Preface

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Our journal, *Intercultural Communication Studies*, is now in its 31st year. This first issue of Volume XXXI contains three main sections, spanning the topic areas of Education, Intercultural Communication, and Media Studies, as well as a book review of Ngwainmbi, 2022.

In the first of two articles on Education, Juana DU and Zach GRENZOWSKI present an ethnographic participant-observer study of the dynamics of intercultural learning in a village school in Sri Lanka, where English is taught by international volunteers. Through fieldwork and in-depth interviews, the research opens up insights into intercultural practices on a community level which involve international volunteer teachers, village students, their parents and the village community. The authors find that emotional encounters and social interactions on a community level are central to intercultural learning. The second article, by Isaac Iortimbir AUN, examines the effect of contextual factors on entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Ilorin Kwara State, Nigeria. The study uses survey methodology and concludes that "both economic context and socio-cultural context, have a significant effect on students' start-up ideas, students' motivation, recognizing entrepreneurial possibilities and students' interest in business start-up". The article also presents background information on the entrepreneurial situation in Nigeria, and concludes with recommendations for educational and governmental action to foster students' entrepreneurial motivation.

The second section in this issue, Intercultural Communication, presents two articles which span across cultural divides. In a theoretical re-conceptualization, Abdelilah Salim SEHLAOUI presents an alternative conceptual framework for developing a critical cross-cultural communicative competence, based upon Arab-Islamic and Quranic principles. The framework presents three concepts of self that are found to be "based on shared fundamental values that are social, psychological, and spiritual in nature". To summarize these concepts, "The third and highest level is called annafssu al mutmainnah النفس المطمئنة (the balanced self) which is also the highest level of C^5, a person's ability to critically communicate with people from other diverse backgrounds while keeping their balance through compassion, respect, and tolerance. The second level is annafssu allawamah النفس اللوامة (the critical self) which uses a critical perspective towards the self and its relation to the socio-economic, spiritual, and political context to establish a balanced self. The first and lowest self is annafssu al-amaratu bissu'u بالسوء النفس الأمارة (the evil self) or uncritical and the cross-culturally incompetent self. [T]he annafssu al mutmainnah (the balanced self) is cooperative, indirect, humble, yielding, compassionate, responsible, calm, cooperative, and virtuous." The article provides a valuable perspective and commentary on the cultural framing of concepts of cross-cultural competence. The second article, by Xiaoshu ZHU and Chang GAO, conducts an evaluation and needs analysis of managers' beliefs and needs in three countries (Brazil, Mexico, and Germany) for negotiation training when dealing with Chinese businesspeople. The authors compare pre- and post-training questionnaires, and finds that the participants were especially interested in developing a

negotiation mindset, understanding contract-related issues, and building trust and stable relationships with their Chinese counterparts. The issues of particular concern were: "How to determine VIPs in the Chinese negotiation team, dealing with legal concerns in negotiations, and the typical Chinese wisdom related to business." In representing both Latin American and European perspectives, the article is a welcome addition to the literature on international business negotiation.

In the third section, Media Studies, Taiwan-based researchers Dienfang CHOU and Xiaoxiang WEE investigate the viewing behavior of Malaysian Chinese when watching Taiwan Tzu Chi Da Ai TV. The study collected information from 15 interviewees to explore the audience's viewing motivation and satisfaction. The Da Ai TV channel is broadcast by the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation, and reflects Buddhist values and Confucian values. The Malaysian Chinese audience has a positive view of the cultural proximity of the programming to their own life experience, appreciates the portrayal of "Needs for Spiritual Growth," "Improvement of Interpersonal Relationships," "Practice of Tzu Chi Activities", "Traditional Gender Roles" and "Filial Piety", and finds the programming both educational and entertaining. In the last article in this section, Yowei KANG (National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan) and Kenneth YANG (University of Texas at El Paso, USA) collaboratively investigate the graying of the digital game market in the Greater China Region, where Greater China is construed to include the mainland of China, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and Singapore. The term "graying" refers to the phenomenon of increased participation by the older/elderly/senior demographic, variously construed, according to different representations, as 50+, 55+, or 60+ years in age. The authors conduct a text-mining study of media representation of the participation in digital gaming by the senior demographic, and reveal discourse frequencies and phrase patterns that attest to the predominant narratives, perceptions and concerns. In particular, they reveal that three extracted topics, "Game Genres," "Brain Training/Cognitive Benefits," and "Economic/Business Dimension," best represent this influential demographic segment in the Greater China Region. Their findings show that is particularly revealing that participation in digital gaming by seniors is viewed as bringing positive cognitive benefits to this segment of Chinese society.

The issue concludes with a comprehensive book review, by Ashlie PERRY, of the recently published *Dismantling Cultural Borders Through Social Media and Digital Communications: How Networked Communities Compromise Identity* (Ngwainmbi, 2022). The theme of digital media is continued in this work, which "examines how the flow of information and digital activities can construct new social and cultural norms". Containing studies by diverse scholars representing several countries and continents, the book argues that culture and social identity are both impacted by digital media, and "digital platforms have managed to change the political and social landscape in countries that belong to both the Global North and South".

In this issue, we are proud to present research by scholars affiliated with academic institutions in Brazil, Canada, Nigeria, Taiwan, and the United States. Their research touches upon not only these countries and territories, but also the cultures and societies of Afghanistan, the Cherokee, Chile, China, Colombia, Germany, Haiti, Hong Kong, Macao, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, and Vietnam, as

well as broad issues of relationship and mutual representation between East and West, and the Global North and Global South. Through intercultural and internationally-based research, the International Association for Intercultural Communication Studies continues to represent its membership in our joint endeavors to understand our world of many cultures in all its complexity.