

**對話世界頂尖學者****Minding the source: Interviewing Dr. Eun-Ju Lee**

Discussants: Dr. Eun-Ju Lee and Dr. Jih-Hsuan Tammy Lin<sup>1</sup>

Editor: Dr. Jih-Hsuan Tammy Lin and Yu-Ting Chang<sup>2</sup>

Time: November 8, 2024



Dr. Eun-Ju Lee



Dr. Jih-Hsuan  
Tammy Lin

**Abstract**

In this conversation, Dr. Eun-Ju Lee elaborated on her research trajectory and theoretical development from Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) to media psychology, while offering critical reflections on the challenges posed by AI and emerging technologies. Dr. Lee presented the “Authenticity Model of CMC” and its derivative, the “Integrative Model of Human-Machine Communication”, seeking to integrate traditional and contemporary theoretical frameworks to elucidate individuals’ perceptions of authenticity in technologically

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mediated content. Furthermore, she provided valuable guidance to early-career scholars, emphasizing the importance of initiating research from theoretical inquiries rather than merely following technological trends. She also underscored the significance of systematic knowledge accumulation and shared her experiences as a distinguished female scholar on the international stage.

## **Introduction to Dr. Eun-Ju Lee**

Dr. Eun-Ju Lee is a renowned scholar in the field of media psychology, with research expertise in Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), human-computer interaction, and AI communication. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Communication and the Director of the Center for Trustworthy AI at Seoul National University. She has previously served as the President of the International Communication Association (ICA) and Editor-in-Chief of Human Communication Research (HCR). Her article, “Minding the source: toward an integrative theory of human–machine communication” has received the Best Journal Article Award from ICA 2025.

EJL: Eun-Ju Lee

JHL: Jih-Hsuan Tammy Lin

**JHL :** Could you briefly outline the main theoretical frameworks you have developed thus far? For example, your work includes specific models related to artificial intelligence, as well as a distinct research trajectory addressing news credibility and trust.

**EJL :** It's only very recently that I started working on developing a theoretical model, instead of reporting empirical findings from individual research projects. The first one was published in the special issue of the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication in 2020. And the second one was published in the special issue of Human Communication Research earlier this year. Both special issues are dedicated to developing new theories—the JCMC special issue is about the past, the present, and the future of computer mediated communication while the HCR one is about rethinking communication theory, as the Journal celebrates its 50th anniversary. In particular, it invited communication scholars to respond, “What type of questions should we ask for the next 50 years?”

When I was at UC Davis as a faculty member, I studied Computer-Mediated Communication mostly in the context of one-to-one interaction or a small group setting. As soon as I returned to South Korea, I was intrigued by the user comments on internet news sites as an emerging social phenomenon, which was not that common in the United States back then. We used to talk about what we read in the newspaper or watched on TV with our friends and family members, but with the advent of the internet, complete strangers could talk about news topics and current affairs. And that seemed to change our news experience more or less substantially. Then people started using SNSs and communication researchers studied how individuals form impressions, develop and maintain relationships on the nascent platforms, but I was curious how politicians' SNS use affects public perceptions, as a new form of public campaign that fosters parasocial relationship. After that I began to examine mis/disinformation, investigating when and why people fall for online falsehoods.

“Authenticity Model” is developed based on the insights I gained from these lines of research. Several theories and models had been proposed to understand and explain CMC from interpersonal communication perspectives, but I couldn’t find equivalent theoretical models for mass-directed computer mediated communication, such as user comments and celebrities SNS use. I wanted to fill this gap.

The second one—we can call it “Minding the Source Model”<sup>3</sup> for now—is a spin-off from the authenticity model. It’s, more specialized in the context of human-machine interaction, but the underlying ideas are not too different. Here, mindlessness takes the center stage because that’s the key explanation for the computers are social actors paradigm, a dominant theoretical framework in the HCI literature.

According to the CASA paradigm, we are mindless when interacting with computers so we exhibit social responses to machines, treating them as if they were humans. That was a sort of Bible-like principle that has framed and guided human computer interaction research in our field. But recently, this concept, machine heuristic, has become very prominent in any human-machine communication research. What piqued my interest was the apparent incompatibility between the two approaches. When we invoke machine heuristic as an explanation for the findings in human-machine communication studies, it is to explain the difference between how people process, evaluate, and respond to human-generated versus machine-generated outputs. On other hand, the CASA paradigm’s main thesis is that the way people respond to computers is fundamentally social, and not different from the way people treat other people. So, if you compare these two ideas vis-à-vis, they contradict each other. After all, heuristics are more likely to influence message processing when people engage in less effortful cognitive processes. If so, machine heuristic should amplify the differences between humans and machines when people

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3. Eun-Ju Lee received the 2025 Outstanding Article Award at the International Communication Association (ICA). The title of the article is “Minding the source: toward an integrative theory of human-machine communication.”

are mindless, directly countering the CASA paradigm. I wanted to reconcile this incompatibility by proposing a theoretical model that considers mindfulness of the source as a conditional moderator that activates machine heuristic only under certain circumstances, namely when individuals' expectancy is not confirmed.

Although this model and the authenticity model were developed in light of some previous findings, now they need to be empirically tested and validated. After publishing them, I became really anxious about how other researchers would respond to them. Of course, I want them to be supported by empirical evidence, but if not, that's still fine. I'll then have to explain which part of the model doesn't work and why. It does take much courage to propose a model or theory that can be falsified—you should have the courage to be proven wrong.

**JHL : As a distinguished scholar, you have the advantage of viewing matters from a broader perspective. Given your demanding schedule, besides your reviewing responsibilities, how do you maintain a consistent habit of reading scholarly articles? We would greatly appreciate your insights on this.**

**EJL :** Developing a new course or constantly updating an existing one can help you keep up with the latest research in your areas. You can assign the articles that you wanted to read, but didn't have time to read. That way, you can integrate teaching and researching, so your research informs your teaching and vice versa.

**JHL : As early-career scholars conducting extensive research in technology, we often find ourselves captivated by numerous emerging features and trends. This makes it challenging for us to systematically investigate and build upon a coherent series of research questions. Given your expertise, could you offer advice to young researchers on how to cultivate a systematic approach in their work, eventually enabling higher-level insights to emerge and leading to the development of robust theoretical models?**

**EJL :** I think if you keep asking theory-driven questions, then you'll eventually be able to see beyond the specific findings and connect the dots. Like snowballing, it

is very difficult at the beginning and your research productivity might suffer as compared to those who just mix and match a limited set of variables. I'm not talking about the variable-centered approach, which is often contrasted with the medium-centered approach. To understand, explain, and predict the effects and consequences of technology use, we need to analyze various attributes of a given medium or technology rather than treating it as a monolithic entity. What I dislike is when people create a laundry list of variables and test different combinations of variables without sufficient theorizing. It may help increase the number of publications, but not necessarily advance our understanding of the world. In fact, I feel the same about using moderated mediation models with no compelling rationales for why such relationships are suspected or expected to begin with.

**JHL : We understand that the affordance-based approach emphasizes the use of theoretical constructs to systematically organize features, rather than simply focusing on features themselves. In your view, what practices can we adopt to encourage more systematic and theory-driven discussions within scholarly publishing? Given the proliferation of journals and the increasing frequency of rapidly produced articles employing statistical models, such as moderation or mediation analyses, without clear theoretical justifications, what recommendations would you offer to foster healthier scholarly practices and promote more meaningful theoretical development in our field?**

**EJL :** I have to foreground my response saying that I don't claim to know the answer. But let me briefly share my personal experience. I was fortunate to have great mentors. I learned a lot from my doctoral advisor Cliff Nass, and I had another mentor, Professor Berger. He would casually stop by my office on his way home and we would talk for an hour about research topics, statistical analyses, nasty reviewers' comments, and the like. I understand that not everyone is as lucky as I was, but I learned a lot by simply observing great scholars nearby.

Speaking of new technologies, although they have specific features that are

unprecedented, we shouldn't be fixated on the surface level affordances. Instead, we should dig deeper and find the linkage between our current research and what we already know. Take AI-generated news, for example. Rather than merely reporting which one's evaluated better, AI-written or human-written article, you can situate the study in the rich tradition of hostile media perception research, asking how the source identity might affect its operation. Such attempts that focus on key theoretical constructs, rather than fancy technical features, can help us better understand how technological advancements may or may not alter communication processes and outcomes as we know them—what changes and what remains the same.

**JHL :** **Do you have any recommendations for researchers aspiring to follow in your footsteps and become distinguished scholars? Given the abundance of emerging topics and the rapid evolution of scholarly trends each year, what guidance can you offer on navigating these dynamics effectively, building impactful research trajectories, and cultivating excellence as scholars?**

**EJL :** I was lucky. It's not like I had a vision, or a forward-looking mindset. Quite contrarily, my research program has evolved as a series of responses to the demands of my situation. I had absolutely no idea what human-computer interaction was when I joined the Stanford PhD program. I originally wanted to study communication law but the professor specialized in that area had left Stanford just months before I arrived. So I had to find a new advisor and learned about Cliff's research program—it was called Social Responses to Communication Technology (SRCT). That's how I was introduced to HCI research, which I found fascinating. At the same time, I still wanted to examine human communication processes more deeply rather than applying communication or psychology theories to a different context, so I chose to compare HCI and CMC in my dissertation.

When I joined UC Davis as an assistant professor, I was explicitly told that I had to publish in communication journals, not conference proceedings. So I started focusing more on CMC, developing a research program in line with the social

identity model of deindividuation (SIDE), while continuing with HCI research to lesser degrees.

After coming back to Seoul National University, I was given no lab space, so had to move to online experiments. The transition wasn't too difficult for me, because I found enough interesting online communication behaviors, such as user comments on news sites as an instance of mass-interpersonal convergence and politicians' social media use as an extension of parasocial interaction. Because I was always interested in identifying and explaining underlying mechanisms and theoretical principles, changing the research settings was not only doable, but also opened a new opportunity for me to develop a theoretical model that addresses the existing gap—that is, mass-oriented CMC. One of my favorite quotes is

“Luck is what happens when opportunity meets preparedness.”

**JHL : We are genuinely proud to see you represent Asian female scholars in your role as president of ICA. As you've previously shared, your leadership has inspired many young scholars, particularly women and Asian researchers. Could you offer some words of encouragement or suggestions for emerging scholars on how they can draw inspiration from your journey and pursue excellence following your example?**

**EJL :** Honestly, I never imagined that I'd become the president of ICA. I never thought about becoming the editor-in-chief of HCR. Even at this moment I would be thrilled to have my paper published in HCR, so editing that prestigious journal never occurred to me.

Then how did it happen? There's one thing I am genuinely proud of—that I was never late with journal reviews. Because I knew how time-pressured junior researchers are, I gave it my highest priority and tried to provide thoughtful comments. Then the journal editors started inviting me to the editorial board, and then appointed me as associate editor, and eventually editor-in-chief.

I don't think I would've been elected as ICA president had I stayed at UC-Davis.

ICA is strongly committed to IDEA—inclusion, diversity, equity, and access—and I was nominated to represent Asian communication scholars in our community. While extremely flattered, I was scared, too. I felt utterly unprepared and inadequate. Still, I accepted the nomination because I wanted to be a precedent for our students and emerging scholars. I wanted to be a role model—not someone others aspire to imitate, but someone who make people think, “If she can do it, maybe I can, too!”

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## 對話世界頂尖學者

### 媒體心理學與人機溝通的理論轉化與挑戰

### Minding the source: Interviewing Dr. Eun-Ju Lee

Discussants: Dr. Eun-Ju Lee、林日璇 博士<sup>1</sup>

Editor: 林日璇 博士、張毓庭<sup>2</sup>

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Dr. Eun-Ju Lee



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## 摘要

在本次對談中，Dr. Eun-Ju Lee 分享了其從電腦中介傳播（CMC）到媒體心理學的研究歷程與理論建構歷程，並反思目前 AI 與新興科技帶來的挑戰。Dr. Eun-Ju Lee 提出「Authenticity Model」與延伸的「Integrative Model of Human-Machine Communication」模型，試圖整合傳統與當代理論框架，解釋人們對科技中介內容的真實性感知。此外，她也給予年輕學者研究與學術發展建議，鼓勵從理論問題出發，而非只研究熱門科技，並分享其對「系統性累積知識」的重視，以及女性學者在國際

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舞台傑出表現的經驗。

## **Dr. Eun-Ju Lee 博士介紹**

Dr. Eun-Ju Lee 為媒體心理學領域知名學者，研究專長為電腦中介傳播（Computer-Mediated Communication）、人機互動與 AI 傳播。現任國立首爾大學傳播系教授兼「可信賴人工智慧研究中心」（Center for Trustworthy AI）主任，曾擔任《國際傳播協會》（International Communication Association, ICA）主席、《人類傳播研究》（Human Communication Research, HCR）主編。

EJL: Eun-Ju Lee

JHL: Jih-Hsuan Tammy Lin

**JHL：**您是否可以簡要介紹您所提出的理論框架，例如您有提出人工智慧相關的模型、以及在新聞可信度與信任方面所進行的系列研究。

**EJL：**我近年來才開始發展理論模型，而非僅僅發表各個實證研究的結果，我發表過的理論文章有兩篇。第一篇是 2020 年發表在《電腦媒介溝通期刊》（Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, JCMC），這篇文章在於討論電腦中介溝通的過去、現在和未來發展。第二篇<sup>3</sup>是發表在《人類傳播研究》特刊，這篇是為了紀念《人類傳播研究》創刊 50 週年，所撰寫關於重新思考傳播理論的文章，對於未來 50 年的傳播史，邀請傳播學者思考：「接下來五十年，我們應該提出哪些問題？」。

當我在加州大學戴維斯分校（UC Davis）擔任教職時，我所研究的領域在於一對一或小團體互動情境中的電腦媒介傳播。當我回到韓國後，我開始對網路新聞網站上的使用者留言產生濃厚興趣，這在當時的美國還不是很普遍的社會現象。過去我們常常與朋友和家人談論在報紙或電視上看到的內容，但隨著網路和新聞網站的出現，我們可以和匿名的陌生人談論新聞和時事。這改變我們的新聞體驗。之後，人們開始使用社群媒體，傳播學者也開始研究人們如何在這些新興平台上建立印象、發展與維持關係，但我更好奇的是政治人物如何透過社群媒體進行新型態的大眾宣傳，並培養一種類擬社會關係（parasocial relationship）。接著我開始探討錯假資訊（mis/disinformation）議題，關注人們在什麼情境下、為何容易相信線上的虛假訊息。我所提出來的「Authenticity Model」就是針對大量媒介與電腦中介溝通情境所提出的模型，雖然過去已有許多理論和模型試圖從人際溝通的角度理解 CMC，但我發現針對大眾導向的電腦中介傳播（如使用者留言或名人社群媒體使用）卻缺乏相應的理論架構，因此我希望填補這個理論空白。

從「Authenticity Model」延伸而出的另一個模型，則更聚焦於人機互動的情境，儘管其核心理念與前者並無太大差異。在這個模型中，「無意識」

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3. Eun-Ju Lee 榮獲 2025 年國際傳播學會（International Communication Association, ICA）頒發之傑出論文獎。獲獎論文題目為“Minding the source: toward an integrative theory of human-machine communication.”

(mindlessness) 是關鍵，因為這正是「電腦作為社會行動者」(Computers Are Social Actors, CASA) 理論的核心理念，也是在人機互動領域中極具影響力的理論架構。

根據 CASA 理論，認為，當人與電腦互動時會進入一種「無意識」狀態，因此會對機器表現出類似對人的社會反應，把機器當作人對待。這是人機互動研究的重要原則，幾乎主導了早期的相關理論架構。但近期在許多人機溝通研究中，另一個概念越來越被重視，那就是「machine heuristic」。令我感興趣的是，這兩種理論看似彼此矛盾。當我們在解釋人機傳播研究中的發現時，若使用「machine heuristic」，通常是為了說明人們如何以不同方式處理、評估並回應來自人與來自機器的內容；但 CASA 理論的主要論點則是人們對電腦的反應與對人的反應本質上無異。因此，這兩個理論如果相比較，理論上是互相矛盾的。

畢竟，在人們使用較少認知過程時，heuristic 更容易發揮影響力；如果是這樣，當人們處在「無意識」狀態時，「machine heuristic」應該會加劇人們對人與機器的差異感知，這恰好與 CASA 理論背道而馳。為了調和這種矛盾，我提出了一個新的理論模型，主張「對來源的覺知程度」是一個條件式調節變項，能在特定情境下，例如人們的期待未被確認時才會啟動「machine heuristic」。

儘管這些模型是根據過去的一些研究發現所發展出來的，它們仍需要進一步的驗證。在發表這些理論後，我其實相當焦慮，不知道其他學者會如何回應。當然，我希望它們能獲得實證支持，但即使不被支持也沒關係。我仍然可以去解釋模型中哪些部分失靈，為什麼會失靈。提出一個可被證偽的理論模型，確實需要極大的勇氣，因為你必須有勇氣接受自己被證明錯誤。

**JHL：**作為學者，您能從更高的層次來看事情。我們都知道，像您這樣的頂尖學者日常非常忙碌。除了審稿之外，我想知道您如何保持閱讀學術文章的習慣？

**EJL：**我認為是開設新課程、或是持續更新現有課讓我保持閱讀習慣，也是幫助自己掌握最新研究進展的好方法，你可以指定你想閱讀但沒有時間閱讀的研究文章，因此教學和研究可以結合。

**JHL :** 對於在科技領域投入大量研究的新進學者，我們容易被科技的各種新功能、新現象所吸引。但對於年輕學者來說要有系統地深入探討，並建立一系列連貫的研究問題相當困難。對我們這些新進學者來說，您有什麼建議？我們要怎麼發展出系統性的研究脈絡，發展更高層次的洞見，並建構出理論模型？

**EJL :** 我認為只要你持續提出以理論為導向 (theory-driven questions) 的研究問題，最終就能超越單一研究發現，看出背後的關聯與脈絡。就像滾雪球一樣。一開始會比較辛苦，你的研究產出可能也不如那些只是在既有變項間隨意組合的學者。不過我這裡說的「以變項為中心」 (variable-centered approach) 的方式，並不是專指它與「以媒介為中心」 (medium-centered approach) 相對的概念。如果要理解、解釋並預測科技使用的效果與影響，我們需要分析該媒介或技術的各種屬性，而不是把它當成一個單一整體來看。

我比較反對的，是那種列出一堆變項，然後任意組合去做驗證，卻缺乏充分理論思考的研究方法。這樣做或許能快速累積論文數量，但並不一定有助於我們真正理解這個世界。此外，我對於那些使用調節中介模型 (moderated mediation models) 卻沒有明確理由來說明為何預期這些關係存在的研究，也是抱持相同的看法。

**JHL :** 「能供性取向」 (affordance-based approach) 的研究方法著重於強調使用理論有系統性建構組織各項特徵，而不僅僅是聚焦於特徵本身。您認為我們可以採用哪些方法來促進學術出版更有系統且以理論為導向的討論？鑑於期刊數量快速增加，以及大量論文為快速發表因此使用中介或調節等統計模型，卻缺乏的理論基礎，您會給出哪些建議，來促進更健全的學術研究文化？

**EJL :** 我不認為自己有什麼標準答案，但我可以分享一下我個人經驗。我很幸運遇到很好的導師，我從我的博士指導教授 Cliff Nass 身上學到了很多，還有另一位導師 Berger 教授，他常常在下班途中隨意來我辦公室坐一下，然後我們就會聊上一個小時，談研究主題、統計分析，甚至討論讓人頭痛的審稿意見。我知道不是每個人都能這麼幸運，但我光是觀察這些優秀學者的言行，就學到了很多。我知道不是每個人都有這樣的機會，但我也從觀察他們的行動中學到很多，而不只是被「告訴」該怎麼做。

談到新興科技，雖然它們的確有許多前所未見的特徵，但我們不該執著於粗淺的能供性，而是要更深入地探討，找到你的研究主題與過去經典理論之間的連結。以 AI 生成新聞為例，與其單純比較 AI 撰寫與人類撰寫的新聞哪個評價更高，不如將這個現象與「敵意媒體認知」（hostile media perception）這個經典理論連結起來，探討「來源身份」會如何影響這類現象的產生。這樣的研究重點是放在核心理論上，而不是流於其技術功能。這樣的研究方式可以幫助我們更好地理解科技進步到底如何改變我們所熟悉的溝通過程與結果，到底是什麼在改變，又是什麼維持不變。

**JHL：**您是否願意分享一些建議，給那些希望以您為榜樣、努力成為傑出學者的研究者？面對現在每年層出不窮的新興議題與快速演變的學術趨勢，您會建議我們如何找到研究方向、發展出有影響力的研究？

**EJL：**我其實很幸運。這並不是說我有什麼遠見，事實上，我的研究歷程比較像是一連串對現實情境需求的回應。當我在史丹佛攻讀博士時，完全沒有接觸過人機互動的概念。我原本是想研究傳播法律，但那位專門研究這個領域的教授在我入學前幾個月就離開了。於是我必須重新找指導教授，這才接觸到 Cliff 的研究計畫，叫 SRCT Lab（Social Responsibility Communication Technology Lab）。但同時，我還是想更深入地探討人類溝通的過程，而不只是把傳播或心理學理論應用到其他領域。因此我在博士論文中選擇比較人機互動（HCI）與電腦中介溝通（CMC）。

我到 UC Davis 擔任助理教授時，校方明確告訴我必須發表在主流傳播學術期刊，而不是會議論文集中。於是我主要研究 CMC，也進行一些社會認同模型（如 SIDE 模型）的延伸研究。後來我回到首爾大學時，學校並沒有給我實驗室空間，不過這對我來說並不是困難，因為我發現很多有趣的線上溝通現象，比如新聞網站上的使用者留言是一種「大眾—人際匯流」（mass-interpersonal convergence）的例子，而政治人物的社群媒體使用則可視為「擬社會互動」（parasocial interaction）的延伸。由於我一直以來都關注底層機制與理論原則，所以即使研究場域轉變了，也還是能繼續做研究，甚至因此有機會發展出針對「面向大眾的電腦中介溝通」的理論模型，填補過去的理論空缺。

我很喜歡的一句話是：「Luck is what happens when opportunity meets preparedness. (運氣是當機會遇上準備)」因此，想抓住機會，就要事先準備好。

**JHL：**我們非常驕傲您能成為 ICA 的亞洲女性會長。正如您曾分享過，這帶給許多年輕女性學者，特別是亞洲學者很多啟發，您是否能給予新進學者鼓勵或建議，讓我們從您的經驗，在學術上持續突破與成長？

**EJL：**老實說，我從來沒有想過要成為 ICA 會長，也從沒想過會當上 HCR 期刊的總編輯。即使是現在，如果我的文章能被發表在 HCR，我還是會感到受寵若驚。所以能擔任總編輯，真的完全出乎我意料。

這些是能夠發生，我有一件真心為自己感到驕傲的事情，那便是我從未拖延過審稿，因為我知道，那些等待審稿的作者會有多焦慮，尤其是還在升等或終身職途上的年輕學者。所以我總是把審稿放在優先順序的最前面，也盡可能給出有建設性的意見。漸漸地，期刊編輯開始邀請我加入編輯委員會，然後成為副主編，最後成為總編輯。

如果我還待在 UC Davis，我想我應該不會成為 ICA 會長。ICA 一直非常重視 IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access)，我被提名是為了代表我們社群中的亞洲傳播學者。當時我既感動又害怕，一方面我覺得自己完全沒準備好、也不夠格。但我還是接受了提名，因為我希望成為一個可以讓學生和新進學者看到的榜樣。不是那種「大家想模仿的對象」，而是讓人產生「如果她做得到，也許我也可以。」這種想法的人。

## 參考文獻

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