About the 70th issue

We are delighted to present the latest issue of the *ConnectIST Istanbul University Journal of Communication Sciences*. This issue includes ten original research articles. We thank our guest editors, Dr. Hatun Boztepe Taşkıran and Dr. Betül Onay Doğan from Istanbul University, Türkiye.

Before introducing the manuscripts featured in the 70th issue, we would like to briefly reflect on the activities that have marked the past six months. In March, we successfully hosted the virtual conference associated with our 71st issue, titled "The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Communication in the Context of a Creative Society." This conference attracted a wide and diverse audience, fostering engaging discussions and valuable exchanges of ideas. We thank everyone involved for their contributions to its success.

The theme of our 73rd issue, scheduled for publication in December 2027, has been finalized as 'Game Studies.' The accompanying virtual conference will be held on March 25–26, 2027. The guest editors of this special issue will be Ertuğrul Süngü and Barbaros Bostan from Bahçeşehir University, Türkiye, and Michal Mochocki from the University of Gdańsk, Poland. We look forward to bringing together researchers from different regions and disciplines and contributing to the growing academic dialogue on games as influential media and cultural phenomena.

In this issue, we present the following articles:

Remzi Bilge, in "The predictive effect of attachment styles on social media stalking tendencies: A study on emerging adults in Istanbul," examines stalking tendencies among emerging adults in Istanbul through attachment theory. Using a correlational survey design with 520 participants, the study examines attachment styles, perceptions of parental acceptance-rejection, and stalking behavior. Anxious-ambivalent attachment is the only significant predictor of stalking tendencies. Ceren Bilgici and Özge Özkök Şişman, in "Artificial intimacy and synthetic dialogues: Generation Z's brand interaction and parasocial relationships with *ChatGPT-3.5* and *ChatGPT-4o,*" explore Generation Z's interactions with *ChatGPT* in Türkiye through parasocial relationship theory. Using a qualitative repeated cross-sectional design, the study compares user experiences of *ChatGPT-3.5* (2023) and *ChatGPT-4o* (2025). *ChatGPT-3.5* is perceived as functional but emotionally limited, while *ChatGPT-4o* is experienced as more fluent and emotionally engaging.

In "From public health to socio-political contestation in vaccination cartoons: A reception study on Facebook users," Cmeciu Camelia examines how Romanian *Facebook* users interpreted COVID-19 vaccination cartoons shared by the European Commission's Representation in Romania. Using reception studies and a multimodal approach supported by MAXQDA analysis, the study identifies dominant themes including vaccine skepticism, political polarization, and irony and humor. The findings show that broader socio-cultural contexts shape users' evaluations, especially trust in authorities. Buğrahan Demirci, in "'Meaningful, ambiguous or meaningless?': Communicative disruption, cynicism and hate in Turkish *Instagram* shitposts," analyzes Turkish Instagram shitposts as ambiguous and often hostile online content. Based on 1.025 posts (2023–2025), the study examines their meaningfulness, themes, and ideological implications. The findings show that these posts are not entirely meaningless, but often include distorted semantics, violent stimuli, limited political critique, and discriminatory discourse. The study points to possible links with extreme right and incel-related ideologies.

Birgül Üstünbaş Erdoğan and Deniz Akbulut, in "Academic–industry collaboration in public relations education: A qualitative study of professional associations in Türkiye," examine academia–industry collaboration in public relations education in Türkiye, focusing on professional associations. Using a qualitative design, the study explores how these organizations contribute to undergraduate education through semi-

structured interviews with representatives of the Public Relations Association of Türkiye, the Communication Consultancies Association of Türkiye, and the Corporate Communicators Association. The findings highlight curriculum development, competency expectations, and university collaboration, and indicate the need for a more institutionalized structure in stakeholder relations between academia and the industry. Abdullah Erol and Emine Kübra Usta, in "Spotlights on set workers: Working conditions in the Turkish film and TV industry," examine working conditions in Türkiye's film and television industry through labor law and media policy. Based on a large-scale survey of 1.181 participants, the study reveals structural precarity marked by informal employment, short-term contracts, delayed payments, and excessive working hours. The findings also show that many workers are excluded from legal employee status and propose the "dependent contractor" category as a potential solution.

In "*Telegram* and disinformation: A systematic review of toxic content in the age of polycrisis," Oğuz Kuş and Derya Gül Ünlü conduct a systematic review of the literature on *Telegram* and disinformation in the context of the contemporary "polycrisis." Analyzing studies retrieved from Web of Science, Scopus, and DOAJ, the study examines how semi-regulated platforms such as *Telegram* contribute to misinformation in an increasingly fragile information ecosystem. The findings identify key thematic, methodological, and contextual patterns and highlight *Telegram*'s role as a major hub for disinformation. Berceste Gülçin Özdemir and Simge Şişman Bal, in "Virtual reality technologies viewing experience and point of view: A study of university students in Istanbul," examine how virtual reality technologies are transforming film viewing experiences and point of view among university students studying cinema in Istanbul. Using questionnaires administered to 214 students aged 18–25, the study investigates perceptions and preferences regarding VR-based film narratives. The findings indicate that immersive 360-degree VR viewing is highly appealing to young film students and that they prefer individual viewing over traditional collective cinema attendance.

In "Are biometric measures transforming advertising research?" A study on Turkish academics and advertising professionals," Semra Akıncı Saçaralp, Hacer Taşdelen and Emine Hilal Er examine how biometric measures are perceived in advertising research among academics and professionals in Türkiye. Based on a hermeneutic approach and 33 in-depth interviews with industry professionals and academics specializing in neuromarketing, the study explores the advantages and limitations of biometric methods, their role in advertising effectiveness, and related ethical concerns. The findings highlight the potential of biometric applications and the need for ethical and regulatory frameworks. Finally, in "Discursive games on board: Communicating ideology through the semiotics of play," Ertuğrul Süngü examines analog board games as multimodal semiotic systems that communicate cultural meanings and ideological positions. Through multimodal discourse analysis and social semiotics, combined with close comparative play analysis, the study investigates six board games, ranging from *The Mansion of Happiness* to *Spirit Island*. The findings show that earlier games tend to naturalize dominant moral and economic worldviews, while contemporary games increasingly embed reflexive and critical perspectives in their design and rule systems.

Before closing this introduction, let me remind everyone that our journal can continue to publish academic studies in communications sciences through your valued support and participation.

We look forward to appearing before you once again with our 71st issue.

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