

Conference Travel Grant Report (2026) for Jae Sıdika Weller

Linguistics Society of America Conference 2026 (New Orleans, Louisiana)

Presentation Title: *Turkish Emphatic Reduplication: Foraging for Loose Ends*

I am currently working on completing my dissertation, which is focused on Turkish phonology (mental representation of speech sounds). One chapter of my dissertation focuses on Turkish emphatic reduplication, which can be applied to a limited set of adjectives and adverbs to create an emphasized meaning. For example, *beyaz* ‘white’ can be reduplicated to *bembeyaz* ‘extremely white’. Note that there is a linker consonant which is added to the form, in this example it is *m*. For vowel-initial words, the added consonant is always *p*, but for words that start with consonants, the linker is from the list *p m s r*.

I compared and consolidated data across about a dozen past works to document the variation in linker consonant selection for consonant-initial forms. Based on this data, I make the argument that the choice of linker is not governed by predictable rules, but is rather memorized with each word. For example, the *m* linker consonant for *bembeyaz* is memorized with the word *beyaz* in the speakers’ memory.

I used these findings to create a poster presentation for the *Linguistics Society of America* annual conference. My presentation focused on explaining the variation I found and showing how memorization of linker consonants can be represented using directed graphs. My poster was quite well attended; I was speaking to audience members continuously for over the 1.5 hours allotted for the poster session. I received many interesting questions, as well as feedback from native Turkish speaking linguists about their intuitions around the linker consonants. This feedback is extremely useful to me as I plan to incorporate it into my dissertation. Thank you again to the Karpas Center for helping to make this presentation possible.