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# АРХІТЕКТОНІКА СОЦІАЛІЗАЦІЇ: ЛЮДИНА В ЛАНДШАФТІ КУЛЬТУРИ

КОЛЕКТИВНА МОНОГРАФІЯ

*за редакцією Сергія та Володимира Виткалових*



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Авторським колективом у складі фахівців українських, польських та китайських ЗВО і наукових установ аналізується широкий спектр актуальних питань становлення і функціонування культурних практик. Розглядаються причини змін у соціокультурній ситуації та культурній політиці сучасної країни, обумовлені новими суспільно-політичними та ідеологічними обставинами, виявляються її проблемні лакуни, наголошується на зміні ціннісних орієнтацій особистості й широкого загалу населення, обумовлених вищенаведеним. Окреслено проблеми діджиталізації сучасного культурного простору і їх актуальність у збереженні культурної спадщини та міжкультурній взаємодії. Наведено теоретичні підходи до розуміння питань ідентичності в класичному та сучасному науковому дискурсі й виявлено особливості впливу цифрових мас-медіа на ці процеси. Розглянуто специфіку функціонування культурно-мистецьких практик у різних регіонах України і розкрито кореляційні підстави їх сучасної трансформації. Продемонстровано форми міжкультурної комунікації в умовах війни і подано найбільш переконливі її результати. Доведено, що низка актуальних питань сучасної соціалізації торкається й світового соціуму і шляхи їх розв'язання майже тотожні. У процесі розгляду окресленої проблематики використано широке історико-культурне тло, спираючись на яке підтвержується низка акцентів дослідників у процесі доведення власних позицій. Авторський текст вирізняє й широке використання візуального ряду, який виступає необхідним «коментарем» окреслених теоретичних наративів.

Зважаючи на широкий представницький авторський ряд, продемонстровано різні науково-теоретичні та методичні підходи у розкритті обраної проблематики.

Для наукових, науково-педагогічних працівників й здобувачів вищої освіти різних кваліфікаційних ступенів та всіх, хто цікавиться проблемами становлення особистості у культурному просторі в час складних суспільних трансформацій.

За точність наведених цитат, імен, дат відповідальність несуть автори.

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Розділ XXII. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND MANAGERIAL SOCIOCULTURAL PRACTICES :  
FOREIGN TEACHERS IN THE PRC

Management approaches to hiring foreign teachers in higher education institutions in the PRC combine globalization trends and national educational traditions. The relevance of the study is determined by the role of foreign teachers as agents of intercultural exchange, which contributes to the development of an inclusive educational environment, intercultural competence, and the international image of Chinese education. The objective of the article is to explore the sociocultural and managerial aspects of the activities of foreign teachers in the PRC as a factor of cross-cultural interaction and educational integration. The methodological basis consists of systemic, activity-based, and cultural approaches, which allow us to consider the hiring of foreign teachers as a complex sociocultural and managerial process. The methods of theoretical analysis and generalization of literature, comparative analysis of personnel management practices, as well as sociocultural analysis of adaptation and intercultural communication processes were used. The empirical basis consists of personal observations and work experience in Chinese higher education institutions and cases of foreign teacher integration, supplemented by the results of the Ukrainian-Chinese project «Education in a Globalized Society». The results show that the management of foreign personnel recruitment includes the selection, adaptation, and support of teachers in a multicultural environment, promoting cultural integration and the development of sociocultural practices. Foreign teachers create an environment for intercultural dialogue and support universities as centers of sociocultural development. The recruitment of foreign teachers in PRC integrates legal, organizational, and cultural-communicative components, creating conditions for the development of an intercultural educational environment. Foreign teachers perform pedagogical, managerial, and sociocultural functions, promote adaptation to global approaches, shape a «glocal» educational environment, and support cultural integration and the overcoming of stereotypes. Sociocultural practices, experience, and cultural capital are important resources for enhancing critical thinking, ensuring the integration of global and local approaches, overcoming cultural barriers, and creating space for cultural synergy and international dialogue. The practical significance of the results lies in their application to improve the policy of internationalization of education, develop adaptation programs for foreign teachers, develop the sociocultural management of universities, and strengthen the role of education as a tool for cultural diplomacy and cross-cultural interaction.

*Key words:* cross-cultural interaction, educational integration, sociocultural processes, cultural capital, intercultural competence, national identity, national traditions, managerial socio-cultural practices.

*Introduction.* The sociocultural development of China is an important subject of scientific research, as the country combines centuries-old traditions with dynamic processes of modernization and technological progress [8]. In the current context of globalization and intense sociocultural transformations, the higher education system faces new challenges related to the need to integrate diverse cultural codes and practices into the educational process. The People’s Republic of China, which is actively developing its international education policy within the framework of its «educational globalization» strategy, considers the recruitment of foreign teachers to be one of the key tools for modernizing education, strengthening intercultural dialogue, and enhancing its international image. In this context, the management structure for hiring foreign teachers takes on strategic importance. It includes not only administrative and organizational processes, but also the resolution of complex sociocultural issues: the adaptation of foreign specialists to the Chinese educational and cultural environment, overcoming intercultural barriers, forming a positive image of Chinese education abroad, etc. The sociocultural aspect is particularly important, as foreign teachers become participants in the process of mutual cultural exchange and influence the social dynamics of university communities. Their successful integration into the local academic and social environment contributes

to the development of intercultural competence among students, the formation of a globalized worldview, and the improvement of the quality of education in general. Given the rapid changes in international relations, the growth of staff mobility, the intensification of cultural diplomacy, and increased competition in the global market for educational services, the issue of improving the structural mechanisms for managing the recruitment of foreign teachers in the PRC is becoming particularly relevant. Research on this topic allows us to identify optimal models of interaction in a multicultural environment, ensure the effective implementation of educational and cultural strategies, and promote the harmonious development of the sociocultural space of educational institutions.

*The aim* of the study was to investigate the sociocultural and managerial aspects of foreign teachers' activities in the PRC as a factor of cross-cultural interaction and educational integration.

Objectives of the research:

- define the role of foreign teachers as agents of cross-cultural interaction and sociocultural practices;
- identify the impact of cultural capital on the integration of foreign teachers, the development of intercultural competencies, and the formation of a «glocal» educational environment;
- analyze pedagogical and management strategies aimed at adapting global educational approaches to the local context, overcoming stereotypes, and improving the sociocultural effectiveness of management;
- summarize the experience of sociocultural and management practices at various levels for the development of critical thinking, cultural sensitivity, and global competitiveness of universities.

*The scientific novelty* of the study lies in the fact that comprehensive analysis of the specifics of management approaches in PRC related to the hiring of foreign teachers, taking into account sociocultural practices and cross-cultural interaction in the field of education. The work provides a comprehensive interdisciplinary understanding of the activities of foreign teachers not only as knowledge carriers, but also as key actors in the formation of strategies for the sociocultural management of universities, ensuring the integration of global and local educational approaches. The study combines legal, managerial, and sociocultural dimensions, which allows foreign teachers to be seen as an indicator of the effectiveness of university practices of cultural adaptation, the creation of an educational space, and the overcoming of intercultural barriers. This approach allows their presence to be interpreted not only as a human resource, but also as a strategic factor in institutional modernization, the development of intercultural competence among students, and the improvement of the global competitiveness of education in the PRC.

*Review of literature.* Both Ukrainian and foreign researchers are looking into the specifics of management in education in China. Mostly, scientific studies include these aspects in their analysis of the specifics of managing social institutions of education. Aspects of the management of sociocultural activities are not considered separately. Scientific research focuses on a comprehensive analysis of transformational processes in the field of higher education in the People's Republic of China, with an emphasis on management, internationalization, transnational cooperation, and modernization of the education system. Scientific research emphasizes the strategic role of higher education management, particularly in the direction of transnational cooperation, reforming teacher training, and developing the institutional capacity of the Chinese education system in the context of globalization and sociocultural changes. Among the main areas of research, we can identify the following:

1. The direction of transnational higher education and internationalization, which reveals the strategic priorities of the PRC regarding integration into the global educational space, analyzes the combination of global educational trends with national traditions, outlines regulatory and organizational models for the implementation of joint educational programs and institutions with international participation, for example, scientific research by Ukrainian scientists N. Avshenyuk [1] and E. Vdovichenko [3]; among foreign researchers, the works are relevant: S. Lin, J. Liu, W. Lyu [18], L. Wenhui, M. Maniam [26], S. Han [16], J. Yin, H. Niu, Z. Pan [29], W. Fan, S. Fang [14], etc. For example, Chu Ying emphasizes that it is fundamentally important for China to harmoniously combine the processes of Westernization, which naturally accompany the international and globalized system of higher education, with the (indigenization) of national educational traditions based on Confucian philosophy. He outlines the key organizational mechanisms of transnational higher education (TNHE) in China and establishes that the most common formats for implementing such education are: joint educational programs that provide for the award of (joint/double degrees), the creation of joint educational structures – international branch campuses, joint universities or joint institutes/micro campuses. Among all forms of TNHE, joint educational programs are the most popular and prevail in terms of quantitative indicators [11]. As a key form of transnational higher education, they perform not only an educational but also an important sociocultural function. Their implementation involves close interaction between representatives of different cultures, the exchange of values, knowledge, and norms of behavior, which forms a special multicultural educational environment. The management of such programs requires taking into account cultural differences in the process of organizing learning, adapting students and teachers to new sociocultural conditions, ensuring effective communication, and integration into a single academic space. In this context, the management of sociocultural activities is an important component of the management of joint educational programs, as it ensures the development of intercultural competence, contributes to the creation of a favorable environment for intercultural dialogue, conflict prevention, and the harmonization of relations in the international academic space.

2. Research into the development of higher pedagogical education, analyzing the current state of affairs, government policy priorities in the field of teacher training, education management reforms, and mechanisms for

ensuring the quality of teacher training in response to internal and external challenges V. Mumladze, N. Myronchuk, [7], L. Pyrozhenko, L. Smolinchuk [9], Y. Van [2], L. Kalinina, V. Rogova [6], O. Ivanilov [5], J. Huang, M. Li, S. Wei, Z. He [17]. For example, V. Mumladze notes that China is gradually transforming its higher education system in the direction of modernization and dynamic development. The Chinese leadership is actively implementing comprehensive measures aimed at training highly professional teaching staff who can function effectively in various types of educational institutions. Modern teachers are required not only to have in-depth knowledge of their subject area, but also to be proficient in a foreign language, have a broad outlook, professional competencies, the ability to use innovative methods, and engage in continuous self-development. Thus, there is a clear trend towards improving the quality of teacher training in the PRC. In this context, it is appropriate and promising to analyze the features of the system of professional development and postgraduate teacher education in China [7].

3. The field of professional training in economics and education management, which studies the specifics of organizing the educational process for future specialists in business, economics, and education management at universities in the PRC, taking into account modern educational standards and the sociocultural context [10; 4]. Management in the field of education in the PRC is characterized by a clear distribution of functions and responsibilities among national and regional structures of the education system, their focus on achieving educational goals set by the government, taking into account regional specifics in the implementation of reforms in the field of education, conducting pilot studies of reforms, and introducing educational inspections [2]. For example, the works of Y. Demyanova and L. Sarkisyan are aimed at studying the specifics and models of management in Chinese and Western corporations. In particular, they consider the dependence on national management specifics and compare the Chinese management model with the Western management style. Let us note an important point: as the authors point out, family relationships, which form the basis and core of Chinese society, play an important role in the study of the specifics of Chinese management. Thus, for the people of China, the awareness of belonging to a clan is extremely important. An individual is considered to be part not only of himself, but also of his family community, and therefore cannot act solely according to his own desires. People are evaluated first and foremost not by their personal qualities, but by the clan to which they belong. The clan itself acts as a regulator of the moral and ethical norms of behavior of its members, since its existence is based on the social recognition of all its members [4]. This phenomenon has deep sociocultural roots, as the family in China not only performs domestic and emotional functions, but is also the basic unit of the sociocultural environment. Family ties shape values, behavior patterns, attitudes toward authority, the collective, and work, which directly influence management practices. Thus, Chinese management develops in close connection with the national sociocultural context, where priority is given to harmony, hierarchy, and collective responsibility, inherited from family upbringing. In the PRC education system, state education authorities exercise strict control over the content of education and various educational institutions.

4. The field of intercultural communication and integration in higher education focuses on the interaction between students and teachers from different cultures in the context of the university environment. It covers issues such as the adaptation of foreign teachers, their perception by students and colleagues, the difficulties and opportunities of implementing intercultural education, and the development of tolerance, openness, and academic cooperation skills. Research in this area reveals both the barriers to cross-cultural interaction (linguistic, communicative, value-based) and the positive effects of integration: the development of students' global competencies, improvement of the quality of the educational process, formation of new educational practices that combine local and global approaches, etc. This area is of practical importance for improving the internationalization policy of higher education and creating an educational environment that promotes mutual understanding, academic partnership, and cultural diversity. Among the scholars working in this field, we can mention B. Nam, Y. Yang, R. Draeger [22], B. Lu, X. Shao, L. Ge, J. Wu [19], J. Maele, L. Jin [20], and many others.

Materials and methods. The methodological basis of the study consists of systemic, activity-based, and cultural approaches, which allow us to consider the hiring of foreign teachers as a complex sociocultural and managerial process. Methods of theoretical analysis and generalization of scientific literature, comparative analysis of personnel management practices in the transnational education sphere were applied. The empirical basis of the study consists of observations (personal experience of staying and working in Chinese higher education institutions), as well as practical cases of integration of foreign teachers into Chinese higher education institutions. Methods of sociocultural analysis made it possible to determine the importance of cross-cultural interaction in the processes of adaptation, communication, and professional activity of foreign teachers, as well as to assess the role of management in ensuring effective interaction in the cultural environment of the PRC.

The study used the results of the Ukrainian-Chinese educational and scientific project «Education in a Globalized Society: Philosophy, Management, Culture, Modern Trends, Economic Options, and International Practices» (State Institution «South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky» – Anhui University of Finance and Economics, Agreement 101/Д/21/1). The aim of the project was to explore the possibilities and main directions for deepening cooperation between Ukraine and China by analyzing the management of contemporary trends in the development of education as a social institution in the context of globalization. Particular attention was paid to cultural forms and international practices that ensure the effectiveness of intercultural dialogue. In this context, the results obtained became the methodological basis for studying the role of foreign teachers in higher education institutions in

the PRC as important agents of cross-cultural interaction and sociocultural management practices that contribute to institutional modernization and increase the competitiveness of Chinese education in the context of globalization.

*Results and discussion.* The activities of foreign teachers in educational institutions in the PRC are regulated by a set of regulatory and legal acts that combine requirements in the field of education, migration policy, and cultural interaction. The main documents adopted by the Ministry of Education of the PRC and the State Administration for Foreigners determine the procedure for employing foreign specialists, qualification criteria, contract terms, and social guarantees. The work permit system and visa policy play a significant role in attracting highly qualified personnel on the one hand, and in controlling the quality of educational services and compliance with legislation on the other. The regulatory documents outline not only the legal status of teachers, but also the cultural and communicative dimensions of their professional activities. The official policy of the PRC promotes the development of cross-cultural interaction in the educational environment, viewing foreign teachers as a resource for improving the quality of education, modernizing programs, and strengthening the international authority of universities. At the same time, the socio-cultural management practices of university administrations aim to ensure the integration of foreign teachers into the local academic space, adaptation to cultural norms, and a balance between traditional educational values and global standards. Among the important points worth noting are the regulation of requirements for the qualifications and experience of foreign teachers; mandatory compliance with the norms of labor and migration legislation of the PRC; management mechanisms for cultural adaptation and social support; and the strategic importance of foreign personnel for increasing the competitiveness of Chinese universities in the global educational space. The legal and institutional framework is based on the «P.R.C. Education Law», the «Teachers Law of the P.R.C.», the «P.R.C. Regulations on the Administration of the Entry and Exit of Foreigners», and other laws and regulations so as to promote international cooperation and exchanges on education and regulate the hiring and management of foreign teachers [13].

The system for hiring foreign teachers in China is strictly regulated and involves a large number of government agencies, recruitment agencies, educational institutions, and bureaucratic procedures. The main factors influencing this process are government policy in the field of education, immigration law, and increasing requirements for teacher qualifications. The process is regulated at several levels. The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China determines the general qualification requirements for foreign teachers, including the mandatory possession of a bachelor's degree, teaching certificates (e. g., TEFL, TESOL, minimum 120 hours), and minimum work experience. The structure for foreign teachers in higher education institutions is quite complex. Teachers must have at least one year of experience, and those without experience are prohibited from being hired. Among the opportunities to find employment as a teacher is a system of hiring native speakers to teach language courses. Depending on the country whose language you speak, you are allowed to teach a certain language (for example: French speakers teach French, German speakers teach German, etc.). In PRC, for example, there are more than 10 Ukrainian language departments in various higher education institutions and Ukrainian research centers, but it is quite difficult for Ukrainians to find employment as native speakers, as there are not many vacancies for Ukrainian language teachers.

An analysis of studies devoted to the recruitment of foreign scholars in the PRC provides a better understanding of the sociocultural and managerial practices associated with their activities in Chinese higher education. Over the past decade, government policy has evolved from inviting «foreign cultural and educational experts» to forming «talent attraction» programs, where priority is given to highly qualified scholars from the global West. This policy change reflects Chinese universities' desire to integrate into the global academic system and enhance their international prestige. Chinese universities' management practices regarding foreign teachers combine institutional support (financial incentives, housing, research funding) with expectations of high productivity in the scientific field, particularly in engineering and the natural sciences. At the same time, the sociocultural dimension of interaction reveals a number of challenges: foreign academics often feel isolated, like «guests» at universities, which highlights the lack of effective integration into local academic and cultural environments. This creates tension in cross-cultural interaction and highlights the need to develop new practices of communication, partnership, and interpersonal support.

Attracting foreign scholars is seen not only as a personnel policy, but also as a sociocultural process: from developing incentive packages to creating conditions for cultural adaptation and overcoming barriers. Universities expect foreign teachers to enhance their international reputation, but in practice, the lack of integration mechanisms, language and administrative difficulties, and cultural differences mean that the potential for cross-cultural interaction is not fully exploited. Managerial sociocultural practices (inclusion, communication, family support, cultural integration) are a key factor in improving the effectiveness of foreign teachers in PRC [12].

*Research conducted at Peking University* shows that foreign teachers play a key role in the internationalization of Chinese higher education by providing academic support and facilitating intercultural communication. Interaction between students and teachers is shaped by specific sociocultural practices: students adapt to international teaching approaches, while teachers adapt to local norms and expectations. Structured forms of interaction, including cooperative teaching, the integration of cultural elements into teaching modules, and regular dialogue between stakeholders, are necessary for the effective development of intercultural competence. This approach emphasizes the importance of sociocultural practices in shaping intercultural competence and the global visibility of Chinese universities [29].

China's State Administration of Immigration is responsible for issuing work visas (category Z), without which

official employment in educational institutions is not possible. Local education bureaus and human resources bureaus in each province or city are responsible for approving specific employment applications, which creates an additional level of verification and selection. Institutions conduct three levels of interviews, the final one being the decision of the local authorities after a short interview with the prospective employee. During interviews at state educational institutions with Chinese-speaking foreign candidates, questions about understanding the history, culture, and political system of the state are relevant. Questions about willingness to join the Communist Party are often asked.

Recruitment agencies and intermediaries play an important role in the hiring process, working with educational institutions to help them find foreign teachers. They are responsible for searching for candidates through international platforms, verifying diplomas and certificates, and preparing documents for work visas. These agencies often play a key role in simplifying bureaucratic procedures for foreign candidates, although there is a risk of unscrupulous intermediaries who may provide incorrect information or fail to comply with all legal requirements. The same situation applies to inviting students, postgraduates, and grant candidates to study.

Various educational institutions can be employers for foreign teachers. Public schools and universities are the main official institutions that hire foreign teachers, but they require approval from local government authorities to do so. Private and international schools also actively recruit foreigners, although their internal procedures may be less formalized. Language centers (known as training centers or “培训中心”) that specialize in teaching English to children and adults are in a separate category. In addition, online platforms that allow teaching without physical presence in China are gaining popularity, which has become particularly relevant in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The recruitment process at training centers is often fraudulent. In the event of inspections by the country’s security centers during raids, school owners either pay fines themselves or ignore illegal teachers, which leads to the deportation of employees.

The hiring procedure involves several mandatory steps. First, educational institutions publish job advertisements and collect applications. Next, interviews are conducted (usually online), after which the employer checks the candidate’s documents, including diplomas (state institutions carry out the nostrification of documents exclusively through Chinese state websites), certificates, and a certificate of no criminal record. The next step is to obtain a work permit and a Z-visa. Upon arrival in China, the teacher must undergo a medical examination, register with the police, and obtain a residence permit, which is completed by signing a contract and starting work. Despite strict regulations, there are certain challenges and risks associated with the employment of foreign teachers. Some schools operate without an official license to hire foreigners, which can cause visa problems and legal complications for the teacher. Delays in salary payments or non-compliance with contract terms are not uncommon. In recent years, legislation has become stricter: since 2017, a minimum of a bachelor’s degree and a TEFL/TESOL certificate are required to obtain a work visa. Cultural adaptation and legal differences can also create difficulties for foreign teachers, especially those who are unfamiliar with the labor relations system in China. An important factor is the language barrier. Due to their lack of knowledge of the language, foreigners are often not sufficiently informed, which leads to legal violations, mostly due to a lack of knowledge of the work of regulatory bodies.

As noted by L. Wenhui and M. Maniam, a comprehensive analysis of the policy of managing foreign teachers in Chinese higher education institutions operating in the format of Chinese-foreign cooperation shows the existence of a basic regulatory framework, but its effectiveness is limited by its generality, lack of detailed regulations, inconsistent application, and cultural adaptation difficulties. Foreign teachers and administrators play a key role in bridging the gap between policy and practice, as their experience demonstrates the need for unified and culturally sensitive management strategies. The results of the study outline areas for improvement: the formation of a systematic policy framework with clear procedures for verifying qualifications and contract standards, the introduction of support and cultural integration programs, the establishment of communication and feedback mechanisms, and the expansion of cooperation between government agencies, educational institutions, and foreign teachers. The implementation of these measures will contribute to improving the quality of teaching, more effective integration of foreign teachers, and strengthening the international dimension of Chinese higher education, which is important for its global competitiveness [26].

Recent changes in the system for hiring foreigners are largely related to internal reforms and external factors. In particular, the Chinese government has tightened regulatory requirements for teachers in order to improve the quality of education and bring it closer to international standards. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the mobility of foreign teachers, leading to a reduction in their numbers and stimulating the development of online learning. At the same time, the slowdown in economic growth and the decline in foreign investment have created additional challenges for educational institutions, forcing them to optimize their spending on hiring foreigners. Another important factor is the Chinese government’s policy of reducing the influence of foreigners on education. In 2021, a ban was introduced on the teaching of English by foreigners from non-English-speaking countries, which is explained by the desire to improve the quality of language education and prevent unqualified teaching. The government has also stepped up its fight against the illegal hiring of foreigners, which was previously a common practice among language schools. The management structure for hiring foreign teachers in China is multi-level and strictly regulated. It combines state regulation, the activities of intermediaries, competition between different types of educational institutions, and numerous bureaucratic procedures. Despite the high demand for foreign teachers, the PRC government is gradually

reducing its dependence on them, focusing on developing its own personnel and improving the quality of education through stricter qualification requirements. In fact, until 2017, foreign teachers played the role of «different people» who revealed an understanding of the breadth of the world and showed the diversity of nationalities as such.

A winning strategy for the employment of graduates from leading Chinese universities (Project 985) is to combine local and international educational capital. An important managerial and sociocultural trend is emerging in the Chinese education system, where a clear hierarchy of cultural capital is being formed, with international experience being viewed as a resource of prestige, innovation, and academic status. For foreign teachers, this means that their integration into Chinese higher education takes place in conditions where the very fact of having a «Western education» or international background is an institutional advantage, but at the same time creates asymmetry in the attitude towards different groups of teachers (local, foreign graduates, «real» foreign specialists). From a managerial and sociocultural point of view, the practice of selecting personnel based on international experience serves as symbolic capital and at the same time reinforces differences between academic groups. This directly affects cross-cultural interaction in universities: first, there is a growing demand for the integration of foreign teachers into a system oriented towards global standards; second, specific management practices are formed (preferences in contracts, grants, support programs), which lay the foundation for inequality and at the same time stimulate competition [18].

It is important to note that, with regard to the socio-cultural and ethical requirements for foreign workers, the PRC places particular emphasis on the separation of education and religion and the prohibition of actions that are «harmful to national security» (Article 5). This reflects the state policy of ideological control. Foreign teachers must follow Chinese «social customs» and pedagogical ethics. For example, Article 31 states: «In any of the following situations, education establishments shall dismiss foreign teachers and report to the administrative departments for education to make a credit record: (1) Have actions or speech that harm China's national sovereignty, security, reputation, or the societal public interest; (2) Was pursued for criminal responsibility; (3) Obstructing the implementation of education policies; (4) Had conduct in violation of public security management such as drug use; (5) Sexually assaulted or abused minors; (6) Illegally engaged in religious education or proselytization; (7) Engaged in cult activities; (8) Sexually harassed students or otherwise seriously violated China's social mores and teachers' professional ethics and code of conduct; (9) Provided false information in applying to come to China to serve as a teacher; (10) Have a cumulative total of more than three records of untrustworthiness as provided for in article 30 of these measures. Education establishments must not hire foreign personnel with the circumstance provided for in the preceding paragraph to serve as foreign teachers» (Article 31).

The motivations of foreign teachers to work in China go far beyond individual career strategies and directly influence the formation of sociocultural practices in the Chinese academic environment. On the one hand, economic security and access to resources encourage teachers to integrate into the system of management relations at Chinese universities, which are based on hierarchy, discipline, and a focus on state priorities. On the other hand, cultural and family factors contribute to the transfer of intercultural experience, as foreign teachers not only adapt to local norms (guanxi, collectivism, symbolic status of education), but also bring elements of Western academic practices (academic autonomy, collegiality, academic mobility). Thus, the motivations of foreign scholars act as a catalyst for sociocultural interaction, where different educational traditions and management approaches intertwine, influencing the transformation of Chinese higher education in the context of globalization.

*Research on international academic mobility* indicates that the classic «push–pull» model, which explains the movement of teachers through factors of «push» from the country of origin and «pull» from the host country, has significant limitations. It reduces individuals to passive recipients of external circumstances and neglects subjective agency, which is key to understanding the motivations and strategies of foreign teachers in China. A more modern, multi-level approach demonstrates that decisions about academic mobility are formed as a «package of factors» that interact at the global, regional, national, local, institutional, and personal levels. In the case of China, these levels are particularly important. At the national level, strategic government programs such as «Double First-class» and research grants for foreign talent create favorable employment conditions, enhancing prestige and providing resources for research activities. At the institutional level, different universities show variations in international integration, academic privileges, and management practices, reflecting the internal stratification of the PRC's higher education system. Local conditions include access to laboratories, scientific and technical infrastructure, as well as the specifics of management procedures that determine the powers of foreign teachers in supervising graduate students or participating in applied projects. Personal factors, including family ties, language skills, and cultural capital, play an additional role in sociocultural integration and academic performance. For example, having a Chinese partner or family makes it easier to navigate the complex administrative and sociocultural practices of the university, facilitates the formation of a local network of contacts, and reduces barriers to intercultural communication [21]. Foreign teachers in China do not simply adapt to the new academic environment, but become active participants in sociocultural and managerial practices. They form «microsocial» strategies of interaction, combining their own academic competencies with local rules of the game, which opens up opportunities for a deeper understanding of the processes of transnational academic mobility and intercultural integration in contemporary Chinese higher education.

It is worth paying attention to the visa regulation system and classification of foreign teachers in the

PRC. The employment of foreign teachers in Chinese higher education institutions is regulated through a work visa system, which provides for different categories of permits depending on qualifications, experience, and type of contract. The most common are the Z-visa, F-visa, and X-visa, which have different legal applications.

Let's look at the types of visas for teachers at Chinese higher education institutions: The Z-visa (工作签证) is the main work visa for foreign teachers who sign a permanent contract with Chinese universities or colleges. It requires an official work permit (外国人工作许可证) and a residence permit (居留许可证), which allows the holder to work legally and receive a salary. The types of visas are designated by letters and are basically called «talent visas». It is believed that a Chinese teacher can teach all subjects and perform all necessary functions. The «talent» of foreigners lies in their belonging to a particular language, of which they are native speakers (language teachers, translators, etc.). This means that a qualified representative of the PRC can teach all subjects except languages. Of course, certified Chinese philologists also teach philological subjects, but a foreigner teaching, for example, economics is extremely rare. Usually, these are foreign associate professors or PhD candidates who have to undergo a certain amount of practical training. At the same time, professional bilingual subjects (Chinese-English) taught by native speakers are very popular in China, but the regulatory system does not have specific regulations on this, so such situations can be determined directly by the heads of faculties and institutes of higher education based on the results of interviews or the availability of a degree in a specific required specialty.

The R-visa (人才签证) is only granted to highly qualified specialists of international standing, including winners of international awards, outstanding scientists, and professors with recognized achievements. It has a simplified application procedure and allows for long-term residence in China without the need for regular permit renewals. This visa can also be granted after gaining 5 years of official work experience in the PRC.

The F-visa (访问签证) is used for visiting professors, guest speakers, and scholars who come for short-term events or academic exchanges. It does not allow the holder to work officially or receive a salary in China, which limits its use in cases of long-term employment. It is often used in the case of grant collaborations between China and other countries.

The X-visa (学习签证) is intended for foreigners who are studying in graduate school or undergoing scientific internships at universities. This type of visa does not grant the right to paid work, although it may sometimes include the possibility of academic internships within the framework of the study program. In 2021, updates were introduced regarding the limited number of hours for part-time employment, but usually the university administration and the regulatory body for educational cooperation with foreigners – the international department of the university – do not provide such open information and try to control student employment as much as possible in order to avoid additional conflicts and misunderstandings.

There is a clear visa regulation system for teachers at higher education institutions in China: only a Z-visa or R-visa (for highly qualified specialists) is required for permanent employment, an F-visa for short-term programs, and an X-visa for scientific internships. It is important to note that even temporary contracts cannot be formalized without a Z-visa and a work permit.

There is also a classification of foreign specialists in the PRC: the A/B/C人才 (talent visa) system. The Chinese immigration regulation system divides all foreign specialists into three categories depending on their qualifications, experience, and level of demand in the labor market.

1. Category A (高端人才, «Highly Skilled Talents») includes the highest level of specialists with outstanding academic or professional achievements. This group includes Nobel Prize winners and other international scientific award winners, renowned scientists, leading professors at top universities, heads of international companies, and experts in fields of science and technology that are strategic for the PRC. Category A specialists receive an R-visa with a simplified application procedure, allowing them to quickly obtain a work permit and residence permit for up to 10 years.

2. Category B (专业人才, «Professionals») includes most foreign teachers, researchers, and other qualified specialists. This includes: university lecturers and professors, engineers, doctors, STEM specialists, professionals with experience in relevant fields, and native speakers as potential teachers of philological disciplines. Category B professionals receive a Z-visa, which requires a contract with a Chinese employer. They must have a higher education degree (bachelor's or higher), proven qualifications, and at least two years of work experience, or be native speakers of a language required for the educational process according to the work programs.

3. Category C (普通人才, «Ordinary Workers») – This group includes temporary or seasonal workers who receive work visas with limited rights. This may include: junior teachers without significant experience, teachers at private language schools, and specialists working on short-term contracts. Category C specialists have the least chance of long-term employment, and their access to official work visas is severely restricted.

The A/B/C人才 classification allows China to attract highly qualified specialists by offering them better conditions, while less qualified specialists have limited access to the labor market. University lecturers and professors who wish to work in China must meet the established criteria and go through the official visa application process. The main requirements for obtaining a Z-visa are: an invitation from the university (employment contract), a work permit (外国人工作许可证) issued by the local human resources bureau, higher education (bachelor's degree or higher), relevant specialization, at least two years of teaching experience, or

native speaker status, a language proficiency certificate (if required), and a medical examination. Upon arrival in China, the teacher must apply for a residence permit (居留许可证) within 30 days, which replaces the visa and allows them to work officially. Thus, for standard employment at a Chinese university, a teacher receives a Z-visa, and an R-visa is only available to the best world-class specialists.

In recent years, China has significantly reformed its system for hiring foreign teachers, introducing stricter regulatory requirements aimed at improving the quality of education and controlling foreign influence. The main changes concern mandatory qualification criteria, restrictions on teaching non-language subjects, and strengthening the fight against illegal employment.

An important role in the organization of the educational process in the PRC is given to sociocultural language practices as ways of using language that reflect the cultural norms, values, social roles, and communicative traditions of a particular community. These include speech etiquette (greetings, farewells, thanks, apologies, etc.), the use of language depending on social status (formality/informality), communicative strategies in intercultural dialogue, body language, intonation, communication styles, as well as stereotypes and culturally conditioned expressions. The Chinese government encourages the recruitment of foreign teachers to improve the language skills of students. As China is actively integrating into the global economy and international cultural processes, high-quality foreign language learning, particularly English, is a priority in education policy. That is why universities seek to hire native speakers who can provide students with an authentic linguistic and sociocultural environment and correct pronunciation. Universities often invite native speakers not to teach theoretical courses, but to conduct conversation classes, discussions, and improve pronunciation and listening skills. In such cases, a teaching degree is not critically necessary, although the general requirements for teachers still include a bachelor's degree (not necessarily in education) and a TEFL/ TESOL certificate confirming knowledge of teaching English as a foreign language. At the same time, Chinese teachers are subject to stricter standards and must have specialized education in the field of pedagogy.

L. Shi's research analyzes the experiences of two foreign academic writing instructors at universities in the PRC, their teaching methods, and how they are perceived by students, colleagues, and administrators. The study revealed conflicting results: one teacher reproduced the traditional «Chinese style» of lectures, while the other applied a process-oriented approach, but both faced criticism from students and colleagues. Students expected a combination of a structured program with greater interactivity, while Chinese professors noted that foreigners do not always understand the specifics of local educational needs [24]. This case shows that the activities of foreign teachers in Chinese educational institutions unfold in the context of managerial sociocultural practices, where there are clear expectations regarding the format of teaching, discipline, and the balance between collective and individual approaches. At the same time, the phenomenon of «othering» appears, when both foreign teachers and local participants in the educational process perceive each other through the prism of stereotypes and cultural differences. This complicates cross-cultural interaction and requires organizational decisions at the university management level – the creation of platforms for the exchange of experience, communication strategies, and the preparation of foreign specialists for the specifics of the Chinese educational environment. Thus, this experience demonstrates that the role of a foreign teacher in the PRC is not limited to the pedagogical function. It is woven into a system of sociocultural and managerial practices, where not only the quality of teaching is decisive, but also the ability to integrate into local educational norms while maintaining intercultural potential.

R. Stanley's monograph reveals the broader sociocultural and managerial context of foreign teachers activities in China. The author describes the phenomenon of so-called «backpacker teachers», who often lack systematic pedagogical training but are massively integrated into the Chinese education system. Their presence shapes students perceptions of the «West» and promotes the development of intercultural contacts, but at the same time creates a number of management problems: from the need to standardize recruitment and training to the need to create mechanisms for adapting foreign teachers to local educational and cultural norms [25]. Thus, the study demonstrates that cross-cultural interaction in the educational space of the PRC is not limited to the learning process. It includes a wider range of managerial and sociocultural practices: regulating the professional training of foreign personnel, aligning methodologies with local expectations, and overcoming stereotypes and mutual «othering» of participants in the educational process.

Chinese labor and education laws clearly stipulate that foreign teachers without relevant education and experience can only teach their native language or the language of the country from which they came. The main reasons for this restriction are: ensuring the quality of teaching – native speakers are considered the most competent in teaching their own language, which simplifies the verification of their qualifications and guarantees high-quality language practice; legal restrictions and licensing – a Z-visa (work visa for teachers) allows the holder to teach only their native language, which helps the government control the quality of teaching and avoid situations where insufficiently qualified foreigners teach subjects that could be taught by Chinese specialists; Competition with local teachers – educational institutions are interested in preserving jobs for Chinese specialists, so subjects not related to languages are mainly taught by local teachers. ease of verifying qualifications – a passport or citizenship makes it easy to determine whether a person is a native speaker, while competence in other disciplines requires more complex verification of diplomas and professional experience.

Thus, China seeks to maintain a balance between inviting foreign teachers for language and sociocultural practice and protecting the local labor market for other disciplines.

In recent years, China has stepped up measures to combat illegal hiring of teachers, forcing schools to focus more on attracting professional educators rather than simply «good-looking white foreigners». The government has stepped up inspections of educational institutions and introduced tougher penalties for violators. Methods for detecting illegal teachers include: surprise police checks (突击检查) at language schools, universities, and private training centers; complaints from parents or colleagues who can report illegal teachers to the authorities; monitoring social media, where teachers can advertise their services without official permission; checking the registration of foreigners in hotels and residential complexes, which can lead to the detection of illegal workers. Possible penalties for teachers: a fine of 5,000 to 50,000 yuan (~700 – 7,000 USD) (if school owners who hire foreign teachers value their staff, they pay such fines themselves); deportation and a ban on entry for 5-10 years or for life; administrative arrest for 5-15 days prior to deportation. Sanctions against educational institutions include fines of up to 100,000 yuan (~14,000 USD); closure of the school or language center; loss of license to hire foreigners. After 2021, inspections have become much stricter, especially after the ban on private tutoring for children. This has forced schools to adhere to stricter rules for hiring teachers.

The government also banned the illegal hiring of teachers, forcing schools to hire more professionals rather than just «good-looking white foreigners». However, discrimination based on nationality and appearance still exists, especially in private schools and training centers. In China, there has long been a stereotype that a «white» teacher is a true native speaker, even if they have no education or experience, or are not a native speaker. This is usually a common problem in small towns, where the general perception of foreigners is based on stereotypes promoted by the Chinese authorities on the closed internet, which is regulated by the Communist Party. Many schools in such towns and villages hire teachers based solely on their appearance, rather than their level of English or diplomas. The situation is now changing, but white teachers still have a better chance of getting a job than dark-skinned teachers or those from non-English-speaking countries. A dark-skinned teacher may be rejected even if they are a native speaker, unlike a Caucasian representative. There is a stereotype that children are afraid of dark-skinned teachers, and parents prefer schools where white educators provide educational services. Often, it is not only skin color that plays a role, but also hair and eye color. In the case of dark shades, the teacher is less popular, which even affects their salary, because enrollment in such a teacher's classes is low, and school owners receive less funding as a result.

The issue of teachers working without pedagogical education, but only on the basis of being native speakers, can be explained in China by several key factors:

1. Demand for native speakers (China is actively integrating into the global economy and culture, so high-quality foreign language learning (especially English) is a priority. Universities strive to hire native speakers so that students can practice the «natural» language with correct pronunciation);
2. Flexibility in requirements for foreign teachers (at the same time, Chinese teachers must comply with stricter standards, including having a teaching degree);
3. Differences in teaching approaches (universities often invite native speakers not to teach theoretical courses, but to conduct conversation classes, discussions, and improve pronunciation and listening skills; for this, a teaching degree is not critically necessary);
4. Government policy on education (the Chinese authorities encourage the recruitment of foreign specialists in the field of education, and special visa programs have been created for this purpose, such as the Z-visa for teachers, which allows native speakers to work at universities on a contract basis).

Therefore, the main reason is the focus on the quality of the linguistic and sociocultural environment for students, rather than just formal pedagogical qualifications.

China strives to maintain a balance between inviting foreign teachers for language practice and protecting the local labor market for other disciplines. Stereotypes about «white» teachers in China and their impact on the labor market can be explained historically. It so happened that in China, a «white» teacher has long been considered a sign of high-quality education, even if the candidate did not have the appropriate education or experience. In China, especially in private language schools and training centers, European appearance has long been more important than qualifications when hiring foreign English teachers. Private language schools often used the European appearance of teachers as a marketing tool, as the parents of Chinese students associated white foreigners with «native English speakers». The marketing factor – language school advertisements often used photos of Caucasian teachers to attract customers (even if they were not actual teachers at the school). For many years, Chinese people have consumed Western content in which native English speakers are predominantly white people. Therefore, in the minds of many parents, a white teacher looks more «authentic» than, for example, a people of color or Asian teacher. Many Chinese schools openly refuse to hire dark-skinned teachers because «customers do not perceive them as true native English speakers». Employers may reject Filipinos, Indians, and Africans, even if they have perfect English skills. Some schools falsify nationality – for example, they may state in advertisements that a teacher from Ukraine is «originally from Britain». Stereotypes about pronunciation and accent – Chinese people believe that native speakers have the «correct» pronunciation, while people from

other countries may speak with a «bad accent». Discrimination based on nationality – schools often gave preference to European teachers, even from non-English-speaking countries, while rejecting specialists from the Philippines, India, or Africa. Usually, such classes with native speakers take the form of games, discussions, and communication, accompanied by elements of entertainment, dancing, and singing in the language being studied.

The attitude of Chinese children, students, and even their parents toward foreign teachers largely depends on the age of the students, the place of study (public school, international school, university, or language center), and personal experience communicating with foreigners. In general, reactions range from great interest and enthusiasm to a certain shyness or aloofness due to cultural differences. For many Chinese children, especially in small towns or rural areas, their first contact with a foreign teacher can be a unique experience. Children often look at the teacher with curiosity and may discuss their appearance, accent, or behavior. If the teacher does not look «Chinese» (for example, has white skin, light hair, or dark skin), children may openly express surprise or even admiration. Many Chinese children are accustomed to a strict education system dominated by rote learning rather than interactive communication. Because of this, some students, even if they understand English well, are afraid to speak because they don't want to make a mistake or «lose face» (丢脸). In classrooms, you can often see children being shy about answering questions or lowering their heads to avoid eye contact. Foreign teachers often use interactive teaching methods: games, songs, videos, role-playing. This contrasts with the traditional Chinese teaching system, which is more focused on memorization and tests. Therefore, children who are used to strict teachers may be confused at first, but eventually become enthusiastic about the new teaching style. In China, personal space and physical contact are perceived differently than in Western countries. For example, children may touch the hands or hair of a foreign teacher, especially if they look «unusual». Young children may openly ask questions about skin color or even try to rub the teacher's skin to make sure it is their real color. Many Chinese teenagers are interested in Western culture, cinema, music, and social media. If a foreign teacher can hold a conversation about popular Western movies, games, or fashion, they will quickly gain popularity among students.

Unlike children, teenagers are more likely to maintain a formal relationship with their teacher. Chinese culture respects teachers, so open jokes or overly friendly behavior may not always be appropriate. However, if the teacher manages to create an atmosphere of trust, students will begin to show more interest in the lessons. Chinese students are often afraid of making mistakes because they believe it could damage their reputation among their peers. They may be reluctant to answer questions if they are not sure they will give the correct answer. Therefore, effective teachers usually create an environment where mistakes are not seen as something bad, but rather as part of the learning process. Some students may believe that native English speakers are always the best teachers, even if not all of them have a teaching background. Those studying other languages (e. g., Spanish, French) may be surprised if their teacher is not from a «traditionally French-speaking» or «Spanish-speaking» country.

University students generally have more experience communicating with foreigners and are less shy in conversation. They are interested not only in the language, but also in what life is like outside China, what traditions exist there, and attitudes toward education and careers. Chinese university students expect foreign teachers to be not just «native speakers» but also professionals in their field. They respect teachers who can provide deeper knowledge and make classes interesting. Even in big cities like Beijing or Shanghai, many students have a good level of grammar but weak spoken English due to lack of practice. Therefore, if the teacher does not know Chinese, communication can be difficult. Some students may invite the teacher to lunch or ask about their personal life (for example, asking if they are married and how much they earn – in China, this is not considered inappropriate). Students are more likely to openly share their thoughts on education, future careers, and the problems of modern China. In general, foreign teachers in China are treated with respect, curiosity, and sometimes even a certain amount of admiration, especially if they can interact effectively with students and make learning more interactive. However, after stricter rules were introduced, the situation began to change. Now, Chinese schools are more focused on a teacher's qualifications rather than just their appearance. At the same time, discrimination based on nationality and appearance is still a problem, especially in private language centers.

The study by B. Nam, Y. Yang and R. Draeger focuses on the characteristics of cross-cultural interaction in Chinese universities. The authors apply P. Bourdieu's concepts (linguistic habitus, cultural capital, symbolic power) to explain the development of Chinese students' linguistic and intercultural competencies. In this process, foreign teachers act as mediators in the formation of intercultural capital, which is of strategic importance for the PRC in the context of globalization. An important aspect is the dominance of English-language ideology in higher education, which poses a challenge for managerial sociocultural practices: universities must balance the prestige of the English language with the preservation of national identity. As the authors note: «One prominent intercultural context is the power nexus between the Anglophone and Sinophone cultural spheres... at the nexus between the dominant Anglophone linguistic ideology and growing decolonial awareness in China» [22]. The presence of foreign teachers in China is not limited to language teaching, but is part of broader sociocultural and management strategies aimed at developing intercultural capital, increasing global student mobility, and reducing cultural distance, while highlighting the tension between English-language educational models and local cultural priorities.

In the context of research on cross-cultural interaction and managerial sociocultural practices in higher education in China, the results of studies by B. Lu, X. Shao, X., L Ge and J. Wu, which analyze the experience of foreign

teachers and their perceptions of intercultural education, are indicative. The authors emphasize that «culture is neither solid nor unified but fluid and internally heterogeneous with evolving boundaries ... this helps teachers understand classroom interactions and opportunities to facilitate IE (Intercultural education)» [19]. This statement is important for understanding the role of a foreign teacher as an agent of intercultural communication, because in the educational process, they not only convey language knowledge but also create conditions for the formation of a dynamic cultural space. However, the study revealed the limited perception of intercultural education: most teachers identify culture only with national identity or with the «four Fs» (food, festivals, folklore, fashion), which leads to the formalization and simplification of the content of cross-cultural interaction. This correlates with the practice of avoiding controversial topics and striving for «harmonization» of discussions, which limits the development of students' critical thinking and contradicts the goals of intercultural competence. Thus, first, foreign teachers in the PRC operate in the context of managerial sociocultural practices, where an exam-oriented model of education dominates, reducing the potential for cross-cultural interaction. Second, it is thanks to student initiatives that authentic intercultural topics (ecology, global cooperation, educational inequality) appear in discussions, expanding the boundaries of the «official» cultural framework. Thus, even under institutional constraints, the role of a foreign teacher in creating space for cultural dialogue and rethinking stereotypical models of cultural identity can be mediating.

Students cultural capital shapes the dynamics of interaction with teachers, which is important for understanding cross-cultural interaction, especially for foreign teachers in China, and emphasizes the need to adapt management and teaching practices to the local context, taking into account the specific educational expectations, social background, and cultural norms of students. The authoritarian style of interaction characteristic of the Chinese context creates challenges for foreign teachers who seek to implement an emic and reflective approach to teaching. J. Huang points to the need to rethink educational strategies and teacher training programs, which directly correlates with the topic of managerial sociocultural practices in institutions in the PRC [17].

Research by J. Maele and L. Jin shows that intercultural competence has become a key component of higher education in China, especially in the context of learning English and other foreign languages. The PRC's national policy (Ministry of Education, 2000, 2020) provides for the integration of intercultural learning as an educational goal for millions of students and thousands of teachers in more than 2,700 higher education institutions. An important aspect is that foreign teachers in the PRC not only perform a pedagogical role, but also act as mediators between cultural contexts, helping students and staff to critically reflect on stereotypes and approach intercultural situations in a reflective manner. The RICH-Ed (Resources for Interculturality in Chinese Higher Education) project demonstrates how this process is implemented in practice. Five Chinese and three European universities participated in the project, jointly developing training modules for students, teachers, and administrative staff. The main results of the project can be divided into three levels. The first level, the student level, focuses on developing critical thinking and reflective abilities through journals, interviews, and autoethnography; forming an awareness of the «variations of Chinese-ness» and cultural complexity even in a local context. The second level, for teachers, focused on adapting teaching methods to local conditions, integrating Chinese traditions and Anglo-European approaches, working in mixed international teams, and improving critical analysis and stereotype management in the educational process. And third, administrative (staff and managers) – training in the «critical incidents» methodology, which helps to realize one's own cultural identity and better understand the cultures of others, which is directly related to the university's managerial sociocultural practices. The study demonstrates that an emic approach to intercultural learning (through the prism of local cultural practices and interpretations) avoids Western stereotypes about Chinese students. For example, the concept of critical thinking among Chinese students combines universal aspects (intellectual autonomy, evidence-based reasoning, multiple perspectives) and local aspects (yin-yang, Confucian influences). Foreign teachers become agents of integration between local and global approaches: they help students and staff combine Western and Chinese theoretical frameworks, forming «glocal» intercultural competence. During joint training sessions and the development of materials, cultural synergy emerges that goes beyond a simple mixture of cultures and contributes to the creation of a shared «culture of learning» that takes into account the preferences, styles, and context of the participants. At the same time, the authors emphasize that political and ideological constraints remain a challenge for cross-cultural interaction, as the ability to «speak out» may depend on security and context. This places an additional responsibility on foreign teachers to choose teaching methods and model a safe, critically reflective space for students and staff [20].

The current study by Y. Guo, S. Guo, L. Yochim and X. Liu is based on Charles Taylor's concept of the social imaginary [15], which defines shared representations as the basis for norms and practices that shape social coordination. In the context of international education in China, the social imaginary manifests itself through the internationalization of higher education institutions, which often coincides with Western models of education and the dominance of the English language. The authors identified three key aspects of the internationalization of students at China North University (CNU). The first is Westernization. International programs and courses in English are often oriented towards the US, the UK and other developed countries. This creates a normative environment in which foreign teachers become bearers of Western academic standards, and local knowledge and methodologies are degraded in comparison with the «global norm». The second is Englishization (English as a means of legitimization). The English language functions as an instrument of prestige and control, but at the same time complicates students'

access to educational content, emphasizing linguistic inequality in the process of cross-cultural interaction. The third is Elitization (Elite access). Participation in international programs is limited to students with high academic performance or financial resources. This demonstrates social stratification and the need for management strategies that ensure more inclusive access to international opportunities. Thus, foreign teachers in China operate in a complex field between global standards and local sociocultural practices, where cross-cultural interaction is determined both by the norms of Western academic discourse and by the structural limitations of students. Effective management practice in this context requires a critical reflection on the role of English, Western methodology, and social inequality, as well as a search for ways to adapt to local educational traditions [15].

In academic discourse, the involvement of foreign teachers in the PRC is seen as a central link in cross-cultural interaction, while at the same time they become an indicator of the effectiveness of managerial sociocultural practices. Their activities reveal contradictions between globalization trends and the task of preserving national cultural and educational identity. An analysis of contemporary publications shows that foreign teachers in higher education institutions in the PRC perform not only an educational role, but also an intercultural mediation role [16; 23]. Despite the active development of Sino-foreign cooperation since the 1990 s, studies emphasize the lack of a comprehensive system for regulating the work of foreign teachers. Uncertainty in matters of qualification verification, contract terms, and adaptation procedures demonstrates the gap between regulatory documents and actual management practices. In this context, intercultural challenges are particularly pronounced: foreign teachers often face difficulties in adapting both in the professional environment and in everyday communication. The lack of systematic cultural induction programs reduces the effectiveness of their activities and complicates their integration into the educational process [30]. Although Chinese teachers and students consider intercultural experience valuable, the academic workload on students can be excessive, as they have a large amount of work to do [31].

The Chinese system for hiring foreign teachers has changed significantly – now priority is given to qualified teachers rather than simply native speakers. The government is actively combating illegal hiring, forcing schools to meet stricter requirements. Despite the changes, discrimination based on appearance and nationality still exists, although the trend is gradually moving towards a transparent and qualified approach to hiring. The PRC's education system is characterized by flexibility in attracting foreign teachers to teach foreign languages, especially English. One of the key features of this process is the ability for native speakers to teach without mandatory pedagogical education or significant work experience in China, provided that they teach their native language or the language of the country from which they came. This approach is driven by a number of factors, including the priority of a high-quality language environment, legal norms, protection of the domestic labor market, and simplification of licensing procedures for foreign specialists. The main motive for inviting native speakers to teach in Chinese educational institutions is to create an authentic language environment for students. The Chinese government actively encourages the country's integration into the global economy and cultural space, which requires a high level of foreign language proficiency among the population. It is believed that only native speakers can ensure correct pronunciation, natural speech, and cultural context, which are important for effective learning. Accordingly, Chinese universities and schools are eager to recruit foreigners to teach foreign languages, even if they do not have a teaching degree, but are native speakers and have a bachelor's degree in any field, as well as TEFL/TESOL certificates confirming basic knowledge of teaching methodology.

The activities of foreign teachers are regulated at the state level through a system of licensing and issuing Z-visas, which allow them to work legally in educational institutions in the PRC. One of the key conditions for obtaining such a visa is that the candidate must teach exclusively in their native language. This is due to several factors. First, this simplifies the qualification verification procedure: to confirm competence in teaching one's native language, citizenship of the country where that language is the official language is sufficient, which significantly reduces bureaucratic procedures. Second, there is a clear legal restriction that does not allow foreigners without special education and experience to teach subjects that can be taught by local teachers, which is important for protecting the domestic labor market. The Chinese authorities seek to ensure that the teaching of non-linguistic subjects remains in the hands of local specialists with the appropriate qualifications. A separate issue is the competition between local and foreign teachers. Although the PRC is interested in attracting native speakers, the state's overall strategy is aimed at supporting national specialists in the field of education. Teaching a foreign language without teaching experience is an exception justified by the need for native speakers. However, to teach other subjects, foreigners must have specialized education, work experience, and undergo complex accreditation procedures. Thus, restrictions on teaching for native speakers without work experience in China in their native language are explained by a combination of political, economic, and educational factors. The Chinese authorities seek to ensure high-quality language training for the population while maintaining a balance between attracting foreign specialists and protecting the local labor market.

In the context of analyzing cross-cultural interaction and managerial sociocultural practices, we would like to draw attention to the analysis of the impact of *guanxi* HRM (human resource management based on personal relationships) on the professional well-being of employees in China. The authors explore how the use of such practices in the processes of selection, hiring, adaptation, and evaluation of personnel can have both positive and

negative effects on employees. The key idea is that the psychological security of employees acts as a mediator between guanxi HRM practices and their level of professional well-being. In other words, if employees feel psychologically secure, the impact of personalized management practices can be less traumatic and more constructive. At the same time, the collectivist culture of the team moderates this relationship, either strengthening or weakening the effects of guanxi. Thus, the research results demonstrate the cross-level impact of sociocultural management practices on employee well-being. In the Chinese context, the management of educational or labor processes cannot be understood outside of cultural specifics (guanxi, collectivism, the importance of interpersonal relationships) [27].

The integration of foreign teachers has a direct impact not only on the cultural environment, but also on the global competitiveness of Chinese universities. Their presence is viewed by the state not as «decorative internationalization», but as a strategy for increasing scientific capital and image. Digitalization is becoming a kind of «bridge» for integration: it helps foreigners adapt in the face of cultural and language barriers. Here, a parallel arises with the concepts of guanxi: if they form the «human» level of integration, then digital tools create a «technological» framework for inclusion in research networks. The identified regional and institutional imbalance is very important. This confirms that the integration of international teachers in China is not a homogeneous process: in the «center», strong local practices and network barriers hinder the effectiveness of foreigners, while the «periphery» uses them as an opportunity for a breakthrough (latecomer advantage). The thesis about the risk of human capital «mismatch» correlates with the fact that foreign teachers often face incomplete integration, bureaucratic or cultural restrictions, even if they are formally «integrated» into the university; their real impact depends on how much their experience corresponds to local scientific and cultural practices. The integration of foreign teachers into Chinese universities is not only a cultural but also a structural and economic process, combining sociocultural (network, collectivist, guanxi) and technological (digitalization, international management standards) factors. In this context, their impact is measured not only by the quality of teaching or cultural exchange, but also by the extent to which they become «network nodes» of global science, integrated through both human and digital infrastructures [14].

Conclusions. The PRC's regulatory framework for hiring foreign teachers integrates legal, organizational, and cultural-communicative components that create conditions for their effective work and the development of an intercultural educational environment. The hiring of foreign teachers in China is directly related to issues of cross-cultural interaction. The management of sociocultural activities includes organizing processes for the adaptation of foreigners to the local environment, thereby aiming at cultural integration and overcoming barriers between cultures. Education is one of the most important channels for the dissemination of cultural values. The involvement of foreign teachers involves not only academic but also sociocultural work: participation in cultural events, creation of an inclusive educational environment, and formation of an environment for cultural dialogue. Management of sociocultural activities involves coordinating the work of people from different cultural backgrounds. The structure of foreign teacher recruitment management includes selection, adaptation, motivation, and support of staff in a multicultural environment, which is part of sociocultural management. China actively uses foreign teachers as part of its «soft power» strategy. This means that the recruitment and management of foreign specialists is not only an educational but also a sociocultural tool for shaping the country's image and expanding its cultural influence, which is directly the focus of sociocultural management. In China, educational institutions are not only educational institutions but also active participants in sociocultural development. The hiring of foreign teachers supports this mission by promoting international dialogue and the development of global culture among student communities. Current research outlines three levels of the role of foreign teachers in China: pedagogical (they are carriers of different methodologies and instruments of intercultural learning), managerial (teachers are subject to regulatory policy and the administrative framework of universities), and sociocultural (foreign teachers are symbols of the «West» in the Chinese education system, shaping perceptions of globalization while conforming to local management practices). Thus, the key tasks for foreign teachers in PRC educational institutions are: developing reflective and critical intercultural competence in students and staff; adapting pedagogical and management practices to the local context; ensuring the integration of local and global cultural and educational approaches; creating space for cultural synergy and overcoming stereotypes. In the context of our study, we would like to emphasize that cross-cultural interaction and the managerial sociocultural practices of foreign teachers are an integral part of the effective organization of the educational environment in the PRC. The experience and cultural capital of the foreign teachers involved become not only a pedagogical or scientific resource, but also an element of managerial sociocultural practices that determine personnel policy, the prestige of the institution, and the nature of cross-cultural interaction.

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**МІЖКУЛЬТУРНА КОМУНІКАЦІЯ ТА УПРАВЛІНСЬКІ СОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНІ ПРАКТИКИ:  
ІНОЗЕМНІ ВИКЛАДАЧІ В КНР**

Управлінські підходи до найму іноземних викладачів у закладах вищої освіти КНР поєднують глобалізаційні тенденції та національні освітні традиції. Актуальність дослідження визначається роллю іноземних викладачів як агентів міжкультурного обміну, що сприяє розвитку інклюзивного освітнього середовища, міжкультурної компетентності та міжнародного іміджу китайської освіти. Мета статті – дослідити соціокультурні та управлінські аспекти діяльності іноземних викладачів у КНР як чинника міжкультурної взаємодії та освітньої інтеграції. Методологічну основу становлять системний, діяльнісний і культурологічний підходи, що дозволяють розглядати найм іноземних викладачів як комплексний соціокультурний і управлінський процес. Використано методи теоретичного аналізу й узагальнення літератури, компаративний аналіз практик кадрового менеджменту, а також соціокультурний аналіз процесів адаптації та міжкультурної комунікації. Емпіричну базу складають власні спостереження й досвід роботи у китайських ЗВО та кейси інтеграції іноземних викладачів, доповнені результатами україно-китайського проекту «Освіта в глобалізованому суспільстві». Результати дослідження показують, що менеджмент найму іноземного персоналу включає підбір, адаптацію та підтримку викладачів у мультикультурному середовищі, сприяє культурній інтеграції та розвитку соціокультурних практик. Іноземні викладачі формують середовище міжкультурного діалогу та підтримують університети як центри соціокультурного розвитку. Найм іноземних викладачів у КНР інтегрує правові, організаційні та культурно-комунікативні складові, створюючи умови для розвитку міжкультурного освітнього середовища. Іноземні викладачі виконують педагогічну, управлінську та соціокультурну функції, сприяють адаптації до глобальних підходів, формують «glocal» освітнє середовище, підтримують культурну інтеграцію та подолання стереотипів. Соціокультурні практики, досвід та культурний капітал виступають важливим ресурсом для підвищення критичного мислення, забезпечують інтеграцію глобальних і локальних підходів, подолання культурних бар’єрів та створення простору культурної синергії і міжнародного діалогу. Практичне значення результатів полягає у застосуванні для удосконалення політики інтернаціоналізації освіти, розробки програм адаптації іноземних викладачів, розвитку соціокультурного менеджменту університетів та посилення ролі освіти як інструменту культурної дипломатії і міжкультурної взаємодії.

*Ключові слова:* міжкультурна взаємодія, освітня інтеграція, соціокультурні процеси, культурний капітал, інтеркультурна компетентність, національна ідентичність, національні традиції, управлінські соціокультурні практики.

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## НАУКОВЕ ВИДАННЯ

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