

CANSU MALAK

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EDUCATION

Korea University, Korea

September 2023 – 2025, Faculty of Engineering, Brain and Cognitive Engineering – 4.25/4.5

- PI: Christian Wallraven
- Thesis: *Decoding Faces: Fine-Grained Ethnicity Categorization of East Asian Faces by Humans and Machines*

Yeditepe University, Turkey

September 2018 – 2022, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Psychology (in English) - 3.94/4

- PI: Dr. Funda Yildirim
- Undergraduate Research Project: *Masking emotions: How does perceived gaze direction affect emotion recognition in masked faces? – An eye-tracking study*

September 2016 – 2021, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Sociology (in English) - 3.91/4

HONORS, AWARDS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2022-2025. Global Korean Scholarship. National Institute for International Education (NIIED), Government of the Republic of Korea. \$75.000.
- 2022-2023. Undergraduate Project Grant - 2209-A TUBITAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkiye) [Effects of perceived gaze direction and face mask on emotion recognition – An eye-tracking study](#). 4000 TL.
- 2022. High Honors Student - Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Psychology
- 2021. High Honors Student - Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Sociology

PUBLICATIONS

Malak, C., Wallraven, C. (**submitted**, preprint available). The importance of external features for identifying ethnicity: Testing Korean, Japanese, and Chinese faces in a Korean cultural background. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/gxky7>

Malak, C., Coskun, I., Gungor, Y., Ozilgen, S., & Yildirim, F. (preprint available). Cross-sensory Effects on Taste Perception using Extended Reality. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/6ha5e_v1

Malak, C., Wallraven, C. (preprint available). Attractive Strangers Look Korean: In-group Biases in How Koreans Evaluate and Categorize Korean, Japanese, and Chinese Faces. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/pq7ny_v1

Malak, C., & Yildirim, F. (2025). Pupillary responses to masked and gaze-averted faces. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 16, 1586186. [doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1586186](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1586186)

Baykar, B. G., Kenan, I. D., & **Malak, C.** (2021). [Gender gap in Turkish Debate Programs](#). KA.DER (Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği).

CONFERENCE PEECEDINGS / PRESENTATIONS

Malak, C., Wallraven, C. (2025). Humans versus machines: Distinguishing Korean, Chinese, and Japanese faces via internal and external features. *Vision Sciences Society 2025*.

<https://doi.org/10.1167/jov.25.9.2027>

Malak, C., Wallraven, C. (2025). 민족성을 범주화하는 데 있어 외부 특징의 중요성: 한국인은 한국, 일본, 중국 얼굴을 구별할 수 있을까? (The importance of external features for categorizing ethnicity: Can Koreans identify Korean, Japanese, and Chinese faces?). 한국인지및생물심리학회 (Korean Cognitive and Biological Psychology Society) 2025. [presented in Korean]

Malak, C., Yildirim, F. (2022) Effects of perceived gaze direction and face mask on emotion recognition – An eye-tracking study. *Vision Sciences Society, virtual Undergraduate Just-in-Time Sessions*.

<https://www.visionsciences.org/presentation/?id=4526>

Yorgancıgil, E., Urgen B.A., **Malak C.** & Yıldırım, F. (2021) Audio-visual components and cross-generation characteristics of uncanny valley. *43rd European Conference on Visual Perception. Perception*. 50:104 [doi: 10.1177/0301006621105987](https://doi.org/10.1177/0301006621105987)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Cognitive Systems Lab

September 2023 – present, Korea University, Seoul

Principal Investigator: Christian Wallraven

- **Project 1:** The importance of external features for identifying ethnicity: Testing Korean, Japanese, and Chinese faces in a Korean cultural background. (completed)
- **Project 2:** Comparative analysis of human and machine learning performance in fine-grained ethnicity-based face recognition (completed)
- **Project 3:** Perceptions of attractiveness and trustworthiness in East Asian faces: How Koreans distinguish Korean, Japanese, and Chinese ethnicities (completed)

Undergraduate Research Assistant, Computational Neuroscience Visual Perception Lab

September 2020 – 2022, Yeditepe University, Istanbul

Principal Investigator: Dr. Funda Yıldırım

- **Project 1:** [Effects of perceived gaze direction and face mask on face perception](#)
- **Project 2:** [Audiovisual side of uncanny valley](#)

Research Assistant

September 2020 –2022, Yeditepe University, Istanbul

Principal Investigator: Dr. Pınar Ugurlar

- **Project 1:** Background effect on online lecture
- **Project 2:** Self-other overlap and economic decision-making game

Responsibilities: Designing experiment, data collection

Project Assistant

September 2020 –2021, Yeditepe University, Istanbul

Principal Investigator: Dr. Baris Gencer Baykan

- **Project:** Project for monitoring gender equality in the media

Responsibilities: Data collection, and analysis.

Summer Research Assistant

June 2019- August 2019, Koc University Principal Investigator:

Aysegül Özsomer Tunalı

- **Project:** A closer look at the relationship between brand equity and marketing standardization

Responsibilities: 55 semi-structured interviews with employees at Ford.

SKILLS

SPSS, Psychopy3, Prism, MATLAB, Python, Eye-tracking, fMRI (spm), R, EEG

LANGUAGES

- **Turkish**-Native
- **English**-Advanced
- **Korean**-Advanced (TOPIK 6)

CERTIFICATES

- Electrophysical and Psychophysical Implementations with Arduino -Yeditepe University
- EEG use in cognitive neuroscience research: Basic and advanced analysis techniques - Bilkent University
- Eye-tracking Methods - Bilkent University

MEDIA

[Interview](#) with Cansu Malak&Fundu Yıldırım on “Effects of perceived gaze direction and face mask on emotion recognition” project

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

WORKAWAY-KOREA

August 2019 - October 2019

ESL teacher

AIESEC Global Volunteering-Ukraine

2017-2018

Supporting social and linguistic skills of the marginalized communities.

