

Preface

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This second issue of Volume XXVII is dedicated to the memory of one of the founders of IAICS, Professor Robert N. St. Clair (1934-2018), who sadly passed away this autumn. He served the Association for over thirty years in various capacities, most recently as President (2013-2015). A prolific and perspicacious scholar, he inspired generations of students with his insights in cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, and intercultural communication. His wise spirit and kind heart will be remembered forever.

The first section of this issue commemorates Professor St. Clair with an *In Memoriam* tribute by the current President of IAICS, Robert W. Vaagan. We also re-publish an article by Robert N. St. Clair, "The Social Construction of Modern American Culture", which appeared in one of the very first issues of *ICS*. Although written twenty-six years ago, the article offers an incisive interdisciplinary analysis of modern society, including prescient insights into the contemporary trends of the convergence between communism and capitalism, and the cult of celebrity. It is a must-read for scholars of intercultural communication.

The second section is devoted to the topic area of prejudice and ethnocentrism, a recurrent focal theme in intercultural communication studies. Arul Chib and Jingyuan Shi report the results of a social media campaign to improve the relationship between mainland-Chinese sojourners and Singaporeans. The study found that "imagined contact mediated by social media supplemented sojourners' face-to-face encounters to significantly affect their perceived discrimination and intergroup prejudice." Ray T. Donahue examines the phenomenon of ethnocentrism in journalism, in a double case study of Japan-US automobile trade disputes as featured in the news media in 1989 and 2014. The author's critical discourse analysis of the news articles shows that even highly respected mainstream news media investigative reporting can be ethnocentrically biased, a worrying trend in today's era of globalization. Anqi Hu and Jiro Takai conduct an experimental study to investigate the effects of imagined contact in reducing explicit prejudice toward Chinese and Korean outgroups in Japan. The study provides "evidence for imagined contact to be effective in a society which has relatively little interethnic contact on a daily basis."

The third section of this issue contains two articles on intercultural communication. In a case study of Chinese student migrants (long-term sojourners of between one and five years) in Belgium, Hsien-Ming Lin investigates social media use for intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic communication. The author finds that intra-ethnic social media use has a positive effect on obtaining bonding social capital; however, in the sphere of bridging social capital, "the effects [...] are limited to information searching, not for inter-ethnic communication." In the second study, Yujun Lin investigates the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of Chinese novice teachers (having less than two years of teaching experience) and expert teachers (with more than ten years of teaching experience). Based on face-to-face interviews, the study finds that "expert teachers [...] have the confidence to teach culture in the class", while novice teachers "tend to avoid

the culture teaching and pay more attention to the language teaching.” Therefore, the author recommends that novice teachers need enhanced intercultural training.

The final section in this issue contains a cross-cultural study of linguistic landscape by Yoshinori Nishijima. The author investigates the preferred facing directions of pictures on traffic signs in Japan and Germany, thus extending the framework of linguistic landscape to include visual semiotics. The author finds that, while “[t]he facing directions of the pictures on the traffic signs are largely dependent on the direction of traffic”, there are some pictures the orientation of which seems to be independent of the direction of the traffic, in both cultures. In this case, the prevalence is of left-facing signs more than right-facing, which is unexplained and “could be related to universal human cognition”, meriting further investigation.

The authors of the research studies represent six different universities in three countries (Belgium; China, including also the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong; and Japan), reflecting the international nature of our Association.