

Intercultural Communication in Wuhan

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Members of the Language on the Move team meeting at ZUEL: Li Jia, Zhang Jie, Ingrid Piller, Kimie Takahashi, Guo Jian, Jackie Chang (fltr)

China and Chinese people in the Swiss tourism industry. Additionally, there were two other keynote lectures by members of the *Language on the Move* team. [Dr Kimie Takahashi](#) spoke about “Asian Women on the Move” focusing on gender in intercultural communication. [Dr Zhang Jie](#) also focused on gender representations in intercultural communication in her analysis of identity options imagined for English language learners in textbooks targeting volunteers in preparation for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

The conference provided a welcome opportunity to meet up with former and future PhD students and colleagues from around China and also make new friends and learn about recent scholarship in intercultural communication in China. Many of the discussions at the conference centred around questions of critical and creative inquiry in intercultural communication, as was the major concern of keynote speakers Professors [Jia Yuxin](#) and [Song Li](#), both from the [Harbin Institute of Technology](#) and with longstanding ties to Australian universities through Song Li, who used to be a visiting scholar when I was still at the [University of Sydney](#).

Other presentations focused on the communicative challenges in contexts of cultural diversity. I particularly enjoyed presentations by colleagues from [Yunnan University of Nationalities](#), an institution to which we have strong links through former [Macquarie University](#) PhD student [Yang Hongyan](#). Hongyan was unable to attend but

Last week members of the *Language on the Move* team had the privilege of attending the [International Conference on Research and Applications of Intercultural Communication](#) hosted by the School of Foreign Languages at [Zhongnan University of Economics and Law \(ZUEL\)](#) in [Wuhan](#), the capital of Hubei Province in central China.

When I checked in at the airport in Sydney, the check-in officer commented that Wuhan was an unusual destination for Australians to visit. However, it turned out that I was not visiting a foreign country but that I was visiting friends!

I had been invited to deliver a keynote lecture about the tension between national and commercial identities in intercultural communication. I called my lecture “between the Dragon and the Dollar” and focused on discourses about

two of her colleagues did. Li Jia spoke about the commodification of Yunnan folk songs in tourism contexts; [^] [!] we'll hear more about her research here on *Language on the Move* soon as Li Jia will take up a PhD scholarship granted by the [China Scholarship Council](#) at Macquarie University early next year.

Sun Jing, also from Yunnan University of Nationalities, introduced us to an intercultural communication course she has developed at that university as part of the general education program. The course specifically addresses the linguistic and communicative challenges experienced by ethnic minority students in contemporary China.

Overall, the conference provided an excellent opportunity for scholarly exchange in the field of intercultural communication and I am immensely grateful to the conference organizers for creating such an exciting space for this to happen. My connection with the School of Foreign Languages at ZUEL, too, is a longstanding one through the vice-dean of the English Department, Zhang Jie. After many years in Australia, Zhang Jie returned to ZUEL last year and has since worked tirelessly to formalize our collaboration and create stronger connections between our institutions. It was great to see her efforts supported by the Dean of the School of Foreign Languages, Professor Xie Qun, and the leadership of the university.

If you could not attend but want to get a sense of the spirit of the conference, watch the closing video on [Youtube](#) or [Youku](#) or enjoy [the group picture](#). As is usually the case with academic publications, it will be a while before all this exciting work is published – so watch this space!



INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

