

Preface

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In this issue of *Intercultural Communication Studies*, the articles are grouped into several thematic areas, arranged in a transition order which reflects partly overlapping thematic concerns: cultural diversity in the workplace, international education, conflict mediation, intercultural communication pedagogy, ethnicity, and advertising discourse.

The section on Cultural Diversity in the Workplace contains two studies of cross-cultural comparison. Firstly, the wide-ranging research by Ming-Yi WU and Gale MULLER explores the relationships between diversity, national economic performance, community attachment, job climate, and subjective wellbeing in 143 cultures, using internationally collected data from the Gallup World Poll. The authors' findings bring insights into diversity around the world, and support the Creative Class Theory first put forth by Richard Florida's (2002) *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Secondly, the study of work values in a changing global environment by Beth Bonniwell HASLETT and Kevin LEIDEL compares the values of Chinese and U.S. students, examining both cultural and gender differences. The study supports "a position of crossvergency, with some values convergent while others remain divergent", with reference to the work of David Ralston and colleagues (1997). It is also found that Chinese students reflected more collectivistic while American students more individualistic values, and that "significant gender differences were found across both U.S. and Chinese students."

The thematic area of International Education includes two articles on the experience of study-abroad students. The article by Jayme SCALLY addresses the experience of U.S. students in Spain and examines their intercultural competence development in three different study abroad program types. The first type is the "island" programs "that essentially transplant groups of American students to a city abroad" into an American-run study center with a tailor-made program and lots of support structure. The third type are "direct enrollment" programs "in which students enroll directly into a host university and participate in the same courses as local students", while the second type are "third party" or hybrid programs, which "combine aspects of both Island and Direct Enrollment programs". The research found that students who enroll in these different types of programs differ in their demographic make up, such as age and motivation for study abroad. The structured support offered by Island and Third Party programs is found to cater to the needs of the majority of students, while "Direct Enrollment students may get an opportunity to live an authentic Spanish student life [but] they are, at times, overwhelmed by the multitude of real life responsibilities they must navigate to live that daily life." The second article on International Education, by Flemmings Fishani NGWIRA, Jianzhong HONG and Harold Wilson TUMWITIKE MAPOMA, examines intercultural communication competence and acculturation among international students in Central China. Surprisingly, "a representative sample of 302 international students show[ed] that Asian international students are less motivated to adapt than other students from other continents. In addition, time [length of stay] and education level do not seem to be sufficient factors in facilitating adaptation." The result of the study suggest that Chinese universities, which are now hosting increasing numbers of international students, should "help facilitate [the students'] adjustment to the new culture [and...] come up with effective programs that enhance contact between cultures."

The next section contains two articles related to the theme of Conflict Mediation, the second of which also touches upon study-abroad experience. In “A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Avoidance: Behind-the-Scenes Strategies in Interpersonal Conflicts”, Bing HAN and Deborah A. CAI compare the avoidance strategies of 394 U.S. students and 259 students in China by means of a sixteen-version questionnaire with different hypothetical conflict situations. The three avoidance behaviors examined include acceptance, termination and third-party seeking. Quantitative analysis showed that Chinese are more likely than Americans to use avoidance including all three of these avoidance behaviors “because Chinese perceived a direct approach as more ineffective than Americans did.” A surprising finding was that the higher likelihood of avoidance by Chinese included the strategy of relationship termination, which may be due to the fact that while Chinese culture is collectivistic, it is less tight than other Asian countries, with reference to the 33-nation study by Gelfand and colleagues (2011). The findings also suggest a different behavioral patterning in conflict situations than that predicted in Dean Pruitt and Jeffrey Rubin’s (1986) dual concern model, thus shedding valuable light on different cultures’ negotiation and avoidance styles. In the second article in this section, Vanessa WYNDER QUAINOO examines the occurrence of “intercultural moments” of direct and indirect conflict between African American students studying abroad in Ghana and their host African students. Using ethnographic observation and content analysis of student journals, it is found that “such moments are primarily caused by three factors: incongruent expectation, intercultural preconception and intercultural misunderstanding.” Paradoxically, the conflict situations “can be attributed to intercultural engagement” reflecting the African American students’ high expectations of their study abroad experience in Africa.

The section on Intercultural Communication Pedagogy tackles important issues in the ICC educational context. Firstly, rendering valuable service to the profession, Hsin-I Sydney Yueh & Kristopher D. Copeland investigate “The Embodiment of Intercultural Communication through Course Syllabi” by performing a close content analysis of 64 intercultural communication syllabi from universities across the United States. Their coding scheme reveals three research paradigms which inform the structure and learning objectives of the courses: the social scientific paradigm (specifically stating a theoretical social science perspective), interpretive paradigm (encouraging personal reflection and observation), and critical paradigm (“based on a critical perspective, which focuses on social justice and social change”). The authors find that “a pure social scientific and a pure critical syllabus were rare in our collection, which implied that the trend of teaching this course was more toward understanding and immersive learning, and students’ personal experience of intercultural communication was highly encouraged.” The study significantly updates the examination of ICC syllabi by Steven Beebe and Thompson Biggers (1986) to give a comprehensive picture of how ICC is taught throughout the U.S. In the second article in this section, “*I was ‘fortunate’ enough to have been born a white male: Understanding a Cycle of White Consciousness in Intercultural Communication Education*”, Yea-Wen CHEN and Nathaniel SIMMONS address a pressing problem in U.S. education, that of race consciousness through the eyes of the majority white ethnicity. Using critical discourse analysis, the researchers “interrogate students’ discourses about their cultural identities as they relate to whiteness and white identity development.” With reference to Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell’s (1987) framework in *Discourse and Social Psychology*, they identify four interpretive “repertoires for making sense of whiteness”: “(a) (unmarked) white majority: exploration, stagnation or questioning; (b) unacknowledged white victimhood; (c) imagining abstract equality for all; and (d) feeling fortunate about being white.” The findings suggest that “the majority of our students are in the early stages of

developing anti-racist white identities” and that there is “a need to further theorize white identities for social justice education.”

Continuing with the theme of ethnic identity, the fifth section, Ethnicity, contains two studies which focus on the experience of minority ethnic groups in the U.S., the second of which also touches upon the theme of advertising. Firstly, in “The Acculturation Modes of Arab Americans: An Empirical Study on the Effects of Gender, Religion, Nationality and Sojourner Status”, Gaby Semaan examines the factors that influence the ethnic identity of Arab Americans, including the effects on immigrants’ acculturation mode due to variables such as religion, nationality (Arab country of origin), gender, immigration generation, perceived discrimination, and sojourner status. The author remarks that “since the U.S. Census data does not have a category for Arab Americans and requires them to identify as White, the erasure of a distinct identity of this group within the White racial dominance made Arab Americans invisible until the late 1960s”, which is in contrast to the discrimination they have experienced since the attacks of September 11, 2001. The study used self-administered written survey questionnaires completed by 304 respondents across the U.S., who had been recruited through snowball sampling with three entry points in Arab American communities in Toledo, Ohio; Allentown, Pennsylvania; and Dearborn, Michigan. The reported Arab countries of origin of the immigrants included Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen. The details of the study included quantitative analysis of the variables, while the general conclusion supports that “the participants in this study are proud of their Arab heritage and at the same time are integrating into the American main stream as they are showing positive attitudes toward the American host culture” and “the positive relationship between Arab Americans and their original homeland is not necessarily affecting their ties with their new homeland in a negative way, as the positive attitude of the participants towards American culture shows.”

The second article in the section Ethnicity, by Kenneth C. C. YANG, Marissa JIMÉNEZ and Yowei KANG, investigates the influence of ethnicity on consumers’ environmental attitudes and responses to guilt appeals in ‘green’ advertising, through a post-test experimental design. The results of the study “show that ethnicity explains consumers’ environmental attitudes, which lends support to the environmental deprivation theory.” The researchers found that “Hispanic consumers were likely to demonstrate concerns over environmental issues over time, with a higher level of concern than Whites, because of their daily exposure to less satisfactory living conditions.”

The last article in this issue, in the thematic section Advertising Discourse, continuing the theme of investigating advertising appeal, is a detailed textual examination of the discursive productions of science in pamphlets advertising skincare cosmetics. Jen-Yi CHEN identifies four kinds of “discursive strategies [that] are adopted by the advertisements to construct the productions of science [...]: 1) procedures of science, 2) numbers of science, 3) expertise of science, and 4) innovations of science”. The researcher argues that these discursive strategies serve to construct an image of skincare products as empirically tested and scientifically effective.

Overall, this issue is comprised of articles by international scholars from China, Malawi, Taiwan, the UK and the US. They employ a range of methodologies, including content analysis, discourse analysis, ethnographic observation, interviews, quantitative analysis and survey methodology. *Intercultural Communication Studies* is honored to represent the wide scope of research in our field.