French conversation a type of relationship for speakers involved with attached social commitments. What an American might view as an interruption might be considered an interaction by a French person. Moreover, what a French person might view as a boring conversation where a speaker talks too much, an American might consider the same conversation to be very stimulating. Thus, cultural connotations and notions about relationships between people underline the nature of conversation itself, varying from culture to culture.

Other studies have shown a relationship between culture and interpersonal communication. Duronto, Nishida and Nakayama (2005) examined uncertainty, anxiety and avoidance in communication with strangers. They found that when Japanese

participants communicated with strangers of the different cultures they experience anxiety and uncertainty, leading to avoidance. However, when communicating with strangers from the same culture Japanese participants again experienced anxiety and avoidance, but lesser degrees of uncertainty, suggesting uncertainty is not associated with communication between strangers of the same culture. This study shows how certain feelings and actions during interpersonal interactions can be influenced by the shared or unshared culture of the participating individuals.

## **GENDER**

Because this study investigates communication between spouses from different cultures, it is important to consider the effect gender might play on the findings. Maynard (1999) clarifies that rather than a product of biological sex, gender roles, related behavior and identities are social constructions created by cultures. Thus, cultures interpret what is masculine or feminine, changing depending on the historical period in time. Moreover, Maynard reminds scholars that “gender permeates and has repercussions for every aspect of social life” (1999:134-135). Given this, the researcher can expect gender to play a role, even if partial, in the communication of intercultural couples in Turkey.

## **OBSERVER EFFECT**

It is important to mention the observer effect because of its possible impact on the results of qualitative research. Also known as the actor-observer effort it is defined as “the tendency for actors to attribute their actions to situational factors, whereas

observers attribute them to internal/external dispositional factors” (Statt 2003:3). In other words, observations a researcher makes on participants’ behavior during a study can be related to the presence of the researcher instead of underlying findings. Therefore, it is essential that the researcher be careful of this possibility in order to make more accurate interpretations of her observations.

## **CONCLUSION**

This literature review has reviewed investigated a variety of intercultural relationships, interpersonal relationships and culture. In addition, the effects of gender and the observer effect on research in the social sciences are also explored. Laying the foundation for this study, this literature review gives the researcher a base to work from when analyzing and interpreting the results. Arguably most importantly, the researcher gains a broader perspective of the body of work that has been done on intercultural marriages and relationships, allowing her to make more intuitive interpretations of the data. Lastly, the literature review presents a general overview of the intercultural couple as it is represented in previous research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter the study of this thesis is outlined and discussed. Details regarding the development of the research design and data collection instruments are presented, including a discussion on the theoretical background. Additionally, a discussion of the sample selected for this study and the reasoning behind selection of participants is included.

#### **HUMAN PARTICIPANTS APPROVAL**

Before beginning data collection, the researcher submitted the thesis project for review and approval by an ad hoc human participants review committee. The researcher and her advisor selected an ad-hoc human participants committee to review this project. Faculty members in the humanities and social sciences were selected because of their views and experiences with ethical matters regarding people. The committee was made up of the chair of the sociology department, Associate Professor Ali Murat Yel and three professors from the American Culture and Literature department: Assistant Professor Cemal Karaata, Assistant Professor Elizabeth Pallitto and Assistant Professor Clyde Forsberg. In the weeks leading up to the submission of the final proposal packet, extensive revision was done on all documents related to participant consent, documents meant to be used as research instruments, and thesis and human participants project



proposals. During a period of four weeks starting from February 26, 2008, to March 18, 2008, my advisor supervised multiple revisions of essential documents. In particular, documents to be used as research instruments, such as questionnaires and the interview guide, underwent intensive revision and many drafts in order to better elicit data related to the research question. Also, the researcher together and her advisor brainstormed and discussed the methodology to be employed in the study during this time. Finally when all documents seemed presentable and sufficient, the researcher organized them into individual folders for each member of the committee as well as for the head of the sociology department. The researcher submitted the human participants proposal packets on March 19, 2008, which included the following documents:

- 1) Thesis proposal
- 2) American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics regarding the ethical treatment of human research subjects
- 3) Invitation letter of participation
- 4) Participant disclaimer forms (*English and Turkish*),
- 5) Consent forms (*English and Turkish*)
- 6) Questionnaires (*English and Turkish*)
- 7) Interview guide
- 8) Ad hoc committee project proposal form

The researcher stated that there were no risks from participation in this study beyond those encountered in daily life. Other important and essential ethical issues such as, the assurance of voluntary participation and the maintenance of participant confidentiality throughout the study and in the final thesis, were addressed in the Ad Hoc Committee Project Proposal Form. The committee unanimously approved the project.

## **SAMPLE AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPANTS**

This is a qualitative study of 12 interculturally married couples living in Turkey, where the husband is Turkish. To understand what role culture plays in the communication of intercultural couples, two groups of wives from dissimilar cultures were selected: an (1) American group and a (2) Central Asian (*Turkic*) group. As discussed in chapter one, language is an expression of the cultural reality of its speakers (Kramsch 1998), where aspects like idioms, expressions and pragmatics are essential to competent use of a language. This requires members of intercultural marriages to have a good understanding of the culture associated with their spouse's language. Moreover, a revised version of Whorf's theory of linguistic relativity shows that while language does not absolutely prescribe how speakers think, it does influence their perception and other mental processes (Kay and Kempton 1984). Given the linguistic focus of this study, women from two very different linguistic backgrounds were chosen to capture two different cultural groups and their experiences with their Turkish-speaking husbands. English is an Indo-European language in the western branch of the Germanic family. Turkic languages like Turkish, Kazakh, Uzbek and Azeri are members of the Altaic family. Thus, Turkish husbands and their Central Asian Turkic spouses speak languages having many similar linguistic characteristics. Turkish and English are on the other hand are more linguistically different grammatically, phonetically and syntactically than Turkish and other Turkic languages. Thus, cross-analyzing these two groups helps us to identify communication patterns that stem from the various cultures of American-

Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples (*as expressed though language*) and how they are used in multi-cultural communication.

The first group (*American*) is made up of six American women and their Turkish husbands. The second group (*Central Asian*) is made up of five Kazakh women and their Turkish husbands and one Azeri woman and her Turkish husband. A more detailed account of these couples, including demographic information, follows in chapter three.

## **THEORETICAL GROUNDING AND DATA COLLECTION**

The base for the analysis of data is Grounded Theory first introduced by two sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967), where the investigator begins by studying the phenomenon in question and later reports what emerges (Strauss and Corbin 1990). A qualitative method, Grounded Theory builds theory, not just test it, consequently making the theory “good” science (Strauss and Corbin 1990:57). Collected datum (*an observation, a sentence, a paragraph*) is conceptualized into a distinct name, “something that stands for or represents a phenomenon” (Strauss and Corbin 1990:63). Once these phenomena are labeled, categories are identified that group together labels sharing similar properties. The established categories are then analyzed within a dimensional continuum, noting each time and when it occurs. Thus, dimensional profiles of each category emerge, which can be later grouped into patterns (Strauss and Corbin 1990).

## **The Study**

The researcher met at least once with each couple and twice with one couple. Typically, the researcher met couples in their own home, and occasionally met outside at public locations. In the case of one couple the researcher met them at a mall and later joined them at a local café because their home was not available at the time. With yet another couple, the researcher first met them at a popular square and then accompanied them to a café for the interview portion because they were uncomfortable talking about the husband's family in their home as they co-reside. The researcher did go to their home for the remaining portion of the research that did not regard the husband's family. The meetings with my respondent couples from beginning of to end lasted on average three hours, the shortest lasting two and half hours and the longest 15 hours. The researcher first had couples read a disclaimer describing the study and their rights as participants and then signed a consent form giving me permission to use the data collected. The researcher also orally stated their rights as participants. A total of four investigative instruments were employed in this study in the following order: (1) questionnaire, (2) semi-structured interview, (3) writing exercise, (4) puzzle activity. Additionally, the researcher noted details about the environment and her interactions with the couple after the meeting finished and the researcher was no longer in their company (*participant-observation*). The purpose of using multiple instruments and other observations is to 'triangulate' the analysis, strengthening the findings by eliciting information regarding the research question from various directions. Ideally, if there is

“convergence of meaning from more than one direction”, emergent patterns will be more prominent and as a result supported by the data (Lindlof and Taylor 2002: 240).

### *Questionnaire*

A questionnaire gathering demographic information, language competence, cultural competence and relationships between family members and strangers is first given to participants to be independently completed. Some general demographic data that are asked include age, education, occupation, and years married (*see Appendices A through F*). Questions in this section were partially inspired by Tesler-Gadow (1992); in particular questions about language use were modeled after those in her dissertation on intercultural marriage communication. This information will give the researcher insight into how these areas might affect the communication and relationship of each couple. To exemplify, a couple with similar educational background and one with very different educational backgrounds may differ in how they communicate, giving the researcher valuable insight into the dynamics of their relationship. The questionnaire also explores spouses' language competence by asking respondents to rate themselves and their spouse's language abilities. Referring to Franklin's (1992) dissertation on communication in Japanese-American couples as an example, these questions were answered using a four-point Likert scale. Furthermore, responses from these questions might give a clearer idea of why the couples communicate the way they do. Ideally, people who are well competent in their spouse's native language are more likely to better understand where their spouse is coming from and better interpret their behavior.

Other questions are included to unobtrusively elicit comfort levels with spouse's culture. Again, these questions are included to see how spouses rate themselves and their spouse's acculturation levels. How participants view their spouse's cultural and linguistic competence opens a window into the overall communication and relationship of each couple. The final part of the questionnaire asks participants to write the first three words or phrases that come to their mind about their relationships with strangers, their family and in-laws. The data elicited from this section will be analyzed for any common themes that might shed light on communication between the couples in the study.

In order to test the cultural and linguistic correctness of the Turkish husband's questionnaire, the researcher distributed three copies to four male Turkish professional acquaintances. One of them happened to be previously married to a Japanese woman, and his insight was in particular interesting. He made suggestions about what information might be important to ask in the demographic portion of the questionnaire. Similarly, the questionnaire for wives was distributed to three Turkish female professional acquaintances with the same intent to check for relevancy and correctness. The general feedback from those who participated in the pilot test of the questionnaire was that it took too much time to find responses for the final portion of the questionnaire (*e.g. give three words or phrases that describe your mother, etc.*). Questions about educational history were pointed out as unclear by another participant. Both of these sections were later revised to make it more clear what information questions were asking for and also make them easier to complete.

### *Semi-Structured Interview*

The interview portion is divided into four sections. The first section asks couples friendly questions about their courtship and wedding to break the ice and warm-up the participants. The second part consists of prompts about couple's experience with strangers outside the home and service workers in the home. The third part also uses prompts to elicit experiences with in-laws and other family members. The three part structure of the interview is influenced by Taweekuakulkit's interview guide used in her dissertation about conflict as seen by Thai women married to American men (2005). Moreover, the researcher styled the question prompts in the interview using her interview guide as an example. The last part of the interview serves as a cool-down, asking about the couple's last outing (*see appendix G and H for complete interview guide*). The interview is designed so that the prompts allow the couple to mention anything relevant to the communication with strangers and family without limiting them to a specific event or time. The investigator serves as a listener, noting relevant information brought up in the interview as well as noting observations about the couple's interaction and behavior with one another. Also serving as a facilitator, the investigator keeps the couple on track by subtly directing the couple's dialogue in a direction relevant to the thesis topic.

### *Writing Exercise*

In the writing exercise, husband and wife independently write about the last time they visited the husband's family (*see appendices L through M*). This exercise helps

ensure that any details of participants' daily communication patterns or other important information that may not be brought up in the interview is not missed. Analyzing the text for any common themes related to communication, the writing exercise additionally supports the analysis.

### *Puzzle*

Couples are lastly asked to complete a 50 piece children's puzzle. The puzzle is left for them to solve while the researcher observes them and takes notes. These observations are later analyzed for any emergent patterns in couples' communication that may enhance the findings. Some of the things the researcher is focusing on include: the couple's body language, manner of solving the puzzle (*e.g. as a team, individual, etc.*) and conversation made between husband and wife.

### *Participant-Observation*

The final data collection strategy is observations during the session. Participant-observation is used here, which includes how the couple interacts with the researcher and other parties present. These observations are later analyzed for any emergent patterns that may enhance the findings.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, two groups of six couples make up the participants: 1) the American-Turkish couples and 2) the Central Asian-Turkish couples. First, general background of all the couples in each group is presented, including details like age, years of education and years married. Second, patterns of language use for each group are discussed. Third, the couples of each group are introduced one by one. Fourth, a comparison of demographic patterns in both groups is presented.

#### **GROUP ONE: AMERICAN – TURKISH COUPLES**

##### **Demographics**

The demographic background of American-Turkish couples reveals various trends. Starting with age, the average age for American women is 38.5 and 36.8 for Turkish men. The youngest of the American woman is 26 and the oldest 56, these women at a wide variety of different stages of life. The youngest Turkish man is 26 and the oldest 57, typically close to their wife in age. This is further evidenced when taking the median of the age gap between husband and wife, which equals three and a half years. The average age for American women is greater than that of Turkish men as three of the American women were older than their husband from four to six years. Thus, a

tendency for the wife to be older than the husband in American-Turkish couples emerges.

American-Turkish couples have been married for an average of eight years and nine months. Among the couples there were newlyweds of ten months and long-term couples of 26 years. Given the wide range of the years American-Turkish couples have been married, it is important to mention the median years of marriage American is five years and three months. Moving on to courtship, American-Turkish couples knew each other for an average of three years and nine months before marriage. The couples' courtship ranged from one year to six years. American-Turkish couples' courtship took place in various countries. Four of the couples met in the United States (*home country for wife*), one in England (*foreign country for both husband and wife*) and another in Turkey (*home country of husband*). Typically, the entirety of this courtship period occurred in the country the couple met (*four out of six couples*). Two other couples not only courted one another in more than one country, but also maintained long-distance relationships and periods of separation. Continuing, American women tended to come to Turkey before their marriage. American women have been living in Turkey for an average of six years and eight months, ranging from one year to 20 years. On average five years and ten months of this time the couples have been living as a married couple, ranging from ten months to 20 years. Thus, the majority of the couples (*four out of six*) have spent all or the majority of their marriage in Turkey.

All couples are well-educated: American women have received an average of 18.6 years of education and their Turkish spouse an average of 19.7 years. American

women went to school anywhere from 16 to 23 years, and Turkish men anywhere from 15 to 26 years (*see Table 1*). When looking at these data it can be concluded that Turkish men tend to have received more years of education than their American wife. This is most likely due to extra years of education spent in English and French preparatory programs, like those at many high schools and universities in Turkey. Also, some of these men received education in English language schools in the United States. One participant did not give educational history; for him the median value of years of education was assigned. Of the five Turkish men who gave their educational history, three of them pursued their graduate studies in the United States or England, two other men completing their undergraduate studies in the United States. All other stages of Turkish men's education were completed in Turkey. American women completed most stages of their education in the United States, one woman completing a Master's degree in England

**TABLE 1:  
AGE AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF TURKISH MEN AND AMERICAN WOMEN**

Variable	Central Tendency Measures	Turkish (Husband)	American (Wife)
Age	Mean	36.8	38.5
	Range	29-57 (28)*	26-56 (30)*
Years of Education	Mean	19.7	18.6
	Range	15-26 (11)*	16-23 (7)*

\* indicates difference between highest and lowest value

## **The Couples**

### *Samantha and Eren*

Samantha and Eren met through mutual friends at a restaurant bar in Turkey. When he was learning English Eren made some contacts with foreigners who happened to also know Samantha. Samantha had been in Turkey for some time, coming after her university graduation to teach English, making a circle of friends with other foreigners. Eren had come back to Istanbul on a short leave from his military service and as he says in his own words met Samantha by “destiny” (*tabii ki kader*) when they were sitting at the same table with mutual friends. After their first meeting they continued to see each other and became good friends. After some time they decided to get married. Samantha comments, “I probably would have never gotten married...if I hadn’t been here [Turkey]...[I] saw I needed to change something”, not wanting to live a “student life” forever like her other friends in the United States. Samantha and Eren have a one-year-old son. Eren works in small-scale industrial production. Samantha is a former English teacher, now happy to have dedicated her time to being a stay-at-home mother.

### *Hillary and Turan*

Hillary and Turan met in the United States at university in a class they were taking together. After spending the whole semester sitting in the front row, they finally talked to each other on the last day of class after a friend of Hillary’s introduced her to Turan. After going to lunch that day they ended up spending the following days together until Turan went back to Turkey after his graduation. On only their fourth day of their first meeting the couple was in a major car accident and ended up spending the

rest of the night in the hospital. The accident served as a catalyst in their relationship as Hillary elaborates: “I guess that made us closer in a very short amount of time, and then we spent every day together until the day he left.” The following year they maintained a long-distance relationship while Hillary finished her undergraduate studies. Hillary then decided to go to Turkey and lived with Turan’s family until he completed his military service, after which Turan and his family looked for a place for Hillary. During her stay with Turan’s family, Hillary learned a good amount of Turkish since her mother-in-law does not know any English and her sister-in-law very little. Hillary and Turan currently have no children. Turan is a finance manager and Hillary a freelance linguist and editor.

*Melissa and Emin*

Melissa and Emin met in England while living in the same graduate housing. They became friends and “it was love after that” as Melissa jokingly says. Melissa and Emin became friends after seeing each other so often and eventually Emin realized “there was something more”, and the couple later became romantic. When Emin decided he wanted to marry Melissa she was about to return to the United States to finish her doctorate. The couple lived apart for a year until they both finished their doctorate programs, Melissa in the United States and Emin in England. The couple came across more hurdles when Emin was not able to get a visa to the United States. It was then that Melissa decided to come to Istanbul, where they later lived together until they married within the same year. The two both highly value their privacy and family time and use their free time to spend time with each other or as Emin puts it, “we enjoy

each other”. Melissa and Emin have one four-year-old son. Melissa and Emin are both university professors. Emin was previously married to a Turkish woman.

*Isabelle and Ahmet*

When Isabelle was invited by one of her friend to a Turkish cultural event given by an international student’s club during university in the United States, she and Ahmet happened to be next to each other in line while waiting to get food. Isabelle noticed Ahmet’s shaved head and thinking he had recently come back from the army made a joke. Ahmet replied by starting a casual conversation with Isabelle, and they later went their own ways. Later Ahmet realized that Isabelle’s department was only three floors below his and started to notice her coming out of class. One day he approached her, after which they continued to “bump into each other” and chat (*Ahmet*). Isabelle adds, “Suddenly we started to cross paths, like they say, it’s in the stars.” It turns out they also had been in some of the same classes: Isabelle lightheartedly recalls, “I remember we had classes together but apparently you [Ahmet] noticed me.” They also would see each other at other cultural functions arranged by international student clubs. Eventually after sentimental feelings developed between them, they started to take their relationship more seriously. Finally after some time, what Isabelle describes as “love, honesty and higher values” brought the couple to realize their marriage was written “in the stars.” The couple engaged in the United States and later married in Turkey after Ahmet finished his military service. Ahmet is a university professor and Isabelle a housewife. They have one 17-year-old son.

### *Michelle and Bilal*

Bilal was a waiter at one of Michelle's favorite restaurants in the United States. One evening when Michelle and a friend were the last customers and Bilal the closing waiter, Bilal asked the two women if they wanted to go to a bar after his shift was over. Bilal had noticed Michelle at the restaurant before and thought she was different, as he said in his own words, "She looked different, she spoke different, she acted differently, and then she paid the bill and gave a good tip." He decided to make his move that night and talk to her. That evening Bilal and Michelle talked for hours at the bar and because it was so late Bilal insisted to take Michelle back home with a cab, spending a small fortune on their first meeting. Michelle says, "We've been together ever since that night." Their relationship sped up very quickly after their first meeting. Soon later they moved in together when Bilal asked Michelle to move to a different state where he had enrolled in college, and in a couple of months they were engaged. Bilal explains, "I'm a you see what you get kind of guy...when I like somebody I want to go all the way". Even though Michelle was not thinking about getting involved in another relationship as she was going through a divorce at the time, she felt Bilal was a "special guy." However, she was still reluctant to get married despite Bilal's insistence. One day Michelle was suddenly sent to the emergency room after a routine visit to her doctor while Bilal was at work. When Bilal did not hear from her he called her doctor and upon learning she had been sent to the hospital, called every hospital in the city until he found the one she was sent to and as Michelle explains, "I wasn't expecting him...and I looked up and there he was." After her near death experience and seeing Bilal's

response, Michelle thought, “What am I waiting for?” and decided to get married. The couple has one two-year-old son. Michelle was previously married to a Turkish man.

*Elizabeth and Yusuf*

Elizabeth and Yusuf met in university during their graduate studies. Because their program was small, they were often together in classes and in the same circle of friends. In particular, Yusuf recalls that Elizabeth noticed him when he was “making super smart comments” in the class. Right when she was about to set Yusuf up with her roommate, Elizabeth decided that Yusuf “was more interesting than she [roommate] needs” after they had lingered after class one day and chatted. They dated off and on for six years, until they decided to get married when they wanted to have children. They married for logistic ease because of their mixed nationalities and to receive more social support and recognition as a couple, even though they “are not huge believers in the necessity of marriage” as Elizabeth explains. The couple highly values their education, the topic dominating their conversation as scholarly books dominate their bookshelf. Just as their work takes a big place in their home, it also takes a big place in their relationship. Their academic endeavors are an area they connect: Elizabeth says, “we share the same professional language...it’s personally and professionally rewarding...we got each other really well”. They have one daughter, age one and a half. Yusuf and Elizabeth are both university instructors.



## **GROUP TWO: CENTRAL ASIAN – TURKISH COUPLES**

### **Demographics**

Various trends emerge when examining the demographic details of Central Asian woman and Turkish men. To begin with, all Turkish men in this group are older than their Central Asian wives. The average age for Central Asian women is 33 and 37.5 for Turkish men. Central Asian women range from 25 to 41 years of age and Turkish men from 28 to 49 years of age. Moreover, Turkish men and Central Asian women are usually close in age, ranging from three to eight years. The median age difference is three years.

Central Asian couples have been married for an average of seven years, ranging from one year and four months to 11 years and six months. Most couples had been married around eight years, the median years of marriage. On average couples had known each other for four years and six months before marriage, their courtship ranging from two years and seven months to eight years. In the case of all but one couple, the couple's courtship passed in the woman's home country (*Kazakhstan or Azerbaijan*). Four of the couples met in Kazakhstan (*the home country of the wife*), one couple met in Azerbaijan (*the home country of the wife*) and another couple met in Turkey (*the home country of the husband*). On average Central Asian woman have been living in Turkey for 12 years and 2 months, ranging from three years to 41 years. One woman is the daughter of Kazakh refugees from China, and as a result was born and raised in a Kazakh community in Turkey. One other couple married in the wife's home country, later moving to Turkey. Thus, years married and years living in Turkey are typically

congruent in Central Asian-Turkish couples (*four out of six*), showing a tendency for Central Asian-Turkish couples to come to Turkey directly after marriage. On average, Central Asian women have spent an average of four years of their time in Turkey with their spouse. Thus, the majority of Central Asian-Turkish couples have spent the entirety of their marriage in Turkey.

Central Asian-Turkish couples are well-educated: Central Asian women received an average of 17 years of education, and their Turkish spouse received an average of 16 years. Central Asian women attended school anywhere from 15 to 22 years and Turkish men anywhere from 13 to 19 years (*see Table 2*). So, Central Asian women had often received more years of education than their Turkish husband. Three of the Turkish men in this group had completed their undergraduate studies in Kazakhstan, and one man completed his graduate studies in Azerbaijan, the home countries of their Central Asian wives. One Kazakh woman whose family came to Turkey as refugees from China received all stages of her education in Turkey. The remaining Central Asian women received all stages of their education in their home country.

**TABLE 2:  
AGE AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF TURKISH MEN AND CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN**

Variable	Central Tendency Measures	Turkish (Husband)	Central Asian (Wife)
Age	Mean	37.5	33
	Range	28-49 (21)*	25-41 (16)*
Years of Education	Mean	16	17
	Range	13-19 (6)*	15-22 (7)*

\* indicates difference between highest and lowest value

## **The Couples**

### *Damira and Mahmut*

Damira and Mahmut met while studying at university in Kazakhstan. Mahmut was studying in the same department as Damira's brother. One day when Mahmut went to Damira's home to visit her brother he saw his future wife for the first time. Mahmut thought Damira was different and colder than other Kazakh girls he had seen, and when he learned that her own family thought she was a little different than other Kazakh people he became even more interested in her. After some time, he developed feelings for her. One day Mahmut finally told Damira that he not only wanted to get to know her but also that he wanted to marry her. She refused saying she would never marry a Turk. Damira describes herself as somewhat conceited and capricious at the time because the way her parents thought highly of her and her success in university built up her ego. She describes herself at that time: "I didn't think anyone was good enough for me" (*kimseye bi bakmazdım*). After they got to know each other a little better Damira agreed to marry Mahmut. Damira recalls: "He prayed for me lot...and I liked that" (*bana çok dua etmiş...hoşuma gitti*). Their courtship lasted two and half years. Damira and Mahmut have one seven-year-old son. Their first son passed away when he was one-year-old. While Damira was educated to be a music teacher, she currently is not working. Mahmut works for a newspaper.

### *Alia and Selim*

Selim met Alia when she was his student in an English course in Istanbul, Turkey. Alia suddenly decided not to continue with the course after experiencing a

major earthquake and left the dormitory she was staying at, leaving a bag behind. Students from the dorm gave the bag to Selim thinking he might be able to return it to Alia. After asking around, he eventually learned Alia's phone number and called her to ask for her address to send the bag, and also briefly chatted. Later after years had passed, Alia contacted Selim to ask him to translate some parts of her doctoral thesis into English. Selim at first accepted, but after Alia requested further translations Selim refused to translate anymore. They still occasionally contacted one another after this event, and sometime after his divorce with his first wife Selim decided he wanted to remarry. He then called Alia and asked her, "Do you not plan to get married?" (*Evlenmeyi düşünmüyor musun?*). Alia replied that while she was thinking about marriage that it is difficult to find the right person. Selim at that time was discussing marriage plans with someone else, so did not further pursue Alia. Later, Alia moved to Istanbul and would get together with Selim from time to time, resulting in a close friendship. Alia's family started to make jokes about Selim being their groom and then one day while chatting Alia and Selim decided to get married saying, "why not?" (*Neden olmasın?*). Alia recalls: "we decided to get married in one day, we hadn't even comprehended it yet" (*bir gün de karar verdik, anlamadık yani*). Alia said she later reflected on her decision thinking that after all they had been staying in touch via telephone and Selim seemed like a good man, and thus went through with the marriage. Alia is a university professor and Selim a university lecturer. They currently have no children. Selim was previously married to a Turkish woman.

### *Ainura and Mehmet*

Ainura was just completing high school and taking additional English classes at a cram school in Kazakhstan. At the end of the course, Ainura's teacher had a group photograph of her class and another class taught by her teacher taken. Mehmet was a student in the other class and they briefly met when picking up the photos. Later they met again when her teacher put her in the same examination with the foreign Turkish students and Mehmet remembered her as being shy, which caught his attention. Ainura recalls differently: "No, I am not shy, the teacher put me in the room with only Turkish [students], she allowed me to take the exam and there were seven or eight foreign students, and I just withdrew a bit... he misunderstood" (*Hayır, utangaç değilim orada, ha öğretmen beni şeye soktu bir sınıf sadece Türkler var ve beni sınava aldı ve sadece yedi sekiz yabancı öğrenciler ve sadece ben orada biraz çekindim...o yanlış biliyor*). Ainura further explains that in Kazakhstan usually women study English language and literature, and when Mehmet and other male Turkish students were in the program they attracted attention. Mehmet having met Ainura went to her when he needed help, resulting in continued contact between the two. They continued their friendship which later became more romantic. In particular, Ainura liked the occasional romantic gestures Mehmet made to her even if they were sporadic and irregular. After Mehmet did not call Ainura for a month during a university break, Ainura called him and said everything is over. He insisted that before she makes such a decision she meet him by the lakeside. Ainura gathered all the letters and photographs from Mehmet to give back to him to essentially end their relationship and met him at the lakeside. After a long chat

which ended with a marriage proposal from Mehmet, Ainura said “yes,” she herself surprised by her answer. They then engaged and were apart for a year after their graduation, Mehmet in Turkey and Ainura in Kazakhstan. Mehmet and some family and friends accompanied him to Kazakhstan for the wedding, after which the couple moved to Turkey. Ainura and Mehmet have three-year-old twin daughters. Mehmet and Ainura are English teachers.

#### *Nazgul and Ali*

Nazgul and Ali met in Kazakhstan in the university theater where Ali was a presenter and Nazgul in the dance group in various programs. Seeing each other at the university cultural center and other places on campus, they became friends. Both very popular among members of the opposite sex, their friendship did not develop into anything further for two years. When they decided to take their relationship further and get married, Nazgul’s family refused to let their daughter marry a Turk and after graduating Ali went back to Turkey. Ali later went back to Kazakhstan and brought a Turkish friend with the same last name with him, claiming he was his brother. Upon seeing a supposed person from Ali’s family, they accepted his request to marry their daughter. The next day the couple was on a plane to Turkey. Nazgul studied economics but is currently not working and Ali is a theater actor and instructor. They have one two-year-old daughter.

#### *Oya and Yavuz*

Yavuz met Oya when he stated to work at a university in Azerbaijan where Oya was working as a medical doctor. It was love at first sight for Yavuz as he explains, “I

liked Oya when I first saw her, I asked myself why hadn't I seen her before, I mean there is this beautiful woman in Azerbaijan...I liked her, loved her when I first saw her" (*ben Oya ilk gördüğümde beğendim...dedim ki ben bunu neden daha önce görmedim, yani Azerbaycan de öyle güzel bir kız varmış...ilk gördüğümde beğendim, sevdim*). He pursued her for some years until he finally convinced her to marry him after they had been friends for some time. Yavuz continues, "she was one of a kind, a special person to me, I attracted her attention later after we became friends" (*bir taneydi, benim için bir özel olmuş oldu, ben onu dikkati sonra çekmiş oldum dostluk sonrası*). When Oya met Yavuz she was not thinking about marriage just yet and consequently did not think of Yavuz in a romantic way until later when she was ready to marry. Yavuz is a university professor and Oya while previously a medical doctor is currently not working. Oya and Yavuz have a nine-year-old daughter and a seven-year-old son.

#### *Mariash and Necmi*

Mariash and Necmi were working together in Kazakhstan when they met, Mariash a translator for a Turkish company. They got to know each other over time and eventually decided to marry. Necmi then returned to Turkey and worked for three years saving up money for his impending marriage. During this time his family strongly opposed the idea of their son marrying a Kazakh woman and frequently found single Bosnian-Turkish women as potential brides. Necmi refused to marry the women his family introduced him to, eventually saving up enough money to marry Mariash and bring her to Turkey. In Necmi's words as time passed his parents "realized it was a good choice [to marry Mariash]" (*iyi tercih olduğunu fark ettiler*). Mariash a

tradesperson in Kazakhstan is currently not working and Necmi an insurance agent. Mariash and Necmi have two sons, ages 8 and 1 month.

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

When comparing the demographics for these two groups various trends emerge. First, trends in age and education history vary in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples for both men and women. Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5 more clearly illustrate these differences.

**TABLE 3:  
AGE AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF AMERICAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN**

Variable	Central Tendency Measures	American Women	Central Asian Women
Age	Mean	38.5	33
	Range	26-56 (30)*	25-41 (16)*
Years of Education	Mean	18.6	17
	Range	16-23 (7)*	15-22 (7)*

\* indicates difference between highest and lowest value

Table 3 compares age and educational history of American women and Central Asian women. As can be seen in the table, while American women tend to be older than their husband (50%), Central Asian women tend to be younger (100%). Moreover, American women tend to be older than Central Asian women, perhaps an indication of their tendency to marry later. In terms of education, American women had typically received more years of education than Central Asian women. Central Asian woman and Central Asian women were highly educated, four of the American women and two of the



Central Asian women having received some sort of graduate level education, all of them completing undergraduate studies.

Table 4 compares differences in age and educational history between Turkish men married to American women and those married to Central Asian women. There is a trend for Turkish men married to American women to be slightly younger than Turkish men married to Central Asian women. Moving on to education, it appears that Turkish men married to American women have typically received more years of education than those men married to Central Asian women. Thus, it appears that Turkish men married

**TABLE 4:  
AGE AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF TURKISH MEN**

Variable	Central Tendency Measures	Turkish men married to American Women	Turkish men married to Central Asian Women
Age	Mean	36.8	37.5
	Range	29-57 (28)*	28-49 (21)*
Years of Education	Mean	19.7	16
	Range	15-26 (11)*	13-19 (6)*

\* indicates difference between highest and lowest value

to American women are more likely to finish their undergraduate studies and also continue onto graduate studies. For example, half of the Turkish men married to American women had completed at least one graduate program whereas one Turkish man married to a Central Asian woman had done so.

When looking into marriage length and residency the following trends discussed above become clearer, adding another context in which to understand the trends. Table

5 illustrates the differences in marriage length and residency in Turkey for both American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples:

**TABLE 5:  
MARRIAGE LENGTH AND RESIDENCY IN TURKEY**

Variable	Central Tendency Measures	American-Turkish Couples	Central Asian-Turkish Couples
Length of Marriage	Mean	8 yrs. 9 mos.	7 yrs.
	Range	10 mos.-26 yrs.	1 yr. 4 mos.-11 yrs. 6 mos.
Length of Acquaintance before Marriage	Mean	3 yrs. 9 mos.	4 yrs. 6 mos.
	Range	1 yr.- 6 yrs.	2 yrs. 7 mos.-8 yrs.
Wife's Length of Residence in Turkey	Mean	6 yrs. 8 mos.	12 yrs. 2 mos.
	Range	1 yr.- 20 yrs.	3 yrs.-41 yrs.
Couple's Length of Residence in Turkey	Mean	5 yrs. 10 mos.	4 yrs.
	Range	10 mos.-20 yrs.	4 yrs.-10 yrs.

First of all, Central Asian-Turkish couples typically knew each other longer before they married than Turkish-American couples, where the former group had been acquainted an average of nine months more than the latter. Thus, courtship seems to be a longer affair for Central Asian-Turkish couples than American-Turkish couples. At first glance it appears that American-Turkish couples have been married longer than Central Asian-Turkish couples, but when closer examining the range of the years of marriage for both groups of couples, a different picture emerges. The range in years of marriage for American-Turkish couples is very wide, from ten months to 26 years, while the range in years of marriage for Central Asian-Turkish couples is less varied from one year and four months to 11 years and six months. Thus, the mean is slightly skewed by the wide range of years of marriage for American-Turkish couples. Moreover, the

median value of years of marriage for American-Turkish couples is five years and three months while the same value for Central Asian-Turkish couples is eight years. Combining these observations it emerges that Central Asian-Turkish couples actually tend to be married longer.

In terms of residence in Turkey Central Asian women tend to have been living in Turkey longer than American women by three years and two months. In terms of living in Turkey together as a couple American-Turkish couples are shown to have lived on average one year and ten months longer than Central Asian-Turkish couples. However, when taking in account the median years to account for the variations in the range, it appears that Central Asian women have actually been living in Turkey as a couple longer than American women at a mean of five years and six months, five months longer than American-Turkish couples. Since Central Asian women are more likely to come to Turkey after marriage and typically have been married longer than American women they also have longer residence in Turkey. Lastly, American women sometimes came to Turkey before their marriage or courtship for work. In contrast, all Central Asian women except for one daughter of Kazakh refugees who has always resided in Turkey, come as a result of their marriage.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **COMMUNICATION PATTERNS OF INTERCULTURAL COUPLES**

In order to understand how members of intercultural couples communicate with one another, a semi-structured interview was designed to stimulate couples to discuss stories of their experiences with strangers and family. During the interview the researcher carefully observed couples' behavior and took notes on how spouses communicated with one another. The following themes appeared: (1) displays of affection, (2) rebuttals, (3) confirming information, (4) turn taking, (5) one spouse leading the conversation, (6) involving a third party, (7) interaction with children, (8) inactivity or lack of participation, (9) use of commands, (10) belittling a spouse and (11) getting a spouse's attention.

For some of these trends sub-categories were identified to reveal a finer picture. Displays of affection were sorted by their nature creating four sub-categories: (1) physical, (2) looking, (3) humor and (4) verbal. Similarly, rebuttals were divided into five sub-categories based on their nature or the context in which they were made: (1) clarification/add information, (2) correction, (3) hostile rebuttal, (4) change of subject and (5) making a joke. Lastly, confirming information was further divided into three sub-categories including: (1) agreeing with spouse, (2) repeating spouse and (3) consulting with spouse. Interpretations of the distribution of frequencies among these categories and sub-categories for both American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-

Turkish couples follow. Finally, a cross analysis of both groups give further insight into the communication of these intercultural couples.

### **WITHIN GROUPS: AMERICAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

The most prominent trends in American-Turkish couples' communication in order of most frequent include: (1) displaying affection, (2) rebutting, (3) confirming information and (4) turn taking. Secondary trends (in order of most frequent) include: (5) one spouse leading the conversation, (6) involving a third party and (7) interacting with children. Other minor occurrences of the following trends were also observed (in order of most frequent): (8) inactivity or lack of participation, (9) using commands *along with* belittling a spouse and (10) getting a spouse's attention. The following table below summarizes these findings:

**TABLE 6:  
FREQUENCY OF INTERVIEW THEMES IN AMERICAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Rank	Category	# of items		
		W*	H**	Total
1	Displaying Affection	141	78	219
2	Rebutting	135	73	208
3	Confirming Information	95	92	187
4	Turn Taking	42	31	70
5	One Spouse Leading the Conversation	19	21	40
6	Involving a Third Party	14	19	33
7	Interacting with Children	26	3	29
8	Inactivity/Lack of Participation	0	5	5
9	Using Commands	0	2	2
9	Belittling a Spouse	1	1	2
10	Getting a Spouse's Attention	1	1	0

\*W = American Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

## **Displaying Affection**

A deeper analysis of the table reveals other interesting findings about the communication between spouses of American-Turkish couples. The most visible trend in American-Turkish couples' communication is displays of affection. Moreover, American women (*five out of six*) are more likely to display their affection for their spouse than their Turkish husbands. The nature of displays of affection made by women and men of American-Turkish couples mimic one another as the ranking of each sub-category of affectionate displays is the same between American women and Turkish men. The most common type of affectionate displays observed for both American woman and Turkish men is use of humor, consecutively followed by physical displays of affection, looking at one another and verbal expressions. Moreover, American woman are more likely to make displays of affection when communicating with their husband than is reciprocated back to them by their husband. The table below shows these findings:

**TABLE 7:  
DISPLAYING AFFECTION BY AMERICAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Type of Display of Affection	# of Items		
	W*	H**	Total
Humor	72	36	108
Physical	33	22	55
Looking	30	20	50
Verbal	6	0	6
Total	141	78	219

\*W = American Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

### *Humor*

The use of humor by American-Turkish couples emerges when a spouse is amused by something their partner says, whether it be intended to be humorous or not. In some cases a spouse may respond to a joke and in others simply laugh at an amusing comment made by their partner. Other instances of the occasional nervous humor appear where spouses chuckle to themselves or during pauses. Such instances might be a result of the observer effect as the presence of the researcher and the nature of the semi-structured interview can add an awkward dimension to the atmosphere at times. American women were more likely to use humor to communicate with their spouse. Some examples below better illustrate the use of humor by American-Turkish couples.

An intentional use of humor by a woman is seen when her husband is discussing his first impressions of his in-laws. He says how his first meeting with his in-laws was strange:

Husband: “[I] thought they were selfish --”

Wife: “My family?”

Husband: “Yes”

Wife: “I can’t imagine why you would think that – you think because they are. *Herhalde!* (probably)”

After making this joke the wife verifies in Turkish and chuckles. Her husband does not respond openly and goes back to explaining the story.

In other cases, the husband and wife laugh at something that amuses them as seen here when a couple are discussing the safety of their daughter on the balcony. When noticing his daughter is holding on the railing of the balcony, one man asks his

wife if it is safe. She replies saying that she tested if it was dangerous by trying to push the girls head through the bars of the railing, verifying that she could not slip through. Her husband amused by this says “That’s awesome!” and laughs, his wife then answers back by laughing.

Also, a sort of nervous humor between spouses occasionally emerges. In one instance a woman is describing how she met her husband. While telling the couple’s story the wife chuckles every once in a while and when finishing the story chuckles again. Her husband responds, “What?” to which the woman replies, “Nothing.” Her husband then summarizes, “And we met.” After which the wife laughs, followed by her husband who again asks, “What?”

### *Physical*

Physical closeness takes on several forms in American-Turkish couples’ communication. This can include physical touching of one spouse by another, a spouse sliding their hand towards a partner, a spouse leaning towards the other, a spouse putting sugar in a partner’s coffee and stirring it or even an unexpected smile. Examples of some of these follow to paint a clearer picture of the physical displays of affection observed in American-Turkish couples.

One woman’s responds to a question about what she likes about biking along the Bosphorus, “What do I like about riding along the Bosphorus?” followed by a soft chuckle. Pausing at first she later continues to explain how she likes “Being outside and riding the bike close to the water.” Her husband who is already sitting next to her starts to lean closer towards her as she continues explaining after another pause saying, “[I



Like adventure, riding through traffic and seeing people.” Her husband then puts his arm around her and adds, “yeah.”

While discussing the mental state of the woman’s mother, one participant puts her arm on her husband’s arm and explains how despite her mother’s poor treatment of her husband, “is just amazing with her – it’s not just him, she has moments where she doesn’t see things clearly.” As she continues to explain details about her mother her husband puts his hand on his wife’s arm.

A husband is talking about how his family always expects him and his wife to visit during holidays when his wife adds, “It makes them happy, we’re happy because they’re happy.” While she is talking he turns towards her and smiles. He then reaches his arm out towards his wife, who turns her head towards him.

### *Looking*

While communicating with one another American-Turkish couples show a tendency to look at and watch their spouse. For clarification, looking is not included as a physical display of affection because there is no actual physical contact made. For example, a husband is talking about how his wife’s expectations of others in Turkey in terms of punctuality are higher than the Turkish expectation. His wife adds that her expectations are much lower then they previously were saying she is a “work in progress, another eight more years and I’ll be right there.” She then looks towards her husband and the smile lines around her eyes become more prominent.

### *Verbal*

A final display of affection is verbal expressions. These can include use of affectionate names for a spouse, complimenting a spouse or telling a spouse “I love you.” All verbal displays of affection were made by women. Some examples of affectionate names used by American women for their spouses include “honey” and “sweetie pie.” Other times women complimented their husband like the women here does after her husband explains how language competency helped their marriage: “That’s because of your fantastic English,” which she follows up with a smile. Another instance of verbal expressions is seen in the next example. A husband brings up a general question during the interview (“Why would someone marry someone from a whole different culture?”) to which his wife answers, “Because I love you.”

### **Rebutting**

The use of rebuttals by American-Turkish couples is a very prominent trend in their communication style. Rebuttals are primarily made by American-Turkish couples to clarify or add information to something a spouse is explaining. Occasionally rebuttals take on the form of jokes or corrections. Four out of the six women made more rebuttals than their husbands indicating a greater tendency for women to make rebuttals. Moreover, when looking at the distribution of rebuttals based on gender, it appears that American woman are more likely to use all three forms of rebuttals observed. The table below shows these trends:

**TABLE 8:  
REBUTTING BY AMERICAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Type of Rebuttal	# of Items		
	W*	H**	Total
Clarification/Add Information	124	71	195
Make Joke	6	1	7
Correction	5	1	6
Total	135	73	208

\*W = American Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

### *Clarification*

Clarifications are made to either make a comment on something a spouse said or add something different (*e.g. different angle, different opinion*) to something a spouse is explaining by American-Turkish couples. A husband comments on an example his wife gives of her Turkish in-laws' different expectations on her role in her marriage:

Wife: "I can't do the tea service properly--"

Husband: "Like they know" (chuckle)

At other times a spouse adds their perspective to something being discussed. In the next example, a husband is talking about how his relationship with his wife and her family are two different things that usually do not affect one another. His wife cuts in and makes a similar comment but from her angle: "I feel the same way to some extent, even in the most contentious of moments it wasn't about choosing between him or his mother or him saying you must get along with her and kiss her hand, pay your respect."

### *Making Jokes*

Another emergent form of rebuttal is jokes made while a spouse is talking, typically about the topic of the conversation. Following trends already seen, American

women are more likely to interrupt their Turkish husband to make a joke than men are to interrupt their wives. A man is talking about his wife's different expectations on organization and discipline when she cuts in with a joke:

Husband: "She expects herself to be that way [organized and disciplined] – she expects others to be that way...when they're not it's hard for her--"

Wife: "Pow, I just get out my whip (makes whip sound)!"

In another example, a husband is explaining how his wife's knowledge of Turkish makes it easy for him to take her with him to social events. When he is finishing up he makes a short pause and then jokes: "Unless she's hiding something from me," and both the man and his wife laugh.

#### *Correction*

The most common corrections made by couple's are when a spouse makes a linguistic error (*e.g. grammar, vocabulary choice*) or misstated detail. American women were more likely to make corrections than Turkish men. An example of a linguistic correction is seen when a women corrects her husband's word choice:

Husband: "We met each other in PhD studies. We were in the same cohort--"

Wife: "Same program"

Husband: "Same program"

Other corrections include restatements of a particular detail that pertains to the topic of conversation. A husband is talking about a young man he hired to assemble his furniture and says he worked for three days when his wife cuts in and corrects him: "Three hours, not three days – you said three days."

### **Confirming Information**

American-Turkish couples' frequently confirm information when communicating with one another. The most frequent type of confirmation of information observed in American-Turkish couples is agreeing with a spouse. Consulting with a spouse is also a fairly prominent trend, followed by repeating a spouse. When looking at the combined frequencies of all three of these trends it appears that American women are more likely to confirm information than their Turkish husbands. However, when looking closer at each trend individually Turkish men were more likely to agree with their spouses than American woman. Also, Turkish men are more likely to repeat something their spouses said than American women. Moreover, American woman are more likely to consult with their Turkish husband than Turkish men are to consult with their American wives. These findings are summarized in the table below:

**TABLE 9:  
CONFIRMING INFORMATION BY AMERICAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Type of Confirmation	# of Items		
	W*	H**	Total
Agreeing with Spouse	55	65	120
Consulting with Spouse	34	20	54
Repeating Spouse	6	7	13
Total	95	92	187

\*W = American Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

#### *Agreeing with Spouse*

When agreeing with a spouse, the husband or wife typically follows up with one word like “yeah” and “true” or with a short sentence like “I concur”. An instance of the first case follows:

Wife: “We’re very close with his family because we are here [Turkey] I guess. We are in constant communication“

Husband: “Yeah”

In another case, a husband is talking about how he and his wife fear living in the same place for more than five or six years and his wife adds, “Yeah, we agree on that.”

### *Consulting with Spouse*

Consulting with a spouse is done either overtly or implicitly. Overt consultations typically take the form of questions as seen in the following examples. After the researcher asks a couple a prompt about an experience with strangers that stands out in their minds the woman looks at her husband and asks, “What are you going to tell first?” The husband directly starts to tell a story about a car accident his wife experienced when she was driving alone. When another couple explains how they met, a woman first asks her husband in Turkish: “Should I tell? (*Ben mi söyleyim?*). Her husband not responding, she continues to tell their story and when she finishes again verifies with her husband by asking, “That’s right, isn’t it?” He plainly answers “yeah.” In the next example a husband consults with his wife when trying to remember his favorite place to go out:

Husband: Where is my favorite place? (*Benim en sevdiğim yer neresi?*)

Wife: “The barbeque (*mangal*) place”

Husband: “The barbeque (*mangal*) place, yeah.”

Other consultations are more indirect and seen in the form of subtle hints directed towards a spouse. Interestingly, cases of indirect hinting are only used by

American women. In one case, a woman hints that her husband may have a different opinion on the effect language competence has on their marriage: “I don’t think it’s really affected our relationship, well maybe it has.” In the next example a woman is talking about an experience with strangers: “Something that stands out for me for sure and I think also for [husband] after having lived in the United States for eight years is how wonderful people are with kids here.” Also, when referring to her husband she also looks at him as if checking to see he agrees.

#### *Repeating Spouse*

Another way in which couples confirm information is by repeating something their spouse says in agreement. An example is seen here when a couple is discussing their favorite outing:

Wife: “Do you have a favorite place?”

Husband: “In Istanbul Büyük Ada.”

Wife: “Büyük Ada.”

The wife then continues to explain a “very pleasant” summer vacation the couple spent together at Büyük Ada, indicating that it is a favorite place for both her and her husband.

In another instance a couple is discussing their travel to the United States:

Wife: “He [husband] went back [to the United States] once on a green card.”

Husband: “Yeah, green card.”

Here the husband is in a sense confirming his wife’s statement by repeating the final part.

## **Turn Taking**

Turn taking can be described as smooth shifts from one speaker to another (*i.e. husband and wife*) without interruptions. These shifts sometimes naturally come as the conversation intuitively moves between speakers or can be initiated by a spouse inviting their partner to respond. Turn taking is another fairly prominent trend in American-Turkish couples' communication. Moreover, American women were more likely to initiate or encourage turn taking than their Turkish husband. In the analysis, the first person to start talking about a topic which later switched to their spouse is considered to be encouraging turn taking.

### *Natural Shifts*

In the following example a natural shift from a husband to his wife is observed. The man is telling a story about a time a salesman at the local bazaar guessed his wife to be Bosnian, instead of American and later claimed he was good at recognizing people:

Husband: "It was very funny because he [the salesman] said 'See how well I know people' (*Bak, adamı nasıl tanıyorum*)."

Wife: (chuckling) "Quite 'awake' (*uyanık*), they [people] notice right away – like to ask questions too."

In another case, a woman is talking about her in-laws different expectations about the role of men and women in marriage when the conversation smoothly shifts to her husband:



Wife: “And I think it’s hard for them [in-laws] to see their son doing housework. They try to understand and I think they do understand.”

Husband: They’re [parents] scared to talk to me. Before taking this medication I use to shout a lot.”

Her husband continues to explain how his behavior with his parents has resulted in them keeping a distance from him and his wife, connecting to his wife’s comment on how they try to understand the situation.

### *Initiating Turn Taking*

At other times a shift between speakers is initiated by a spouse. For example, a woman is talking about the effect knowing Turkish has had on her relationship with her husband and family when she turns to her husband and asks, “What do you think?” Her husband then proceeds to explain his perspective. In another similar instance a woman is talking about her relationship with her in-laws and when she finishes her husband says, “You answered so it’s my turn.” Both of these transitions between husband and wife are fluid.

### **One Spouse Leading the Conversation**

Although not observed as much as turn taking, American-Turkish couples show a tendency for a spouse to lead the conversation. In other words, one spouse dominates the discussion, often resulting in the other spouse interrupting when they want to contribute. Thus, the high frequency of rebuttals is partially related to the relatively high frequency of a spouse leading the conversation. In American-Turkish couples no particular gender is more likely to lead the conversation. In three couples the wife is

more likely to lead the conversation, and in the remaining three couples the husband. In the following example a husband takes the lead by answering a question first about the couple's and maintaining control of the conversation:

Husband: "We didn't have friends at our wedding. We didn't want friends at our wedding because we were enough for ourselves--"

Wife: "Falling in love part."

Husband: "We really like spending time with each other."

The husband continues to elaborate on their wedding, his wife occasionally interrupting with details or clarifications. In another case a woman is the first to answer a question about how close each spouse is with their in-laws. First she explains the relationship her husband has with her family and then her relationship with her husband's family. Her husband simply follows up with, "yeah."

### **Involving a Third Party**

Involving a third party refers to a spouse either verbally or physically including a party other than their husband or wife into the conversation. American-Turkish couples occasionally involve their children or the researcher into the conversation. Since children naturally require and seek attention from their parents they seem to be included more out of obligation than desire. Inclusions of children into the conversation are typically due to parents watching or trying to amuse their children. At other times a spouse includes the researcher into the conversation usually by looking and leaning towards her during the interview. It is also not uncommon for American-Turkish couples to directly talk to the researcher rather than discuss a topic with their spouse.

Some participants directly ask the researcher questions like: “Do you have another question?” This phenomenon is most likely a result of the observer’s effect. Lastly, Turkish men are more likely to involve a third party than their American wives, although the difference is not very great. Moreover, Turkish men are more likely to involve the researcher and American woman their children into the discussion.

### **Interacting with Children**

American woman are far more likely to interact with their children in comparison to their Turkish husbands. For instance, for the couples with children present at the interview the wife is the main caretaker. Moreover, only one husband interacts with his child during the interview. Interactions with children include talking to children, helping children (*i.e., feeding, changing diapers*) and entertaining children (*i.e., playing*).

### **Inactivity/Lack of Participation**

A relatively minor observation, inactivity or lack of participation is observed by Turkish men only. Only one husband shows lack of participation and inactivity. This is evident when he watches the television and at other times looks out blankly and in general unresponsive during the interview.

### **Using Commands**

Commands are rarely observed in American-Turkish couples. Only two Turkish men make use of commands and in each case only one instance. In one case a man tells

his wife to “speak loud” at the beginning of the interview. In the other case a man tells his wife to explain a particular story: “Tell her about the taxi driver in Taksim.”

### **Belittling of a Spouse**

Belittling of a spouse is another minor observation in American-Turkish couples. Only two instances of some sort of belittling occur. In one case a woman mimics her husband after he tells a story about how he admitted to his wife that he was lying to her. She deepens her voice and changes her facial expression making an impression of her husband and says: “I have to tell you something very important..he says..I, I am a liar.” As for the other instance, a husband criticizes his wife’s behavior with a taxi driver in Istanbul claiming that part of the reason she had a bad experience with the driver was “partially your [her] fault.”

### **Getting Spouse’s Attention**

Only one occurrence of getting a spouse’s attention was observed in American-Turkish couple’s communication. One woman gets her husband’s attention after he starts to go on a tangent about his relationship with his sister by laughing and touching his arm saying: “Sweetie pie she’s [researcher] a sociologist not a psychologist.”

## **WITHIN GROUPS: CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

The most prominent trends in Central Asian-Turkish couples’ communication in order of most frequent to least frequent include: (1) rebutting, (2) displaying affection,

(3) turn taking and (4) confirming information. Secondary trends (in order of most frequent to least frequent) include:

**TABLE 10:  
FREQUENCY OF INTERVIEW THEMES IN CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Rank	Category	# of items		
		W*	H**	Total
1	Rebutting	84	64	148
2	Displaying Affection	77	68	145
3	Turn Taking	33	41	74
4	Confirming Information	37	30	67
5	One Spouse Leading the Conversation	10	33	43
6	Involving a Third Party	14	23	37
7	Interacting with Children	14	10	24
8	Inactivity/Lack of Participation	2	9	11
9	Using Commands	4	4	8
10	Getting a Spouse's Attention	1	1	2
11	Belittling a Spouse	0	1	1

\*W = Central Asian Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

(5) one spouse leading the conversation, (6) involving a third party, (7) interacting with children, (8) inactivity or lack of participation and (9) using commands. Other minor occurrences of the following trends were also observed (in order of most frequent): (10) getting a spouse's attention and (11) belittling a spouse. These findings are summarized in Table 10.

### **Rebutting**

The most frequent communication trend seen in Central Asian-Turkish couples is the use of rebuttals. While a wide variety of rebuttals are used, they are most commonly used to clarify or add information to something previously said by a spouse. A

secondary type of rebuttal is correcting a spouse. Hostile rebuttals, changing the subject and making a joke are other more minor types of rebuttals used by Central-Asian couples. Moreover, Central Asian women are more likely to make rebuttals than their Turkish husband. Table 11 gives a visual representation of this information:

**TABLE 11:  
REBUTTING BY CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Type of Rebuttal	# of Items		
	W*	H**	Total
Clarification/Add Information	66	57	123
Correction	14	5	19
Hostile Rebuttal	3	0	3
Change Subject	0	2	2
Make Joke	1	0	1
Total	84	64	146

\*W = Central Asian Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

#### *Clarification/Add Information*

Central Asian women are slightly more likely than Turkish men to clarify or add information. In five couples the wife make more clarifications than her husband and in the remaining couple both the wife and husband make an equal amount of clarifications. For example, a husband is talking about the effect the use of Kazakh and Russian has on his marriage when his wife gives her opinion:

Husband: “When did they [husband’s family] begin to get to know my wife - whenever we would speak Russian [with wife] they were not bothered. They were still curious though. They were interested in a warm way”

*(Ne zamanki eşimi tanımaya başladılar. Biz ne zaman esimle Rusça konuşunca aldırmyorlardı. Daha ters de da yine merak ediyorlardı. Sıcaklıkla merak ediyorlardı.)*

Wife: “What warmth, like a refrigerator.” *(Ne sığağı, buzdolabı gibi.)*

The woman rebuts her husband's opinion on her in-laws feeling towards the couple's use of a foreign language and expresses her opinion. In the next example, a Turkish man adds to what his wife is discussing:

Wife: "I took my husband to visit my grandma. He sat down at the table, drank his tea quietly, ate his food, ate his rice, ate the meat--"  
(*Ben eşimi akrabalarından anneanneme götürdüm. Eşim sofraya girdi, sessizce çayını içti, yemeğini yedi, pilavını yedi, etini yedi.*)

Husband: "I will eat horse meat. They eat horse meat."  
(*Yerim ben at eti de yerim. At eti yiyorlar.*)

Here the husband interrupts his wife to clarify that his wife's family prefers horse meat and that he does not have a problem with eating horse meat.

#### *Correction*

Central Asian women are more likely to correct their spouse during a conversation than Turkish men are to correct their wife. In one instance a man is talking about how he met when they were working at the same university when his wife interrupts him to correct him saying, "No, I left [the university] one year before (*Hayır, bir sene önce ayrıldım*)."

When recalling the time they met each other one a couple correct each other on some details of the story:

Husband: "We met at university." (*Üniversitede tanıştık.*)

Wife: "We did not meet each other there in the dance group [university theater]."  
(*Biz orada dans grubunda tanışmadık.*)

Husband: "No, we first saw each other there." (*Hayır Orada ilk gördük.*)

Since the couple had been previously discussing theater, the topic was fresh in their minds when the wife corrected her husband on the details of where they met. The husband later corrects his wife, clearing up the misunderstanding.

### *Hostile Rebuttal*

Occasionally rebuttals of a hostile nature were made during tense moments throughout the discussion. In one couple hostile rebuttals were observed, all of which were made by the wife. In the instance below the wife is upset at her husband's different understanding of her in-laws perspective of her:

Wife: "They [in-laws] think of university girls as spoiled girls [not virgin]--"  
(*Hele okumuş üniversite bitirmiş kız bozulmuş kız olarak bakıyorlar.*)

Husband: "Not like that, not spoiled, you are looking at it emotionally--"  
(*Ya öyle değil, bozulmuş değil, sen duygusal bakıyorsun.*)

Wife: "That's what they were thinking--" (*Onların akılları öyledi.*)

Husband: "You are being subjective--" (*Sen sübjektif konuşuyorsun.*)

Wife: "That's for the one who experienced it to know." (*Onu yaşayan bilir.*)

After her husband's first retort, the wife lowers her head and continues to state her opinion while raising her voice. While her husband remains calm, the woman is clearly upset and takes on a hostile tone of voice and her distant body language appears to be a sign of stress.

### *Change of Subject*

Changing the subject is another way Central Asian-Turkish couples made rebuttals during conversation. Only one couple made use of this type of rebuttal which is also the same couple in which hostile rebuttals were observed. All instances of this rebuttal were made by the husband. In one case a wife is telling the researcher about how learning about Islam has changed her life when her husband who has become listless looks up from a book he was examining and says, "The second question (*İkinci*



*soru*)?” The husband wanting to move on makes his message by directly asking the researcher to move on to the next question.

#### *Make a Joke*

Although infrequently, another type of rebuttal used by Central Asian-Turkish couples is making a joke. Only one Central Asian woman made use of such rebuttals. For example, she jokes with her husband when he is talking about their courtship:

Husband: “We were hiding our feelings for each other.”  
(*Duygularımız saklanıyorduk*.)”

Wife: “But [nickname for husband], one minute, I do not have feelings.”  
(*Ama [nickname for husband] bi dakika, ben de duygu yok*.)”

By playfully hitting her husband when she makes her joke the lightheaded nature of her rebuttal is clearer.

#### **Displaying Affection**

The most commonly observed display of affection used by Central Asian-Turkish couples is the use of humor. Closely following, looking at a spouse is another prominent display of affection seen in the interview. A less frequent trend is the use of physical displays of affection by Central Asian-Turkish couples. Lastly, verbal expressions of a spouse’s affection are rarely observed. In terms of gender, displays of affection for a spouse are more likely to be made by Central Asian women. In four of the couples the wife is more likely to make affectionate displays. In two others couples, the Turkish husband shows a greater tendency to make affectionate expressions towards his wife. Moreover, Central Asian women most often use humor when being

affectionate, while Turkish men most often look at their spouse affectionately. Table 12 visually presents these findings:

**TABLE 12:  
DISPLAYING AFFECTION BY CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Type of Display of Affection	# of Items		
	W*	H**	Total
Humor	31	23	54
Looking	26	27	53
Physical	19	18	37
Verbal	1	0	1
Total	77	68	145

\*W = Central Asian Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

### *Humor*

Central-Asian couples typically used humor when they liked or were amused by something a spouse said. Central Asian women were more likely to use humor than Turkish men. For example, a husband and wife laugh while the husband explains the couple's courtship, reminiscing about the past. The husband explains, "Later we chatted but the possibility of marriage came in 1999...I chased after her (*Sonra konuştuk ama evlilik '99 de ortaya çıktı...peşine düştüm*)." He then laughs and smiles and continues with the story, "We discussed marriage for a long time...it was hard to convince her (*görüştük epey...zor ikna ettik*)." His wife then chuckles to herself and tries to hide a slight smile. Furthermore, Turkish men occasionally make jokes, another use of humor in Central Asian-Turkish couples. Another couple is discussing how they decided to get married when her husband makes a joke:

Wife: “For seven or eight years I have been talking with him on the phone every once in a while, I said he was a good person, he helped me.”  
(*Yedi, sekiz yıldır ara sıra telefonda görüşüyorum ya, iyi bir insan dedim, yardım yaptı.*)

Husband: “Of course, does she think the same think after marriage?”  
(*Tabii evlendikten sonra aynı şey düşünüyor mu?*)

Both the husband and wife laugh together at the joke.

### *Looking*

Looking at one another is another type of physical display of affection made by Central Asian-Turkish couples. Moreover, Turkish men and Central Asian women were equally likely to look at their spouse. In the next example a wife is talking about how her husband is romantic at times: “He is sometimes romantic and polite (*Ara sıra romantiktir, kibardır*).” Her husband lightheartedly chuckles and looks at his wife as she continues to explain: “He loves me. [He] takes me out to dinner, takes me out around town. I am also romantic. I like going out, holding hounds, touching (*Beni sever. Beni yemeğe götürmesi gezdirmesi. Ben de romantiğimdir – dışarıda olsun ellini tutmak, dokunmak hoşuma gider*).” In another instance a wife is looking at her husband as she talks about how she likes how her husband makes an effort to speak Kazakh: “I am proud of my husband because he likes Kazakh, I like it (*Eşim Kazakçayı sevdiği için eşimle gurur duyuyorum, hoşuma gidiyor*).” The wife pleased by her husband’s behavior expresses her affection by looking at her husband.

### *Physical*

Central Asian couples make a variety of physical displays of affection including: smiling, leaning, towards a spouse, raising eyebrows, touching, whispering in the ear and bringing food and other items to a spouse. Physical displays of affection are fairly equally made by both Central Asian women and Turkish men. However, are more likely to touch their husbands than Turkish men are to touch their Central Asian wives. An instance of touching is observed when a couple is discussing their courtship. The Husband explains: “We were hiding our feelings for each other (*Duygularımız saklanıyorduk*).” In response his wife smiles and playfully hits him saying, “But [nickname for husband], one minute, I do not have feelings (*Ama [nickname for husband] bi dakika, ben de duygu yok*).” Another affectionate display is observed when a Central Asian woman becomes emotional when her husband recollects an occasion when he tried to surprise her by putting on their wedding video. Her husband explains that while trying to make his wife happy by showing the video, it instead brought up feelings of longing and made his wife teary and emotional. While listening to her husband tell this story the woman smiles and becomes emotional. Moreover, the woman becomes soft spoken for a moment.

### *Verbal*

Verbal displays of affection are not observed very often in Central Asian-Turkish couple’s communication. The use of nicknames for spouse is the only verbal expression of spouse’s affection observed. Moreover, all instances of verbal expressions of

affection are said by women. An example of use of a nickname for a spouse is discussed in the previous paragraph.

### **Turn Taking**

Turn taking between husband and wife was a common trend in Central Asian-Turkish couples' communication. Turn taking refers to smooth shifts between speakers without interruption during conversation. While turn taking sometimes naturally results as the conversation intuitively moves between speakers or can be initiated by a spouse inviting their partner to respond. Moreover, Turkish men were more likely to initiate or encourage turn taking than their Central Asian wives. While four men were more likely to initiate turn taking with their wives, only two women were more likely to do so with their husbands. When analyzing, the first person to start talking about a topic that later switched to their spouse is considered to be encouraging turn taking.

#### *Natural Shifts*

One type of turn taking observed is a natural shift between husband and wife. An example of the husband encouraging turn taking is seen when a couple is discussing a typical outing together:

Husband: "We go to the officers' club, we eat fish. Because my father is a military officer we can easily go."  
(*Biz orduevine gideriz, balığımız yeriz...Benim babam subay olduğu için orduevine rahatlıkla gidiyoruz.*)

Wife: "Now [he] Works Saturday and Sunday, there is no time."  
(*...şimdi Cumartesi Pazar çalışıyor, zamanı yok.*)

Husband: “We eat fish, listen to music, enjoy ourselves. My wife had never gone to places like that before. She likes it more now, she likes places like that. Of course we do not go all the time, once a month.”  
(... *Balığımız yiyoruz, müziğimizi dinliyoruz, eğleniyoruz. Eşim daha önce gitmemiş öyle yerlere. Şimdi daha hoşuna gitti, sevdi öyle yerleri. Bu da her zaman gitmiyoruz tabii ki, ayda bir.*)

The conversation smoothly flows from husband to wife without any interruptions. In the next example a Central Asian women encourages turn taking when they are discussing how close she is with her husband’s family:

Wife: “We are very close because we live in the same house.”  
(*Çok yakınız bir evde yaşadığımız için.*)

Husband: “We are physically and psychologically close.”  
(*Çok yakınız fiziki, ruhsal olarak.*)

Wife: “Psychologically we are close. We get along well 90% of the time, 10% of the time we have conflicts because as you know Turkish women are a lack understanding sometimes.”  
(*Ruhsal olarak yakınız. İyiyiz. 90% iyiyiz 10% bazen oluyor çünkü biliyorsunuz Türk kadınları biraz şey anlayışlı olmayan insanlar.*)

The conversation fluidly and quickly moves between speakers as timing between the husband and wife is well timed such that they do not overlap each other. The husband continues to describe his relationship with his wife’s family which is followed with a comment from his wife in an almost orchestrated manner.

### *Initiating Turn Taking*

By asking a spouse questions participants also initiated turn taking during conversation. While one couple is discussing a recent outing they made together a Turkish man initiates turn taking:

Husband: “What do you have to say about the Bolu trip?”  
(*Sen ne dersin Bolu gezisi alakalı?*)

Wife: “It was very interesting for the children, a trip to the forest.”  
(*Çocuklar için çok ilginç olmuştun, orman gezisi.*)

Husband: “It is a place we had not gone before.”  
(*Bizim daha önce gitmediğimiz bir yerde.*)

After finishing sharing his account of a trip the couple made to Bolu, he asks his wife for her thoughts, passing on the topic to his wife. In the next instance a Central Asian woman initiates turn taking when she asks her husband how he feels about marrying a foreigner:

Wife: “Are you lucky because I am your wife? Would you have wanted a Turkish wife, really, why do you love me? Now look, I do lots of things for [husband].  
(*Ben senin eşin olduğun için şanslı mısın? ...Türk mü kadın isterdin..., gerçekten niye mi seviyorsun? Şimdi bakınız burası çok şey mesela [husband] için ben yapıyorum.*)

Husband: “Turkish men hide their feelings.” (*Türk erkeği duygularını saklar.*)

Wife: “I love him a lot, a whole lot.” (*Çok severim, çok çok çok.*)

The husband responds to his wife’s question which she follows up with another response.

### **Confirming Information**

Confirming information is a fairly common trend observed in the communication of Central Asian-Turkish couples’. Consulting with a spouse is the most frequent way in which these couples confirm information. Other ways that these couples confirm information are (in order of most frequent to least frequent) by agreeing with a spouse and repeating a spouse. When looking at overall frequencies Central Asian women are more likely to confirm information with their Turkish husbands. However, when

analyzing occurrences of this trend couple by couple it appears that three of the Turkish men confirm information more than their wives. Moreover, two Central Asian women confirm information more than their Turkish husbands and one other couple equally confirms information revealing a more complex picture of this trend. Thus, despite greater combined frequencies of confirming information by Central Asian women, Turkish men are just as likely to confirm information as are Central Asian women. In fact, Turkish men are sometimes more likely to confirm information than are their Central Asian wives. General frequencies for this trend are shown in the table below:

**TABLE 13:  
CONFIRMING INFORMATION BY CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES**

Type of Confirmation	# of Items		
	W*	H**	Total
Consulting with Spouse	18	13	31
Agreeing with Spouse	10	11	21
Repeating Spouse	11	6	17
Total	39	30	69

\*W = Central Asian Wives

\*\*H = Turkish Husbands

#### *Consulting with Spouse*

Central Asian women were more likely to consult with a spouse than Turkish men. Central Asian-Turkish couples typically consult with each other to verify details or ask for a spouse's opinion (*directly or indirectly*). For example, one woman indirectly asks her husband about how he feels about his relationship with her family:



Wife: “Because our family is warm natured, I [feel] as if [my in-laws] are own brother, sister-in-law, mother. I do not feel any coldness with them [in-laws]. I do not know what [husband] thinks.”

*(Aile olarak sıcakkanlı olduğumuz için ben onları kendi abim, yengem, annem, öz annem. Ben de öyle bir soğukluk şey hissetmiyorum. [husband] ne hissediyor bilmiyorum.)*

Husband: “I do not feel any coldness honey, we already live together with my mother-in-law. My sisters-in-law come on the weekends and stay here. There is no coldness. ”

*(Yok canım beraberiz zaten kayınvalide falan, baldızlar gelir hafta sonular kalırlar burada. Öyle bir şey yok.)*

After explaining how she feels close to her husband’s family the woman probes for her husband’s feelings about her family by saying, “I do not know what [he] thinks.” Her husband looking out the window at the time turns around and explains how he feels about his in-laws. A direct instance of consultation is observed when a husband verifies if he and his wife went to Kazakhstan together: “We went together one year, didn’t we *(Bir sene gittik beraber de mi)?*” His wife responds by verifying he is correct by saying, “yes *(uh huh evet).*”

#### *Agreeing with Spouse*

Central Asian women and Turkish men are just as likely to agree with their spouse. For instance, while a couple is discussing a typical outing together one man says, “Eyüp is my favorite place in Istanbul, Turkey, the world *(Eyüp benim en sevdiğim yerdir İstanbul’da, Türkiye’de dünyada).*” The man’s wife agrees with him by saying, “Mine also *(Benim de).*” In another case, a wife is talking about Kazakh traditions, “When I go to a Kazakh home I drink tea, when you knock on the door you can go in

(*Kazağın evine gittim çay içtim, çalıp kapıyı girebiliyorsun*)." Her husband agrees by simply saying, "mm him".

### *Repeating Spouse*

Yet another way in which Central Asian-Turkish couples confirm information is by repeating something a spouse said. In the following example a wife verifies that that her and her husband met at university in English preparatory classes by repeating and expanding on what he previously said:

Husband: "In university English preparatory school." (*Üniversite hazırlıkta*.)

Wife: "Yes we met at university in the English preparatory school."  
(*Evet üniversite hazırlıkta tanışmıştık*.)

The women essentially repeats the same information her husband gave, but in a more complete way. Another Central Asian woman is discussing the first time she met her father-in-law recalling, "He was sick then. He received me well (*O zaman hastaydı. İyi karşıladı*)," when her husband interrupts and repeats, "Yes, she was well received (*Evet, iyi karşılandı*)." The woman then continues to explain more about the first meeting with her father-in-law.

### **One Spouse Leading the Conversation**

Although not as frequent as turn taking, a tendency for a spouse to lead the conversation was seen in Central Asian-Turkish couples. Furthermore, because one spouse dominates the discussion, the other spouse often interrupts when they want to contribute. Therefore, the high frequency of rebuttals is partially related to the relatively high frequency of a spouse leading the conversation. In particular Turkish men are more

likely to lead the conversation than Central Asian women. In five couples, the husband is more likely to lead the conversation and in another couple the wife. Also, the woman who is more likely to lead the conversation was also the women who argued with her husband during the interview. An example of when this women leads the conversation is seen below where she explains why she and her husband enjoy different activities:

Wife: “Because culture is very different...But I principally like opera but I do not see opera here. I am unhappy about this. There are no cultural activities here, I mean, you cannot do anything together as a family with the children.”

*(Kültür çok farklı olduğu için...Ama esas benim opera hoşuma gidiyor. Ben bunu göremiyorum...Çok şikayetçiyim bu konularda. Kültürler sıfır, yani çocuklarla ailecik hiçbir şey yapılmaz.)*

Husband: “The next question?” (*Sonraki soru?*)

Wife: “What are you saying?...The whole winter we take the child back and forth to school. Sometimes we get together with friends but it is not enough for me.”

*(Ne diyorsun?...Bütün kış boyu çocuğu okula getirip götürüyoruz. Bazen arkadaşlarla buluşuyoruz ama olmuyor benim için.)*

The woman not only brings up this topic, but also ignores her husband’s attempt to move on when he interrupts her and asks for the next question. The woman continues to explain her point and lead the conversation. In the next example, a Turkish man leads the conversation when the couple is talking about times when service workers come to the house:

Husband: “Service workers do not come because I generally do those types of jobs around the house, for example, when something gets out of place or broken. When it is something I cannot do like electronics, for example the natural gas heater, then I cannot do it--“

*(Gelen giden çok yok bizde çünkü genellikle bu işleri ben yaparım evde, mesela bi yer çıktığı zaman kırıldığı zaman sadece yapamadığım şey elektronik mesela kombi bozulmuştur o an için yapamam--)*

Wife: “Anyways, for example the natural gas heater, when it is time to check the heater I do not deal with it anyways.”

*(Neyse mesela kombi, kombi zamanı geldiğinde ben ilgilenmiyorum zaten.)*

Husband: “The simplest example is the heater. Because I do not have previous experience with those kinds of tasks they [service workers] come.”

*(En basit kombi bu tarz işlerde benim daha önceden pratiğim olmadığı için gelir.)*

The husband is the first to answer a prompt about service workers who come to the home and principal speaker during this topic. Also, his wife interrupts him in order to get him on track and from rambling, after which the husband soon takes control of the conversation again. This pattern continues until the couple finishes discussing service workers.

### **Involving a Third Party**

Central Asian-Turkish couples sometimes include a third party into the interview. In general Turkish men are more likely to include a third party into the interview. In five couples Turkish men have a greater tendency to involve their children or a researcher into the discussion. In one other couple a Central Asian women is more likely to involve a third party. Overall, Central Asian-Turkish couples include the researcher or their children into the interview. For example, when discussing why his wife and son usually go to Kazakhstan every year one man confirms with his son: “[Because of] longing, right son (*Hasret, de mi oğlum*)?” Couples involve the researcher by looking at her, asking her questions and explaining details directly to her. In this example a women tells the researcher, “I want to ask something else to [husband] (*Başka ben bir şey sormak istiyorum [eşine]*),” in a sense asking permission to do so. In one other case, not pleased with his wife’s manner a husband covers up for his wife’s

behavior by saying to the researcher: “I apologize on behalf of my wife (*Eşim adına özür diliyorum*).”

### **Interacting with Children**

While Central Asian women tend to be the main caretakers of children, men do play an important role as well. For example, one Turkish man solely interacts with his child during the interview. In three other couples, both Central Asian women and Turkish men interact with their children where women interact more often. In one other couple solely the wife interacts with the children. Interactions with children include talking to children, helping children (*i.e. bathing*) and entertaining children (*i.e. playing*).

### **Inactivity/Lack of Participation**

Inactivity or lack of participation is observed by both Turkish men and Central Asian women. The majority of the spouses who exhibit inactivity or are slow to participate in the interview are Turkish men. Signs of inactivity, like watching television or looking at a book, are observed in four Turkish men. One Central Asian woman is also inactive at times as observed when she avoids eye contact with her husband or the researcher. Rather, she looks down towards the floor or out towards the wall. She chooses to withdraw at times most likely due to occasional disagreements with her husband doing the interview.

### **Using Commands**

A relatively minor trend observed in the interview is use of commands by Central Asian-Turkish couples. Central Asian women and Turkish men show a tendency to give commands. In three couples, Turkish men are more likely to give commands than their wife. However, in one other couple only the wife gives commands. Thus, it appears that while Central Asian women do not back away from giving commands, Turkish men are still more likely to give commands. Typical commands include telling a spouse to explain something. For example, one woman wants an explanation from her husband on a certain issue: “Why do you tell me to go the room? Explain that, okay (*Niye sen bana odaya gir diyorsun? Onu anlat, tamam*).” The woman demands an explanation of why her husband tells her to go into a back room when a service worker comes to their home. In the next example both the husband and wife tell their spouse to describe an outing they went on together:

Husband: “So let’s tell about an outing...you tell for example”  
(*Bir kez anlatalım o zaman...anlat mesela*)

Wife: “[You] tell--” (*Anlat--*)

Husband: “You explain.” (*Sen anlat.*)

The wife then proceeds to describe an outing the couple went on with her husband’s business partner.

### **Getting Spouse’s Attention**

Getting a spouse’s attention is a minor trend in Central Asian-Turkish couple’s communication. Central Asian women and Turkish men are equally likely to try to get

their spouse's attention, typically making use of body language to do so. One woman gets her husband's attention when comparing herself to Turkish women, as if trying to confirm her evaluation with her husband. She says, "Turkish women are very harsh with their husbands. [They say things] like 'Go away, are you [the source of] my trouble?' I would never say things like that (*Türk kadınları kocalara çok sert davranırlar. 'Git başımdan belam mısın?' gibi. Ben böyle şeyler hayatta söylemem*)."

She then touches her husband's arm and continues, "I love him a lot, I will do everything for him (*Çok severim her şey yaparım*)."

In another instance, a husband tries to get his wife's attention in order to say something to his wife who is discussing how her in-laws did not treat her with respect for a long time. He extends his arm towards her and shakes his hand, in essence asking her to stop talking and let him speak.

### **Belittling a Spouse**

Another minor observation is the belittling of a spouse. Only one Turkish man belittled his wife, most likely due to some conflicts the couple encountered during the interview. During a disagreement on the intentions of his family, the husband verbally belittles his wife by saying that she is looking at the issue emotionally and subjectively. An excerpt from their conversation that contains the husband's claims can be found above under *hostile rebuttal* (p. 66).

### **ACROSS GROUPS**

American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples are cross-analyzed for similarities and differences in each trend and theme that appeared in the interview. In

Table 14 the joint frequencies for American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples for each category are presented. A chi-square test is applied to the data above to test for independence. The distribution of the frequencies for categories in the interview analysis among American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples comes out significantly different,  $X^2(7, n = 24) = 48.812, p < .000$  (see Table 15).

**TABLE 14:  
FREQUENCY OF INTERVIEW THEMES IN AMERICAN-TURKISH AND  
CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES (ACROSS GROUPS ANALYSIS)**

Rank	Category	Group*		Total
		AM	CA	
1	Displaying Affection	219	145	364
2	Rebutting	208	148	356
3	Confirming Information	187	69	254
4	Turn Taking	70	74	144
5	One spouse Leading the Conversation	40	43	83
6	Interacting with Children	29	24	53
7	Involving a Third Party	33	37	70
8	Inactivity/Lack of participation	5	11	16
9	Using Commands	2	8	10
10	Belittling a Spouse	2	1	3
10	Getting Spouse's Attention	1	2	3
Total		796	562	1356

\*AM = American-Turkish couples / CA = Central Asian-Turkish couples

Because the last four categories have relatively low frequencies they are combined into an “other” category for the statistical analysis. A more in-depth comparative analysis of each trend follows.



**TABLE 15:  
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR INTERVIEW FREQUENCIES**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	48.812 <sup>a</sup>	7	.000

a. 0 cells (0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.56.

### **Displaying Affection**

Making displays of affection is a prominent trend in American-Turkish couples' and Central Asian-Turkish couples' communication. For American-Turkish couples, making displays of affection with a spouse is the most frequent communication trend, and for Central Asian-Turkish couples the second most frequent trend. In the interview American-Turkish couples are more likely to make affectionate displays than Central Asian-Turkish couples. Of these, American-Turkish couples are nearly twice as more likely to use humor with their spouse than Central Asian-Turkish couples. While humor is the most frequent way in which both groups of couples display affection, Central-Asian couples also look at each other almost as much as they use humor. On the contrary, American-Couples are less likely to look at each other, preferring physical displays of affection over looking at each other. In contrast, Central-Asian couples preferring looking at each other over physical displays of affection. Of all the types of displays of affection observed, verbal displays of affection are the least likely to be used by both American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Lastly, American and Central Asian women are more likely to make displays of affection than their Turkish husband.

### **Rebutting**

Use of rebuttals is another prominent trend in the communication between spouses in American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples. For Central-Asian-Turkish couples, the use of rebuttals is the most frequent trend in communication, and for American-Turkish couples is the second most frequent trend. Overall, American-Turkish couples are more likely to use rebuttals than Central Asian-Turkish couples. Both groups of couples most often make rebuttals to clarify or add information to something a spouse said. In particular, American-Turkish couples are more likely to make such rebuttals than Central Asian-Turkish couples. Correcting a spouse is the second most common rebuttal used by both groups of couples. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to make corrections than American-Turkish couples. Additionally, rebuttals in the form of jokes are more likely to be used by American-Turkish couples. On another note, Central Asian-Turkish couples use a wider variety of rebuttals than American-Turkish couples. Instances of hostile rebuttals and rebuttals aimed at changing the subject of conversation only appear in the interviews with Central Asian-Turkish couples. Lastly, American and Central Asian women are more likely to make rebuttals than are Turkish men.

### **Confirming Information**

While confirming information is a major trend in the communication of American-Turkish couples, it is a less prominent trend in the communication of Central Asian-Turkish couples. Of the three varieties of confirmations observed in the interviews, American-Turkish couples most often agree with a spouse while Central

Asian-Turkish couples most often consult with a spouse. The second most frequently used confirmations are consulting with a spouse for American-Turkish couples and agreeing with a spouse for Central Asian-Turkish couples. Repeating a spouse was the least common used confirmation for both groups. Moreover, Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to repeat a spouse than American-Turkish couples. Finally, American and Central Asian women are more likely to confirm information with their spouse than Turkish men.

### **Turn Taking**

Turn taking between spouses during conversation is a frequent trend in American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Central Asian-Turkish couples are slightly more likely to take turns when conversing than American-Turkish couples. Moreover, while American women are more likely to encourage or initiate turn taking with their Turkish husband, Turkish men are more likely to do so with their Central Asian wife.

### **One Spouse Leading the Conversation**

Following turn taking for both American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples, occurrences of a spouse leading the conversation is another common trend in couples' communication. American women and Turkish men are almost as likely to lead the conversation (*three items different in frequency by gender*). On the other hand, Turkish men married to Central Asian women show a greater tendency to lead the conversation than Turkish men married to American women (*eight items different in frequency by gender*).

### **Involving a Third Party**

Involving a third party into the discussion is the sixth most common trend for both American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Moreover, American-Turkish couples are more likely to involve a third party into the discussion than Central Asian-Turkish couples. In both groups of couples, Turkish men are more likely to involve a third party into the conversation than American and Central Asian women.

### **Interacting with Children**

Interacting with children is the seventh most common trend for both American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. American-Turkish couples are more likely to interact with their children during the interview than Central Asian-Turkish couples. Moreover, American and Central Asian women are more likely to interact with children than Turkish men. While American women are clearly more interactive with their children than their spouse (*23 items difference in frequency by gender*), it is more difficult to make the same claim for Central Asian couples. While Central Asian women do interact more with their children during the interview, men also frequently interacted children, one husband even being the sole spouse to do so (*four items different in frequency by gender*).

### **Inactivity or Lack of Participation**

Inactivity or lack of participation is a relatively minor theme among American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to be inactive or lack participation in the interview. In both couple groups, Turkish men are more likely to become inactive and withdraw from participating during the interview. Furthermore, American-Turkish couples inactivity and lack of participation is only observed by Turkish men. Central Asian women occasionally become inactive or withdraw from participation during the interview.

### **Using Commands**

Using commands is another relatively minor theme in American-Turkish couples' and Central Asian-Turkish couples' communication. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to give a command to their spouse than American-Turkish couples. In addition, Central Asian women and Turkish men are just as likely to use commands in Central Asian-Turkish couples. In contrast, only Turkish men use commands in American-Turkish couples.

### **Belittling a Spouse**

During the interview, American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples rarely belittle a spouse. Central Asian-Turkish couples are slightly more likely to belittle a spouse than American-Turkish couples. In addition, Central Asian women and Turkish men are just as likely to belittle their spouse, whereas only Turkish men belittle their wife in American-Turkish couples.

### **Getting Spouse's Attention**

The least common theme in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples is getting a spouse's attention. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to try to get a spouse's attention than American-Turkish couples. Moreover, Central Asian women and Turkish men are just as likely to get a spouse's attention in Central Asian-Turkish couples. In contrast, only American women try to get their husband's attention in American-Turkish couples.

### **CONCLUSION**

In general, cooperative turn taking was observed in the communication of American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples during the interview. Also while American women are more likely to encourage or initiate turn taking with their Turkish husband, Turkish men are more likely to do so with their Central Asian wives. Spouses also have a tendency to take control and lead the conversation during the interview. In American-Turkish couples men and women are almost just as likely to take control of the conversation. On the contrary, in Central Asian-Turkish couples Turkish men are more likely to take control of the conversation than are their Central Asian wives.

Use of rebuttals is another common conversation trend observed during the interview. While American-Turkish couples mainly use rebuttals to add or clarify information, Central Asian-Turkish couples make use of more types of rebuttals. Moreover, Central Asian couples are more likely to make use of negative rebuttals than American-Turkish couples, such as corrections, hostile rebuttals and changing the subject. On the other hand, American-Turkish couples are more likely to make

humorous rebuttals than Central Asian-Turkish couples. Thus, rebuttals made by American-Turkish couples have a tendency to be more light-hearted than those made by Central Asian-Turkish couples.

Furthermore, American-Turkish couples are more likely to confirm information with a spouse than Central Asian-Turkish couples. American-Turkish couples most often agree with their spouse to confirm information. On the other hand, Central Asian-Turkish couples most often consult with a spouse to confirm information. In general, American and Central Asian women are more likely to confirm information with their spouse than are Turkish men.

Displays of affection are observed frequently observed during the interview. For both American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples, displays of affection most often take the form of humor. In addition, American women are more physically affectionate than Central Asian women. Overall, both American Central Asian women are more likely to make physical displays of affection than Turkish men.

Other more minor trends are also seen in the interview. For example, instances of involving a third party into the interview are more likely to be observed in American-Turkish couples. Other emergent trends such as, inactivity or lack of participation, belittling a spouse, using commands and getting a spouses attention are more likely to be observed in Central Asian-Turkish couples' communication during the interview than in American-Turkish couples' communication.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **INCOOPERATING INSTRUMENTS**

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the purpose of using multiple instruments and other observations is to ‘triangulate’ the analysis. In the case a convergence in patterns seen in various research instruments, any emergent patterns will be more prominent and as a result supported by the data. Moreover, these research instruments should ideally be as unobtrusive as possible in order to get a more accurate picture of how members of American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples communicate with each other when there is no third party. In their classic work on social sciences research Webb, Campbell, Schwartz and Sechrest (1966) note “interviews and questionnaires intrude as a foreign element into the social setting they would describe, they create as well as measure attitudes, [and] they elicit atypical roles and responses” (1). Therefore, they argue that interviews and questionnaires should be supplemented with instruments that test the same variables but have different methodological strengths and weaknesses.

In this light, the research design incorporates three research methods in addition to the interview and questionnaire. The use of “hardware,” or physical supplanting of the researcher, is implemented with the writing exercise and puzzle activity (Webb et al. 1966). To reduce the role of the foreign party on the emergent data, the writing activity and puzzle activity remove the researcher from the couples’ interactions and allow her to



observe them from a distance. The aim of such less obtrusive methods is to obtain an environment in which the nature of communication between couples in private is more likely to be reflected in the presence of the researcher. Lastly, participant-observation is also used throughout the researcher's meeting with the couple to pick up on any relevant and enlightening details that may emerge. The remainder of this chapter presents the findings from the puzzle activity, writing activity and questionnaire.

## **PUZZLE**

All of the same communication trends and patterns used between spouses in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples seen in the interview are also seen in the puzzle activity. In addition, another trend for participants to talk out loud also emerges during the puzzle activity. The researcher noted details about how couples complete the puzzle including: who opens the box, who takes out the puzzle pieces, who organizes the puzzle pieces, who puts puzzle pieces together, who puts the last piece in, who takes apart the puzzle, who puts the puzzle pieces back in the box and who closes the box. These details will later give the researcher a better idea of the roles couples have in the marriage which may be helpful in better understanding the trends in couples' communication. These details are coded into two categories, working together and working independently, which are included in the statistical analysis but not ranked with the other categories because they are not directly related to couple's communication. When combining the frequencies of each category for American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples the following ranking emerges: (1) confirming information, (2)

turn taking, (3) talking out loud, (4) one spouse leading the conversation, (5) displaying affection, (6) interacting with children *and* getting spouse's attention, (7) using commands *and* rebutting, (8) inactivity or lack of participation, (9) involving a third party and (10) belittling a spouse. These findings are visually presented in Table 16.

**TABLE 16:**  
**FREQUENCY OF PUZZLE THEMES IN AMERICAN-TURKISH AND**  
**CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES (ACROSS GROUPS ANALYSIS)**

Rank	Category	Group*		Total
		AM	CA	
1	Confirming Information	38	85	123
2	Turn Taking	24	45	69
3	Talking out Loud	23	15	38
4	One Spouse Leading the Conversation	15	10	25
5	Displaying Affection	8	16	24
6	Interacting with Children	7	16	23
6	Getting Spouse's Attention	8	15	23
7	Using Commands	3	18	21
7	Rebutting	5	16	21
8	Inactivity/Lack of participation	5	12	17
9	Involving a Third Party	7	3	10
10	Belittling a Spouse	2	5	7
--	Working Independently	25	28	53
--	Working Together	16	12	28
Total		186	296	482

\*AM = American-Turkish couples / CA = Central Asian-Turkish couples

The distribution of the frequencies for categories in the puzzle analysis among American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples comes out significantly different,  $X^2(12, n = 24) = 32.079$ ,  $p < .001$  (*see Table 17*). Because the last two categories (*i.e., involving a third party, belittling a spouse*) have relatively low

frequencies, they are combined into an “other” category for the statistical analysis. A more in-depth comparative analysis of each trend follows.

**TABLE 17:  
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR PUZZLE FREQUENCIES**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.079 <sup>a</sup>	12	.001

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.58.

### **Confirming Information**

Confirming information is one of the most prominent trends in American-Turkish couples’ and Central Asian-Turkish couples’ communication. During the puzzle activity, Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to confirm information with one another than are American-Turkish couples. Spouses most often confirm information by consulting with their spouse while completing the puzzle. Among American-Turkish couples American women are more likely to consult with their spouse, whereas among Central-Asian couples Turkish men are more likely to consult with their spouse. Spouses also sometimes agree with a spouse while completing the puzzle. In both groups of couples, Turkish men are more likely to agree with their spouse.

### **Turn Taking**

Turn taking is one of the most prominent trends in American-Turkish couples’ and Central Asian-Turkish couples’ communication. During the puzzle activity, turn taking refers to smooth transitions between husband and wife where they respond to one

another. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to take turns when communicating with one another than American-Turkish couples. In both American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples, women are more likely to encourage or initiate conversation with their husband.

### **Talking Out Loud**

Most likely due to the nature of the puzzle activity American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples have a tendency to think out loud and thus not necessarily expecting a response. Central-Asian couples are slightly more likely to talk out loud during the puzzle than American-Turkish couples. Among American-Turkish couples women are more likely to talk out loud when compared to their husbands. Meanwhile, among Central Asian-Turkish couples Turkish more likely to talk out loud when compared to their wives. All in all, distribution of frequencies between both couple groups is fairly equal, suggesting this trend to be related to the nature of the puzzle activity.

### **One Spouse Leading the Conversation**

One spouse leading the conversation is a fairly common trend in the communication of American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. This trend is more dominant in American-Turkish couples than Central Asian-Turkish couples. In particular, American women in American-Turkish couples have a greater tendency to take control of the puzzle, guiding their spouse and the conversation. Moreover, in both American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples women are more likely to be the dominant figure during the puzzle activity, in a sense organizing the manner in which

the puzzle is completed. Furthermore, while this trend is the third most frequently observed trend in American-Turkish couples, it is the eighth most frequently observed in Central Asian-Turkish couples. Frequencies for instances of 'leading' behavior as observed in Turkish men married to American women and Turkish men married to Central Asian women are similar.

### **Displaying Affection**

Displays of affection between spouses are frequently made during the puzzle activity. Central Asian-Turkish couples are twice as affectionate as American-Turkish couples. Moreover, Central Asian women and Turkish men are equally likely to display their affection for their spouse. In American-Turkish couples, American women are twice as their husband to make a display of affection.

### **Interacting with Children**

Interacting with children during the puzzle activity is a fairly prominent trend in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to interact with their children than American-Turkish couples. Furthermore, among American-Turkish couples American women are more likely to interact with their children than are Turkish men. On the other hand, among Central Asian-Turkish couples Turkish men are more likely to interact with their children than Central Asian women.

### **Getting Spouse's Attention**

Getting a spouse's attention is another common trend in the communication of American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Moreover, in every case

participants are unable to draw their spouse's attention and do not receive a response. Members of Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to attempt to get a spouse's attention than are American-Turkish couples. Also, in Central Asian-Turkish couples Turkish men were more likely to try to get their wife's attention than their wife is to try to get their husband's attention. In American-Turkish couples American women and Turkish men are just as likely to try to get a spouse's attention.

### **Using Commands**

Use of commands is another fairly prominent theme in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couple's communication. Members of Central Asian couples have a greater tendency to give commands to their spouses than are American-Turkish couples. While use of commands is the fourth most frequent communication trend for Central Asian-Turkish couples, it is one of the least common among American-Turkish couples, ranking eighth. Central Asian women are more likely to give commands to their husbands than are Turkish men are to give commands to their wives. In contrast, in American-Turkish couples Turkish men are more likely to give commands to their wife than American women are to give commands to their husbands.

### **Rebutting**

Use of rebuttals during the puzzle activity is a common trend observed in American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Members of Central Asian-Turkish couples have a fairly greater tendency to rebut their spouses during the puzzle activity in comparison to members of American-Turkish couples. Among Central Asian-Turkish couples, Turkish men are slightly more likely to rebut their wives than

are Central Asian wives to rebut their husbands. Among American-Turkish couples only American women rebut their spouse during the puzzle activity.

### **Inactivity or Lack of Participation**

Inactivity or a lack of participation is a relatively minor trend observed during the puzzle activity in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to become inactive or withdraw from participating in the puzzle activity than are American-Turkish couples. Only Turkish men in both couple groups display inactivity or lack to participate in the puzzle activity.

### **Involving a Third Party**

Involving a third party is another trend observed among American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples during the puzzle activity. American-Turkish couples are more likely to involve a third party into the discussion that takes place during the puzzle activity than are Central Asian-Turkish couples. In fact, while involving a third party is the sixth most common trend in American-Turkish couples' communication, it is the lowest ranking trend in Central Asian-Turkish couples' communication (*tenth*). Typically the researcher or other family members are included into the discussion. Moreover, in both couple groups women are more likely to involve a third party into the conversation

### **Belittling a Spouse**

Belittling a Spouse is a minor theme observed in American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples' communication. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely

to belittle a spouse during the puzzle activity than are American-Turkish couples. Moreover, only women belittle their spouse by making fun of them or degrading them.

### **Interpretation**

In general, cooperative turn taking is observed in American-Turkish and Central-Asian Turkish couples during the puzzle activity. Couples in both groups make an effort to respond to one another's questions and gestures. Also, American-Turkish couples have a tendency to work together during the puzzle while Central Asian-Turkish couples have a tendency to work independently. In addition, Central Asian-Turkish couples have a greater proclivity to make use of ten of the twelve emergent communication trends or themes with one another during the puzzle activity than American-Turkish couples. This is most likely a skewed result given the tendency for Central Asian-Turkish couples to take longer to complete the puzzle than American-Turkish couples. In other words, more analyzable data is generated for Central Asian-Turkish couples. For example, American-Turkish couples took on average 13 minutes (*ranging from 12 minutes to 16 minutes*) to complete the puzzle while Central Asian-Turkish couples took 33 minutes (*ranging from 18 minutes to 60 minutes*). Therefore, trends more likely to be observed in American-Turkish couples (e.g., *one spouse leading the conversation, involving a third party*) can be considered to be more dominant communication trends for these couples, considering they rank higher than they do for Central-Asian couples despite the difference in available data. For a more precise understanding of how American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples communicate, the findings from



the puzzle activity will be joined with other findings in chapter six. In the following paragraphs, general findings from the puzzle activity for women are men are presented.

American women are more likely to lead the puzzle activity, often making strong suggestions to their husband on how to complete the puzzle. On the other hand, Central Asian women rarely lead the puzzle activity. Instead, Central Asian women give commands or directly interfere with their spouse to lead the puzzle activity. For example, an American woman might say, “I think it’s easier to put the edges together first, don’t you think?” Meanwhile, a Central Asian woman might say, “We are going to do the corners now (Kenar yapacağız şimdi).” However, American women who have a tendency to lead the puzzle activity would also sometimes use commands and directly interfere with or rebut their spouse. Similarly, Central Asian women who are more likely to rebut or directly interfere with their spouse are also more likely to lead the puzzle activity, use commands and belittle their spouse. Thus, there is an apparent relationship between these trends. Furthermore, both American and Central Asian women are more likely to negatively respond to their spouse, often in the form of rebuttals or belittling comments (*i.e., teasing*).

In contrast, Turkish men are in general more reserved and more likely to talk when asked something during the puzzle activity. Turkish men in both couple groups have a tendency to become inactive or not participate from time to time during the puzzle. Furthermore, this trend is observed among four men in each couple group. Another trend dominantly seen among men is their attempts to get their spouse’s attention. As mentioned previously, the result might be skewed given the difference in

completion times for both couple groups, possibly indicating more data is generated for Central Asian-Turkish couples. Therefore, the following findings may not be fully representative of true communication patterns. Of the 11 communication trends seen used by Turkish men, ten of them are more frequently used by those married to Central Asian women. Following general couple trends, Turkish men married to American women are more likely to involve a third party into the puzzle activity than those married to Central-Asian women. Thus, Turkish men married to Central Asian women are more likely to confirm information, take turns, lead the puzzle activity, make displays of affection, give commands attempt to get their spouse's attention, interact with their children, rebut their spouse and become inactive during the puzzle activity than are Turkish men married to American women.

## **QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire mainly provides background information on participants, such as their educational history, occupation, length of marriage and length of residency in Turkey. This information is discussed in detail in chapter three. In addition, information on language usage with their spouse, children spouse's family is also asked in order to get a better idea of how each couple communicates. In line with Bacigalupe's (2003) recommendation that a look at language usage between spouses and other family members may shed some light on the intercultural couple's relationship, an analysis of language use for each couple is presented below.

## **Language Use in American-Turkish Couples**

### *Language Use between Spouses*

In terms of language use, five out of six couples speak both English and Turkish with each other, the sixth couple speaking only English. Of the five couples who speak both Turkish and English at home, two of them speak Turkish half or more than half of the time. Another couple while speaking English the majority of the time also speaks Turkish close to a quarter of the time. Lastly, two other couples speak very minimal amounts of Turkish, relying mostly on English to communicate with one another. Thus, half of the American women have little or no competence in Turkish, relying on their spouse's relatively high competence of English to communicate. Half of the American women do show relatively high competence of levels of Turkish, one woman even speaking Turkish with her husband eighty percent of the time. All of the Turkish men in this group speak English fluently.

### *Language Use with Children*

Five of the six couples each have one child. Three of the American women always speak in English with their child. Two others speak a minimal amount of Turkish with their child. In contrast, only one Turkish man speaks only Turkish with his child. Two others speak a majority of Turkish and a minor amount of English with their child. Another man while mainly speaking Turkish also uses English more than a quarter of the time when talking with his child. Lastly, another man uses a majority of English with his child, speaking Turkish less than a quarter of the time. English is the dominant language used when communicating with children by American-Turkish

couples. Turkish men are more likely to speak English with their children than American women to speak Turkish with their children.

#### *Language Use with Spouse's Family*

When communicating with their in-laws, American women typically use Turkish. Four of the six women use only Turkish, another woman speaks an even mix of English and Turkish and one other woman speaks a majority of English and very little Turkish. Naturally, Turkish men always speak English with their in-laws as they are all located in the United States or Canada, English-speaking countries. Since American women are currently residing in Turkey they have naturally picked up at least a little bit of the language, and therefore even if limited speak to their in-laws in Turkish. One women's mother-in-law speaks English well, thus allowing her to comfortably communicate in English to her in-laws via her mother-in-law.

#### **Language Use in Central Asian-Turkish Couples**

##### *Language Use between Spouses*

Turkish is the dominant language in communication between Central Asian women and Turkish men. All Central Asian women speak Turkish with their husband more than half of the time. One woman only speaks Turkish with her spouse, while two others speak Turkish and their native Turkic language (*Kazakh or Azeri*), and the remaining three women speak Turkish, their native Turkic language (*Kazakh or Azeri*) and Russian with their spouse. Thus, five out of the six women in addition to Turkish speak their native Turkic language with their spouse, while three out of the six women

speak Russian. This indicates that Central Asian women prefer their 'native' Turkic language over Russian when communicating with their spouse. The percentage of languages other than Turkish spoken never exceeds 30 percent, making Turkish the preferred language of communication. Of these other languages, Kazakh is the second most commonly spoken language, followed by Russian and then Azeri. Similarly, all Turkish men in this group speak in Turkish with their spouse more than half the time. Four of the six men speak Turkish and either Kazakh, Azeri or Russian with their spouse, the remaining two speaking three languages including Turkish, Russian and Kazakh or Azeri with their spouse. The percentage of languages other than Turkish spoken by Turkish men with their spouses ranges from one to 38 percent, Kazakh being the most common of these secondary languages. When combining Kazakh and Azeri, Turkic languages become the second most frequent language used by Turkish men when speaking to their spouse, followed by Russian. This follows the same pattern that emerged amongst Central Asian women. Given the linguistic similarities between Turkish, Kazakh and Azeri it is not unusual to see overall good linguistic competence from both Turkish men and Central Asian women in their spouse's native language. Moreover, the fact that the couples are currently residing in Turkey is likely a major factor in making Turkish the preferred language of communication in Central Asian-Turkish couples.

#### *Language Use with Children*

Five of the six Central Asian-Turkish couples have children. Three of the six couples have two children, and two others have one child. While speaking multiple

languages with their children, Central Asian-Turkish couples mostly speak Turkish. Central Asian women speak Turkish more than half of the time with their children, followed consecutively by an even mixture of Russian and Kazakh, and then English. One woman speaks only Turkish with her children. Three women speak two languages with their children, Turkish and Kazakh or Russian. The remaining woman speaks four languages with her child, a mixture of Turkish, Russian, Kazakh and English.

#### *Language Use with Spouse's Family*

As expected, Turkish is the main language used by Central Asian women with their in-laws. Five of six women use only Turkish, one other woman using Turkish more than half the time and also some Bosnian. This participant uses Bosnian because her in-laws have Bosnian heritage, still speaking the language in addition to Turkish. Most likely because of linguistic similarities between Russian and Bosnian, this participant not only picked up Bosnian but also feels comfortable speaking it with her in-laws. Of the Turkish men, three speak only Kazakh with their wife's family. Another participant speaks only Russian with his in-laws most likely due to his comfort with the language as he also knows Bosnian. Two other men speak a combination of Turkish and either Kazakh or Azeri with their in-laws. One of these participant's in-laws came to Turkey as refugees, residing in Turkey for quite some time and already becoming competent in Turkish, making it the easiest way to communicate. The other participant speaks an even mixture of Azeri and Turkish with his in-laws. Moreover, Turkish men married to Kazakh women typically speak Kazakh with their in-laws (*three out of four*) and one other Russian.

## **Interpretation**

American-Turkish couples primarily speak in English when communicating with one another. While Turkish is also used by some couples, a strong preference for English is observed. Thus, Turkish men are more likely to adapt to their wife's language. This is reflected in the tendency for Turkish men to confirm information with their wife and the equal likelihood for Turkish men and American women to lead the conversation during the interview.

In contrast, Central Asian-Turkish couples primarily speak in Turkish when communicating with one another. Although other languages like Kazakh, Azeri and Russian are used, a strong preference for Turkish is observed. Thus, Central Asian women are more likely to adapt to their husband's language. This is reflected in Central Asian women's tendency to confirm information with their husband and Turkish men's strong tendency to lead the conversation during the interview. On a side note, these results might partially be affected by the researcher's ability to only speak English and Turkish. Perhaps if the researcher also knew Kazakh, Azeri or Russian these trends might have been slightly different.

American-Turkish couples primarily speak English with their children. While an effort to speak both English and Turkish with their children is observed, American-Turkish couples strongly prefer English. Moreover, Turkish men have a strong tendency to speak English with their children, one man even speaking English the majority of the time. This is again an indication of a tendency for American-Turkish couples to adapt to

English. Thus, Turkish men are more likely to adapt to the communication patterns of their wife than American women are to adapt to those of their husband.

In contrast, Central Asian-Turkish couples primarily speak Turkish with their children, some even only speaking Turkish. While Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to speak a greater variety of languages with their children (*in particular women*), a strong preference for Turkish is observed. This is again an indication of a tendency for Central Asian-Turkish couples to adapt to Turkish. Thus, Central Asian women are more likely to adapt to the communication patterns of their husband than Turkish men are to adapt to those of their wife. Moreover, Central Asian-Turkish couples' tendency to use Turkish with their children also supports that their tendency to speak Turkish is not affected by the researcher's ability to only speak English and Turkish.

In American-Turkish couples, American women primarily speak Turkish with their in-laws while Turkish men only speak English. While Turkish is the main language American women speak with their in-laws two women speak English. In fact one woman primarily speaks English with her in-laws. These observations indicate that Turkish men and to some extent their families adapt to English and as a result the communication patterns of their wife.

Similarly, in Central Asian- Turkish couples Central Asian women primarily speak Turkish with their in-laws while Turkish men primarily speak the Turkic language native to their in-laws, Kazak and Azeri. Additionally, Turkish is occasionally used by some Turkish men when speaking to their in-laws. Moreover, one woman speaks



Bosnian occasionally with her in-laws because they are of Bosnian origin. Together this suggests that Turkish men are less likely to adapt to their wife's language than Central-Asian women are to adapt to their husband's language. In fact, when communicating with their in-laws Central Asian women always speak the native language(s) of their husband's family. On the other hand, Turkish men while speaking the native language of their wife's family when communicating with them, also make use of Turkish. Thus, Central Asian women are more likely to adapt to the communication patterns of their husband.

All in all, an analysis of the language usage sheds insight on the communication of American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples. While Turkish men married to American women are more likely to conform to their wife's communication patterns, it is Central Asian women who conform to the communication patterns of their husband. This is further supported in the puzzle analysis where American women have greater tendencies to use ten of the twelve communication trends than do their husbands, including one spouse leading the conversation, turn taking, displaying affection, rebutting and belittling a spouse. In contrast, Turkish men married to Central Asian women have greater tendencies to use the twelve communication trends than do their wives. These findings suggest Central Asian women are more likely to adapt to their husband's communication patterns than American women.

## WRITING

A writing exercise given to American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples asked participants to write a short composition about the last time they visited the husband's family. The analysis of these compositions revealed (1) positive feelings, (2) feeling stress, (3) efforts to make the husband's parents happy, (4) displays of an individual going out of their comfort zone, (5) family activities and (6) visiting to be prominent themes. Because the writing prompt asks participants to describe a visit to the husband's family, accounts of family activities and visiting naturally emerge. Thus, these categories are included in the statistical analysis but not ranked with the other categories. When combining the frequencies of each category for American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples the following ranking emerges: (1) positive feelings, (2) feeling stress, (3) making the husband's parents happy, and (4) going out of the comfort zone (*see Table 18*).

**TABLE 18:  
FREQUENCY OF WRITING THEMES IN AMERICAN-TURKISH AND  
CENTRAL ASIAN-TURKISH COUPLES (ACROSS GROUPS ANALYSIS)**

Rank	Category	Group*		Total
		AM	CA	
1	Positive Feelings	11	15	26
2	Feeling Stress	13	5	18
3	Making the Husband's Parents Happy	12	4	16
4	Going out of the Comfort Zone	10	2	12
--	Family Activities	13	14	27
--	Visiting	7	12	19
Total		67	55	122

\*AM = American-Turkish couples / CA = Central Asian-Turkish couples

Moreover, the distribution of the frequencies for categories in the writing analysis among American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples comes out significantly different,  $X^2(12, n = 24) = 8.613, p < .035$  (see Table 19). Finally, a deeper analysis of these themes and their possible relation to communication trends between husband and wife is discussed.

**TABLE 19:  
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR WRITING FREQUENCIES**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.613 <sup>a</sup>	3	.035

a. 1 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.33.

### **Interpretation**

There clearly appears to be a difference between American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples that likely stems from the degree of shared cultural customs and values. In particular, American women indicate a significant amount of stress when visiting their in-laws, whereas Central Asian women more often indicate a positive experience. American women experience more space and privacy violations than do Central Asian women, and are additionally more stressed by expectations from their in-laws or other parties than are Central Asian wives. Central Asian women feel stressed when their in-laws are a little too investigative, also a type of space violation, but is relatively minimal compared to the stress American women experience.

Moreover, Central Asian women frequently feel like a part of the husband's family while American women feel more like guests (*i.e., enjoying the visit*). Also, there is clearly an effort by American-Turkish couples to please the husband's parents. This is

evident because four out of six couples spend much detail on this issue. Moreover, American-Turkish couples' efforts to please the husband's parents could be a possible reason for a greater amount of stress experienced by American women in comparison to Central Asian women. Also, such efforts to please the husband's parents could also account for high frequency of displays of 'going out of one's comfort zone' in this group, where both American women and Turkish men make fairly equal efforts to meet their spouse's expectations. Moreover, the one Central Asian-Turkish couple in which efforts to make the husband's happy are observed in is also the only couple that mentions going out of their comfort zone. Thus, there appears to be a relation between efforts to make the husband's parents happy and spouses going out of their comfort zone.

Perhaps more shared cultural similarities between Central-Asian women and their Turkish husbands serve for a more positive experience with their in-laws and spouses. Both linguistic similarities and cultural similarities would smooth relations between Central-Asian women and their Turkish affinal relatives. By mentioning visiting friends, elders, neighbors and the public, the collective nature of Turkic culture is brought out in Central Asian-Turkish couples. Also, Central Asian-Turkish couples mention shared religious family activities, another area of cultural congruence. Moreover, the fact that Central Asian women feel as a part of their husband's family is an indicator of cultural similarity.

American women on the other hand are more disadvantaged not only linguistically, but also from their own more individualistic cultures. For example, they

only mention visiting immediate family unlike Central Asian women who also mention extended family. American women rarely mention feeling comfortable when visiting their in-laws, but rather would indicate enjoying their visit. Thus, American women seem to be more distant from their in-laws than Central Asian women since they remain at a more superficial level, and while they do enjoy their visit they do not feel as if they are a part of the family. In other words, American women feel more as guests when visiting with their in-laws than as family. This distance could largely be due to the linguistic and cultural differences between American women and their Turkish in-laws. Moreover, indications of one going out of their comfort zone are an indication of greater cultural differences. Hence, American-Turkish couples share fewer cultural similarities than do Central Asian-Turkish couples; therefore, 'going out of the comfort zone' is a significant category in the former group and insignificant one in the latter group. The frequent occurrences of American-Turkish couples to make the husband's family happy may suggest more cultural incongruence between American women and their husband than Central-Asian women experience.

All in all, the greater likelihood for American-Turkish couple to go out of the comfort zone in comparison to Central Asian-Turkish couples supports the general tendency for Turkish men to adjust to their wife's communication patterns. Moreover, Central Asian women already sharing cultural and linguistic similarities are more likely to adapt to their husband's communication patterns. Also, because American women are more culturally distinct from their husband they experience greater stress than Central Asian women. This is perhaps a possible reason why Turkish men married to

American women are more likely to adapt to their wives. Turkish men married to Central Asian women, on the other hand, may not feel the need to adapt to their wives as much as Turkish men married to American women.

## CONCLUSION

Various communication trends used by American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples emerge when taking a global look at the findings from each portion of this study. The general findings suggest that Turkish men are more likely to adapt to American women's communication patterns among American-Turkish couples. In contrast, Central Asian women are more likely to adapt to Turkish men's communication patterns among Central Asian-Turkish couples. Moreover, the communication differences between American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples are likely due to the linguistic and cultural background of women.

In general, cooperative turn taking between husband and wife is observed in the communication of American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples in the interview and puzzle activity. While American women are more likely to encourage or initiate turn taking with their Turkish husband, Turkish men are more likely to do so with their Central Asian wives. In addition, members of American-Turkish couples and Central Asian-Turkish couples have a tendency to take control and lead the conversation. In particular, American women are more likely to take on a leader role when communicating with their spouse than Central Asian women. This is suggested in the interview were American women and their Turkish husbands are almost just as likely to take control of the conversation. Moreover, American women are more likely to lead the puzzle activity often making strong suggestions to their husband on how to complete

the puzzle. Thus, American women are overall more likely to lead a conversation than Turkish men. On the contrary, during the interview Turkish men are more likely to take control of the conversation than their Central Asian wife. This is further supported when Central Asian women are rarely observed leading the puzzle activity. Instead of making strong suggestions to take control of the conversation like American women, Central Asian women rather give commands, interrupt or rebut their spouse. While American-Turkish couples mainly use rebuttals to add or clarify information, Central Asian-Turkish couples make use of more types of rebuttals including making use of hostile rebuttals and changing the subject. Moreover, Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to make rebuttals than American-Turkish couples during the interview and puzzle activity.

Furthermore, American-Turkish couples are more likely to confirm information with a spouse than are Central Asian-Turkish couples. American-Turkish couples more often agree with their spouse to confirm information. On the other hand, Central Asian-Turkish couples most often consult with a spouse to confirm information. In general, American and Central Asian women are more likely to confirm information with their spouses than are Turkish men. This observation is possibly a byproduct of gender relations between husband and wife. However, Turkish men married to Central Asian women are more likely to confirm information during the puzzle activity than are their wives. This is perhaps again an indication of gender roles where Central Asian women are more likely to be the dominant domestic figure, thus having more control over happenings in the house. The puzzle activity, a task that is to be completed by the



couple in their home, in many ways is such a happening. So while American women have tendency to lead the puzzle activity, Central Asian women are even more dominant during the puzzle activity not only initiating turn taking more than their husband but also are more likely to lead the activity and give commands to their husband. This is also supported by the greater tendency for Central Asian-Turkish couples to work independently during the puzzle activity, an indication of split gender roles between spouses. On the other hand, American-Turkish couples have a greater tendency to work together during the puzzle activity, an indication of more shared gender roles between spouses. Further indications of these findings are observed in some of the comments spouses make on their role in their marriage during the interview. These comments will not be further looked into since they lie outside the focus of the study.

Displays of affection is another prominent trend observed during the interview and puzzle activity. For both American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples, displays of affection most often take the form of humor. In addition, American women are more physically affectionate than Central Asian women. Overall, both American Central Asian women are more likely to make physical displays of affection than Turkish men, a trend most likely related to gender.

Other more minor trends are also seen in the interview. For example, instances of involving a third party into the interview are more likely to be observed in American-Turkish couples. Another minor trend is inactivity or lack of participation during the

interview and puzzle activity. Central Asian-Turkish couples are more likely to be inactive or refrain from participation than American-Turkish couples. Moreover, Turkish men in general are more reserved and more likely to talk when asked something. Turkish men in both couple groups have a tendency to become inactive or not participate from time to time during the interview and puzzle. This is another trend that is most likely related more to gender than cultural differences.

Another observation is a greater tendency for American-Turkish couples to use humor when communicating with one another than Central Asian-Turkish couples. American-Turkish couples make greater use of humor during the interview and puzzle activity. Moreover, American-Turkish couples are more likely to make humorous rebuttals than Central Asian-Turkish couples

Also, both American and Central Asian women are more likely to negatively respond to their spouse, often in the form of rebuttals or belittling comments (*e.g., teasing*). For example, American women who have a tendency to lead the puzzle activity would also sometimes use commands and directly interfere with or rebut their spouse. Similarly, Central Asian women who are more likely to rebut or directly interfere with their spouse are also more likely to lead the puzzle activity, use commands and belittle their spouse.

These communication differences between American-Turkish and Central Asian-Turkish couples are likely due to the linguistic and cultural background of women. Because American women come from a cultural background with marked differences

from that of their husband and share few linguistic similarities with their husband they are less likely to adapt to their husband's communication patterns. On the other hand, Central Asian women come from a similar Turkic cultural background and share linguistic similarities and as a result are more likely to adapt to their husband's communication patterns. A look at language usage supports this finding revealing a preference for American-Turkish couples to use English when communicating with each other and their children and a preference for Central Asian-Turkish couples to use Turkish when communicating with each other and their children. Thus, by preferring to use Turkish it appears that Central Asian women have adapted to their husband's language and perhaps communication patterns.

Findings from the questionnaire also support a tendency for Turkish men to adapt to their American wife's communication patterns and Central Asian women to adapt to their Turkish husband's communication patterns. The questionnaire reveals that Central Asian-Turkish couples typically had known each other longer before marriage than did American-Turkish couples. Additionally, it also reveals that Central Asian-Turkish couples have been married longer than American-Turkish couples and that Central Asian women have been living in Turkey longer than American women. Therefore, Central Asian women's tendency to adapt to their husband's communication patterns could be partially a result of a greater understanding of their husband and his cultural background due to a greater amount of time spent with him. Also, during time spent with their husband perhaps Central Asian women have had more time to adapt to the communication patterns of their husband. This possibility is supported by findings

from the writing exercise that show American women are more likely to experience stress and go out of their comfort zone when visiting their in-laws than do Central Asian women, who largely reported experiencing positive feelings. Thus, it appears that Central Asian women are more comfortable with their husband's language and culture, resulting in their tendency to adapt to their Turkish husband's communication patterns. American women on the other hand are less comfortable with their husband's language and culture, resulting in their Turkish husband's tendency to adapt to their communication patterns.

Another possible explanation for the tendency for Central Asian women to adapt to their Turkish husband's communication patterns could stem from the similar patriarchal cultures they share (Patai 1951). In other words, the patriarchal nature of Turkish culture (Koca, Aşçı and Kirazcı 2005) could be a factor influencing Central Asian women to adapt to their husband's language by not only using Turkish in their daily communication with their husbands and children, but also a reason why they tend to adapt to the communication patterns used by their husband. On the other hand, Turkish men married to American women are more likely to adapt to their wives' language patterns and also frequently speak English with their wives and children. Perhaps the patriarchal nature of their Turkic culture is negotiated with the less patriarchic nature of American culture, resulting in the tendency for men to adapt to their American wives' communication patterns.

All in all, these findings suggest that among American-Turkish couples Turkish men are more likely to adapt to American women's communication patterns. American

women have a tendency to lead discussion with their husband, and Turkish men have a tendency to confirm information with their wives. American women also tend to involve their husband in discussion by casually asking their spouses' opinion. In contrast, among Central Asian-Turkish couples Central Asian women are more likely to adapt to Turkish men's communication patterns. Turkish men married to Central Asian women show tendencies to lead discussion with their wives and Central Asian women have a tendency to confirm information with their husbands. Central Asian wives have a tendency to interrupt and rebut their husband in order to join a discussion.

# APPENDIX A

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AMERICAN WOMEN

### Wives' Questionnaire

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
2. Birth Place (town/city and country): \_\_\_\_\_
3. What country did you spend the majority of your childhood? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In what year did you move to Turkey? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How long have you lived in Turkey? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How long have you lived in Turkey as a couple? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In what country did you meet your spouse? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How long did you know your spouse before your marriage? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months
9. Length of current marriage: \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months
10. Educational History:



Check if completed (if not indicate years attended in next column):	How Many Years?	In what country (ies) did you attend each level?
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary school		
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle school		
<input type="checkbox"/> High school		
<input type="checkbox"/> College		
<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate School		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):		

11. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Children's ages:
 

Male	_____	_____	_____	_____
Female	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. What languages do you speak with your spouse?
 

English	_____%
Turkish	_____%
Other (specify)	_____%
	_____%
14. What languages do you speak with your children?
 

English	_____%
Turkish	_____%
Other (specify)	_____%
	_____%
15. What languages do you speak with your spouse's family?
 

English	_____%
Turkish	_____%
Other (specify)	_____%
	_____%

For the next five questions, please tell me about **yourself**.  
Please circle the best response.

16.	How well do you <i>understand</i> your spouse's language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
17.	How well do you <i>speak</i> your spouse's language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
18.	How comfortable would you feel celebrating your spouse's <i>religious holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
19.	How comfortable would you feel celebrating your spouse's <i>national holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
20.	How comfortable would you feel spending time alone with your in-laws in their country?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very

For the next five questions, please tell me about **your spouse**.  
Please circle the best response.

21.	How well does your spouse <i>understand</i> your language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
22.	How well does your spouse <i>speak</i> your language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
23.	How comfortable would your spouse feel celebrating your <i>religious holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
24.	How comfortable would your spouse feel celebrating your <i>national holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
25.	How comfortable would your spouse feel spending time with your family in your country?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very

\*\*\*\*\* Generally the first words that come to mind are the best! \*\*\*\*\*

26. Pick three words or phrases that describe your mother-in-law:

\_\_\_\_\_

27. Pick three words or phrases that describe your relationship with your mother-in-law:

\_\_\_\_\_

28. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with his mother:

\_\_\_\_\_

\* Pick the same relative (either a specific sister-in-law or brother-in-law) for questions 29-31.

29. Pick three words or phrases that describe the brother-in-law/sister-in-law (circle to specify)\* you see most often:

\_\_\_\_\_

30. Pick three words or phrases that describe your relationship with the brother-in-law/sister-in-law (circle to specify)\* you see most often:

\_\_\_\_\_

31. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with his brother/sister (circle to specify)\* he sees most often:

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with strangers in public:

\_\_\_\_\_

33. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with service workers who come to your home:

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN (ENGLISH)

#### Wives' Questionnaire

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
2. Birth Place (town/city and country): \_\_\_\_\_
3. What country did you spend the majority of your childhood? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In what year did you move to Turkey? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How long have you lived in Turkey? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How long have you lived in Turkey as a couple? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In what country did you meet your spouse? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How long did you know your spouse before your marriage? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months
9. Length of current marriage: \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months
10. Educational History:



Check if completed (if not indicate years attended in next column):	How Many Years?	In what country (ies) did you attend each level?
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary school		
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle school		
<input type="checkbox"/> High school		
<input type="checkbox"/> College		
<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate School		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____		

11. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Children's ages:
 

Male	_____	_____	_____	_____
Female	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. What languages do you speak with your spouse?
 

Turkish	_____ %
Other (specify)	_____ %
	_____ %
	_____ %
14. What languages do you speak with your children?
 

Turkish	_____ %
Other (specify)	_____ %
	_____ %
	_____ %
15. What languages do you speak with your spouse's family?
 

Turkish	_____ %
Other (specify)	_____ %
	_____ %
	_____ %



For the next five questions, please tell me about **yourself**.  
Please circle the best response.

16.	How well do you <i>understand</i> your spouse's language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
17.	How well do you <i>speak</i> your spouse's language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
18.	How comfortable would you feel celebrating your spouse's <i>religious holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
19.	How comfortable would you feel celebrating your spouse's <i>national holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
20.	How comfortable would you feel spending time alone with your in-laws in their country?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very

For the next five questions, please tell me about **your spouse**.  
Please circle the best response.

21.	How well does your spouse <i>understand</i> your language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
22.	How well does your spouse <i>speak</i> your language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
23.	How comfortable would your spouse feel celebrating your <i>religious holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
24.	How comfortable would your spouse feel celebrating your <i>national holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
25.	How comfortable would your spouse feel spending time with your family in your country?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very

\*\*\*\*\* Generally the first words that come to mind are the best! \*\*\*\*\*

26. Pick three words or phrases that describe your mother-in-law:

\_\_\_\_\_

27. Pick three words or phrases that describe your relationship with your mother-in-law:

\_\_\_\_\_

28. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with his mother:

\_\_\_\_\_

\* Pick the same relative (either a specific sister-in-law or brother-in-law) for questions 29-31.

29. Pick three words or phrases that describe the brother-in-law/sister-in-law (circle to specify)\* you see most often:

\_\_\_\_\_

30. Pick three words or phrases that describe your relationship with the brother-in-law/sister-in-law (circle to specify)\* you see most often:

\_\_\_\_\_

31. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with his brother/sister (circle to specify)\* he sees most often:

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with strangers in public:

\_\_\_\_\_

33. Pick three words or phrases that describe your husband's relationship with service workers who come to your home:

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN (TURKISH)

#### Eşler için Anket

- Yaşınız: \_\_\_\_\_
- Doğum yeriniz (il/ilçe / ülke): \_\_\_\_\_
- Çocukluğunuzda en uzun hangi ülkede yaşadınız? \_\_\_\_\_
- Hangi yıl Türkiye'ye taşındınız? \_\_\_\_\_
- Ne kadar süredir Türkiye'de yaşıyorsunuz? \_\_\_\_\_
- Ne kadar süredir eşinizle birlikte Türkiye'de yaşıyorsunuz? \_\_\_\_\_
- Eşinizle hangi ülkede tanıştınız? \_\_\_\_\_
- Evlenmeden önce eşinizle ne kadar süredir tanıştınız? \_\_\_\_\_ yıl \_\_\_\_\_ ay
- Ne kadar süredir evlisiniz?: \_\_\_\_\_ yıl \_\_\_\_\_ ay
- Eğitim Geçmişiniz:



Tamamladıklarınızı işaretleyiniz (tamamlamadıklarımıza kaç sene devam ettiğinizi yandaki sütunda belirtiniz):	Kaç sene okudunuz?	Her bir öğrenim düzeyine hangi ülke(ler) de devam ettiğinizi belirtiniz.
<input type="checkbox"/> İlk okul		
<input type="checkbox"/> Orta okul		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lise		
<input type="checkbox"/> Üniversite		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yüksek Lisans/Doktora		
<input type="checkbox"/> Diğer (belirtiniz): _____		

- Mesleğiniz ne? \_\_\_\_\_
- Çocuklarımızın yaşları: Erkek \_\_\_\_\_ Kız \_\_\_\_\_
- Eşinizle hangi dili konuşuyorsunuz?  
Türkçe \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Diğer (belirtiniz) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %
- Çocuklarımızla hangi dili konuşuyorsunuz?  
Türkçe \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Diğer (belirtiniz) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %
- Eşinizin ailesiyle hangi dili konuşuyorsunuz?  
Türkçe \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Diğer (belirtiniz) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %

Aşağıdaki sorular için kendinize en uygun cevapları belirtiniz.

16. Eşinizin ana dilini ne kadar iyi anlıyorsunuz?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
17. Eşinizin ana dilini ne kadar iyi konuşuyorsunuz?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
18. Eşinizin dini bayramlarını kutlarken kendinizi ne kadar rahat hissedersiniz?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
19. Eşinizin milli bayramlarını kutlarken kendinizi ne kadar rahat hissedersiniz?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
20. Eşinizin memleketinde onun ailesiyle tek başınıza vakit geçirseniz kendinizi ne kadar rahat hissedersiniz?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok

Aşağıdaki sorular için eşinize en uygun cevapları belirtiniz.

21. Eşiniz sizin ana dilinizi ne kadar iyi anlıyor?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
22. Eşiniz sizin ana dilinizi ne kadar iyi konuşuyor?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
23. Eşiniz sizin dini bayramlarınızı kutlarken kendisini ne kadar rahat hisseder?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
24. Eşiniz sizin milli bayramlarınızı kutlarken kendisini ne kadar rahat hisseder?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
25. Eşiniz sizin memleketinizde ailenizle tek başına vakit geçirirse kendisini ne kadar rahat hisseder?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok

\*\*\*\*\* Genellikle akla gelen ilk kelimeler en iyi cevaplardır \*\*\*\*\*

26. Annenizi anlatan üç kelime veya yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

27. Annenizle ilişkinizi anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

28. Eşinizin annenizle ilişkisini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

\* 28. - 30. sorular için aynı akrabayı seçiniz (Örn: ağabey, abla, erkek kardeş / kız kardeş).

29. En çok gördüğünüz ağabeyinizi / ablanızı / erkek kardeşinizi / kız kardeşinizi (belirtiniz)\* anlatılan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

30. En çok gördüğünüz ağabeyiniz / ablanız / erkek kardeşiniz / kız kardeşiniz (belirtiniz)\* ile ilişkinizi anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

31. Eşinizle en çok gördüğünüz ağabeyinizin / ablanızın / erkek kardeşinizin / kız kardeşinizin (belirtiniz)\* ilişkisini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Eşinizin dışarıdaki yabancı kişilerle iletişimini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

33. Eşinizin eve gelen servis çalışanları ve tamircilerle iletişimini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN (RUSSIAN)

### АНКЕТА ДЛЯ СУПРУГИ

1. Возраст: \_\_\_\_\_ (лет)
2. Место рождения (город и страна): \_\_\_\_\_
3. В какой стране вы провели большую часть вашего детства? \_\_\_\_\_
4. В каком году вы переехали в Турции? \_\_\_\_\_
5. сколько времени вы прожили в Турции? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Сколько времени вы прожили в Турции, как пара? \_\_\_\_\_
7. В какой стране вы встретились с вашим супругом? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Сколько времени вы были знакомы с вашим супругом до вашего брака? \_\_\_\_\_ лет  
\_\_\_\_\_ месяцев
9. Длительность нынешнего брака: \_\_\_\_\_ лет \_\_\_\_\_ месяцев
10. История образования:

Отметьте законченное вами учреждение, если не закончили в последующей колонке отметьте сколько лет продолжили учебу :	Сколько лет проучились ?	В какой стране (странах) вы находились на каждом из уровней?
<input type="checkbox"/> Начальная школа		
<input type="checkbox"/> средняя школа		
<input type="checkbox"/> Высшая школа		
<input type="checkbox"/> колледж		
<input type="checkbox"/> аспирантура		
<input type="checkbox"/> Другое (укажите): _____		

11. Ваша профессия? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Возраст ваших детей:
 

Мальчиков	_____
Девочек	_____
13. На каком языке Вы разговариваете со своим супругом?
 

Турецкий	_____ %
Другое (укажите)	_____ %
	_____ %
	_____ %
14. На каком языке Вы разговариваете со вашим ребенком?
 

Турецкий	_____ %
Другое (укажите)	_____ %
	_____ %
	_____ %

15. На каком языке Вы разговариваете со своим супругом в семье?

Турецкий \_\_\_\_\_ %  
 Другое (укажите) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
 \_\_\_\_\_ %  
 \_\_\_\_\_ %

Ответив на последующие пять вопросов, расскажите, пожалуйста мне о себе.  
 Выбранные вами ответы обведите кружком .

16.	Насколько хорошо вы понимаете язык вашего супруга?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
17.	Насколько хорошо Вы говорите с вашим супругом на его языке?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
18.	Насколько комфортно вы себя чувствуете во время празднования вашим супругом его религиозных праздников?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
19.	Насколько комфортно вы себя чувствуете во время празднования вашим супругом государственных праздников его страны?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
20.	Насколько комфортно вы будете себя чувствовать наедине с семьей вашего мужа в их стране?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо

Ответив на последующие пять вопросов, , расскажите пожалуйста мне о вашей супруге.  
 . Выбранные вами ответы обведите кружком

21.	Насколько хорошо ваша супруга понимает ваш язык?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
22.	Насколько хорошо ваша супруга говорит на вашем языке?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
23.	Насколько комфортно вы будете себя чувствовать с вашей супругой во время празднования ее религиозных праздников?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
24.	Насколько комфортно вы будете себя чувствовать с вашей супругой во время празднования ее государственных праздников?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо
25.	Насколько комфортно вы будете себя чувствовать наедине с семьей вашей супруги в их стране?	Совсем	Немножко	Хорошо	Очень хорошо

\*\*\*\*\* Первые слова, которые приходят на ум, являются лучшим ответом! \*\*\*\*\*

26. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие Вашу свекровь:

---

27. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие Ваши отношения с Вашей свекровью:

---

28. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие отношения вашего мужа с его матерью:

---

\* Для ответа на последующие вопросы выберите одного из родственников например брат мужа или сестра мужа. 29-31.

29. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие brother-in-law/sister-in-law (указать кружком)

\* С которыми из них вы наиболее часто встречаетесь:

---

30. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие ваши отношения с brother-in-law/sister-in-law (круг указать) \* С которыми из них вы наиболее часто встречаетесь:

---

31. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие отношения Вашего мужа со его братом / сестрой (обвести кружком) \*с которыми из них он видится наиболее часто:

---

32. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие отношения Вашего мужа с незнакомыми людьми в общественных местах:

---

33. Выберите три слова или фразы, описывающие отношения Вашего мужа с работниками сервиса приходящими в ваш дом:

---

## APPENDIX E

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEN (ENGLISH)

#### Husbands' Questionnaire

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
2. Birth Place (town/city and country): \_\_\_\_\_
3. In what country did you spend the majority of your childhood? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How long have you lived in Turkey? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How long have you lived in Turkey as a couple? \_\_\_\_\_
6. In what country did you meet your spouse? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How long did you know your spouse before your marriage? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months
8. Length of current marriage: \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months
9. Educational History:



Check if completed (if not indicate years attended in next column):	How Many Years?	In what country (ies) did you attend each level?
___ Elementary school	_____	_____
___ Middle school	_____	_____
___ High school	_____	_____
___ College	_____	_____
___ Graduate School	_____	_____
___ Other (specify): _____	_____	_____

10. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Children's ages:
 

Male	___	___	___	___
Female	___	___	___	___
12. What languages do you speak with your spouse?
 

English	_____	%
Turkish	_____	%
Other (specify) _____	_____	%
_____	_____	%
13. What languages do you speak with your children?
 

English	_____	%
Turkish	_____	%
Other (specify) _____	_____	%
_____	_____	%
14. What languages do you speak with your spouse's family?
 

English	_____	%
Turkish	_____	%
Other (specify) _____	_____	%
_____	_____	%

For the next five questions, please tell me about **yourself**.  
Please circle the best response.

15.	How well do you <i>understand</i> your spouse's language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
16.	How well do you <i>speak</i> your spouse's language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
17.	How comfortable would you feel celebrating your spouse's <i>religious holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
18.	How comfortable would you feel celebrating your spouse's <i>national holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
19.	How comfortable would you feel spending time alone with your in-laws in their country?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very

For the next five questions, please tell me about **your spouse**.  
Please circle the best response.

20.	How well does your spouse <i>understand</i> your language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
21.	How well does your spouse <i>speak</i> your language?	Not at All	Very little	Well	Very Well
22.	How comfortable would your spouse feel celebrating your <i>religious holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
23.	How comfortable would your spouse feel celebrating your <i>national holiday</i> ?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very
24.	How comfortable would your spouse feel spending time with your family in your country?	Not at All	A little	Fairly	Very

\*\*\*\*\* Generally the first words that come to mind are the best! \*\*\*\*\*

25. Pick three words or phrases that describe your mother:

\_\_\_\_\_

26. Pick three words or phrases that describe your relationship with your mother:

\_\_\_\_\_

27. Pick three words or phrases that describe your wife's relationship with your mother:

\_\_\_\_\_

\* Pick the same relative (either a specific sister or brother) for questions 28-30.

28. Pick three words or phrases that describe your brother/sister you see most often (circle to specify)\*:

\_\_\_\_\_

29. Pick three words or phrases that describe your relationship with your brother/sister you see most often(circle to specify)\*:

\_\_\_\_\_

30. Pick three words or phrases that describe your wife's relationship with your brother/sister you see most often(circle to specify)\*:

\_\_\_\_\_

31. Pick three words or phrases that describe your wife's relationship with strangers in public:

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Pick three words or phrases that describe your wife's relationship with service workers who come to your home:

\_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX F QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEN (TURKISH)

### Eşler için Anket

- Yaşınız: \_\_\_\_\_
- Doğum yeriniz (il/ilçe / ülke): \_\_\_\_\_
- Çocukluğunuzda en uzun hangi ülkede yaşadınız? \_\_\_\_\_
- Ne kadar süredir Türkiye'de yaşıyorsunuz? \_\_\_\_\_
- Ne kadar süredir eşinizle birlikte Türkiye'de yaşıyorsunuz? \_\_\_\_\_
- Eşinizle hangi ülkede tanıştınız? \_\_\_\_\_
- Evlenmeden önce eşinizle ne kadar süredir tanıştınız? \_\_\_\_\_ yıl \_\_\_\_\_ ay
- Ne kadar süredir evlisiniz?: \_\_\_\_\_ yıl \_\_\_\_\_ ay
- Eğitim Geçmişiniz:



Tamamladıklarınızı işaretleyiniz (tamamlamadıklarınıza kaç sene devam ettiğinizi yandaki sütunda belirtiniz):	Kaç sene okudunuz?	Her bir öğrenim düzeyine hangi ülke(ler) de devam ettiğinizi belirtiniz.
<input type="checkbox"/> İlk okul		
<input type="checkbox"/> Orta okul		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lise		
<input type="checkbox"/> Üniversite		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yüksek Lisans/Doktora		
<input type="checkbox"/> Diğer (belirtiniz): _____		

- Mesleğiniz ne? \_\_\_\_\_
- Çocuklarınızın yaşları: Erkek \_\_\_\_\_  
Kız \_\_\_\_\_
- Eşinizle hangi dili konuşuyorsunuz?  
İngilizce \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Türkçe \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Diğer (belirtiniz) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %
- Çocuklarınızla hangi dili konuşuyorsunuz?  
İngilizce \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Türkçe \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Diğer (belirtiniz) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %
- Eşinizin ailesiyle hangi dili konuşuyorsunuz?  
İngilizce \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Türkçe \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Diğer (belirtiniz) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
\_\_\_\_\_ %

Aşağıdaki sorular için **kendinize** en uygun cevapları **belirtiniz**.

15. Eşinizin ana dilini ne kadar iyi <i>anlıyorsunuz</i> ?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
16. Eşinizin ana dilini ne kadar iyi <i>konuşuyorsunuz</i> ?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
17. Eşinizin <i>dini bayramlarını</i> kutlarken kendinizi ne kadar rahat hissedersiniz?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
18. Eşinizin <i>milli bayramlarını</i> kutlarken kendinizi ne kadar rahat hissedersiniz?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
19. Eşinizin memleketinde onun ailesiyle tek başınıza vakit geçerseniz kendinizi ne kadar rahat hissedersiniz?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok

Aşağıdaki sorular için **eşinize** en uygun cevapları **belirtiniz**.

20. Eşiniz sizin ana dilinizi ne kadar iyi <i>anlıyor</i> ?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
21. Eşiniz sizin ana dilinizi ne kadar iyi <i>konuşuyor</i> ?	Hiç	Biraz	İyi	Çok İyi
22. Eşiniz sizin <i>dini bayramlarınızı</i> kutlarken kendisini ne kadar rahat hisseder?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
23. Eşiniz sizin <i>milli bayramlarınızı</i> kutlarken kendisini ne kadar rahat hisseder?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok
24. Eşiniz sizin memleketinizde ailenizle tek başına vakit geçirirse kendisini ne kadar rahat hisseder?	Hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Çok

\*\*\*\*\* Genellikle akla gelen ilk kelimeler en iyi cevaplardır \*\*\*\*\*

25. Annenizi anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

26. Annenizle ilişkinizi anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

27. Eşinizin annenizle ilişkisini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

\* 28. - 30. sorular için aynı akrabayı seçiniz (Örn: ağabey, ~~abla~~ erkek kardeş / kız kardeş).

28. En çok gördüğünüz ağabeyinizi / ablanızı / erkek kardeşinizi / kız kardeşinizi (belirtiniz)\* anlatılan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

29. En çok gördüğünüz ağabeyiniz / ablanız / erkek kardeşiniz / kız kardeşiniz (belirtiniz)\* ile ilişkinizi anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

30. Eşinizle en çok gördüğünüz ağabeyinizin / ablanızın / erkek kardeşinizin / kız kardeşinizin (belirtiniz)\* ilişkisini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

31. Eşinizin dışarıdaki yabancı kişilerle iletişimini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Eşinizin eve gelen servis çalışanları ve tamircilerle iletişimini anlatan üç kelime yazınız:

\_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX G**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE (ENGLISH)**

#### **Interview Guide**

##### Warm-Up Questions:

1. Could you tell me about how and where you met each other?
2. Can you tell me about your wedding?
3. How often do you go back to America/Kazakhstan/Other? How long? When? For what purpose?

##### Questions Targeting RQ:

###### Relationship with strangers:

1. Tell me about the last time a service worker came to work in your home.
2. Could you tell me any a story that stands out about your experience with strangers around Istanbul? (For example, maybe when you were at the supermarket or at a restaurant)
3. Tell me about one of your outings to one of your favorite public places.

###### Relationship with family:

1. How close are you with your spouse's family?
2. How often do you meet them?
3. To what extent does communication with your spouse's family help promote or maintain a good relationship with your spouse?

##### Cool-Down Questions:

1. When was your last outing together?
2. What did you do during that outing vacation?
3. Is there anything you wish I had asked?

## APPENDIX H INTERVIEW GUIDE (TURKISH)

### Görüşme Rehberi

#### Isınma Soruları:

1. Birbirinizle ilk nerede ve nasıl tanıştığınızı anlatabilir misiniz?
2. Ne kadar zamandır evlisiniz?
3. Ne kadar zamandır Türkiye’de yaşıyorsunuz?
4. Ne kadar sıklıkla eşinizin memleketine gidirsiniz? Ne kadar kalırsınız? Ne zaman gidirsiniz? Ne amaçla gidirsiniz?

#### Yabancılarla ilişkiler:

1. Lütfen bir servis elemanının en son evinize gelişini anlatın.
2. İstanbul’da tammadığımız insanlarla yaşadığımız tecrübelerden aklınızda en çok kalanını anlatabilir misiniz?
3. En beğendiğiniz toplu mekanlardan birine en son gidişinizi anlatın lütfen.

#### Aile fertleriyle ilişkiler:

1. Eşinizin arkadaşları ve ailesiyle ne kadar yakınsınız?
2. Onlarla ne sıklıkla görüşürsünüz?
3. Eşinizin ailesiyle iletişiminiz eşinizle ilişkinizin iyi olmasını ne derece sağlıyor veya güçlendiriyor?

#### Sakinleştirme Soruları:

1. En son ne zaman beraber dışarı çıktınız?
2. Bu birlikte dışarı çıkışınızda neler yaptınız?
3. Benim sormadığım ama sormuş olmamı istediğiniz herhangi bir şey var mı?













## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdel-Jaouad, Heidi. 1991. "World Literature in Review: Algerian." *World Literature Today* 65: 750-751.
- Baltas, Zuhail and Andrew Steptoe. 2000. "Migration, Culture, Conflict and Psychological Well-Being among Turkish-British Married Couples." *Ethnicity and Health* 5: 173-180.
- Bacigalupe, Gonzalo. 2003. "Intercultural Therapy with Latino Immigrants and White Partners: Crossing Borders Coupling." Pp. 131-149 in Volker Thomas, Joseph L. Wetchler and Terri Karis (authors) *Clinical Issues with Interracial Couples: Theories and Research*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.
- Biever, Joan, Monte Bobele and Mary-Wales North. 1998. "Therapy with Intercultural Couples: A Postmodern Approach." *Counseling Psychology Quarterly* 11: 181-188.
- Billhimer, Ruth Kretzler. 1998. "Pawns of Fate: Chinese/Paiute Intercultural Marriages, 1860-1920, Walker River Reservation, Schurz, Nevada." M.A. dissertation, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- Bhugra, Dinesh and Padmal De Silva. 2000. "Couple Therapy Across Cultures." *Sexual and Relationship Therapy* 15: 184-192.
- Carroll, Raymonde. 1987. *Cultural Misunderstandings: The French-American Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Casimir, Fred L. 1997. "Ethics, Culture and Communication: An Application of the Third-Culture Building Model to International and Intercultural Communication." Pp. 89-118 in Fred L. Casimir (Ed.), *Ethics in Intercultural and International Communication*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Casimir, Fred L. 1999. "Foundations for the study of intercultural communication based on third-culture building model." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 23: 91-116.
- Kramsch, Claire. 1998. *Language and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Crippen, Cheryl and Leah Brew. 2007 "Intercultural Parenting and the Transcultural Family: A Literature Review" *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families* 15: 107-115.
- Duronto, Patricia M., Tsukasa Nishida and Shin-ichi Nakayama. 2005. "Uncertainty, Anxiety and Avoidance in Communication with Strangers." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29: 549-560.
- Franklin, Yuko Iwamoto. 1992. "Communication and Marital Satisfaction in Japanese and Caucasian American Intermarried Couples." Ph.D. dissertation, California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA.
- Gaines, Stanley O. and Kelly A. Brennan. 2001. "Establishing and Maintaining Satisfaction in Multicultural Relationships." Pp. 237-253 in John Harvey and A. Wenzel (Eds.), *Close Romantic Relationships: Maintenance and Enhancement*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gibson, Cristina B. and Mary E. Zellmer-Bruhn. 2001. "Metaphors and Meaning: An Intercultural Analysis of the Concept of Teamwork." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 46: 274-202.
- Giladi-McKelvie, Dalia. 1986. "Intercultural Marriage: A Phenomenological Study of Couples Who Succeed." Ph.D. dissertation, The Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, Cincinnati, OH.
- Hill, Jane H. and Bruce Mannheim. 1992. "Language and World View." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 21: 381-406.
- Jo-Pei, Tan, Rozumah Baharuddin, Rumaya Juhari, and Steven Eric Krauss. 2008. "Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Intercultural Marriages: A Study of a Multi-Ethnic Community in Malaysia." *European Journal of Social Sciences* 5(4): 30-44.
- Kay, Paul and Willett Kempton. 1984. "What is the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis?" *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 86(1): 65-79.
- Koca, Canan and F. Hülya Aşçı and Sadettin Kirazcı. 2005. "Gender Role Orientation of Athletes and Nonathletes in a Patriarchal Society: A Study in Turkey." *Sex Roles* 52: 217-225.

- Lee, Pei-Wen. 2006. "Bridging Cultures: Understanding the Construction of Relational Identity in Intercultural Friendships." *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 35(1): 3-22.
- Lee, Suman. 2006. "Somewhere in the Middle: The Measurement of Third Culture." *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 35: 235-264.
- Lindlof, Thomas. R. and Bryan C. Taylor. 2002. *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Luke, Carmen and Allan Luke. 1998. "Interracial Families: Differences within Difference." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21: 728-753.
- Maynard, Mary. 1999. "Gender Relations." Pp. 116-135 in Steve Taylor (Ed.), *Sociology: Issues and Debates*. New York, NY: Palgrave.
- McGoldrick, Monica, Joe Giodarno and Nydia Garcia-Preto, eds. 2005. *Ethnicity and Family Therapy*. New York, NY: Guildford Press.
- Nabeshima, E. Noel. 2005. "Intercultural Marriage and Early Parenting: A Qualitative Study of American and Japanese Couples in the United States." Psy.D. dissertation, The Wright Institute, Berkeley, CA.
- Nibler, Roger and Karen L. Harris. 2003. "The Effect of Culture and Cohesiveness on Intragroup Conflict and Effectiveness." *Journal of Social Psychology* 143: 613-631.
- Owen, Jane Duncan. 2002. *Mixed Matches: Interracial Marriage in Australia*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Patai, Raphael. 1951. "Nomadism: Middle Eastern and Central Asian." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 7: 401-414.
- Pillai, Rajnandini and James R.Meindl, 1998. "Context and Charisma: A 'Meso' Level Examination of the Relationship of Organic Structure, Collectivism, and Crisis to Charismatic Leadership." *Journal of Management* 24: 643-671.
- Qasim, Arsheen. 2006. "Love in a Cold Wet Climate." *Irish Times*, March 3.
- Quah, Stella. 2003. "Ethnicity and Parenting Styles among Singapore Families." *Marriage and Family Review* 35(3-4): 63-83.

- Seto, Atsuko and Marion Cavallaro. 2007. "Cross-National Couples in the Mainland United States." *The Family Journal* 15: 258-264.
- Shute, Christina and Brian Spitzberg 2003. "Intercultural Couples: Exploring the Role of Social Support." Presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Social Sciences. Honolulu, HI. June 12-15. Retrieved December 28, 2008 (<http://www.hicsocial.org/social2003proceedings/christina%20l.%20shute.pdf>).
- Sims, Randi L and A. Ercan Gegez. 2004. "Attitudes Towards Business Ethics: A Five Nation Comparative Study." *Journal of Business Ethics* 50: 253-265.
- Strauss, Anselm and Juliet Corbin. 1990. *Basics of Quantitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Statt, David A. 2003. *A Student's Dictionary of Psychology*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Sullivan, Christopher and R. Rocco Cottone. 2006. "Culturally Based Couple Therapy and Intercultural Relationships: A Review of the Literature." *The Family Journal: Counselling and Therapy for Couples and Families* 14: 231-225.
- Taweekuakulkit, Narissara 2005. "Thai-North American Intercultural Marriage in the United States: A Qualitative Study of Conflict from Thai Wives' Perspectives." Ph.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.
- Telser-Gadow, Barbara C. 1992. "Intercultural Communication Competence in Intercultural Marriages" PhD. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, MI.
- Tseng, Wen-Shing and Jing Hsu. 1991. *Culture and Family: Problems and Therapy*. New York: Haworth.
- Webb, Eugene J., Donald T. Campbell, Richard D. Schwartz and Lee Sechrest. 1966. *Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences*. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally and Co.
- Whorf, Benjamin Lee. 1940. "Science and Linguistics." Pp. 201-219 in John B. Carroll (Ed.), (1964), *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Works of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.