

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION STUDIES

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Intercultural Communication Studies (ICS) began in 1991 with the goal of publishing research related to the study of intercultural communication in the many areas involved in the field. The interdisciplinary nature of the journal can be seen in some of the fields scheduled for publication:

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Preface

Joanna RADWAŃSKA-WILLIAMS
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This issue of *Intercultural Communication Studies* contains several thematic groupings of articles: studies of minority groups; communication studies and media studies; and philosophical perspectives on comparative cultural studies.

The first group of articles concerns underrepresented minority groups: the Roma people in Europe, Filipino migrant workers in Taiwan, and Hakka Chinese in Taiwan. All of these articles are exceptional in that not only do they add to our knowledge of underrepresented groups, but also engage in theory-building. The article on the difficulties the Roma people experience in establishing a career path, by Elena GABOR and Patrice BUZZANELL, applies anthropological and discourse-analysis perspectives of co-cultural theory. The study of Filipino migrant workers, by Francis Raymond CALBAY, applies the framework of symbolic convergence theory to an analysis of knowledge transfer through Catholic homilies. LEE Meihua's article applies the contextual theory of interethnic communication to analyze communication between the Hakka and other ethnic groups in Taiwan.

The second group of articles offers theoretical perspectives on communication studies. The article by Qin ZHANG and Jibiao ZHANG explores the moderating effects of culture in the relationships of conflict types and conflict resolution with relational satisfaction. Their quantitative research design enables them to verify several hypotheses in this regard and to conclude that indeed culture plays a mediating role in relational satisfaction, i.e., in the extent of satisfaction with interpersonal relationships in regard to various conflict outcomes. The article by Alla SHEVELEVA approaches communication from the point of view of linguistic and pragmatic rhetorical features. This framework is applied to the political speeches of Barack Obama to analyze the peculiarities of their stylistic and persuasive effectiveness.

The grouping of articles on media studies begins with the study by Kara CHAN, Yu Leung NG and Russell B. WILLIAMS on adolescent girls' interpretation of sexuality found in media images. This qualitative study, conducted in Hong Kong using autovideography and recorded interviews, found that "adolescent girls' perception of sexuality embraced traditional as well as modern values". The article by Hanying WANG examines portrayals of Chinese women's images in Hollywood mainstream films. It employs a longitudinal historical approach by comparing films of different generations, from 1931 to 1997, and argues that despite the difference in time period, some stereotypes of Oriental "otherness" persist in the Hollywood portrayals. The last article on media studies, "Chinese Working-class Identity in *The Piano in a Factory*" by Tongyuan SHI, contains a thick description of this fascinating film (directed by Meng ZHANG,

2011), which is a humorous yet serious depiction of the decline of state-owned heavy industry in the 1990s and the hardships and “crisis in masculinity” experienced by laid-off workers in a state which has shifted away from valuing labor.

The final group of articles offers philosophical perspectives on comparative cultural studies. The study on “Representation of the Other in Desert de Retz as Reflections of French Enlightenment Thought”, by JIA Ning, offers an architectural and hermeneutic reading of a French picturesque garden constructed in the 18th century, Desert de Retz. The author argues that “contrary to the fluid and dynamic image created in past stages for Western history, the image constructed for the Orient is completely divorced from its own context and history to become essentialist and static”. The article by Victor LUX TONN presents “a systematic study on the commonality between systems of communication and poetry through the transformations between spaces of meanings and images in the operational spheres of conflict, mutuality, centrality, and holistic advancement residing in the context of cultural systems of D*, X*, and Δ*”. The latter are defined, respectively, as “the system of symbolic and tranquil culture”, “the system of sciences and conflict culture”, and “the system of dialectical culture”. The author argues that the concept of communication competence can be approached “from the perspective of **matching the operational spheres and operating fields** of the sender/receiver with those of the receiver/sender” [editor’s emphasis]. Operational spheres (OS) are defined as containing meanings in the five dimensions of values of “individual creativity, balance/conflict, mutuality, centrality, holistic advancement”, while operating fields are defined as containing meanings in the four dimensions of values of “fairness, happiness, beauty, and ultimate concerns.” The theory of matching is expressed symbolically in terms of the iso-xystemism of images and/or states of mind between the sender and the receiver. Finally, the article “Undefined Man: A Sartrean Reading of American Novelist Walker Percy’s *The Moviegoer*”, by Zhenping WANG, compares the philosophy of the French existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre with the literary work of the American novelist Walker Percy, who was influenced by Sartre. In the analysis of the novel *The Moviegoer*, the author argues that the protagonist of the novel, Binx Bolling, undergoes a metaphysical search and becomes an “undefined man” who resists the confinement of everyday existence.