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CI DIRECTORS’ PARTNERSHIP: EURASIAN DIMENSION

The article deals with the issues related to the improvement of the CI directors’ partnership within Eurasian dimension. The key purpose, tasks, areas of the CI activities at the State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” (Ushynsky University) under modern conditions in Ukraine have been specified. The author outlines the general requirements to the Local and Chinese CI directors (including pivot psychological, moral and other personal qualities). The article presents the CI Directors’ duties within the prism of their general competence which comprises 3 subcompetences: personal, self-administrative and intercultural.

Keywords: CI Director, partnership, CI activities, competence, duties and responsibilities.

Introduction.

Currently, despite the ongoing military actions in Ukraine and the post-COVID-19 challenges, the country remains actively engaged in Eurasian integration within the academic space. This participation fosters the accumulation of positive experiences, particularly within Ukraine’s education system. International educational and academic cooperation continues to drive development in a multi-vector direction.

A defining feature of Ukraine’s contemporary education system is its “mosaic culture”, representing the initial stage in shaping the outlines of a universal world

culture. Amid the ongoing reform of higher education in Ukraine, shifts in value orientations, and the expansion of intercultural and academic connections, it has become necessary to adapt teaching and learning tools to align with multiculturalism.

This transformation requires the development of an enhanced methodological platform, particularly for training future philologists and educators specializing in Oriental and Germanic Studies, to better reflect the multicultural and globalized context of modern education. The CIs is the part of these modifications. Their competent management contributes to the CI sustainable evolution.

The relevance of the study is determined by two key factors: on the one hand, the advancements in science, technology, and education; on the other, the urgent need to adapt Ukraine's academic and educational environment to global standards while accounting for cultural diversity of the world.

Success of any activity depends on the partner-based platform for its performance. Participants striving for constructive collaboration try to take into consideration these constituents of joint work:

- general purpose, tasks and areas of work;
- adherence to their functional responsibilities;
- personal qualities enabling productive team work;
- cultural awareness, etc.

Thus, the purpose of the study is to analyse the CI directors' partnership within Eurasian dimension. It implies the solution of the tasks as follows:

- 1) to outline the key purpose, tasks, areas of the CI activities at Ushynsky University under modern conditions in Ukraine;
- 2) to specify the general requirements to the Local and Chinese CI directors (including pivot psychological, moral and other personal qualities);
- 3) to present the CI Directors' duties within the prism of their general competence.

These methods were used: *theoretical analysis* of the literature related to the issue under study to specify its essence; *systematisation method* of potential vectors

for productive development of the CI partnership under modern conditions in Ukraine.

Results and Discussion.

A. Purpose, tasks, areas of the CI activities at Ushynsky University

Transforming the main mission of the CI International initiative (Low & Ang, 2013) (to promote understanding of China and its culture in the world, to develop friendly relations between China and other countries, to support local Chinese teaching internationally, to facilitate cultural exchanges, in particular) into the domain of the educational process of Ushynsky University, the Culture and Education Centre “Confucius Institute” was established at the State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” in 2013. Its purpose and tasks were set in compliance with the requirements of the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. Corresponding areas of the CI activities were determined in correlation with the normative documents at the state level of Ukraine alongside international regulations: *The Law on Higher Education* (The Law on Higher Education, 2019), The Law of Ukraine “*On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activities*” (2016), The joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education “*European space in the field of higher education*” (1999), regulations established by the Commission on Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the People’s Republic of China, the *Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the People's Republic of China on scientific and technical cooperation* (1992), etc.

According to the above documents, the purposes of the CI activities were determined:

- to organize and hold events in the field of education and culture for expanding cooperation between Ukraine and the People’s Republic of China, as well as for strengthening mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries;
- to create conditions for Ukrainian learners to master Chinese;

- to involve university students and other citizens of Ukraine to get acquainted with the history, culture and philosophy of China;

- to provide opportunities for course participants to undergo language practice in the People's Republic of China, including cultural exchange;

- to develop and implement joint projects in the field of science, culture, art and sports.

Under guidance of the Administration Boards of our partner university – Harbin Engineering University – these tasks have been being solved since the establishment of the Confucius Institute:

- promotion of the Chinese language among representatives of various population strata (secondary school pupils; students of colleges, technical schools, institutes, universities; civil servants and others), using modern information (demonstration) and education technologies;

- organization of preparatory courses for taking the HSK examinations (it should be noted that at Ushynsky University the Ukrainian CI staff has been conducting the HSK examinations online on their own without any support from the Chinese responsible side since 2022; we were the first who had launched this initiative);

- implementation of educational and cultural activities to acquaint Ukrainian learners with the history, culture, art, philosophy, economy, and political system of the People's Republic of China;

- creation of platforms for holding open lectures, seminars, master classes in various modes (on-line, remote, etc.) in Ukrainian and Chinese educational (or other) state and non-state institutions.

The CI at Ushynsky University is operating in a sustainable mode due to the widening range of its activities in accordance with the demands of Ukrainian society, world economic tendencies, science and education standards, labour market. To facilitate the realization of the purpose and the tasks set, the CI team analyses and regularly considers the activity content within four areas of work of the CI Centre:

educational, cultural, scientific and information-providing. Let us describe them.

Today, *the educational area* covers these activities:

- to provide Chinese classes (including other related classes) for Ukrainian learners;
- to organize and hold Chinese language Olympiads for Ukrainian students;
- to launch projects, internship and exchange programs for students and specialists in the field of Chinese studies in the People's Republic of China (though, the procedure of selecting Ukrainian candidates for the fully-funded Confucius Institute Stipend Programmes needs some clarification for them not lose motivation to further study Chinese and trust in the Confucius Institute team, especially in difficult times for Ukraine).

The scientific sector includes the activities which allow Ukrainians:

- to carry out scientific research on linguistic problems of the Chinese language and methodological means aimed at effective teaching of Chinese to Ukrainian-speaking learners, advisory assistance to students; the results of research are discussed in the annual International Scientific and Practical Conferences of Scientists, Young Scholars and Students and published in the international periodical journals "Modern Vectors of Science and Education Development in China and Ukraine" (ISSN 2414-4746) and "Topical Problems of Philology and Profession-oriented Training of Specialists in a Multicultural Space" (the Ukrainian side provides DOIs (digital object identifiers) for each article.); the designated Conference is supported by the Chinese International Education Foundation, Harbin Engineering University, the National Academy of Educational Sciences (NAES) of Ukraine.

- to hold scientific forums, discussions, scientific and communicative events, schools, Olympiads, competitions, debates and round tables, briefings, exhibitions, master classes for young people on issues of Chinese studies and activities of Confucius Institutes;

- to organize scientific and practical training alongside advisory events for

teachers of the Chinese language;

- to assist in the preparation of bilateral visits of leading Chinese and Ukrainian scientists, civil servants and other honoured guests;

- to carry out informational and analytical work on the scientific generalization and analysis of the intensive Chinese language learning.

The cultural activities play a significant role in the development process of our Confucius Institute. It means that we are:

- to organize exhibitions of samples of Chinese and Ukrainian culture and literature involving representatives of the Chinese diaspora and guests of honour;

- to organize and hold cultural events to acquaint Ukrainian citizens with Chinese art (concerts, competitions) involving Ukrainian and Chinese students; “International Day of Confucius Institutes”, National Day of the People's Republic of China and the Day of Defenders of Ukraine, “Ukrainian-Chinese spring” (New Year’s Day), Teacher’s Day and other celebrations are the most popular ones.

The information-targeted component of the CI activities is aimed at:

- providing public access to publications about the People's Republic of China (electronic and printed), special and scientific literature, methodological manuals for learning the Chinese language;

- publishing articles and other informational materials about the activities of the Centre and cooperation between Ukraine and China;

- organizing cooperation with other Confucius Institutes;

- issuing relevant booklets, leaflets and other types of information sources regarding the Confucius Institute activities;

- creating scientific and informational products (film library, photo albums, commercials about China) characterizing the CI activities;

- providing information about the Centre’s activities for the university's web resources and other electronic resources;

- participating in various conferences, meetings for mass media, etc.

- informing the Chinese International Education Foundation and municipal

(regional) authorities on international cultural and educational activities as well as on the work plans and development prospects of the CI at Ushynsky University;

- providing information to all interested persons about multilevel educational exchange programs in the Chinese language;

- providing informational support for those who intend to continue their studies in China, etc.

Fruitful performance of the set purpose, tasks and activities is closely interrelated with the quality of the CI team work under guidance of the Local and Chinese Directors. The result-oriented joint work is the guaranty of the sustainable development of the Confucius Institute.

B. General requirements to the Local and Chinese CI directors

Taking into account the fact that both CI Directors fulfil joint work, they are to be able:

- 1) to responsibly administer the activities of the Education and Culture Centre “Confucius Institute”;

- 2) to determine the required number of the CI personnel on both sides and put forward specific proposals for consideration by the CI Council, based on the volume of work for the current year and the work plan for the next year;

- 3) to monitor the educational and methodological work alongside labour discipline of all the CI personnel, to consider candidates for the position of CI research and teaching staff members at Ushynsky University, to make decisions to extend or not to extend the term of the CI workers’ contracts depending on the quality of their pedagogical activities;

- 4) to draw up an annual report and work plan;

- 5) to make amendments to the relevant rules related to the CI management with regard to disagreements occurred in the teaching/learning process;

- 6) to correlate curricula and syllabi with the educational process particularities at Ushynsky University;

- 7) to administer the financial and material CI resources; to coordinate all

issues related to the use of the CI premises and equipment, etc.

In the view of the above, it would be to focus upon psychological, moral and other personal qualities both CI Directors are to possess in order to enable sustainable development of the Confucius Institute. Here are the keynote ones that appear to have worked successfully in our case (see Table 1):

Table 1. Keynote psychological, moral and other personal qualities of Local and Chinese CI Directors

| <i>№</i> | <i>Qualities of the Local CI Director</i> | <i>Qualities of the Chinese CI Director</i> |
|----------|---|---|
| 1 | Language proficiency at a level not lower than B2 according to the European Standards of Language Education | |
| | Chinese or English | Ukrainian or English |
| 2 | Knowledge of culture (traditions, customs, national holidays, cuisine, peculiarities of mentality, etc.). | |
| | Chinese | Ukrainian |
| 3 | Aesthetic upbringing and the ability to behave correctly in various official and unofficial work situations. | |
| 4 | High moral and patriotic qualities | |
| 5 | Sociability and the ability to convince an interlocutor and/or an opponent to take the side of the co-director of the CI Director through constructive argumentation | |
| 6 | Mastery in making correct and original decisions on important issues related to the activities of the Confucius Institute | |
| 7 | Desire and aspiration to conduct research and methodological work in various areas on the Confucius Institute platform. | |
| 8 | The ability to psychologically correctly resolve problematic issues connected with Chinese language teachers and volunteers from China related to their safety, living and working conditions in Ukraine, difficulties in psychological adaptation to a new culture, their physical and psychological state, etc. | |
| 9 | The ability to navigate in the flow of information, to determine what is necessary for the successful functioning of the Confucius Institute and to convey it to employees from both the Chinese and Ukrainian sides. | |
| 10 | Careful economic attitude to household and work equipment (regular maintenance during its operation, fixing the non-working and/or outdated parts, etc.). | |

C. Ways to build Partnership between Local and Chinese CI directors

Since the above-mentioned activities do not take place in China, it is essential that the Local CI and Chinese Directors should have certain competences to be capable of performing their duties within the CI Directors' general competence

which comprises 3 subcompetences: *personal, self-administrative and intercultural*.

Let us specify them.

We associate *the personal competence* with these determinants:

- the psychophysiological component (cognitive, psychomotor and behavioural mechanisms – memory, attention, psychological stability, critical attitude, etc.);
- moral and ethical sub-competency (sense of responsibility for the quality of the work; objectivity and reliability);
- self-improvement sub-competency (readiness and need for constant self-education and development);
- professional and social sub-competency (techniques and norms of communication in a professional environment; to cooperate with specialists in the relevant field, etc.).

Self-administrative competence implies the possession of knowledge, abilities and skills in the organization of managerial and administrative activities aimed at a person himself/herself as well as ensures the CI Director's self-development and self-education. The specified competence is actualized in the ability of the CI Local and Chinese Directors to implement their job duties and responsibilities:

- self-knowledge aimed at identification, understanding and perception of the personal "I" in comparison with their colleagues;
- self-organization, designed to determine goals, tasks and means of their successful achievement involving one's own efforts;
- the monitoring of activities aimed at regulating the CI Directors' own actions-operations at each stages of their professional activity organized by them.

Intercultural (supracultural) competence means the stay of the CI Directors above and within the cultures of the partner countries (China and Ukraine) and implies their conscious place inside the society of these countries in terms of the performance of the job duties. The markers of this competence are:

- the mental and aesthetic culture of the CI Directors – the ability to analyze,

synthesize, generalize, classify, perform logical operations, abstract, act creatively, thoughtfully, aesthetically and correctly in relation to representatives of other cultures;

- general erudition and the potential to use deep, comprehensive knowledge from all branches of science, to demonstrate broad awareness of the environment and the laws of its development;

- intercultural communication skills – willingness and ability to establish diplomatic contact within the scope of the CI activities.

To provide further sustainable development of the Education and Culture Centre “Confucius Institute” at Ushynsky University, it expedient to adhere to the directions as follows:

1. Rational adjustment of work to ensure the CI functioning

1) Adaptation of the educational process depending on the student contingent.

It is necessary to effectively use the Confucius Institute platform to organize Chinese language classes, taking into account the mental state of students, their technical capabilities, the updating normative content of educational and professional programmes, differences in time zones, and / or other factors that negatively affect learning outcomes.

We propose to initiate classes in the Chinese language for non-linguistic specialties, where the Chinese language can act as a practical applied discipline, which opens up more space for cooperation in the field of education between China and Ukraine.

2) Timely recruitment of Chinese language teachers in accordance with the requirements.

We are currently providing online training in the Chinese language and culture. Provided that the situation in Ukraine is stable and the Embassy and Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Ukraine work on a regular basis, it is necessary to intensify efforts to send Chinese employees to the Confucius Institute and provide them with safety living conditions in Ukraine.

2. The role of the CI platform to promote cooperation in the field of scientific research and humanitarian exchanges between Ushynsky University and Harbin Engineering University

The Confucius Institute is the basis for cooperation between the two universities and a platform for joint scientific research and cultural exchanges.

1) Activation of the work of the “Ukrainian Culture, Science and Information Centre” of Ushynsky University at Harbin Engineering University.

The platform of the “Ukrainian Culture, Science and Information Centre” has every reason to become a platform for joint scientific research in various fields with the participation of the Institute of International Education of Harbin Engineering University. The educational project “2 + 2” remains relevant today.

2) Intensification of publications in international periodicals by expanding the range of scientific and educational fields.

Taking into account the specializations within which Harbin Engineering University conducts its research, we are considering the possibility of involving Ukrainian scientists in developing projects in physics, mathematics, computer technology, engineering, as well as in writing abstracts and articles in international journals (*“Topical Problems of Philology and Profession-oriented Training of Specialists in a Multicultural Space”* and *“Modern Vectors of Science and Education Development in China and Ukraine / 中国与乌克兰科学及教育前沿研究”* (ISSN 2414-4746) and other reputable journals.

3) Activation of advanced training for Ukrainian scientific and pedagogical staff at Harbin Engineering University.

We consider it rational to send leading Ukrainian specialists in the field of humanitarian, educational and natural sciences to improve their qualifications at Harbin Engineering University, which will facilitate not only the acquisition of experience in an international team within a specialized field, but also the mastering of the Chinese language and improvement of their English. The contribution of these teachers to the Confucius Institute development after their return to Ukraine will be

useful in terms of teaching subjects in Chinese at a new, improved international level.

We consider it effective to begin joint work on consulting and/or scientific supervision of Chinese graduate students in the fields of Philology, Pedagogy, and Political Science.

In the new working year, guided by the regulatory documents and many years of experience, the Confucius Institute at Ushynsky University intends to continue providing support in expanding the vectors of cooperation between the two parties, and continue promoting communication between the two partner universities and peoples.

Conclusion.

The conducted research allowed us to come to these conclusions:

- Eurasian integration within the academic space fosters the accumulation of positive experiences, particularly within Ukraine's education system, the Cis being part of these modifications.

- The CI directors' partnership within Eurasian dimension was analysed through the prism of constructive collaboration: general purpose, tasks and areas of work; adherence to their functional responsibilities; personal qualities enabling productive team work; cultural awareness.

- The key purpose, tasks, areas of the CI activities at Ushynsky University under modern conditions in Ukraine have been outlined. The pivot purpose of the Confucius Institute is to organize and hold events in the field of education and culture for expanding cooperation between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China, as well as for strengthening mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries.

- The activity content of the CI Centre is correlated within four areas of work: *educational, cultural, scientific and information-providing.*

- The general requirements to the Local and Chinese CI directors have been specified in accordance with the CI activities to be performed. The keynote psychological, moral and other personal qualities both CI Directors are to possess in

order to enable sustainable development of the Confucius Institute have been presented (language proficiency, cultural awareness, aesthetic upbringing, high moral and patriotic qualities, sociability, mastery in making correct and original decisions, the ability to navigate in the flow of information, etc.).

- The CI Directors' general competence has been defined from the standpoint of its subcompetences: personal, self-administrative and intercultural.

- **The perspectives of further research and CI development are seen in the study of these vectors: rational adjustment of work to ensure the CI functioning and the role of the CI platform to promote cooperation in the field of scientific research and humanitarian exchanges between Ushynsky University and Harbin Engineering University.**

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波波娃·亚历山大
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孔子学院院长合作：欧亚维度

本文探讨欧亚维度下孔子学院(CI)院长合作关系的优化问题,明确了乌克兰当代背景下乌克兰国立南方师范大学(乌申斯基大学)孔子学院的核心目标、任务及活动领域。作者系统阐述了对孔子学院中外方院长(含中方与外方)的总体要求,涵盖核心心理素质、道德品质及其他个人特质。文章从院长综合能力视角出发,提出其职责范畴,该能力体系由三大子能力构成:个人能力、自我管理能力与跨文化能力。

关键词: 孔子学院院长, 合作伙伴关系, 孔子学院活动, 综合能力, 职责与责任。