Introduction to Special Issue on Language and Culture

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Published online: 1 August 2020

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Language and culture have been found to be intimately and intricately interconnected (Wang 2017). It is through language that the expression of thoughts and perceptions are made known. With the explosion of new ways of communication, from instant messaging and texting, to social media (Hinduja and Patchin 2010), and now to Memes, etc., we are faced with new challenges to examine fundamental features of communication, as well as their impact on the nature and quality of the intended meaning and cognitive and emotional content. The unique nature of cultural influences on language are anchored in different components of language functions (Javier 2007; Javier and Lamela 2020). Thus, it is not surprising that linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of language inherent in different modes of communication become particularly sensitive to specific cultural environments where linguistic codes are developed and utilized. We are particularly interested in these types of investigations because of the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic contexts that are now made possible through the internet. Online these different modes of communication may be at play such that the possibility for misinterpretation of the intended meaning may have dire consequences in the sociopolitical and socioeconomic arena, not to mention in interpersonal relationships.

In the series of manuscripts included in this special issue, we highlight current research exploring some of these issues to encourage more investigations of critical linguistic components in relation to augmenting or obscuring the intended meaning of the communication. The possibility for distortion of the intended meaning of the communication becomes particularly apparent when more than one linguistic code is used in the communication, and likely to become implicated in disrupting its intended meaning, leading to misunderstanding (Wang 2017). The world is getting smaller, with online communication and international travel cultures are meeting all the time. People can translate a message in one language online into another with just the click of a button—and that translation may cloud someone's understanding. Studying of language-specific syntactic, semantic, and grammatical rules, the use of specific sentence constructions to reflect complex genitive-possession, the modulation of emotional affects and vocabulary concept accessibility (attrition rate), linguistic mechanisms that are engaged in meaning construction, impact of different vocalization (consonant pronunciation) on accuracy of intralingual translation of meaning, different language processing in communication requiring processing of tactile sensations, specific individual characteristics likely to mediate/modulate cross-language communication

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and content accessibility, research on idioms and metaphors, etc. are all important and consequential aspects of language production that may bear on meaning construction. We decided to include in this special issue a series of manuscripts which, although submitted independently, explore some of these issues toward the goal of encouraging future submissions of manuscripts addressing issues of language and culture.

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