



# Chinese for Europeans

# China

Language – Culture – Business

**International Conference • Antwerp • 7 June 2013**

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**Chinese**  
for **Europeans**

# China

Language – Culture – Business

International Conference • Antwerp • 7 June 2013



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# Preface

According to the European Commission Directorate-General for Trade, China is the second biggest business partner of the European Union and the EU is the largest trading partner for China. It is worth noting, that the volume of trade exchange between these two parties has been growing rapidly every year. Not only is business increasing, but there is also an increase in the number of projects in the fields of education and culture. One such project is “Chinese For Europeans” which culminated in an International Conference “China – Language. Culture. Business”, held in the Antwerp Management School on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2013, Antwerp, Belgium.

This publication contains articles written by experts participating in the event and other professionals in the field who couldn’t participate but wanted to share their opinion about EU – China dialogue for better understanding between European Union and China.

## **Background**

This conference is the final product of the European Union co-funded project “Chinese For Europeans”, which was developed and realized by consortium of six institutions from Poland, Belgium, Italy, Germany and Lithuania. This project produced self-study materials for studying Chinese language on-line, which are available in all 23 official EU languages for free at [www.Chinese4.eu](http://www.Chinese4.eu). They are compatible with computers, tablets as well as mobile phones and they can be used anywhere in the world by any person interested in Chinese language, culture or business with China.

The project offers four targeted courses applying appropriate methodology for different target groups:

- Tourists – mobile phone application;
- Students – regular e-learning approach;
- Entrepreneurs – micro-learning using e-mails;
- Children – game-based learning.

## **Conference**

The International Conference “China – Language. Culture. Business” was hosted by “Chinese For Europeans” project partner, Antwerp Management School (AMS). All project partners were also involved and actively took part delivering presentations and workshops. The objective of the conference was to develop a dialogue about EU-China relations as well as delivering a promotional presentation with discussion about the project. During the conference experts from different fields shared their knowledge and experience with participants. There were almost one hundred participants from all over the world, interested in different areas of EU-China relations, from language through business to culture.

## **Proceedings**

This publication is divided into 4 parts. The first section is related to “Business Communication and Management”. This section looks at subjects related to direct investment, cultural differences in company management (especially MNC), innovations and patents as well as the substantial influence of China on the global market. The second section is about “Language and Culture”, addressing issues related with the process of learning the Chinese language and the need to include education about culture and cultural differences within this process. The second very important issue mentioned here is ICT applications for learning Chinese. The authors prove how effective the usage of technology could be and how rapidly it can increase positive results in the process of Chinese language acquisition. The third section is “European Projects”, where different European projects related to Chinese language teaching and learning are presented. Most of them use the latest technology to accelerate the process of learning. In some texts **www.Chinese4.eu** project is mentioned as an example of a good practice. Last but not least is the fourth section called “Varia”. Within this section different types of articles can be found which address issues of EU-China relations not mentioned in the previous sections. The authors are representatives from academia, as well as professionals who are actively engaged in business and trade relations with China, together with some whose life-passion is China and EU-China relations.

## **Acknowledgments**

We would like to express many thanks to a number of people who contributed to this publication. We are most grateful to authors of articles, who decided to share their passion, enthusiasm, experience and knowledge in many different fields of EU-China relations. Neither the International Conference “China – Language. Culture. Business”, nor this publication would have been realized so successfully without the great work and deep engagement of all “Chinese For Europeans” project partners. Here is the place to thank Antwerp Management School for their great hospitality. We are also truly grateful to Warsaw Academy of Computer Science, Management and Administration and many other contributors, who dedicated many hours of hard work to contribute to this publication.

Last but not least are all participants of the International Conference “China – Language. Culture. Business”. Thank you for your presence, engagement and professionalism. We have learned a lot from you all. This event would not have reached such a high level without you. Thank you.



# Business Communication and Management

[www.chinese4.eu](http://www.chinese4.eu)

## Corporate governance of Chinese enterprises in Europe: A preliminary study on ownership structure and management control

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### **1. Introduction**

The corporate governance literature strongly focuses on the parent companies of multinational enterprises, especially the largest and listed firms. As many of the subsidiaries of emerging multinational enterprise (MNEs) are rather small and medium sized legal entities in the host countries, the management and corporate governance dimensions of these overseas subsid-

aries are less often studied, although they constitute an important aspect of multinational groups. With regard to the Chinese companies, the studies about corporate governance are relatively new and have almost entirely neglected its international dimension. On the basis of Amadeus dataset which provide information on the shareholders and board of directors of European based companies, this paper investigates the ownership structure and corporate governance (e.g. shareholders and board members) of Chinese companies operating in Europe. The study also provides some insights into management aspects of Chinese companies in Europe.

## **2. Data source and sample description**

The firm-level data which are used in this study were compiled from the Amadeus European company database in November 2010. This database contains comprehensive financial and business data on over 18 million companies registered in 43 European countries. The database consists of annual accounts (consolidated and unconsolidated), financial ratios, sectoral activities and ownership information of the large public companies and the unlisted private companies. This unique pan-European database also provides information about the board members of each company, such as the name of the directors, their title and management function, nationality, home country and date of appointment. This data allows to analyse the size and the composition of the board of directors of Chinese companies in Europe and to discuss some specific management issues. Yet, given the fact that the structure, size and composition of the board of companies are regulated by different national laws, the results of this analysis should be interpreted with care.

A total number of 4.525 firms from 28 European countries (including the Russian Federation) have been identified as Chinese owned companies in the Amadeus database on the basis of shareholder information. A company is considered to be a Chinese enterprise, when it has at least one shareholder with the Chinese nationality, who owns at least 10 per cent of the equity capital in the European subsidiary.

Table 1 and 2 provides a descriptive analysis of European based Chinese firms in terms of their age, employment, size, equity share, type of shareholders, ownership structure, legal forms, location, and knowledge intensity and technological level.

The European based Chinese companies can be divided into two major groups according to the available ownership information of their shareholders. The first group consists of the so-called Chinese corporate subsidiaries, i.e. 732 subsidiary companies set up by Chinese industrial or service companies and financial institutions which are often state owned enterprises (SOEs) with a relatively strong competitive position in their domestic market as compared to private firms in terms of technology and financial resources. The second category is formed by no less than 3.793 companies, which can be qualified as Chinese individual or family enterprises or entrepreneurial firms. They are mostly established by Chinese individual persons or families, such as migrant entrepreneurs and cross-border traders looking for opportunities abroad.

The size of the Chinese owned companies in Europe is quite small with 17 employees in average in the last available accounting year (2009 or 2010), and the majority (89 per cent) of these firms are small and microcompanies according to the firm size classification applicable in the European Union. The concentration of Chinese enterprises in the category of small and micro enterprises seems to be typical for Chinese companies in Europe. This is quite different from the foreign subsidiaries of multinational enterprises (MNEs) from developed countries that are typically large sized and on average larger than domestic firms in the host countries. Even compared to the investment by other emerging economies, Chinese companies are quite small (Zhang, Yang and Van Den Bulcke, 2011).

**Table 1.** Some business indicators of China invested companies in Europe, 2009

	Mean	<i>Number of available cases</i>	S.D.
Age	8.06	3.501	4.86
Sales (million Euro)	5.79	1.426	42.41
No. of employees	17.37	1.497	109.32
Equity share of main shareholder (%)	79.87	3.679	27.41
No of recorded subsidiaries	0.19	3.679	4.88
No of recorded shareholders	1.65	3.679	1.53

**Source:** Amadeus database

The so-called surge of Chinese enterprises in Europe is quite recent, as the average age of Chinese owned enterprises is only about eight years, while about three quarters of them were established after 2000s. Chinese owned enterprises in Europe are widely dispersed, although there is a strong concentration in only a few countries. The top five host countries of Chinese companies in Europe are Russia, Germany, Hungary, Romania and the United Kingdom. Together they take up 92 per cent of the total number of Chinese owned enterprises in Europe. This geographical concentration of Chinese enterprise is not only reflected at the country level, but also at the city level. Nearly three quarters of Chinese companies are located in ten cities and suburbs, namely Moscow, Budapest, Bucharest, Hamburg, Düsseldorf, London, Sofia, Köln, Berlin and Saint-Petersburg. Chinese owned enterprises are more likely to agglomerate around capital cities in Eastern Europe, while in Western Europe they are concentrated in regional hubs either with intensive industrial activities or logistic capabilities.

**Table 2.** Main characteristics of China invested companies in Europe  
(No. of firms)

	No. of firms	%
Type of investors		
Individual or family	3.793	83.82
Corporate investor	732	16.18
Size category		
Large	119	2.63
Medium	357	7.89
Small	4.049	89.48
Location		
Eastern Europe	3.037	67.12
Northern Europe	313	6.92
Southern Europe	21	0.46
Western Europe	1.154	25.50
Technology level		
Knowledge-intensive services (KIS)	307	7.11
Less knowledge-intensive services (LKIS)	3.778	87.49

Low-tech manufacturing	123	2.85
High-tech manufacturing	110	2.55
Ownership structure		
Wholly owned company	2.231	60.46
Majority Joint Venture	414	11.22
50:50 Joint Venture	563	15.26
Minority Joint Venture	482	13.06
Legal forms		
Private limited liability company	3.550	78.45
Public limited company	22	0.49
Limited partnership	799	17.66
Joint-stock company	92	2.03
One-person private limited company	46	1.02
Others	16	0.35

**Source:** Amadeus database

The type of Chinese companies and the size of their operations explain most of the difference between European sub-regions with regard to Chinese investment. Chinese corporate subsidiaries are relatively more concentrated in Western Europe, mostly in Germany, the UK, the Netherlands and France, while individual entrepreneurial firms tend to agglomerate in Eastern European countries, such as Russia, Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria. With regard to the size of the firms, large Chinese companies are highly concentrated in the West and North of Europe, while Eastern Europe is dominated by small and medium sized Chinese owned enterprises.

Chinese enterprises in Europe are highly concentrated in service activities, especially in less knowledge-intensive sectors (LKIS) (87 per cent), such as wholesale trade, food and beverage services and retail trade. The concentration of Chinese service companies in trade and related supporting activities reflects that most of these companies are still at the very beginning of their international expansion and are related to the highly export oriented Chinese economy. Only a small proportion, i.e. seven per cent of Chinese service activities, can be considered as knowledge-intensive services (KIS), carrying out knowledge-intensive market services, banking and insurance and high-tech services.

Only five per cent of Chinese owned enterprises in Europe are in manufacturing, of which about half are active in high and medium technology manufacturing, such as computers, electronics and optical products, basic pharmaceutical products, machinery and equipment, electrical equipment, motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers, and chemicals. The other half is engaged in medium and low technology manufacturing such as fabricated metals, rubber and plastics, and non-metallic mineral products. The investments of Chinese companies in knowledge intensive sectors are often carried out by large firms, while the less knowledge intensive sectors prevail in the category of small and medium sized companies.

### **3. Corporate governance**

#### **3.1. Ownership control**

The average equity share of Chinese investors in their European subsidiaries is 80 per cent. The choice of a particular ownership structure, i.e. wholly owned subsidiary or joint venture, is a trade-off between different factors which are not only related to specific resources and strategies of the firms, but are also location bound and influenced by the regulations of the host countries. About three fifths of Chinese companies in Europe are wholly owned subsidiaries, while the majority, equally and minority joint ventures accounted for respectively 11, 15 and 13 per cent. The entrepreneurial and family owned Chinese companies are more inclined to set up fifty-fifty joint ventures, while corporate investors preferred majority owned joint ventures. The choice of the small entrepreneurial investors for equally owned equity joint ventures may to some extent indicate their need to rely on external resources and to share the investment risks when entering European markets. The higher propensity of corporate investors for majority joint ventures reflects on the one hand their stronger financial or technological position and on the other hand their need to acquire or maintain control of their overseas investment operations.

About three fifths of the Chinese joint ventures in Europe were set up with partners from China, while another fifteen per cent relied on overseas Chinese living in the host and/or third countries for partnering. The joint ventures with non-Chinese partners accounted only for fifteen per cent. The fact that the majority of Chinese joint ventures were set up with Chinese or overseas Chinese counterparts clearly indicates that Chinese companies

still feel constrained to cooperate with foreign (i.e. non-Chinese) firms. This may be due to the perceived cultural and psychic distance and anticipated difficulties in the joint management operations.

Yet, Chinese corporate or institutional investors more often do involve foreign companies in their partnerships. Three fifths of the joint ventures set up by corporate/institutional investors have non-Chinese partners. The strong participation of non-Chinese companies in Chinese corporate subsidiaries suggests that this latter group of Chinese firms has stronger ownership advantages and feels better able to deal with the possible coordination costs occurring in the cooperation with partners from a different cultural and institutional background. On the other hand a joint venture partner might be preferred in order to acquire access to the particular technology or marketing or other knowledge of that company. Also the choice of a joint venture might be intended as a step in the internationalisation process and intended to switch to a wholly owned subsidiary at a later stage. Also the partnership with non-Chinese may be the result from a partial take-over of a local company.

The cross-sectoral analysis reveals that Chinese companies in the less knowledge intensive services are more inclined to opt for a wholly owned subsidiary due to its low requirement for investment and knowledge, while in industries with higher knowledge intensity, the joint venture with non-Chinese partners is more frequently used. The preference to cooperate with local European firms in knowledge intensive services and high-tech manufacturing seems to be influenced by the desire of Chinese multinational companies to learn from local partners as a part of their asset augmenting investment strategy.

The choice of the ownership structure and the partners also depends on the location factors or characteristics of the host country, such as the legal and institutional environment, the political and economic system, the labour market, and the cultural and psychic distance. In the East European countries, the Chinese firms prefer to take sole proprietorship or joint ventures with domestic Chinese partners. By contrast, Chinese companies in West, North and South Europe are less inclined to choose sole ownership and are more willing to establish joint ventures with local and non-Chinese companies to get access to local market knowledge and to share high investment costs and risks.

### 3.2. Board of directors

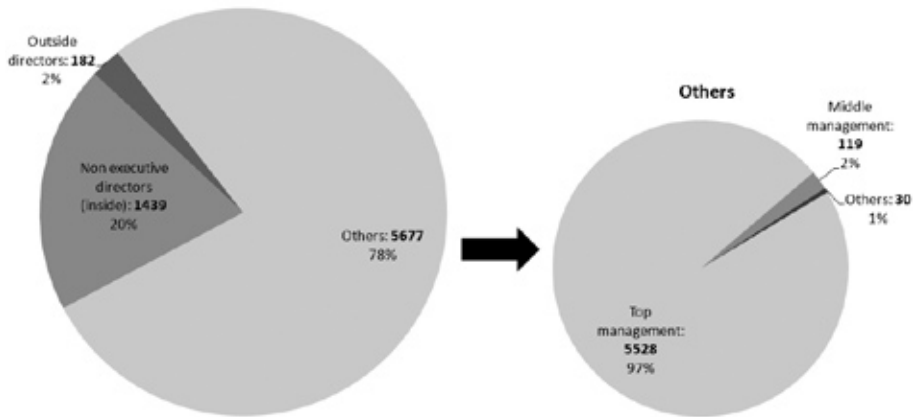
Although most European countries have their own specific business forms, the legal structure for business organisations across Europe is generally comparable, such as the structure of a limited liability company. More than three quarters (78 per cent) of Chinese companies in Europe are registered in this particular form. Other frequently used legal forms are limited partnerships (18 per cent) and joint stock companies (2 per cent). Also 22 Chinese owned companies are public quoted ones.

Different types of companies are subject to different requirements with regard to, e.g. the minimum capital, the structure and composition of the boards and the responsibilities of the general assembly of shareholders (Davies, 2000). In most European countries, the limited liability company has a one-tier board structure, where responsibilities are shared between representatives of the management (executive directors), representatives of the shareholders (non-executive directors) and external advisers or business partners (outside directors). An inside director is a board member who represents the interests of the company's stakeholders, and is supposed to have special knowledge about the company's operations, products and technology, financial situation, market position, etc. The inside directors are often employed by or closely related to the company, such as executives, major shareholders and in certain countries representatives of trade unions. An inside director may be an executive or non-executive director, depending on whether he/she is responsible for a management function in the organization. As compared to the executive directors, the non-executive directors usually do not have a daily management function, but are closely linked to the company, such as chairman of the board, shareholders, representatives of trade unions and technical or managerial experts.

An outside director is not employed by or engaged in the organization, and does not represent any of its stakeholders. In principle, the outside directors are appointed because of their wisdom, experience and relevant contacts. The integration of the outside directors in the board is expected to bring extra experience and insights to the board and to keep a watchful eye on the inside directors and on the way the organization is being run. Such representation has become strongly favoured in Western countries because it implies more objectivity and lessens the risk of conflicts of interest. Yet, outside directors might lack familiarity with the specific managerial and technical issues related to the company.

Composition: The 4.525 Chinese companies in the dataset count 7.332 board members. On the basis of their professional title, they are divided into *inside directors* and *outside directors*, while the inside directors are further divided into *executive directors* and *non-executive directors*. On the basis of the information about their name, nationality and country of origin, the board members can be split into three ethnic groups, i.e. *Chinese*, *overseas Chinese* and *non-Chinese* and their home countries can be further classified into China, the host country or a third country. The executive directors of Chinese companies are also separated into two groups according to their management position, i.e. top managers and middle managers. The top managers are senior managers or executives who hold positions such as chief executive officer (CEO), president, vice president, corporate head, etc., while the middle management consists of persons responsible for carrying out the goals at functional departments and other business units, like sales and marketing, production and IT and technology management. The management position of the executive directors will be analysed in order to acquire some insight in the management approach of Chinese multinational companies in their European subsidiaries.

The boards of directors of Chinese companies mainly consist of inside directors and are composed of 5.677 executive directors and 1.439 non-executive directors. Together they account for 98 per cent of all board members, meaning that only a negligent of two per cent of the board members are outside directors. This result indicates that Chinese owned enterprises in Europe are still very much internally oriented without any substantial involvement of external experts, such as bankers, accountants, consultants, etc. It indicates that Chinese companies are small and have a limited formalised corporate structure with an extremely limited diversity among the members of the board. Among the executive directors who are in charge of an operational management function in the company, 97 per cent are top managers and 2 per cent are at the middle management level.



**Figure 1.** Composition of board of directors of Chinese companies in Europe (% of directors)

**Source:** Amadeus database

**Size:** the size of the board is known to be correlated with observable firm characteristics, e.g. firm size, firm age, industry affiliation, as well as unobserved factors that are potentially linked to firm performance, such as investment and growth opportunities (Bennedsen, Kongsted and Nielsen, 2008). The average board size of Chinese firms is 1.6 members. Two thirds of the Chinese companies, i.e. 2.931 of 4.225 (65 per cent), are run by a 'one member board', while only two per cent count more than 4 board directors. The largest board of Chinese companies in Europe consists of 18 directors. While the minimum number of board members is regulated by the legal regulations or codes in most of European countries, the size of the board of directors is often positively related to the size of the companies. The large Chinese firms consist of on average of 3.5 board directors, while the small companies on average only count 1.6 members. Joint ventures typically have more board members than the wholly owned subsidiaries as two or more partners all want to have seats on the board of the companies in which they are shared owners.

**Diversity:** The diversity in the board members' profiles and backgrounds, i.e. according to their professional, international, ethnic and gen-

der background and other characteristics, equips the board with a range of complementary values, views and competencies that might be most useful for an active and balanced strategy. Such diversified boards are expected to provide the organisation with a wider pool of experts and to benefit from the knowledge of experienced business leaders. Also the different national or regional backgrounds or gender composition allows to more effectively tackle the 'group-think' biases and to generate new ideas (European Commission, 2011).

About a quarter of the board members of Chinese companies in Europe are female (27 per cent). As compared to their male counterparts, female directors more often occupy the position of non-executive director. In fact, more than half (55 per cent) of the non-executive board members are women, while male directors dominate in the positions of both the categories of executive directors and outside directors with respectively 77 per cent and 90 per cent. It is also interesting to notice that women are more frequently represented on the board of small Chinese firms, by about one third of total board members in this category of firms, while they account only for 15 and 8 per cent in the medium and large sized companies. This result suggests that Chinese companies in Europe have a rather low participation of women in their boardroom and management, especially in the large and middle sized companies and at the level of executive and outside positions. Yet, as no comparison was made with other foreign companies in Europe, it is not possible to draw definite conclusions about the gender balance in Chinese companies with regard to the board composition.

The international diversity of the board of a company presents another interesting aspect of the management structure and the corporate governance. About three fifths of the board members of Chinese companies in Europe are from China, 35 per cent from the host country and 5 per cent come from third countries. About two thirds of the board members from China take up the position of executive director (64 per cent), while the local board members and those from third countries function more frequently as non-executive or outside directors. The high proportion of board members from China and their high involvement in the executive positions shows that the Chinese subsidiaries in Europe are followed closely by their parent companies which tend to behave in an ethnocentric way which is typical for the early stages of the internationalisation process of multinational firms in general.

With regard to the ethnic diversity of the boards of Chinese firms in Europe, it is found that three quarters are Chinese, 5 per cent are overseas Chinese and 20 per cent are non-Chinese. Yet, the proportion of different types of board members varies with the size of the company. In the large firms, only 36 per cent of the board members are Chinese, while non-Chinese directors take up 59 per cent of the board positions. In the medium and small sized firms, Chinese directors account respectively for 50 and 81 per cent. Chinese board members are strongly concentrated in the category of executive directors, i.e. about three quarters (77 per cent) of all executive members, while non-Chinese dominate (71 per cent) in the group of outside directors. Clearly, large Chinese companies have more diversified boards. This should lead to more open discussions and interactions among the different stakeholders and result in better decisions even though the decision making process might take more time.

**Table 3.** Composition of board of directors of different types of Chinese companies in Europe (% of number of directors)

	Type of directors			Origin of directors		
	Executive directors	Non executive directors	Outside directors	From China	From the host country	From a third country
Type of firms (investors)						
Corporate subsidiaries	76.24	17.21	6.55	34.78	56.74	8.48
Entrepreneurial firms	91.29	6.82	1.88	72.44	23.01	4.54
Ownership structure						
Wholly owned subsidiary	89.16	9.86	0.98	72.02	21.98	6.00
Majority JVs	83.16	9.69	7.15	44.48	49.63	5.89
Equality JVs	92.58	5.75	1.67	73.68	22.89	3.43
Minority JVs	79.98	12.28	7.74	37.45	56.17	6.38

Technological level/knowledge intensity						
KIS	77.53	13.72	8.75	36.61	54.92	8.46
LKIS	93.75	4.52	1.73	69.63	26.27	4.09
Low-tech manuf.	76.13	14.86	9.01	39.01	51.57	9.42
High-tech manuf.	79.83	11.16	9.01	23.73	71.19	5.08
Location						
Western Europe	92.54	2.30	5.16	39.52	52.13	8.35
Eastern Europe	97.82	1.55	0.63	82.68	15.91	1.40
Northern Europe	41.44	52.35	6.22	41.79	43.28	14.93
Southern Europe	48.05	28.57	23.38	30.38	67.09	2.53

**Source:** Amadeus database

### 3.3. Ownership differences

As expected, the comparison between corporate subsidiaries and entrepreneurial companies reveals a number of differences with regard to the size and composition of their boards. As expected the individual and family owned firms have fewer board members as compared to corporate subsidiaries, i.e. 1.5 as compared to 2 persons, although the difference is extremely small. The boards of the entrepreneurial firms are composed of a higher proportion of executive directors, i.e. 91 per cent as compared to 76 per cent for corporate Chinese companies. Clearly, corporate Chinese companies tend to involve more non-executive and outside directors, while individual and family companies heavily rely on their inside, especially executive directors as they account for 98 per cent of the board members.

The size of the board and its composition may also change according to the mode of investment. Wholly owned subsidiaries have fewer board members, while minority joint ventures involve more representatives on the board. The wholly owned Chinese subsidiaries have on average 1.2 board members, while the majority and minority joint ventures respectively count

1.8 and 2.1 persons. With regard to the composition of the board of directors, the wholly owned subsidiaries, majority and 50:50 joint ventures have a higher presence of executive directors in the board, while the minority joint ventures include more non-executive and outside directors. Especially in the entrepreneurial enterprises, the owners strongly and actively participate in the daily management tasks.

About one third (35 per cent) of the board members in the corporate subsidiaries have the Chinese nationality, while this proportion is almost three quarters (72 per cent) for individual companies. Subsidiaries established by industrial companies and financial institutions involve more local and third country members in the board (65 per cent), while this is only 28 per cent for individual and family invested companies. The composition of the boards of directors in term of the country of origin also varies according to the ownership structure. The wholly owned firms have more board members from China (i.e. 72 per cent), while in the minority joint ventures, it is only 37 per cent. As most of the equally owned joint ventures were established with Chinese partners, the proportion of board members from Chinese origin is higher than for other forms of joint ventures.

It is also interesting to find that one fifth of board members in the Chinese wholly owned companies are from the host country. In fact, more than one quarter (608 out of the 2,231) of Chinese wholly owned companies in Europe have board members from the European host countries. Most of these companies are located in Germany, Russia, the UK and Bulgaria. Yet, Chinese corporate wholly owned subsidiaries are more inclined to have local board membership than the entrepreneurial firms. Although full ownership guarantees more control by the parent company in China, the involvement of local board members is intended to provide specific local knowledge and experience which is considered important for the successful operation of the firm.

### 3.4. Regional and sectoral differences

The composition of the boards of Chinese firms in Europe also differs according to their location and industrial specialisation. Firms located in Eastern and Western Europe have a high proportion of executive directors, who account for respectively 98 and 93 per cent of the board members, while the relative share is only 48 and 42 per cent for those located in Southern and Northern Europe. This difference is likely to be related to two characteristics of Chinese firms in Northern and Southern Europe. On the one hand they

are more engaged in minority partnerships with local companies (i.e. high proportion of minority joint ventures) while on the other hand they are more active in knowledge intensive services (especially in Denmark and the UK) and in high-tech manufacturing (e.g. the acquisition by Chinese firms of renewable energy companies in Italy and Spain).

Based on the level of technology it is found that Chinese companies in less knowledge intensive services have a higher proportion of executive directors on their boards (94 per cent), while firms providing knowledge intensive services count more non-executive and outside directors. This may suggest that knowledge intensive companies, often in high tech financial services and knowledge intensive marketing, opt for a more diversified board in order to involve external experts, business partners, service providers, bankers, etc. as a way to access specific knowledge and local business networks. Yet, the large sized knowledge intensive service companies tend to have more diversified board members in order to represent the interests of stakeholders as a "best practice" of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The manufacturing firms also have more external and non-executive representatives on their boards, as they more often have formed joint ventures which request a larger and more diversified board.

With regard to the international composition of the board, firms located in Eastern Europe have a low participation of local and third country directors, i.e. only 16 and 1 per cent respectively. By contrast, firms in the rest of Europe on average have more than half of their board members coming from the host and third countries. Firms operating in high-tech manufacturing industries tend prefer more local and third country board members, as in fact three quarters of them are non-Chinese. In low-tech manufacturing, the participation of local and third country members is lower, i.e. about three fifths (61 per cent). In the service industry, the board of Chinese firms in the knowledge intensive service companies is quite diversified as more than half of the board (55 per cent) come from the host countries and about 8 per cent from third countries. In the less knowledge intensive services these percentages amount to 26 and 4 (Figure 45).

### 3.5. Management aspects

The information about 5,677 executive directors in the Amadeus dataset provides some insights into the managerial aspects of Chinese firms in Europe. Nine out of ten (91 per cent) of the executive directors are top man-

agers, such as CEOs, administrators and managing directors according to the titles used in different European countries. Seven per cent of executives are chairmen of the board with executive functions such as CEO, while the remaining executives are middle managers in charge of functional management, such as finance, marketing, human resources and procurement.

The average age of 833 executive directors for which this information is available (mostly based in Romania, the UK and France) is 45 years. One third of these managers have less than 40 years of experience, which is quite young for such senior positions in an international company. Yet, most of the companies for which such information about the age of executives is available are small sized and were set up by individual investors or family businesses.

Three fifths of the executive directors in Chinese companies are top managers from China, while another four per cent belong to other Asian economies, especially the so-called Greater China, i.e. Hong Kong and Taiwan. The European executives account for 36 per cent, and mostly come from Germany (17 per cent), Hungary (10 per cent), the UK (6 per cent), etc. The importance of Asian and European countries depends not only on the number of executives of Chinese enterprises located on their territories, but also on the partnerships. While the wholly owned subsidiaries tend to rely on their own executives, joint ventures incorporate more local executives in the board of directors. It is interesting to note that Chinese companies in Europe also have an important number of executives from Hong Kong and Taiwan, which indicates the contribution of overseas Chinese in the internationalisation and management of mainland Chinese companies in Europe.

By matching the information between shareholders and managers, the Amadeus database allowed to divide the executives of Chinese companies into two groups, namely, the professional managers and entrepreneurs, i.e. shareholders acting as executives. Typically, the former management is used by large and corporate owned firms, while the latter one characterises the management of individual or family business. Although professional management is definitely used by a number of private Chinese enterprises both in their domestic and overseas operations, the founders or family members still retain the top and key management positions in many companies both in their home and overseas operations. These type of companies are regarded as family possessions where the entrepreneurs exercise

a strongly personalised and centralized control. Figure 48 indicates that about 43 per cent of executives in Chinese individual or family owned companies are shareholders, while this proportion is less than one per cent in the corporate subsidiaries. The combination of investor and manager functions is more frequently used in small sized firms, as 38 per cent of the shareholders in small Chinese owned firms occupy the top management functions, while this proportion is only 10 per cent for medium sized companies and less than two per cent in large firms.

The cross-sector analysis shows that professional management is more relied on in the Chinese companies that are active in high-tech manufacturing and knowledge intensive services. By contrast, in less knowledge intensive services and low-tech manufacturing a higher proportion of management positions are ensured by shareholders. The difference is also found between regions. In Eastern and Western Europe, a higher proportion of management positions of Chinese companies are taken up by their shareholders, which may reflect a lower level of professionalism in the management. Yet, the regional difference in the management structure reflects the ownership patterns of Chinese owned companies in different European regions. In Eastern Europe, especially in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, most of the Chinese companies are launched by individual or family owned firms, set up by Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs. As a result, the management of these companies is often ensured by the entrepreneurs. In Western Germany, about one third (30 per cent) of the management positions in Chinese companies are occupied by their shareholders, and also indicates a strong presence of Chinese international entrepreneurs in Germany.

The comparison between Chinese corporate and family owned firms in Europe provides a number of insights into their corporate governance and management style. As compared to corporate subsidiaries, family owned companies tend to have a small sized board with a higher proportion of inside directors. The management of these companies are generally often ensured by the entrepreneurs themselves. Although individual and family owned firms are often small sized companies active in less knowledge intensive services (mostly in trading activities), on the basis of certain measurements their performance was better than the larger corporate companies. This observation raises a number of questions related to their firm specific advantages and their business environment that might be related to their ethnic connections.

#### **4. Conclusion**

On the basis of a dataset of 4,525 European based Chinese enterprises, this study provided a preliminary analysis of the ownership control and corporate governance of Chinese firms in Europe, especially the composition and international diversity of board of directors. The data showed that the boards of directors of Chinese companies almost exclusively consist of inside directors, indicating that Chinese owned enterprises in Europe are still very much internally oriented and rarely rely on external experts. As most of the Chinese companies in Europe are small they have a limited formalised structure with little or no diversity among the members of the board in terms of their professional, international, ethnic and gender background.

Based on the level of technology it is found that Chinese companies in less knowledge intensive services have a higher proportion of executive directors who are represented on their boards, while firms providing knowledge intensive services count more non-executive and outside directors. This may suggest that knowledge intensive companies, often in high tech financial services and knowledge intensive marketing, opt for a more diversified board in order to benefit from the potential contributions of the external experts, business partners, service providers, bankers, etc. in order to have a better and easier access to specific knowledge and local business networks. Yet, the large sized knowledge intensive service companies tend to have more diversified board members in order to represent the interests of stakeholders as a "best practice" of corporate social responsibility. The manufacturing firms also have more external and non-executive representatives on their boards. In fact, as they more often have formed joint ventures they need a larger and more diversified board.

The composition of the boards of Chinese firms in Europe also differs according to their location. Firms located in Eastern and Western Europe have a high proportion of executive directors, while the relative share of this latter group of directors is very low in Southern and Northern Europe. This difference is likely to be related to two characteristics of the Chinese firms in Northern and Southern Europe. On the one hand they are more engaged in minority partnerships with local companies (i.e. a high proportion of minority joint ventures) while on the other hand they are more active in knowledge intensive services (especially in Denmark and the UK) and in high-tech manufacturing.

Although this descriptive study fills a gap in the literature about the corporate governance and management of Chinese multinational enterprises, it is still at a preliminary stage. We should acknowledge that further research should be extended to a more conceptual framework with a comprehensive literature review and sophisticated statistic test. This extension would enable us to assess the impact of firm and location specific factors on the corporate governance of Chinese companies in Europe on the one hand and the impact of the corporate governance on the firm performance on the other hands.

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# Influence of Chinese and Western Cultural Differences on the Management of Multinational Companies – Application of Cultural Four-dimensional Model

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## 1. Introduction

In terms of the management development, the management research focuses on the operational economic factors regardless of the scientific management theory, modern management process theory, human behavior theory and decision-making theory. Since 1980s, the western academic circles have turned to the non-economic factors for the research focus, attaching the importance to the comparative research on the management under the different cultural backgrounds. And the different cultural backgrounds of the staff in the multinational enterprises make the cultural difference an important factor influencing management effects, which increases the management operation cost of the enterprise.

## 2. Cultural Four-dimensional Model

On the one hand, the culture of a national is reflected in a variety of tangible substances, such as music, dancing, paintings, and etc. On the other hand, the profound content of the culture exists in the invisible layers, hiding deep in the values and assumptions below the visible layers.

Greet Hofstede, a Dutch sociologist created the Cultural Four-dimensional Model for analyzing culture. He spent 20 years conducting a study on 11600 staff from 39 branch companies of IBM, so as to identify 4 aspects of cul-

tural values. Power Distance, Individualism and Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity Dimension.

a) Power Distance Dimension (PDI)

The power distance dimension is applied to measure the expectation and acceptance degree of a society for the inequality of the power division in the organizations. In the culture with great power distance, it is expected and accepted that the powers are centered on the several persons in the hierarchical and organized social system. While in the culture with little power distance, there will be less levels and more decentralization. And more chances are provided for the individuals to take part in and organize a variety of activities, which will bring the enthusiasm and subjective initiative of the individuals to the full play.

b) Individualism Index and Collectivism Index (II, CI)

It is applied to measure the weight degree of tightly knit groups and the individuals of the loose organizations. The individualism refers to a loose social structure where the individuals only care about the interests of themselves and direct relatives; while the collectivism refers to a close-knit social structure where people hope that the group they belong to takes care of them and pays more attention to them. And they will in turn be more loyal to the group or organization.

c) Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

Living in an uncertain world, we know little about the future to a large extent. Different societies respond to the uncertainty with different ways. Some societies make the members accept the uncertainty, where people bear the risks with equanimity. Greet describes these societies as the ones with low uncertainty avoidance. In other words, people feel relatively safe. And such countries include Singapore, Switzerland and Denmark. In the society with high uncertainty avoidance, the members will have intensive anxiety level. They create organization to provide safety and induce risks. In these societies, people will have relatively low work mobility with the permanent employment being a popular policy. Such countries include Japan, Portugal, Greece and China.

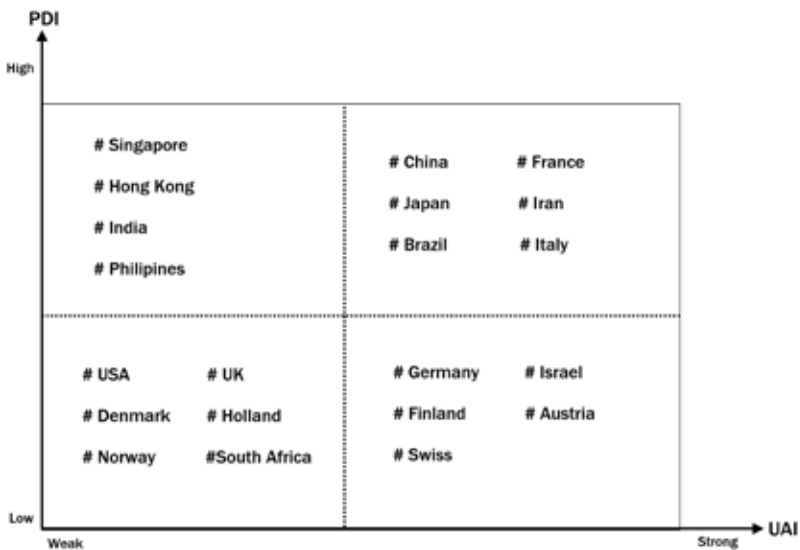
d) Masculinity Index (MI)

It is the fourth dimension of a national culture. And this concept includes the opposite aspect as well – feminine dimension. The masculinity dimension represents the value degree of “male” advantage in the society. For ex-

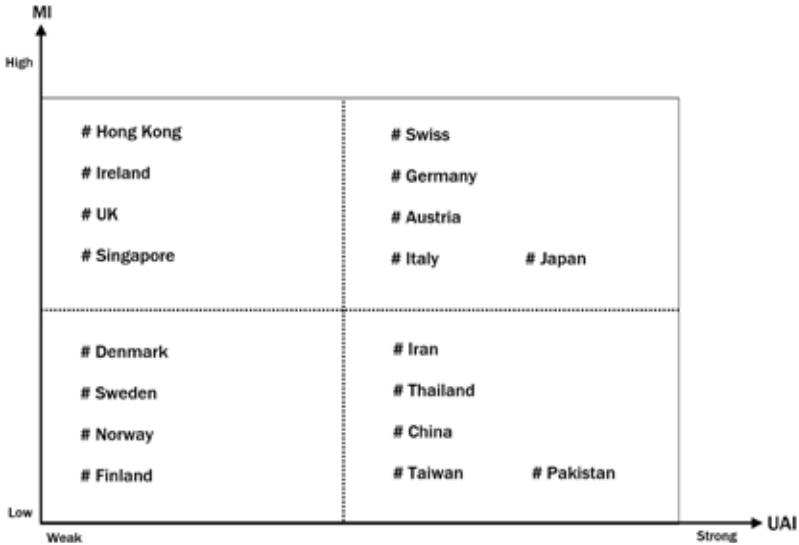
ample, self-confidence, money and material wealth obtainment, non-care about others and emphasis on the living quality or human beings, all these values can be identified as “masculinity” because in almost all the societies, the male will obtain higher marks in the positive aspects of these values than in the negative aspects (such as self-confidence instead of the lacking in the self-confidence).

According to the research in the 40 western wealthy nations, larger and more thriving nations in the third world, the result indicates that the cultures of most nations and areas in the world can be classified into the following types according to the obtained remarks of four-dimensional national culture:

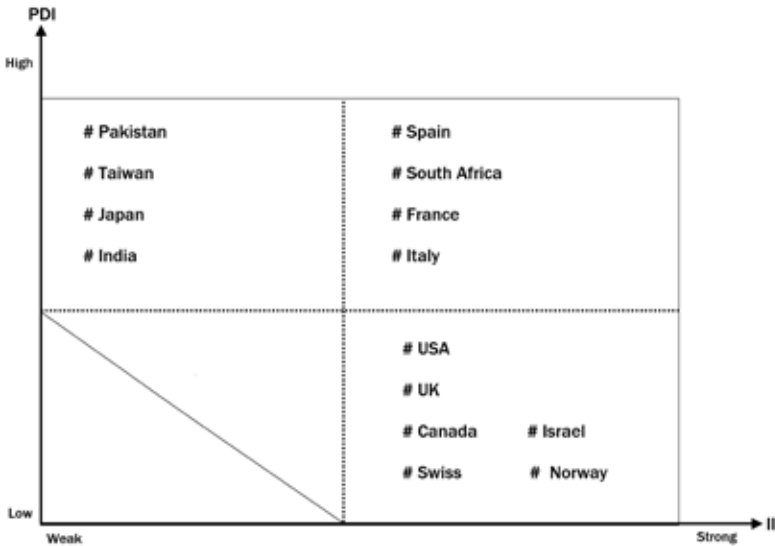
- a) The classification of 40 nations and areas in power distance and uncertainty avoidance dimension



- b) The classification of 40 nations and areas in Masculinity and Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension



c) The classification of 40 nations and areas in Power Distance and Individualism dimension



### 3. Differences of Chinese and Western Cultural Backgrounds

#### 3.1. Oriental culture with Chinese culture as representative

Firstly, Confucian culture. Chinese culture is an important power influencing Asian culture and even all the oriental culture. And the core content and main features are as follows: Harmony source. The thought of harmony emphasizes on the harmony between human beings and the outside world in-

cluding nature, society and others as well as pays attention to the internal cognitive, affective and volitional unity of individuals themselves. Secondly, Collectivity orientation. Essentially, the collectivity orientation is the specific reflection of harmony philosophical thought in relationship between human beings and society. And “harmony” is the source of collectivity orientation. The collectivity orientation, with families as the base, has been the main line throughout the Chinese moral values during thousands of years, which focuses on the society, groups and interpersonal relationship, screams for the unity between the existence and development of individuals and that of the whole family and society and believes that the interests of groups are more important than those of individuals completely and the character and value of a single individual is not worthy of mention. Thirdly, Moral ideal. In terms of either national acts or individual acts, Chinese nation is a nation with “great love” and “friendliness and benevolence”, full of moral idealism. The moral standards of “humanity, justice, propriety, wisdom and integrity as well as “temperateness, kindness, courtliness, thriftiness and magnanimity” and the great ambitions of “self-cultivation, family harmony, country management and world peace” reflect the moral requirements and pursuits of Confucianism, making China form the moral thoughts including that “the power of morals have an advantage over that of truths to a great extent” and “pay attention to the ties of friendship while make light of the truths” during the long term historical development process. As a result, quite a number of scholars make the conclusion that “In China, the moral judgment is superior to the value judgment and in turn, the value judgment superior to the fact judgment”.

### *3.2. Western culture with European and American cultures as the representatives*

Western culture with European and American cultures as the representatives. Firstly, Individual orientation. Individualism, freedom, equality and competition, all are the presentations of the western culture. And the base of the presentations lies in the individual orientation that is the ideological basis and foot fold of western values. Emphasizing on the individual freedom and respecting individual thought and experience, the individual orientation holds the view that the individual is the cell of the society, the core and purpose with the highest value while the nation and society are only the means for the achievement of the individual purposes and their missions are to protect the rights of the individuals. Self-centeredness, pursuit of personal interests, profit obtainment for themselves, self-struggling, all

are the specific reflection of the individual orientation in thought and action. Secondly, Interests come first. Due to the cultural gene of the individual orientation, the westerners have formed the value orientation of the concern about self-interests instead of emotions and moral power during the long-term history course. As a result, compared with the oriental, the westerners lack human touch and ignore the related groups. And the shown utilitarianism is completely opposite to the moral idealism in oriental culture. Thirdly, Christianity. The achievements in all the layers of the western culture are based on the belief in the God. The Christian believe in the absoluteness and the forever existence of the God, pursue the ideas of the freedom and equality of all men. That is, everyone is equal before the God as well as the truth and laws; being an independent individual, everyone can decide the belief by themselves. The essence of western human rights and democracy is the aspect that the Christian has paid attention to and emphasized on particularly for a long time as well. Hence, to some extent, the Christian is the origin of the western human rights and democratic ideas.

#### **4. Management Model of Enterprises under Chinese and Western Cultural Differences**

##### *4.1. Management model of Chinese enterprises*

Chinese enterprises are based on family-running management. The management models of Chinese enterprises are mainly influenced by the Confucianism and Taoism. The Confucianism attaches importance to the unity with the people and takes peace as the best option. And the Taoism puts forward "the time is not as important as the terrain; but in turn the terrain is not as important as the unity with the people". As a result, most of the Chinese entrepreneurs pursue the principle of "unity", treating "selection and employment of talents" as the key link of enterprise management; and the essences in dialectics application of Taoism, including the views of action through inaction, the knowing of when to yield and when not, the conquering of the unyielding with the yielding, one step back today for two steps forward tomorrow, are regarded as the management rules by quite a few enterprises. From the private enterprises starting barely to the Chinese enterprises in Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and those enjoying a long standing reputation, all build up the fortune as family-running enterprises. It is the Chinese traditional culture that is their management philosophy and the cultural deposits for the success of management. In addition, the overseas entrepreneurial environment requires the Chinese to strive for the success

depending on the self-struggling, the cooperation of family members as well the assistance of kinsmen and fellow townsmen. Hence, the trust and family affection will appear among the family members and fellow townsmen naturally. And there will form the ethical management model with the leniency, kindheartedness and equality as the rules.

#### *4.2. Management model of Japanese enterprises*

Japanese enterprises pays great attention to the cultivation of employees' loyalty. The miraculously rapid growth of Japanese economy after the war brings broad reputation to the management model of Japanese enterprises. At a time, "learning from the Japanese" became a popular slogan in the European and American enterprise circles and their media. The main content of the management model of Japanese enterprises that enjoyed extensive attention and great praise in the international is the complete set of personnel management system popularly applied in the great Japanese enterprises including such human-based management as the lifelong employment system, senior system, all-inclusive employment for the formal employees, the finalized training for the staff, the emphasis on the unity of the people, group decision-making as well as the benefits and welfare of the staff. The value idea followed by this set of system can be summarized to one point that it can train the high loyalty of the employees to the companies. Every employee treats himself as a part of the company and connects the lifetime happiness and the achievement of self-worth with the fate of the company. Hence, the employees have great sense of responsibility and initiative in the work.

#### *4.3. Management model of German enterprises*

German enterprises are characterized by clear relations of responsibility, power, benefit and the participation of the employees in the management. Germany is the best nation among the western nations in terms of the participation of the employees in the enterprise management system which is one of the main reasons for the rapider development of the German economy after the war as well. The advantages of the German rational management model include the clear relations of the responsibility, power and benefit and the high work efficiency. German enterprises have quite strict organization, in which they are provided with clear-cut layers, explicit division of labor, high efficiency and the strict implementation of plans. And even if they are encountered with changes in circumstances, the prescribed order can be still followed.

#### 4.4. Management model of American enterprises

American enterprises give prominence to the personal ability and emphasizing on the rationalism management. America is the source of the modern enterprise management, having formed a set of scientific management system over the years. One is the team spirit full of "individualistic heroism". The popularity of heroism and individualism is reflected in the employee layer, especially in the management layer in the American enterprises. Everyone is industrious and aspirant in the post, and do "perfect" work within the range of responsibility. And this motive power strives from the heart instead of their subjecting to the compulsory regulations of the organization or the oppression. The advocacy of the American enterprises for the "self-struggling" stimulates the work enthusiasm of the employees. As a result, they are more inclined to the improvement of their vocational skills toward the deep direction. Especially, the managers or the employees in the management department are proficient in their own work, guaranteeing that there are proper professional talents in all the post inside the American enterprises performing the responsibilities. And these qualified employees expertised in their own posts in knowledge structure and professional quality form the core competitiveness of the enterprises.

Another is the great power of execution. The "rationalism" culture peculiar to America guarantees the possibility of the establishment of great execution power in the American enterprises. The features of the rationalism lie in the utilitarianism of positivism, the emphasis on "action" and "effect", the experience and truth being come down to the "result of action", the knowledge being come down to the "tool of action" and the truth being come down to the "success of action". In the eyes of the American managers with rationalism, such incentive mechanism is the important content to promote the execution power of the employees, the greatest support and assistance to the employees, stimulating their working enthusiasm for their achieving of great performance.

### 5. Strategies on Cross-cultural Management of Multinational Enterprises

#### 5.1. Right Treatment to Different Cultures

As the products of the cultures of different nations and areas, the enterprise cultures only have differences with no good or bad. Treat the different enterprise cultures with neural and objective sights, and get rid of all the prej-

udices. However, facts prove that people are always proud of the cultures of their own nations. Most people regard their own cultures as “orthodox ones” intentionally or unintentionally while hold the view that the foreign cultures, words and deeds are strange and eccentric. For the multinational enterprises, the cultural differences are a double-edged sword, being both the good and the bad. The more differences the enterprise culture has, the more chances of conflicts it owns. Instead, if it can adopt the strong points while overcoming the weak points and conduct proper management, the more differences the enterprise culture has, the more chances it has for the production of positive value-added effects. Apart from the right understanding and treating to the cultural differences, more importantly, the successful multinational enterprises can manage these differences effectively to make them produce great value-added effects.

### 5.2. Cross-culture Training

S. Neuponign, an economist, put forward “cross-cultural training”, clarifying five ways for the quick adaption to the new cultures. (1) Word solution. The trained managers read a large number of literal information on various cultures, including such aspects as the history, geography, traditions, systems and economy. In addition, the video recording medium is often adopted as well. (2) Cultural integration solution. The trainees are required to solve some problems about the conflicts between their own culture and another one, by which, the trainees can realize the differences between the two cultures promptly and know how to eliminate the disharmony and conflict during their management practice. (3) Language guidance solution. Guide the trainees to communicate with others in a cultural environment with a certain belief and master the local language to a certain extent through several ways, which need 0.5-1 year. (4) Sensibility solution. Train the trainees to understand the subtle implication in the new culture. (5) Training implementation solution. The trainees will be dispatched to the culture for the personal experiencing.

### 5.3. Localization of Management

The “localization” includes the localization of production and management, scientific research and development, human resource management and marketing concepts. And the localization of human resource management plays an important role in the formation of cross-cultural communication in the cross-cultural management. More and more joint ventures have realized the importance of the localized management for the success of the al-

lopatric investment. The strategies of IBM localization include the employment of the local staff as far as possible, the cultivation of their loyalty to the company and the appointment of the competent local manger, which can avoid the cultural conflicts well and carry out the business smoothly. Suzhou Sanyo Electro-mechanical Co., Ltd is a sole enterprise the Japanese invested in Shekou, Guangdong. Baoke, the chairman, believes that the talents are the source of vitality for the development of enterprises. And for the foreign businessmen to invest the enterprises in China, the localization of the management is the major premise of the success.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper concluded causes and concrete representations of cultural differences and conflicts between China and the other counties with western cultural background through contrasting different cultures and management models. This paper camp up with strategies for western companies in China on their methods of building up a cross-culture management model with localization, and emphasized the importance of cross-cultural training.

For multinational companies, cultural differences are both important and multifarious variables. It could lead to various cultural conflicts and oppositions to entering the Chinese market, without knowing Chinese cultural differences. This is one of important reasons of many multinational companies' failure in doing business in China.

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# China is a Global Leader

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## ***Will China take a lead?***

In the middle of the last decade China has adopted a new grand strategy. If one wants to describe it shortly in Mao- Fashion, it is called 4M consisting of M.C. (More Cosnume) and three M.I. (More Import, More Invest abroad and More Innovate which on my opinion is the most important from all 4M). China has increased six times in the last 10 years R&D expenditures, the number of scientists was doubled and the number of scientific publications is lagging only USA. In 2011 China took the lead position in the world in number of new patent filings becoming the leader of innovations. It is not any extraordinary event in the history of China, China actually was leader of innovations in the world for many centuries in the past. They lost this position for five centuries in favour of the West. These days they prove, that they have learned the lesson.

## ***The domination of China***

Even in the middle of the last century, knowledge of China's innovation and contribution to modern science, technology and medicine was virtually a mystery.

A famous representative of the medieval world of science Francis Bacon listed the inventions which in his view were crucial in shaping our civilization. These included printing, gunpowder and magnetic compass. Francis Bacon never met the authors of these inventions, nor the country in which they were conceptualized and constructed. Later, the Europeans became aware of the Chinese origin of these fundamental inventions which, with the addition of paper, are known as the Four Great Inventions.

In Europe, only in 1948 the University of Cambridge launched the project "Science and Civilisation in China" under the guidance of Joseph Needham.

The fruits of this work were collected in 25 tomes, the first of which was published in 1956. It turned out that many of the Chinese achievements had been forgotten even in China. Therefore the published results were an amazing surprise – not only in Europe, but in China as well.

Results of these studies have shown that modern agriculture, shipbuilding industry, oil processing, astronomy, mathematics, medicine and many other fields of science and technology owe a lot to designers, discoverers and inventors from China. Many of the inventions and discoveries, which we assign to Europeans in the history of science, had their fathers in China. Movable type of print was not invented by Gutenberg in Germany, but many centuries earlier in China. Also William Harvey did not discover the systemic circulation of blood in the body, and Newton's first law was formulated in China long before the birth of Isaac Newton.

Inventions or descriptions of discoveries created in China, often after many years, mostly by land through merchants travelling the Silk Road through Arab countries, appeared in Europe. The period between the appearance of information about many inventions or discoveries in Europe and the earliest mentions in China is even more than 2000 years. In agriculture, this applies to row cultivation and intensive hoeing, as well as the use of the iron plough. In engineering structures, the double acting piston bellows for liquid travelled to Europe more than 2100 years, and for air – 1900 years. A similar period of time was needed to reveal discoveries in astronomy, mathematics and medicine. The presence of sunspots became known in Europe with a 2000-year delay, and even more – 2300 years – separated the learning of the decimal system in mathematics. 2000 years were also necessary for the science of endocrinology and circulation of the blood to appear in Europe.

For Four Great Inventions which, in the opinion of Francis Bacon, played such an important role in the development of science, it also took many centuries to travel to Europe. The longest it took for the magnetic compass – 1500 years, a little less for paper – 1400 years, printing – 700 years, and gunpowder – only 300 years.

Not many people realize that without these discoveries and inventions the history and development of Europe would probably look significantly different. Inventions originating from China allowed us to discover new continents. These travels would not be possible without borrowing the ship's

rudder and compass from China. Columbus would not have discovered America, and Vasco da Gama would not have sailed to India to create the spice route. Equipment and armaments of European soldiers would have also looked significantly different. Without the use of another Chinese invention, the stirrup, knights of the Middle Ages would not have been able to ride great war horses. Wars would have looked completely different without the invention of the crossbow, and then gunpowder, rifles and cannons. Without these inventions Europeans would have not been able to conquer other continents and win the Opium Wars with China in the second half of the 19th century.

The culmination of the period of Chinese domination in innovations and development of science and technology were the great maritime expeditions of the Chinese sailor Zheng He in the early 15th century. In the years 1405-1424 he held six expeditions, reaching the shores of West Africa and Sumatra almost one hundred years before Vasco da Gama. It is also being mentioned that he held a seventh expedition in the years 1430-1433, during which he circled the globe 90 years before Magellan, but there is no sufficient evidence to support this hypothesis. Zheng He's fleet consisted of approximately 300 ships, the largest of which was five times longer than Columbus' ship Santa Maria, and the crew consisted of 28000 sailors. This was the largest fleet sailing the seas of the world before the First World War.

At that time, ravaged by epidemics and wars, shattered into many small countries and city-states constantly competing with each other, Europe was only at the beginning of its march towards a dynamic development. The dominance of the East was unquestionable. In the year 1500 the future European powers occupied only 10% of the Earth's surface with 16% of its population, producing 43% of the global GDP. Currently the powers include 11 countries, with nine members of the European Union: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom, as well as the United States and Russia. In the year 1500 only France, Spain and Portugal existed in a form more or less similar to present. The largest city in the world was Beijing with about 700,000 inhabitants. The only European city in the top ten was Paris with 100,000 inhabitants. London had less than 50,000 inhabitants. After nearly 400 years, the situation has changed dramatically. In 1913 the European powers occupied 58% of the world with 57% of the population, producing 79% of the global GDP. Among the ten largest cities in the world the largest was London with 6.5 million inhabitants. The only Asian city on the list was Tokyo.

## **Five centuries of European domination**

In the novel by Samuel Johnson, published in 1759, "The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia" the question "By what means are the Europeans thus powerful?" is followed by the answer "They are more powerful because they are wiser and knowledge will always predominate over ignorance". However the earlier achievements of China, as well as other powers of that time, such as India or the Ottoman Empire, impose the question: why it is the Europeans are wiser than other nations? The answer to this question is the topic of many discussions and arguments. It is particularly important to assess the sustainability of this domination and the possible consequences of its loss.

Many researchers in the first half of the previous century drew attention to the aspects of cultural differences. Max Weber defined the Confucian rationalism as "rational adjustment to the world", leading to a society that will be static and allergic to innovations, in contrast to the Western rationalism – a "rational mastery of the world", encouraging the society to transform its environment.

Most researchers are now inclined to the view of five basic factors. The first is "competition", resulting from the decentralisation of political and economic life. The second are "property rights", guarding private property and social peace controlled by elected authorities. The third is "consumer society" – reliance of the economy on the relation between the supply and demand. The fourth is "work ethic" – ethical and moral framework, generally based on religion and bonding the society. The last factor is "science and medicine", that is, education, understanding of the laws governing the world, exploration of these laws and exploitation of the results to further develop the science, engineering and technology. Only a mixture of the above factors led to a change in the leading position.

We have to remember that the first blast furnace for smelting iron ore was made in China in 200 BC, not in Coalbrookdale in England in 1709, and the first steel bridge was not build in England, but in Yunnan province in China in 64 AD. The level of steel production in England in 1778 was much lower than 700 years earlier in China. However, these inventions did not become the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in China, unlike in the West. China lacked the impact of the above factors or their influence was too weak.

Similar conclusions can be drawn when comparing the development of maritime expeditions. During the expeditions of Zheng the West did not

have ships capable of sailing on the high seas. First Western sea-sailing ships were about to be built by Henry the Navigator 50 years later. They were incomparably more primitive, but in the presence of the above factors they initiated the Spice Race leading to conquest of almost the entire world by European countries. The idea of using sea routes was established due to the attempt to take over the supplies of roots from Asia to Europe, for which the land route used earlier (in the case of Portugal) was the longest. Therefore, a competitive factor became the foundation of the expedition. Property rights guaranteed that benefits obtained by the organisers will be at least partially owned by them. The existence of the market and the consumer society provided the possibility to sell the imported goods at the market price, and the work ethic gave the members of the crew a guarantee of even a small share in profits, motivating them to participate in these dangerous expeditions.

The trade was so profitable that as a result of many wars, the more powerful countries took control over it – Portugal, Spain, later the Netherlands, and finally England. Columbus' expedition in 1492 was not intended to discover a new continent, but to find a new access to the roots. If not for the pursuit of Spain to take over the Portuguese root trade, probably the Spanish monarchs, just like the rulers of other countries, would have refused Columbus their financial support and the expedition would not have happened. When it turned out that the territory discovered by Columbus does not have roots, Spaniards forced Portugal out of the route created by Vasco da Gama in an armed conflict. Similarly, in other areas colonized by the West, individual countries constantly fought with each other to extend their influence. Maintaining or expanding the sphere of influence depended on better ships and equipment. Improved armament was also necessary to shape the sphere of influence in Europe. From the group of 11 Western leaders of that time only three of them survived since 1500 in a similar shape. The rest of them have been shaping constantly due to virtually endless wars. In the last 30 years, during a period of peace, prosperity and stability, more than ten new independent states have been established in Europe.

Meanwhile, in China these factors were virtually absent. Large, bureaucratized China was not afraid of anyone's competition. The Middle Kingdom was so powerful that none of its neighbours could threaten it. Similarly, internal competition was limited by powerful, corrupt legions of officials, regulating all aspects of economic life. After the death of Emperor Yongle, by an administrative decision, all the Chinese achievements in the field of

maritime transport had been wasted and forgotten. Ships and all the technical documentation had been burnt. Officials had been deciding about everything – there was no guarantee of property rights, nor free market, not to mention the work ethic. Under these circumstances, innovative activity had slowed down. Even when talented craftsmen perfected their workstations and discovered new phenomena, the lack of demand prevented them to spread and they vanished forever in the darkness of oblivion.

The results of research presented by Murray in “Human Accomplishment” show that since 1650, for more than two and a half centuries, almost all major scientific innovations had been achieved in the Western world.

This had been reflected in the dynamic relative impoverishment of an average Chinese compared to Westerners. This can be seen by comparing the GDP per capita in China and in the leading country of the West – United States. In 1820 an average American was twice as rich as an average Chinese. In 1870 this increased to five times, in 1913 to ten times, and in 1968 to 33 times, calculated on the basis of PPP (Purchase Power Parity). If we take into account the current dollar-renminbi exchange rate, this rate will increase to 70. A similar analysis of the GDP per capita for British and Chinese citizens, based on the PPP, shows that the British was 16 times richer in the highest period.

In the seventies of the twentieth century, the trend has changed and a per capita income in the Western countries and China began to level off. This was associated (among others) with the start of new economic policy and opening of China to the world.

### ***The period of change***

The period of change in the East was initiated by Japan which started to come out from its isolation, partly under the dictation of Western countries. At the beginning everything had been copied, because nobody knew what factors determine the superiority of the Western world. Today we may say that it was done very well in terms of competition (primarily external), consumer society and work ethic, as well as science and medicine. It turned out that internal competition is not as important, as well as the issue of property rights and representative government.

The results were in line with expectations. As early as in 1950 Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore have reached a GDP per capita of 20% of the US GDP. Taiwan reached the same level in 1970, and South Korea only five years

later. Today, the GDP per capita in Singapore is about 21% higher than in the United States. Japan and Taiwan are only 25% behind, and China is 19% of the U.S. GDP. It seems that China will follow in the footsteps of Singapore. Over the past 26 years China's GDP has increased more than ten times. It is estimated that the GDP (based on the PPP) will reach the level of United States in 2014, and based on the dollar-renminbi exchange rate in 2020.

This seems to be very realistic due to the change of growth policy in China and achieved results. Chinese government decided to give support to the policy of innovations. In such a case it is not only cheap labour, which is a competitive factor, but as well the strongest force of the competitors which is innovative economy.

United Nations affiliation World Intellectual Property Organisation presented recently the report "World Intellectual Property Indicators 2012" The report proves the dramatic increase of the number of patent filings. For the first time in the history the number of patent filings in the world is more than two million. Every fourth filing was executed in China amounting to 526 412, at the same the number in USA came up to 503 582, the third Japan reached only 342 610. This means that China took the position of leader in this competition. The position of leader seems to be sustainable in the coming years due to very strong contribution of China to the growth of patent filings. In the years 2009 to 2011 more than 70% of growth was due to China. The most innovative turned out to be telecommunication and green energy sources industries, essential decrease in number of patent filings was observed in pharmaceutical industry.

## **Conclusion**

China consequently implements the 4M programme.

First of all, consumption is growing rapidly – since 1980 it grew more than 36 times. Consumption of food (especially meat) is growing rapidly, but the greatest growth is visible in the power consumption area. The growth in consumption significantly makes the Chinese economy independent from export to the United States and European Union. Furthermore, the increase in consumption made the Chinese government start serious work on the implementation of the program of full convertibility of the national currency – the yuan.

Although Chinese export is still growing rapidly (it increased very significantly in April – by 14.7%), according to the new 4M strategy the import growth also increased – from 14.1% to 16.8%.

China's foreign investment rose in February 2013 a sign of confidence is improving. Non-financial outbound investment in the first two months of the year 2013 surged 147% to \$18.4 billion, exceeding inbound spending of \$17.5 billion.

It seems to be a historical moment, the trend shows the change in geography of innovation centres, moving to Asia, with China on the leading position and Japan with South Korea on the third and the fourth ones. Within the last one hundred years only 4 countries enjoyed the position of the leader in patent filings, it was Germany, Japan, since 2006 USA and now China.

New strategy of development called 4M seems to be very successful and effective. It is very appreciated by many researchers trying to define benchmarks of development. One of them, Ian Morris, adapted the Human Development Index of the United Nations. He is analysing it in four areas: energy consumption, organization of society, information technology and the ability to win wars.

The quantification introduced by Morris resulted in obtaining the opportunity to compare the development of the West and the East over 15000 years – since the Ice Age to the present. It turns out that in the long run the East (China) dominated for about 1250 year – from 250 AD to 1500 AD.

By extrapolating the trends of development the author comes to the conclusion that at the end of the twenty-first century, the East will again dominate the West.

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# China, again innovation leader

KRZYSZTOF PSTRONG

EDUACTIVE

The year 2011 was a record year in terms of the submitted patent applications. More than 2 million of them were submitted all around the world, recording thus an increase by 7.8% as compared to 2010. This result bodes well to the world economy provided, however, that the companies continue to work on innovation. *The World Intellectual Property Indicators 2012* contains one more important information – in 2011 for the first time in history more patent applications were submitted by the people in China than in other countries. For 100 years, only three states have been leading in this field – Germany, Japan and the United States. China was in the lead of recipients of the reserved designs in 2001, and of the reserved trademarks in 1999. At the moment, China is the third innovative power of the world, following the United States and Japan. Their efforts to become leaders in this field are visible.

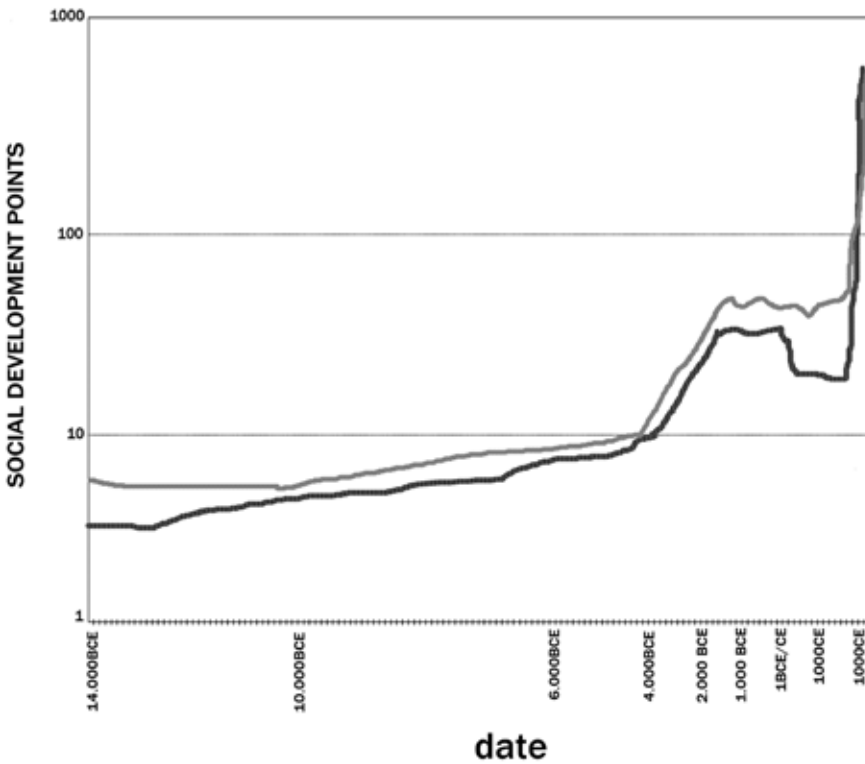
## ***Decline and revival of the power of China***

For thousands of years China was a political, military and civilization power. Even in the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries China was visited by travelers, who nowadays would be called industrial spies – they observed and copied technological solutions. And despite the fact that the stolen inventions were improved in Europe, many discoveries important for mankind originate from the Middle Kingdom. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Chinese invented the decimal system, which was introduced for use in Europe in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. They began to produce paper more than one thousand years before the Europeans, and print six centuries earlier. So a simple device as a wheelbarrow was used by the practical Chinese as early as in the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., while Europe learned about this invention no sooner than 1300 years later. A furrow plough and a stern steer make a difference of 2000 years! The Chinese invented flushed toilet and toilet paper in the times when Europe was still at the point of gutters. The list of Chinese inventions from the past we cannot imagine our present life without is much longer. Nobody can count how many of them appeared in Europe as a result of “borrowing”.

After the years of dominance, in ca. 16th century, the state started to sink in total stagnation. The old-fashioned political, economic and social structure, remaining unchanged from approximately 10th century, ceased to adapt to the changing world. In the 19th century, China was a great state, but economically and militarily weak. It resulted in losing wars with territorially aggressive Western colonial states. Stagnation and backwardness of the Chinese economy based, as in the Middle Ages, on workshops and numerous different manifestations against the Emperor's authorities contributed to the final decline of the state. The work was completed by losing the war with Japan at the end of the 19th century. The influence over China was fought after by the Europeans, the Americans and the Japanese. Over this period, the negative perception of white as a source of any misfortune that fell onto China was consolidated. They even started calling them as "over-seas devils". Despite the reforms, which were introduced subsequently, the Chinese state did not stand a chance of recovering its previous position. The cultural revolution of Mao Zedong did not bring improvement. Political changes began in ca. 1978 after condemning the "cultural revolution". It was then, when an idea appeared to "open up to the world" and start a socialist market economy. In the period of 1980s, the first special economic zones were established, and a dozen or so coastal cities received their first permits to pursue foreign investments. A true period of reforms and opening up with full preservation of authority of the Communist Party of China started, however, as late as in the 1990s. Since then, the image of China as a country that is isolated from the world, resided in economic reality of the 19th century, has become nothing else but memory.

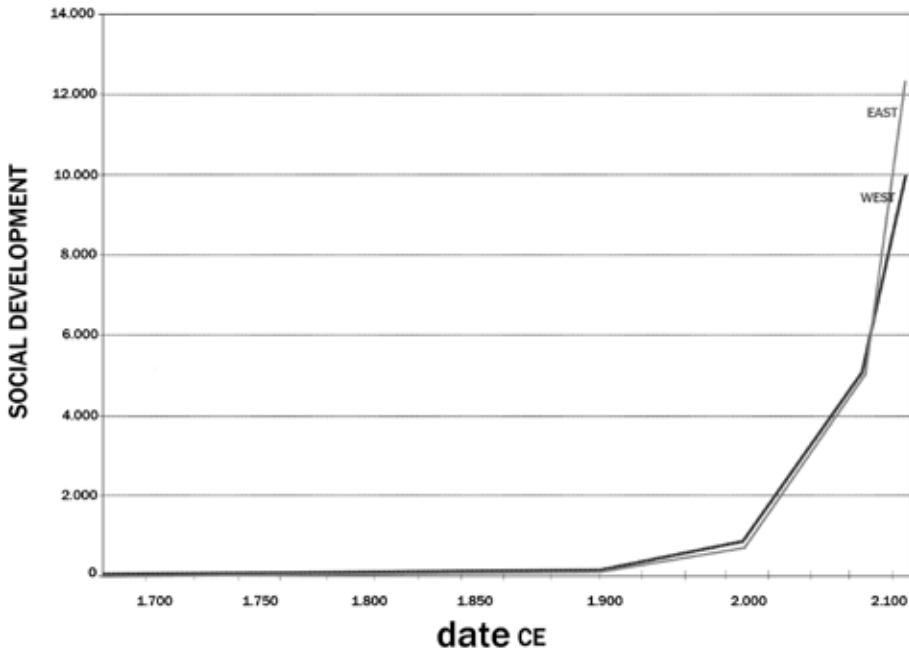
China was, on the one hand, a country closed to impacts from the outside and to contacts with neighbors, and, on the other hand, completely self-sufficient and based on the sense of ethnic community. The isolation provided the possibility to keep unity of the state in political, civilization and cultural terms. This situation made the Chinese feel culturally superior, perceiving their country as a center of the universe – hence the "Middle Kingdom" name originating from the Chinese language.

As a result of a quantification of the level of development of civilization introduced by Ian Morris, it was possible to compare the development of Eastern and Western Civilization from the perspective of 15 000 years, from the Ice Age until today. It turns out that over this long period the East, and strictly speaking China, dominated for ca. 1250 years from 250 C.E. to 1500 C.E.



**Figure 1.** Eastern and Western social development scores, 14,000 BCE-2000 CE, on a log-linear scale, decreasing all Western scores 20 percent and increasing all Eastern scores 20 percent.

Extrapolating the development trends, the author comes to a conclusion that at the end of the present century, the East will dominate over West again. It will happen unless in the meantime there are any unpredictable events.



**Figure 2.** The shape of things to come? Projecting Eastern and Western social development scores into the twenty-first century CE.

The Chinese dream about reconstruction of own power does not only have purely economic causes, but also historical and cultural. Therefore, China is intensifying marking its presence in the region. Trade contacts with China have become strategic also for other regions of the world.

### ***From workshop to technological power***

We are witnessing the transition of China from the economy based on simple production to domination of the world markets using innovative solutions. The same process in the Japanese economy lasted 25 years, and 15 years in Korea. China, so far known for poor quality, cheap products, focused on building strong brands as well as improvement in the quality of goods and services.

The Chinese began their economic expansion from letting big Western concerns to their market. The country offered them favorable investment conditions as well as low costs of production. They also began to produce and export cheap products containing the text "Made in China" on a large scale. Unfortunately, they were often associated with counterfeit of well-known

brands as well as products of cheap and low quality. In this way, they accomplished the goal of accelerating economic development, whose size brought about surprising results, perhaps even for themselves. The Chinese, learning from the experience of other countries, understood that the production of low-cost, but poor-quality products and delivery of cheap workforce was a short-term action. For this reason, using the earned money, they began the next stage of economic development.

The Chinese authorities have now adopted a strategy that is supposed to change the structure of economy; innovation, next to the internal demand, will be its driving wheel. For three years, it has been a priority action of the Chinese government to limit dependence on export. The cause is experience of economies based on export, such as the USA and EU, affected by the world market crisis, and increase in production costs in enriching China, which in this way become less competitive as an investment market. As a target, the internal demand amounting now to 30% is to be a driving force of the Chinese economy. Indeed, consumption is constantly growing. It is influenced by the increase in the income per capita from 1980 by more than 36 times. Consumption of food grows very dynamically, especially of meat as well as consumption of electric energy. Growth in consumption substantially makes the Chinese economy independent on exporting to the USA and the European Union member states. In addition, it made the government of China start serious works on the implementation of a program of full exchangeability of national currency, Yuan. China is striving, gradually and following a plan – yet another time in the history – for self-sufficiency.

The development strategy of China includes both goals, and means for their implementation. They stipulate development of patent law, shortening the waiting time for a patent and the motivating actions for inventors, including, but not limited to, financial gratification or a possibility of free relocation to large cities such as Beijing or Shanghai. The strategy is supported by the great Chinese corporations that, in addition, are also investing much effort in innovations. While great American and European concerns were cutting expenses for research and development, the Chinese were increasing them by 25-45%.

The Middle Kingdom spends the equivalent of 1.4% of GDP on research activities. The authorities of PRCh also spend funds on innovative actions in the private sector. Making the economy independent on import of tech-

nology from the USA, Japan and Europe is the priority of the Chinese authorities. According to this idea, the Chinese companies improve the quality of production and service, they form domestic design and begin to invest strongly in their own brands; they produce more and more advanced products. The Chinese begin global expansion often from less requiring markets in Africa, South-Eastern Asia, the Islamic countries. They will certainly, however, with time come to Western markets.

We cannot ignore the fact that China is becoming a scientific power. Money in the Chinese science comes mostly from the state funds. At the beginning of 1980s, Deng Xiaoping concluded that science and technology were key factors of development of the country and began their fast development. Since 1999, China has been increasing its expenditures on research by approximately 20% annually. In 2011, the state and private expenditures on this purpose amounted together to almost USD 138 billion, and in 2015 it is to be already ca.USD 400 billion. The Chinese scientists do not have to worry about lack of money, because the state intends to extend the scope of *Made in China* and proceed to the stage *Designed & Made in China*.

The actions of the Chinese government bring effect. For the first time in the history, in 2011 China became the leader in terms of reserving copyright in the four most important areas of intellectual property (IP): the number of submitted patent applications, utility models (UMS), trademarks and industrial models. The Patent Office in China (SIPO) remained ahead of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). China remained ahead of the Japanese Patent Office (JPO) already in 2010. In 2011, the China's Patent Office (SIPO) received the most applications for reservation of trademarks since 2000, and most for industrial models since 1990s. Between 2008 and 2011, the share of China in this field increased significantly. And although both USPTO as well as SIPO recorded a growth in the submitted patent applications, SIPO indicators were growing faster. Meanwhile, the Japanese Patent Office (JPO) recorded decrease in registration of intellectual property.

**Table 1.** IP filings by office and income group.

Office and Income Group	Share in world total (%)						Average annual growth (%)		
	2008	2011	2008	2011	2008	2011	2008-2011		
	Patents		Marks (class count)		Designs (design count)		Patents	Marks	Designs
China	15.1	24.6	12.8	22.8	43.6	53.1	22.0	26.6	18.6
European Patent Office	7.6	6.7	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.8	n.a.	n.a.
Japan	20.4	16.0	3.7	3.0	4.7	3.1	-4.3	-2.1	-2.8
OHIM	n.a.	n.a.	4.6	4.9	11.3	8.9	n.a.	6.7	2.4
Republic of Korea	8.9	8.4	3.7	2.8	8.2	6.0	1.6	-4.8	-0.2
United States of America	23.8	23.5	7.3	6.6	3.9	3.1	3.3	0.9	3.1
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	3.8	4.3	11.0
High-income	74.8	67.0	52.8	45.1	44.9	37.2	-0.3	-1.0	4.2
Upper middle-income	22.2	29.8	35.5	43.9	52.0	59.5	14.2	12.1	16.0
Lower middle-income	3.0	3.2	10.4	9.9	2.8	3.1	5.2	2.7	15.9
Low-income	0.1	0.0	1.3	1.0	0.3	0.2	-38.5	-2.4	-7.4
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	3.8	4.3	11.0

**Source:** [http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo\\_pub\\_941\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo_pub_941_2012.pdf), p. 5 [25.05.2013]

### **Chinese technological boom**

The WIPO report indicates that the extraordinary growth in patent applications was recorded in the field of telecommunications, renewable technologies. The number of applications for protection of trademarks was also record – 4.12 million, with the majority of belonging to China. Indeed, the representatives of the government of Beijing put a particular stress on development of innovation in such domains as biotechnology, computer science, telecommunications, RTV and household appliances of new generation. Today already, the licenses for Western modern technologies or products are bought by companies from the Chinese companies.

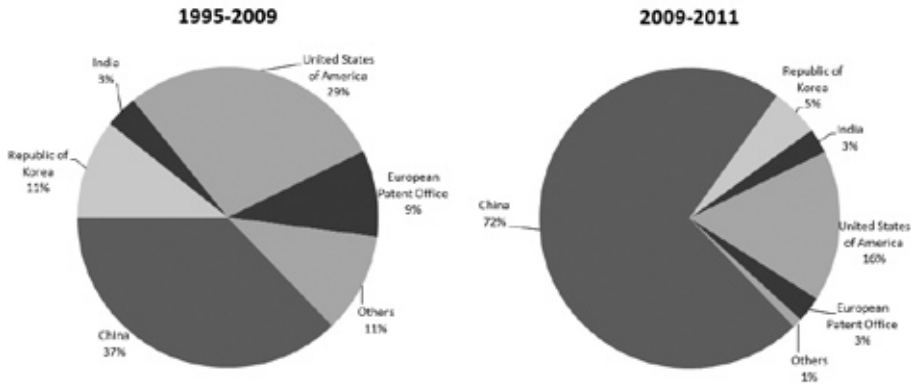
The technological expansion is depicted by a number of patents registered by the World Intellectual Property Organization – the number of patents filed from 2000 increased by 212 percent. The entrepreneurs from the Middle Kingdom more and more often challenge the leaders of the global economy. Professionals are astonished with the progress of Chinese people in works on 3G telephony, which allows mainly very fast data transmission; they are comparable with the offer of all top providers of telecommunication equipment. In Poland the stores offer equipment and household appliances, refrigerators, microwaves or dishwashers manufactured under their own brand by the Chinese concern Haier as well as PCs and laptops by Lenovo – the Chinese IT concern, which, at the end of 2004, took over the production part from IBM. The solutions of the Huawei Technologies concern are used by the Polish operator Telefonía Dialog, and in February this Chinese group won a contract for the development of the UMTS operation system (the so-called third-generation mobile telephony). During the tender procedure, the Chinese defeated such potentates as Ericsson, Siemens, Alcatel. The Chinese research institutes, clinics or pharmaceutical companies offer currently licenses for a lot of unusual biotechnological products. One of them is production of recombined human insulin.

Every technology sold by the Chinese means subsequent billions flowing to domestic companies that more and more frequently are used for foreign expansion. Perhaps soon the Chinese will be able to compete even with motor concerns from Japan, the US or Germany. According to the report of the American company J.D. Powers & Associates, which prepares the rankings of the quality of vehicles, in 2004, the drivers reported on average 118 most diverse faults per 100 cars of the U.S. production; in the case of the Chinese chery qq this ratio was as much as 374. The only difference is that the quality index of the Chinese cars improves almost by 20% annually.

### ***Data speak for themselves***

For the first time in 2011, the total number of patent applications submitted worldwide exceeded 2,000,000. After the slope by 3.6% in 2009, the number of submitted patent applications increased strongly in 2010 by 7.5 and continued increase by 7.8% in 2011. According to the international estimations made by the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), a record growth in 2011 was the fastest since 2005. 82% of this growth belonged to China, Japan and the United States. In 2011, China remained ahead of the US and became the first patent power in the world.

Between 2009 and 2011, the number of patent applications all around the world increased by 293 900. SIPO was the main factor of growth in applications all around the world – which is 72% of all growth. The contribution of China to general growth increased in the recent years. At the same time, the other five patent powers decreased theirs.



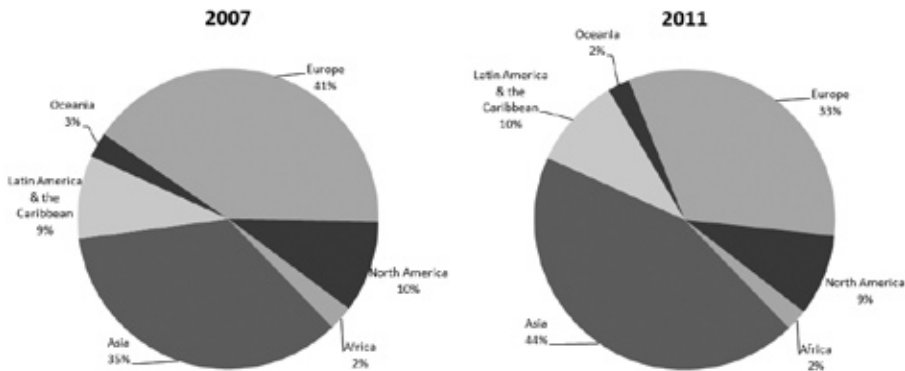
**Figure 3.** Contribution of office to growth in patent applications worldwide

**Source:** [http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo\\_pub\\_941\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo_pub_941_2012.pdf), p. 44 [25.05.2013]

Figure 3 describes growth in patent applications submitted all around the world between 1995 and 2009 as well as 2009 and 2011.

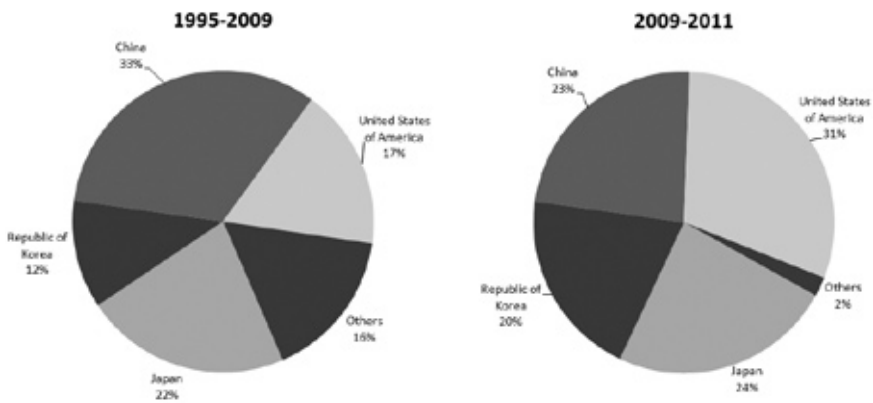
As we can see, two thirds of growth in the years 1995-2009 can be attributed to the patent offices in China and the US. However, from 2009 to 2011 the main factor of growth covered the applications submitted in the patent office in China, constituting 72% of the total growth. The contribution of China in the quantity of submitted patent applications in the recent years increased, whereas in case of other patent powers this quantity decreased. The above reflects changes in geographic shift of innovative potential from the US and Europe to China.

This situation is perfectly depicted by the graphics concerning proportion of quantity of reserved trademarks in particular regions of the world in 2007 and 2011.



**Figure 4.** Trademark application by geographical region.

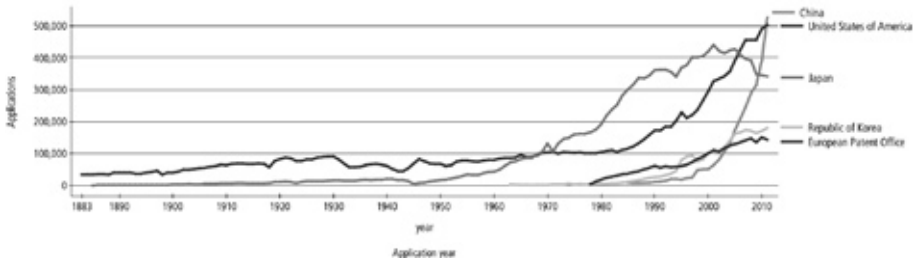
**Source:** [http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo\\_pub\\_941\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo_pub_941_2012.pdf), p. 104 [25.05.2013]



**Figure 5.** Contribution of office to growth in the patent granted worldwide.

**Source:** [http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo\\_pub\\_941\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo_pub_941_2012.pdf), p. 46 [25.05.2013]

The figure shows the division of patent subsidies all around the world between 1995-2009 as well as 2009-2011. You will see general growth in patent subsidies between 2009-2011 in four patent powers, a significant decrease in other countries, including, unfortunately Europe, which is affected by the market crisis. The first place is occupied by the US with 30.4%, then Japan (23.9%). China occupies the third place with 23.3%.

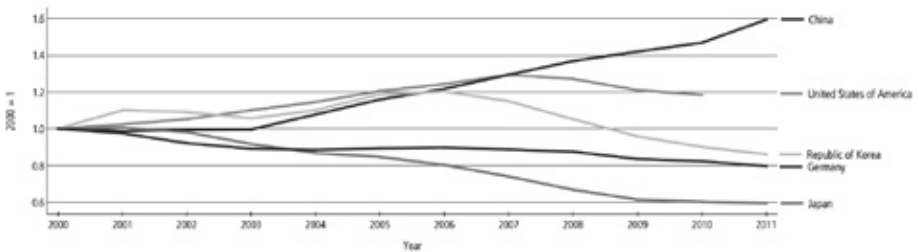


**Figure 6.** Trend in patent applications for the top five Offices

**Source:** [http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo\\_pub\\_941\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo_pub_941_2012.pdf), p. 47 [25.05.2013]

Figure 6 shows a long-term trend in the overall number of submitted applications in the five most important countries. The data have been prepared in accordance with the indicators valid in 2011.

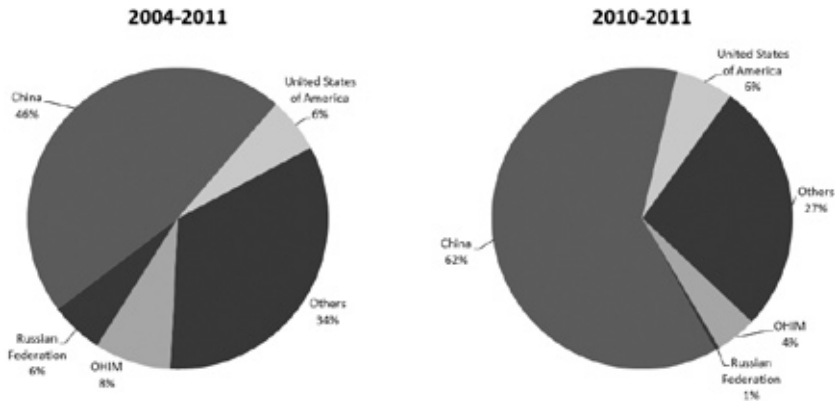
As we can see, indicators remain on roughly stable level until 1970s, when rapid growth was recorded in Japan. In 1980s, the increase in submitted patent applications began to be observed in the United States. Roughly in the same time, increase in applications submitted in Europe and South Korea is observed. In the 1990s, out of the blue PRCh shows up in the rankings. Around 2005, it records incredible growth, and in 2011 remains ahead of such potentates in this field as the USA and Japan.



**Figure 7.** Trend in resident patent application per R&D expenditure for the top five origin

**Source:** [http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo\\_pub\\_941\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo_pub_941_2012.pdf), p. 77 [25.05.2013]

The chart presents investment in development and research for five world economic powers. Until 2002, we can see relative stabilization. After that a growth trend appears in China, the USA as well as Korea. After 2006, we can see a decrease in investment in development and research in Korea, and in 2007 in USA. A significantly upward trend is shown by China.



**Figure 8.** Contribution of offices to growth in applications worldwide

**Source:** [http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo\\_pub\\_941\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/export/sites/www/freepublications/en/intproperty/941/wipo_pub_941_2012.pdf), p. 100 [25.05.2013]

To better understand different components of growth in the whole of applications, it is necessary to look at the contribution of particular offices in this growth. The figure shows proportions of share of customers of particular countries in growth in the submitted patent applications all around the world between 2004 and 2011 as well as 2009 and 2011.

The above chart shows that the applications submitted in China over 8 years between 2004 and 2011 constituted almost half (46.6%) of the general growth. On the other hand, over the last two examined years this share increased already to 61.8%. Other participants report a subtle growth, except for Russia, which records a clear decrease.

The above analyses, although made not within a complete scope, distinctly indicate the dynamics of development of China in the field of innovations. The exceptional activity of the Chinese scientists, investments of the state in research and development as well as the patent law result in the Middle Kingdom becoming a leader of the race in the field of innovations. China has

reached the economic position in which it can call the shots. And thus, it is high time that the previous economic powers adjusted their requirements and values to a strong partner, in order to catch up in an economic race.

### **Chinese patent law**

The Chinese patent law was adopted in 1984 and it was developing continuously in the period of the last two decades. The system of protection of intellectual property had to be adapted to the WTO requirements as well as the so-called international agreement TRIPS (Traded-Related Aspect of Intellectual Property Rights), which China wanted to join. Joining TRIPS by China is of critical importance, because it guarantees a minimum level of protection of different types of intellectual property, including copyrights and patents. At the moment, it is assumed that the system of intellectual property law in China is extensive; however, as compared to other states being the parties to the WTO contract, it is still incomplete. The Chinese copyright law was introduced in October 2001. The rights resulting from copyright, as opposed to patent law as well as the law of trademarks, do not require registration for their protection. However, the entitled entities can register them in the Chinese National Administration of Copyright for evidence purposes. In China, the computer programs are protected on the basis of copyright.

A patent in China is understood – like in other countries – as an invention, utility model and industrial model. China will also grant a patent to a foreign entrepreneur. A condition for this is filing a correct application with the Chinese patent office within 12 months from filing an application for a patent for invention or utility model, or 6 months from filing an application for registration of industrial model in another country, being a party to the Paris convention for protection of industrial property, including Poland. The duration of patent protection is 20 years for invention as well as 10 years for utility and industrial model. The European willing to conduct business activities in China should learn the basis of the Chinese patent law. This is because it is designed to protect own equity and entrepreneurship. Worth recommending is using the Chinese patent system, even if it is not going to be introduced on the Chinese market. In this way patent protection will be gained. The companies seated beyond the territory of China, must use the services of a local patent attorney. The level of the attorney's services and the quality of application will considerably affect the quality of the obtained

protection. The patent applications are accepted and verified by the Patent Office at the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO).

Instead of submitting a patent application directly in China, we can also do it first in your country (it must be the state being a party to the Paris convention, as e.g. all European Union countries) and then file the second application in China, reserving the date of the first filing as an initial date.

In China, in the case of two patent applications of the same content – the patent is granted to the one which was submitted as the first one. China treats introduction of change in the course of the application examination procedure very rigorously. Expansion of the scope of protection beyond the frames specified in the primary application may result in patent cancellation.

The principle “first-to register” applies also to trademarks. Hence, it is not required to provide evidence of prior use or property of a trademark. In connection with the above, when it is intended to produce or sell your goods in China, it is worth registering your trademark in the Trademarks Office. Like in case of registration of patents, foreign entrepreneurs have to use agency of an authorized Chinese attorney in order to be able to register the trademark. The last changes in the Supplementary Regulations of the Law on Trademarks allow, however, offices, branches as well as subsidiaries of foreign companies registered within China to register marks independently, without assistance of an authorized Chinese attorney.

Stealing technological solutions from Western concerns has until recently been a problem. The Chinese were even defined as industrial pirates. The aggressive invention practices are not, however, anything new. The case of Thomas Edison, who stole a variable transformer from Nikola Tesla, is well known. He used the stolen ideas to build General Electric which is now worth approximately USD 200 billion. Everyone knows the so-called “Chinese counterfeits” of brand products. Nowadays, although protection of intellectual property is already much greater than several years ago, China is still considered as a state where this law is not properly observed. Unfortunately, China has become known for “borrowing” someone else’s technology. It is worth remembering that in the days of communism nobody thought about copyrights or trademarks. The communism assumes lack of property as such, including lack of intellectual property. In addition, the Chinese tradition does not include respect for intellectual property. The Chinese authorities try

to refute this image, change the social mentality and obtain a position of a trustworthy business and scientific partner.

Piracy, economic spying and Western know-how form a triad, which has provided China with an impulse stimulating development, like in the case of most developing economies. From 60 percent to 80 percent (depending on sources) of the Chinese exports are still result of the factories of Western potentates or joint venture companies with their share. Thanks to the investments of Dell, Motorola or Samsung in 2005, China has become the largest exporter of modern electronics (computers, mobile phones, digital cameras, printers, etc.), getting ahead of the United States. The entrepreneurs from the Middle Kingdom are extremely rapidly absorbing the imported technologies and begin to create their own, competitive items. For example, in 2004, the Chinese concern ZTE created GoTa – a digital system for the so-called trunking (technology allowing very efficient data transmission) which was the first Chinese patent in the field of telecommunications to be sold in the world (bought by telecoms, among others, from Malaysia, Russia, Norway). The Chinese no longer need to copy, they can buy now. The Lenovo concern, after the purchase of a part of IBM for USD 1.25 billion, has become the world's third manufacturer of computers (in America where it sells the PCs under its own brand, they are on average by 15-20 percent cheaper than those with the logo of IBM.). A popular goal of trips of businessmen from the Middle Kingdom has become also Japan, where they are interested in know-how and production technologies small and medium-sized Japanese companies are famous for. To acquire them, the Chinese have spent so far about USD 100 million – they have bought, among others, the manufacturer of industrial printers Akiyama, the manufacturer of factory engines and machines.

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# Language and Culture

## Grammar explanations in Chinese language textbooks – problems and possible solutions

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For Polish people, there are several sources of difficulties when learning Chinese: 1) the pronunciation of certain initial and final parts of Chinese syllables: as the opposition between aspirated and unaspirated consonants is not phonemic in Polish, students must pay attention when learning to pronounce *g-* and *k-*, *b-* and *p-*, *d-* and *t-*, *j-* and *q-*; the opposition between nasal finals and their non-nasal counterparts (such as *-in* and *-ing*, *-an* and *-ang*) is also difficult to grasp; 2) the four tones of standard Chinese; 3) grammar phenomena not present in Polish (such as the complement, the modal and aspectual particle 了 *le*, the 把 *ba* sentence etc.), word order in sentences, often different from Polish sentence structure; 4) writing Chinese characters.

Given these multiple sources of difficulties, the likelihood of simultaneously making several types of mistakes is quite high: moderate grammar mistakes may not be a serious obstacle in communication, but grammar mistakes combined with inaccurate pronunciation will make it more difficult for the addressee to understand the utterance. This is why, as teacher of Chinese, I encourage my students to aim at the highest possible degree of correctness when learning pronunciation, grammar, and characters. I believe that explaining various grammar phenomena to students and pointing out differences between their mother tongue and Chinese is necessary. For adult learners, it is much easier to understand, remember and then apply a finite amount of grammatical rules than to remember an unlimited number of grammatically correct sentences (due to the limitations of human memory) or to infer the rules from examples independently (as there is always the risk of reaching wrong conclusions). This paper will discuss certain problems that may arise in grammar explanations and will suggest alternative methods, which I believe to be more efficient.

The opinions and remarks contained in this paper are based on my twelve years of experience in teaching Chinese from beginner to upper-intermediate level to BA and MA-degree Polish students of the Institute of Middle and Far Eastern Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Our Chinese studies program, mostly focused on contemporary China and Taiwan, is not a philological one, but belongs to the field of area and cultural studies. Therefore, our students are not trained in linguistics; their knowledge of linguistic terminology is limited to what they remember from the Polish grammar lessons they took in middle school. This is the target group I will refer to throughout this paper.

Since I started working at the Jagiellonian University, I have become acquainted with many textbooks published in the PRC and with those published in Poland, I participated in training courses for teachers of Chinese organized by the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (Hanban), and since 2005 I have had constant interaction with experienced teachers from China dispatched by Hanban and employed by our Institute. My opinions on the more or less efficient methods of teaching Chinese grammar were mainly derived from the above-mentioned experiences. They were applied when planning my own Chinese classes and writing my own textbook, the first compendium of Chinese grammar to be published in Poland<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Zemanek, A. (2013), *Chińszczyzna po polsku. Praktyczna gramatyka języka chińskiego (Chinese in Plain Polish. A Practical Grammar of the Chinese Language)*. Nowela, Poznań. The first volume was already published, and the second will come out in autumn this year.

Because of my most recent experience as textbook author, many of the remarks below will refer to the way grammar is or should be explained in textbooks so as to meet the needs of the target stated above.

From the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Chinese government has been intensifying its efforts of promoting the Chinese language, the results of which are visible both within China and abroad. These efforts are coordinated by Hanban, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Education; it was established in 1987 and reorganized in 2006. Since 2004, Hanban has been establishing Confucius Institutes and classrooms around the world, with the mission of promoting Chinese language and culture; as of 2010, their number amounted to 691, with an increase of 40% (Confucius Institutes) and 97% (Confucius Classrooms) over the previous year<sup>2</sup>. The offer of courses conducted in China has also increased, as has the the total amount and kinds of scholarships to China. There are now over 200 universities admitting Chinese Government Scholarship students<sup>3</sup> (this program includes scholarships for Chinese language training), and 133 universities listed for the Confucius Institute scholarship program, aimed at training present and future teachers of Chinese<sup>4</sup>. The amount and types of Chinese teaching materials prepared and published in China are growing as well. Hanban also organizes short-term training courses for teachers of Chinese, focused on the use of teaching materials. The textbooks most intensively promoted by Hanban are now available in many languages<sup>5</sup>. Hanban also dispatches experienced teachers and volunteers abroad, and provides them with significant financial support during their stay; in 2010, there were over 4000 such teachers, 49% more than in the previous year<sup>6</sup>. According to Hanban director Xu Lin, in 2010 the total number of Chinese

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<sup>2</sup> Hanban (*Confucius Institute Headquarters*) 2010 Annual Report, which is the most recent report available at <http://www.hanban.edu.cn/report/>, p. 2 [1.06.2013].

<sup>3</sup> According to the "Study in China" web page of the China Scholarship Council: <http://www.csc.edu.cn/laihua/universityen.aspx> [1.06.2013].

<sup>4</sup> See [http://cis.chinese.cn/node\\_5737.htm](http://cis.chinese.cn/node_5737.htm) [1.06.2013].

<sup>5</sup> 45 languages as of 2010: Hanban (*Confucius Institute Headquarters*) 2010 Annual Report, p. 26-27. Such textbooks include: Li Xiaoqi 李晓琪 et.al., *Happy Chinese* (《快乐汉语》, *Kuaile Hanyu*), Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe, Beijing; Wu Zhongwei 吴中伟, *Contemporary Chinese* (《当代中文》, *Dangdai Zhongwen*), Sinolingua, Beijing; Wang Zhigang 王志刚, *Learn Chinese With Me* (《跟我学汉语》, *Gen wo xue Hanyu*), Peking University Press, Beijing.

<sup>6</sup> Hanban (*Confucius Institute Headquarters*) 2010 Annual Report, p. 18.

learners outside China was over 40 million<sup>7</sup>; it was predicted that this number would increase to 150 million by 2013<sup>8</sup>.

These impressive and ever-increasing figures show the great importance attached by the Chinese government to the promotion of Chinese, and reflect a significant financial commitment to the fulfilling of this task. However, it seems that quantity does not necessarily go hand in hand with quality. For some years, there has been a tendency to lower requirements and expectations towards learners and to simplify teaching materials as well as the national standardized language proficiency tests. The HSK was reformulated in 2009; although it claims to cover all proficiency levels established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, its actual level is much lower<sup>9</sup>. This may result from a desire to increase the number of learners as much as possible by motivating them through easily attainable goals, as well as from a reorientation towards modern teaching methods, which emphasize communicative skills over a more traditional, systematic approach to language focused on writing skills and grammatical correctness.

This tendency is easily discernible in the evolution of a textbook which has probably been the most successful worldwide of all the textbooks ever published in the PRC: the *Practical Chinese Reader*. Its first two volumes<sup>10</sup> introduce basic grammar; they are very well organized, with useful vocabulary and well-defined topics for each lesson. Grammatical issues are introduced gradually and are explained in a simple, clear but exhaustive manner, with a sufficient number of examples displayed within well-designed

<sup>7</sup> Li Xiabing 李夏冰, "Guojia Hanban zhuren Xu Lin: haiwai xue Hanyu zongrenshu chao 4000 wan" (国家汉办主任许琳: 海外学汉语总人数超4000万, The total number of people learning Chinese abroad has exceeded 40 million). Xinhua, July 20, 2010; available at: <http://news.sohu.com/20100720/n273630530.shtml> [1.06.2013].

<sup>8</sup> Li Guoqiang 李国强, "2013 nian haiwai xuexi Hanyu renshu jiang da 1.5 yi" (2013年海外学习汉语人数将达1.5亿, The number of people learning Chinese abroad will reach 150 million by the year 2013). Guangmingwang, September 6, 2012; available at: [http://difang.gmw.cn/hlj/2012-09/06/content\\_4998461.htm](http://difang.gmw.cn/hlj/2012-09/06/content_4998461.htm) [1.06.2013].

<sup>9</sup> As established by the Association of Chinese Teachers in German-speaking Countries (Fachverband Chinesisch); see <http://www.fachverband-chinesisch.de/chinesischin-deutschland/pruefungen/index.html> [1.06.2013] and the "Statement of the Fachverband Chinesisch e.V. on the New Chinese Proficiency Test", available at the above-mentioned site.

<sup>10</sup> Liu Xun 刘珣, Deng Enming 邓恩明, Liu Shehui 刘社会, *Practical Chinese Reader* (《实用汉语课本》, *Shiyong Hanyu keben*). The Commercial Press, Beijing. The textbook was first published in 1981 and had many subsequent reprints.

tables, which makes it possible for students to easily learn and review them by themselves. However, some lesson topics and the way they are covered, the images as well as part of the vocabulary have definitely become outdated. Therefore, in 2002 the textbook underwent thorough revision and a new version was published, the *New Practical Chinese Reader*<sup>11</sup>, which is still a bestseller used in many Chinese-teaching centres all over the world. Grammatical issues are still well-explained and introduced gradually, from lower to higher degrees of difficulty. However, more complex issues are now (sometimes unnecessarily) divided into parts contained within several lessons, and some of the different possibilities of expressing the same grammatical issue (such as the various possible positions of the object and predicate in a sentence containing a complement of state/degree) are not explained at all.

In Poland, the range of textbooks written by local authors, suitable for use during regular, long-term university courses, is quite limited. I am acquainted with two such books. One of them<sup>12</sup> is devised for beginners and only has one volume, and therefore does not offer the possibility of continuation on higher levels. The other one, a two-volume textbook published by lecturers of the Warsaw University Department of Sinology<sup>13</sup>, is devised for students of philology, who have acquired the necessary linguistic terminology and need to learn both character forms – simplified and traditional. There is also an extensive, three-volume textbook used by students of sinology of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań; however, only one volume has so far been published<sup>14</sup>, and it is already sold out. As a result of donations from Hanban, the Confucius Institute in Krakow has a wide range of textbooks published in the PRC, readily available to both teachers and students of our institute. Many of them have several volumes, with textbooks, workbooks, CDs and (sometimes) Chinese character workbooks, and therefore can be

<sup>11</sup> Liu Xun 刘珣 et. al., *New Practical Chinese Reader* (《新实用汉语课本》, *Xin shiyong Hanyu keben*), volumes 1-6. Beijing Yuyan Daxue chubanshe, Beijing; the textbook has so far had several reprints and is available in several language versions.

<sup>12</sup> Lin, K., Pawlak, K. (2009). *Mówimy po chińsku* (*We Speak Chinese*). Wiedza Powszechna, Warsaw.

<sup>13</sup> Zajdler, E., Jacoby, M., Li-Piszczek, Q. (2008). *Współczesny język chiński. Część 1* (*Contemporary Chinese. Part 1*). Dialog, Warsaw; Zajdler, E., Jacoby, M., Gao, Z. (2008). *Współczesny język chiński. Część 2* (*Contemporary Chinese. Part 2*). Dialog, Warsaw.

<sup>14</sup> Szkudlarczyk-Brkić, W. (2012). *Akademicki podręcznik do nauki języka chińskiego. Tom 1* (*University Textbook of Chinese Language. Volume 1*). UAM Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Poznań.

used up to more advanced levels, as well as for practising various skills related to the contents of each lesson. After several years of trials and errors (as many textbooks published in the PRC are more or less seriously flawed), we have settled on the *New Practical Chinese Reader*, which is now used for all Chinese classes offered by our institute, at all levels, supplemented with other materials prepared by teachers. At present, I teach students of the second and third level; my Chinese colleagues focus on teaching communication skills, and I – on grammar.

The following part of this paper will present some of the basic principles related to grammar teaching I have employed (with good results) during my courses and applied in my textbook, with examples taken from comprehensive textbooks and textbooks of Chinese grammar. I will refer mainly to PRC textbooks, as they are the ones I most often have to do with, and are most easily available to our students. I chose textbooks belonging to the set of key didactic materials promoted by Hanban, or issued by prestigious publishing houses specialized in Chinese language materials for foreigners. All of them were designed for classroom and individual use by learners, and not only as teaching tools. The problems with PRC textbooks that I will point out are, in my opinion, the result of the above-mentioned tendency to focus on communication skills and not on grammatical correctness, and to simplify explanations as much as possible. Another possible source of problems is, I think, an insufficient focus on the target learner; textbook authors fail to take into consideration the learner's actual knowledge and skills, and the way he/she will most probably interact with the textbook.

### 1. Linguistic terms

As my students' knowledge of linguistic terms is limited, I avoid any specialized vocabulary, such as "transitive", "syntagm", "semantic", "syntactic", "lexical item". Instead of the above terms, I use everyday words whenever possible: "which can take an object"; "phrase"; "meaning"; "sentence parts"; "word" etc. However, I believe that this is not always possible; if the teacher does away with any linguistic terms whatsoever, he/she will not be able to explain grammar properly.

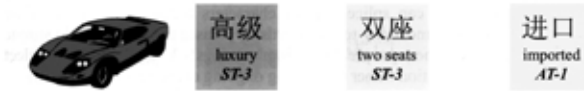
Example 1<sup>15</sup>

We have already discussed how to build up complex words (or phrases) by combining characters. Although there is no limitation in the length of a word, too many characters in one word will cause confusion, and we need to find some way to resolve this problem.

Now we have a complex word as:

红色小汽车

In theory, based on the above word, we can combine more words with it to get a more complex meaning. For example, the following words can be added onto it.



Then we get a complex word meaning (a) *luxury two-seated imported red car*.

高级双座进口红色小汽车

Then comes the problem. Colors in this example help us easily grasp the internal structure. In real language, we will only see a group of characters as:

高级双座进口红色小汽车

To make it more readable, we'd better separate characters into logical parts. A feasible method is to add some marks in it to divide characters into parts. 的 is most frequently used here. Then we cut the combination into pieces as:

高级的双座的进口的红色的小的汽车

This example is taken from a textbook that sets out to teach readers “without [their] suffering headaches from rote learning and sterile sentence drills” (as the author claims in the introduction). However, lack of precision and the use of everyday words instead of linguistic terms results in an explanation which is most likely headache-generating, as it is quite incomprehensible.

The author uses the concepts of “word”, “complex word”, and “character” in a way that may give rise to confusion as to what exactly she refers to. She speaks of “separating characters into (logical) parts”, but what she refers to is not dividing Chinese characters as graphic units into smaller parts, such as the radical and the remaining part of the character. The examples that she provides show that what she actually has in mind is words (and not “characters”), which are linked up to form a noun phrase (and not a “complex word”). Moreover, the expression “complex meaning” will very likely seem confusing to the reader (what exactly can be called a “complex meaning”? is it an abstract concept? is it the information conveyed by a whole phrase, or a whole sentence?). It may also be unclear for the reader exactly what kind of situations require the application of the principles provided by

<sup>15</sup> Zhou Xiaogeng 周晓更 (2007). *New Path Getting Over Chinese Grammar* (《汉语语法新通路》, *Hanyu yufa xin tonglu*). Sinolingua, Beijing, p. 40.

the author (are such constructions to be used only when describing things, or can they be employed in other situations as well? can 的 *de* be used to divide words in any kind of phrase, or a specific kind of phrase and specific kinds of words?). In fact, what the author actually discusses is several attributives that modify the same noun ("car"); the particle 的 *de* cannot be used between any words in any kind of phrase: it links the attributive to the head noun. An explanation containing the terms „attributive”, “phrase” and “noun” would be (I think) much more precise and easy to understand.

Therefore, I believe that a certain, albeit limited, amount of linguistic terminology is inevitable for explaining grammar. In my own explanations, I mostly use names of parts of speech and sentence parts, which students should already be familiar with. To these I add terms which refer to grammatical phenomena specific to the Chinese language, such as “measure word”, “complement”, “pivotal sentence” etc. Whenever I introduce a certain term, I explain it to the students. This includes the basic speech and sentence parts, which are briefly reminded to them, as I noticed they often have only a hazy knowledge of what a “preposition” or “attributive” and other such concepts stand for. In my grammar textbook, I included a glossary of all specialized terms I use throughout the book, placed at the beginning of each volume, for easy reference. Two fragments of this glossary (the entries “verb” and “object”) are given below.

### Example 2<sup>16</sup>

<b>Czasownik</b>	Część mowy, która wyraża czynność (骂 <i>mà</i> – „przeklinać”, „ubliżać komuś”; 骗 <i>piàn</i> – „oszukać”; 欺负 <i>qīfu</i> – „znęcać się nad kimś”) lub stan (恨 <i>hèn</i> – „nienawidzić”; 是 <i>shì</i> – „być”; 有 <i>yǒu</i> – „mieć”) i której podstawową funkcją w zdaniu jest funkcja orzeczenia. W języku chińskim, czasownik nie jest jedyną częścią mowy, która może być orzeczeniem (→ orzeczenie).
<b>Dopełnienie</b>	Część zdania, która występuje po orzeczeniu czasownikowym; uzupełnia jego treść i oznacza przedmiot, którego dotyczy czynność wyrażona przez czasownik: 我爱你。 <i>Wǒ ài nǐ</i> . („Kocham cię”); 他们买啤酒。 <i>Tāmen mǎi pījiǔ</i> . („Oni kupują piwo”). Nie każdy czasownik przyjmuje dopełnienie, np. 咳嗽 <i>késou</i> („kaszleć”) i 失败 <i>shībài</i> („nie powieść się”, „ponieść porażkę”) nie mogą mieć dopełnienia. Czasowniki 在 <i>zài</i> („znajdować się”, „być [w pewnym miejsku]”), 是 <i>shì</i> („być”), 去 <i>qù</i> („pójść”, „pojechać”), 来 <i>lái</i> („przyjść”, „przyjechać”), 到 <i>dào</i> („dotrzeć”) itd. przyjmują dopełnienia – tę funkcję pełnią rzeczowniki lub zaimki występujące po nich: 我们在北京。 <i>Wǒmen zài Běijīng</i> („Jesteśmy [w] Pekinie”); 爸爸是工程师。 <i>Bàba shì gōngchéngshī</i> . („Ojciec jest inżynierem”); 小李去中国。 <i>Xiǎo Lǐ qù Zhōngguó</i> . („Xiao Li jedzie [do] Chin”).

<sup>16</sup> Zemanek, 2013, p. 10.


The same term should be used to refer to grammatical phenomena of the same kind. In Zajdler, Jacoby and Li-Piszczek, 2008 and Zajdler, Jacoby and Gao, 2008, different terms are used when writing about complements. A complement is the sentence part which modifies the predicate and comes after it. There are several kinds of complements, but the term „complement“ should be used to refer to each of them. The two Polish textbooks use the terms „dopełnienie komplementywne“ (‘‘complementive object’’ instead of ‘‘complement’’), ‘‘czasownik kierunkowy’’ (‘‘directional verb’’ instead of ‘‘directional complement’’), ‘‘czasownik rezultatywny’’ (‘‘resultative verb’’ instead of ‘‘resultative complement’’), ‘‘konstrukcja przysłówkowa’’ (‘‘adverbial construction’’ instead of ‘‘complement of degree/state’’) etc. Although precise and justified by in-depth linguistic research, such terms would certainly seem confusing to my students.

I never use linguistic terms in Chinese, as I believe they are not necessary at lower levels of proficiency. However, PRC textbooks targeted at beginner learners often include such terms, which are neither translated into English nor accompanied by phonetic transcription.


Example 3<sup>17</sup>

一
常用格式
Common patterns

格式	肯定形式：动词+结果补语	动词+结果补语+宾语
	否定形式：没+动词+结果补语	没+动词+结果补语+宾语



他看见了吗?  
Tā kàn jiàn le ma?  
他看见了。  
Tā kàn jiàn le.  
他看见(了)一个苹果。  
Tā kàn jiàn (le) yí ge píngguǒ.



他听懂了吗?  
Tā tīng dǒng le ma?  
他没听懂。  
Tā méi tīng dǒng.  
他没听懂老师的话。  
Tā méi tīng dǒng lǎoshī de huà.

<sup>17</sup> Jiang Liping 姜丽萍 (2010). *Chinese Grammar With Illustrative Pictures* (《图解基础汉语语法》), *Tujie jichu Hanyu yufa*, p. 99. Higher Education Press, Beijing.

The basic constructions used for the resultative complement (“verb + resultative complement” and “verb + resultative complement + object” in the affirmative, “没 *mei* + verb + resultative complement” and “没 *mei* + verb + object + resultative complement” in the negative form) are given only in Chinese.

#### Example 4<sup>18</sup>

主语	动词	宾语	重复动词	助词“得”	程度补语
他	说	汉语	说	得	很好。
她	回答	问题	回答	得	很正确。

As can be noticed, the terms in the table header (“subject”, “verb”, “object”, “repeated verb”, “the particle 得 *de*”, “complement of degree”) are only in Chinese. Although it is very important, the information provided in Chinese in both examples above will most likely not be readily accessible to basic-level students. In order to understand it, they should learn not only the Chinese terms for parts of speech and sentence (which they, as non-linguists, may not be interested in), but also other words, usually taught at a more advanced level (肯定 *kending* – “affirmative”, 否定 *fou ding* – “negative”, 形式 *xingshi* – “form”, 重复 *chongfu* – “to repeat”, and so on).

## 2. Amount and kind of information provided to learners

I believe that textbooks should offer enough information for the readers to be able to independently acquire all the basic skills required for the correct usage of the introduced grammatical issues. This information should be as clear and concise as possible, but it should be comprehensive. Quite a few PRC textbooks do not offer any grammar explanations at all, or they reduce such explanations to an absolute minimum, even in the case of very complex and difficult grammatical issues such as the complements and the 把 *ba* sentence. *Experiencing Chinese* is one such example: it offers extremely few explanations; the ones which are explained are (apparently) quite arbitrarily chosen; there are many important issues which are not explained at all. The first example below concerns the complement of degree. The explanation of its meaning and role is insufficient – students will very likely not un-

<sup>18</sup> Li Dejin 李德津, Cheng Meizhen 程美珍 (2008). *A Practical Chinese Grammar for Foreigners. Revised Edition* (《外国人实用汉语语法(修订本)》), *Waiguoren shiyong Hanyu yufa. Xiudingben*, p. 289. Beijing Language and Culture University Press, Beijing.

derstand what exactly “the degree of the action” means. No information and no examples are given for the situations in which the sentence contains both an object and a complement. Students can learn to express meanings such as “speak well”, but not “speak Chinese well”. This seriously limits their ability to actually use this complement.

### Example 5<sup>19</sup>

Sòng Lili: Wǒ bú huì, Zhāng Huá huì. Tā xiū de hěn hǎo.  
宋丽丽: 我 不 会, 张 华 会。他 修 得 很 好。

### 注释

#### Notes

会<sup>21</sup> “Hui” expresses the grasp of a skill through learning, while it also expresses possibility in Lesson 11.

得<sup>22</sup> Here is the degree complement. Structural particle “de” occurs between a verb and a complement which illustrates the degree of the action. The question form is “verb + de + a dj + ma ? ” or “verb+de+zěnmē yàng?”

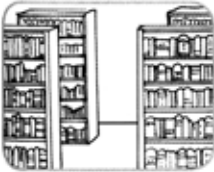
Other textbooks do not explain the rules related to various grammatical phenomena, but only provide examples of sentences or phrases containing them, more often than not without an English translation. Moreover, only one or two such examples are given, although it is very difficult (if not impossible) to infer a rule on the basis of a single example, and without knowing its precise meaning. Even if the reader does reach some conclusion as to what this rule may be, he/she has no possibility of verifying the degree of correctness of his/her inference. Example 6 below concerns 的 *de*, the particle used for attributives; it is not mentioned that it can be omitted when speaking of family relations, and after monosyllabic adjectives; no example is given of disyllabic adjectives, after which 的 *de* should not be omitted<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Zhu Xiaoxing 朱晓星 et al. (2007). *Experiencing Chinese* (《体验汉语》, *Tiyan Hanyu*), p. 118. Higher Education Press, Beijing.

<sup>20</sup> Such explanations are in fact provided on page 200 of Jiang, 2010. However, the footnote on the bottom of page 87, which informs of this fact, is only in Chinese.

Example 6<sup>21</sup>

一 名词、名词短语、代词、数量词、形容词、形容词短语作定语  
 Noun, noun phrase, pronoun, numeral-measure word, adjectives or adjective phrases as attributive



图书馆的书  
túshūguǎn de shū



办公楼前面的花园  
bàngōng lóu qiánmiàn de huāyuán



我(的)爷爷  
wǒ (de) yéye



三个大学生  
sān ge dà xuéshēng



新(的)衣服  
xīn (de) yīfu



很大的足球场  
hěn dà de zúqiú chǎng

Example 7 is taken from the workbook of *Great Wall Chinese* and concerns the use of adverbs 再 *zai* (which means “again” and refers to situations that have not yet occurred) and 又 *you* (which can also be translated as “again”, but refers to situations that have already occurred). Grammatical issues in *Great Wall Chinese* are only addressed in workbooks, which provide only examples, not accompanied by explanations. The example below is taken from Unit One. 又 *you* and 再 *zai* occur only in the dialogues contained in the textbook (which are not translated into English), and are not listed in the new vocabulary introduced in this unit. Therefore, no reference at all is made as to their meaning and usage, neither in the textbook, nor in the workbook.

<sup>21</sup> Jiang, 2010, p. 87. The chapter from which this example is taken is entitled (in Chinese only) “定语 + (的) + 中心语” (“*dingyu* + (*de*) + *zhongxinyu*”, “attributive + (*de*) + head word”).

Example 7<sup>22</sup>

## Grammar Points

The adverbs “又” and “再”

昨天我们又去爬山了。

Zuótiān wǒmen **yòu** qù páshān le.

我下班以后再给你打电话吧。

Wǒ xiàbān yǐhòu **zài** gěi nǐ dǎ diànhuà ba.

Sometimes textbooks provide less important information instead of basic principles, as in the example below, also concerning the use of 的 *de*. The really essential information about this particle (in my opinion) is that it links an attributive to the head noun. Other useful information concerns the situations in which it should not be used (after attributives expressed by means of numbers and measure words, for instance), can be omitted (after monosyllabic adjectives, or when speaking of one's relatives), and must be used (after verb phrases and “subject + predicate” constructions functioning as attributives).

Example 8<sup>23</sup>

Then comes the problem. Colors in this example help us easily grasp the internal structure. In real language, we will only see a group of characters as:

高级双座进口红色小汽车

To make it more readable, we'd better separate characters into logical parts. A feasible method is to add some marks in it to divide characters into parts. 的 is most frequently used here. Then we cut the combination into pieces as:

高级的 双座的 进口的 红色的 小的 汽车

In practice, people seldom use so many 的 at one time. Although here is no strict rule on how many 的 should be added into a complicated combination, we try to use as few as possible. Here are some basic principles for using 的:

1. 的 *is used to separate a complex phrase into several independent parts.*
2. 的 *is not necessary between two meanings that have close ties.*
3. *Too many 的 s cause prolixity or tedium.*

<sup>22</sup> Ma Jianfei 马箭飞 (2006). *Great Wall Chinese. Essentials in Communication* (《长城汉语。生存交际》, *Changcheng Hanyu. Shengcun jiaoji*), *Workbook*, volume 3, p. 6. Beijing Language and Culture University Press, Beijing.

<sup>23</sup> Zhou, 2007, p. 40.

### 3. Graphic display

As mentioned above, I found out that although my students do have some knowledge related to basic grammatical concepts, this knowledge is passive rather than active. They can follow explanations referring to parts of sentence when the respective sentence parts are actually pointed out to them and then apply the given rules to form their own utterances. However, they are not always able to correctly identify parts of sentence by themselves. This is why I have found it useful to place examples within tables, or to emphasize various sentence parts by means of colours, underlinings, and so on. In Example 9, the subject, the predicate and the object are not pointed out to the readers, who have to identify them independently. The sentences given are easy enough, but not entirely straightforward, as in the last one the predicate consists of two verbs in a series.

#### Example 9<sup>24</sup>

Simple Sentence Patterns

Subject + Verb (+ Object), e.g.

我去。Wǒ qù.

我学习汉语。Wǒ xuéxí Hànyǔ.

我是江山的朋友。Wǒ shì Jiāng Shān de péngyou.

我有一张中国地图。Wǒ yǒu yī zhāng Zhōngguó dìtú.

我想去你们学校学习汉语。Wǒ xiǎng qù nǐmen xuéyuàn xuéxí Hànyǔ.

Example 10 below shows sentences placed within well-constructed tables, which is one of the advantages of *New Practical Chinese Reader* over other PRC textbooks.

<sup>24</sup> Wu Zhongwei 吴中伟 (2003). *Contemporary Chinese* (《当代中文》, *Dangdai Zhongwen*), p. 105. Sinolingua, Beijing.

Example 10<sup>25</sup>

## 1. 介词词组 Prepositional Phrase

In Lesson 5 the verb “在” was studied. “在” is also a preposition. When combined with words expressing location (usually a noun or phrase), it forms a prepositional phrase. It is used before the predicative verb to indicate the location of an action.

在 + PW + V O

Subject	Predicate	
	Prep “在” + N	V O
我	在 这儿	买 光盘。
您	在 哪儿	工作?
他	不 在 语言学院	学习。

The preposition “跟…” is often combined with a noun or pronoun after it to form a prepositional phrase and used in front of the predicative verb to indicate the manner of an action.

跟 + Pr/N (person) + V O

Subject	Predicate	
	Prep “跟” + Pr/N	V O
我	跟 力波	来 这儿。
(你)	跟 我	来。
您	跟 我	学。

Example 11 shows my own usage of colours in my grammar textbook. Two shades of red are used. The darker one marks the issue discussed in the current chapter, and the lighter one marks words related to that issue, which I wished to point out to readers. Predicates are given against a darker background, which emphasizes the position of other sentence parts (adverbials and complements) relative to the predicate.

<sup>25</sup> Liu Xun 刘珣 et.al. (2004). *New Practical Chinese Reader* (《新实用汉语课本》, *Xin shi-yong Hanyu keben*), volume 1, p. 142. Beijing Yuyan Daxue chubanshe.

Example 11<sup>26</sup>

他 Tā On	今天 还没有 jīntiān hái méiyǒu dzisiaj jeszcze nie	吃 <b>chī</b> jadł	饭 fàn „puste” dopełnienie, por. 11.1.3)	呢 ne
老师 Lǎoshī Nauczyciel	耐心地 nàixīn de cierpliwie	听 <b>tīng</b> słucha	学生的回答 xuéshēng de huidá odpowiedzi studentów	

Budując chińskie zdania z okolicznikiem, nie należy się sugerować polskim szykiem wyrazów (w języku polskim okoliczniki często występują po orzeczeniu):

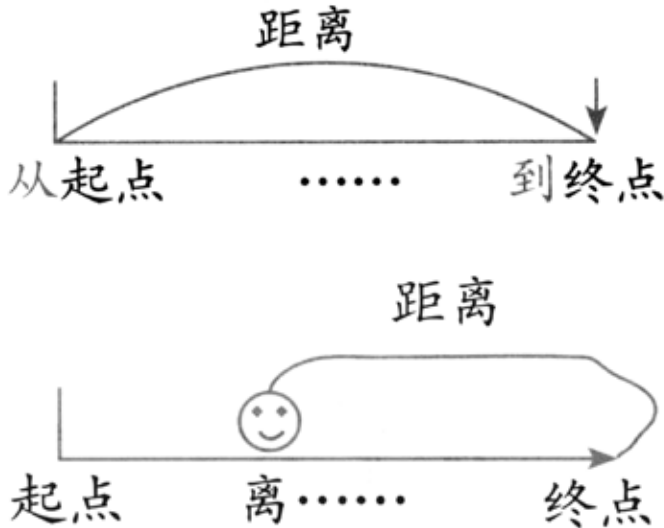
电影开始六点半。 powinno być: 电影六点半开始。  
*Diànyǐng kāishǐ liù diǎn*  
*diǎn bàn.*  
 Film **zaczyna się** o szóstej  
 trzydzieści.

吴笛读书在华沙。 powinno być: 吴笛在华沙读书。  
*Wú Dī dúshū zài Huáshā.*  
 Wu Di **studiuje** w Warszawie.

他说对我: “走吧!” powinno być: 他对我说: “走吧!”  
*Tā shuō duì wǒ: „Zǒu ba!”*  
 On **powiedział** do mnie:  
 „Chodźmy!”

Whenever graphs, diagrams or illustrations are used, they should be clear and relevant. Below is a negative example of such graphical elements, which are supposed to help explain the difference in meaning and usage of the prepositions 从 *cong* (used to refer to a starting point) and 离 *li* (used to express the amount of distance between two points), but are in fact unclear.

<sup>26</sup> Zemanek, 2013, p. 284.

Example 12<sup>27</sup>

#### 4. False connections

When explaining various grammatical issues, one should not induce students to believe that certain issues are necessarily related when in fact they are not. In *New Practical Chinese Reader* (Example 13), the 把 *ba* sentence is introduced too early (lesson 16). The 把 *ba* construction requires the presence of further sentence elements after the predicate, such as an object, complements, the particle 了 *le* which expresses completion of an action, and so on. However, by lesson 16, only 了 *le* and the simple directional complement have been introduced, so there are still very few resources for building a wide diversity of 把 *ba* sentences. The textbook only offers examples in which 了 *le* occurs after the predicate, which is why my students usually get the wrong impression that a 把 *ba* sentence must contain 了 *le*. If the variety of examples had been increased by adding the simple directional complement or an object after the predicate instead of 了 *le*, this problem could have been avoided.

<sup>27</sup> Jiang, 2010, p. 212 and 213.



Example 14<sup>29</sup>

“Verb + 了 + numeral-quantifier-noun”

昨天玛丽买了一件旗袍。

Zuótiān Mǎlì mǎile yí jiàn qípáo.

早上我吃了个面包，喝了一杯牛奶。

Zǎoshang wǒ chīle yí ge miànbāo, hē le yì bēi niúǎi.

### 5. Common mistakes and comparisons between Chinese and Polish

Chinese and Polish significantly differ from a structural point of view. Polish is an inflecting language; the relationship between words in a sentence is determined by grammatical morphemes, which is why the word order in a sentence is not entirely fixed. Chinese, on the other hand, is an isolating language, which lacks systematically occurring inflectional morphemes; syntactic functions are determined by the (fixed) position of words within a sentence. Moreover, there are differences in word order between Polish and Chinese. There are also grammatical phenomena which are absent in Polish: the 把 *ba* construction, complements, aspects such as past experience, and so on. Knowledge of the most typical mistakes made by Polish students is a necessary requirement for teachers of grammar. Explanations of grammar should include examples of ill-formed sentences and comparisons between Chinese and Polish, whenever they are possible and necessary. The common mistakes made by native speakers of Polish are most probably not very different from the ones made by native speakers of English, and therefore I think it is possible for Polish students to effectively learn Chinese from English-language textbooks. However, the process is much easier if explanations are given in the learners' native language.

The author of *Contemporary Chinese* (Example 15) does take into consideration one difference between Chinese and English: an adverbial always occurs before the verb or adjective it modifies, and never after it. However, he does not point out the fact that in a sentence, the adverbial very rarely comes in front of the subject. Polish students (and probably native English speakers as well) often place the adverb 都 *dou* (which can often be translated as “all”) before the subject. The explanation states that adverbials should be put

<sup>29</sup> Ma, 2006, p. 92.

before verbs or adjectives (while the subject is generally a noun); however, I think that mentioning the subject would further hammer home this rule. Moreover, the author does not explain when time expressions can be placed in front of the subject. My students often do so, as this position seems more natural to them than the usual position of the adverbial, between the subject and the predicate. However, time expressions should be placed at the very beginning of the sentence only when the speaker wishes to emphasize them.

### Example 15<sup>30</sup>

#### Adverbials

Elements which modify or limit verbs or adjectives are known as adverbials.  
In Chinese adverbials should be put before verbs or adjectives.

Adverbial + V. / Adj.

Adverbs, prepositional phrases, place expressions or time expressions  
are commonly used as adverbials:

A. Adverb + V. / Adj.

这两本词典都是你的吗？

Zhè liǎng běn cídiǎn dōu shì nǐ de ma?

他非常忙，我不太忙。

Tā fēicháng máng, wǒ bú tài máng.

B. Prepositional phrase + V. / A. [sic!]

我跟你一起去吧。

Wǒ gēn nǐ yìqǐ qù ba.

我可以给你打电话吗？

Wǒ kěyǐ gěi nǐ dǎ diànhuà ma?

C. Place expressions / time expressions + V. / A. [sic!]

我们八点半上课。

Wǒmen bā diǎn bàn shàng kè.

我们明天晚上在咖啡馆见面。

(明天晚上我们在咖啡馆见面。)

Wǒmen míngtiān wǎnshang zài kāfēiguǎn jiànmiàn.

(Míngtiān wǎnshang wǒmen zài kāfēiguǎn jiànmiàn)

Example 16 is taken from my own textbook, which includes many examples of ill-formed sentences which (I hope) will help readers avoid mistakes. The fragment given below demonstrates the same rule as Example 15, i.e. the adverbial comes before the predicate.

<sup>30</sup> Wu, 2003, p. 144-145.

Example 16<sup>31</sup>

Budując chińskie zdania z okolicznikiem, nie należy się sugerować polskim szykiem wyrazów (w języku polskim okoliczniki często występują po orzeczeniu):

电影开始六点半。 powinno być:	电影六点半开始。
<i>Diànyǐng kāishǐ liù diǎn bàn.</i>	<i>Diànyǐng liù diǎn bàn kāishǐ.</i>
Film <b>zaczyna się</b> o szóstej trzydzieści.	(dosł.) Film o szóstej trzydzieści <b>zaczyna się</b> .
吴笛读书在华沙。 powinno być:	吴笛在华沙读书。
<i>Wú Dī dúshū zài Huáshā.</i>	<i>Wú Dī zài Huáshā dúshū.</i>
Wu Di <b>studiuje</b> w Warszawie.	(dosł.) Wu Di w Warszawie <b>studiuje</b> .
他说对我: “走吧!”	他对我说: “走吧!”
<i>Tā shuō duì wǒ: „Zǒu ba!”</i>	<i>Tā duì wǒ shuō: „Zǒu ba!”</i>
On <b>powiedział</b> do mnie: „Chodźmy!”	(dosł.) On do mnie <b>powiedział</b> : „Chodźmy!”

## Conclusions

I have discussed above some of the principles I employ when teaching Chinese grammar, as well as shortcomings I have found in grammar explanations contained in various textbooks and tried to avoid both in classroom teaching and while writing my own textbook. I do not claim universal applicability for the principles discussed here; their efficiency was only proved for my own target. No textbook can ever be flawless, and readers will surely point out the mistakes contained in my own textbook. No matter what the teacher's aim is (whether emphasizing communication skills or maximal correctness), some degree of grammatical correctness is necessary for communication to be actually effective. Grammatical explanations should be clear, exhaustive and offer essential information, focusing on typical situations. Oversimplification will not necessarily make learning easier; insufficient explanations are likely to hinder the full development of the respective skill and to cause knowledge gaps which may hamper acquisition of further knowledge. The teacher (or textbook author) should always focus on the student, by trying to view his/her explanations with the student's eyes. Finally, I believe that textbooks should always contain appropriate information on grammatical issues, which enable independent study.

<sup>31</sup> Zemanek, 2013, p. 284.

# Sinology Studies and Chinese Education at KU Leuven

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## **Introduction**

Because of unique political, geographical and religious reasons, there are three official languages – French, Dutch and German – in the Kingdom of Belgium, a country which is located in the heart of Western Europe, with a land area of only 30,528 square kilometers, and a population of just over 11 million people. Therefore, language learning tasks can be quite onerous for the Belgian people. But still, great importance has been attached to the Chinese language, and it has been promoted widely in Belgium. So far there are four colleges or universities with a Sinology department or related majors in Belgium. They are KU Leuven, Universiteit Gent, Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et Interprètes, and Institut Libre Marie Haps. KU Leuven and Universiteit Gent are universities which have set up Sinology departments with formal Chinese education. Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et Interprètes, and Institut Libre Marie Haps are colleges, and they have majors called English-Chinese Translation Major, which relate to Chinese education. With a long history of Sinology studies and Chinese education, and its strong Sinology department, KU Leuven has shown its own characteristics from the aspects of teachers' employment, textbook choices, curricula and examination system.

We try to make a systematic introduction of the historical and current situation about the Sinology studies and Chinese education in the Sinology department of KU Leuven from four aspects in this article. Firstly, the general

situation about Sinology Studies and Chinese Education at KU Leuven before its Sinology department was founded; Secondly, the general situation about the students, teachers and textbooks in this department; Thirdly, curriculum and its design philosophy in this department; Fourthly, the examination system in the Sinology department of KU Leuven. Then we hope to provide certain reference values to other institutions which also provide Sinology Studies and Chinese Education. Furthermore, despite its many fine achievements, we also discuss any issues that need to be improved in this department, in order to enable the school to take its Sinology studies and Chinese education to the next level. Another significance for finding such problems that need to be improved in the Sinology department of KU Leuven, is that we can attempt to summarize some common problems that may exist more generally across the whole of Chinese further education in Belgium.

### ***The General Situation about Sinology Studies and Chinese Education at KU Leuven before its Sinology Department Was Founded***

The Sinology department of KU Leuven was founded in 1979, which was just after the year of Chinese Reform and Open policy. However, early in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the Kingdom of Belgium was not yet independent, people had begun teaching eastern languages in KU Leuven (although then it was known as “de Leuvense universiteit”). Most Chinese learners and teachers at that time in KU Leuven were Jesuit missionaries, who were also the bridges between Chinese culture and western culture. This situation lasted for several centuries. These missionaries tried to introduce western scientific knowledge, philosophy and religious belief to China with the Chinese language; meanwhile they also gave wide publicity to the Chinese language and culture in their own country. Philippe Couplet and Ferdinand Verbiest, two famous graduates of KU Leuven, not only had a good command of Chinese, but also wrote books in Chinese. In order to commemorate Verbiest’s great contribution in cultural exchange between China and Europe, Verbiest Hall was specially founded in KU Leuven.

The Central Library of Leuven was completely destroyed during World War I in 1914, and all the three hundred thousand books were burned. What’s more, it was burned again in World War II, resulting in only fifteen thousand volumes of books left. We can still get dozens of Chinese books named “Chinese Textbooks for Primary Schools” (in Chinese “Chu Deng Xiao Xue Guo Wen Xin Ke Ben”, books for Chinese learning beginners), which were

written by Catholics in the 1910s and 1920s, and printed by Shanghai Xujiahui Tushanwan Printing House. We can also get the Chinese books named "One Thousand Chinese Characters for Learners" (in Chinese "Ping Min Qian Zi Ke", a book for Chinese characters learning), which were written by the Chinese famous educators Jingnong Zhu and Zhixing Tao, printed by Commercial Press. Many other Chinese books are also available here. All of these books were mainly used for Chinese teaching for the beginners among the missionaries. Worthy of mentioning is that, though a limited number of books written in Dutch, there is still a book named "Korte Chinese Spraakkunst Van de Gesproken Taal"<sup>1</sup> for Chinese learning in this library. It is a grammar book for spoken Chinese which was written on the basis of northern dialect in China, and its target students were religious believers who can understand Dutch well. The author of this book was a priest.

### **The Situation of Students, Teachers and Textbook Choices in Sinology Department of KU Leuven**

As mentioned earlier, the Sinology department was officially established in the year of 1979, and the number of the students in the first year was over 30. The number of new students varied from 30 to 40 in the following years. Because Chinese education was highly emphasized and actively promoted by Mr Wilfried Martens, who served as the Prime Minister of Belgium, in the year of 1987, the Sinology department of KU Leuven observed its first new students boom with a number over 100. In the following years 1988 and 1989, the number of new students returned to the range from 30 to 40. Affected by the political affair of 1989 in China, the Sinology department of KU Leuven had only 10 new students in 1990, the record lowest in its history. In the years of 2005 and 2006, the second new student boom came with the success of China in its bid for the Olympic Games, numbered over 100 for each year. The enthusiasm for the Chinese education in foreign countries is closely related with the domestic political and economic situation of China, as well as the attitudes of some influential foreign individuals towards China and the Chinese language.

Before the formal establishment of the Sinology department of KU Leuven, some students from the Indian language department had chosen Chinese as their optional course. At that time, Ms Françoise Paron, a Belgian who graduated from the Chinese language department of Peking University, worked

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<sup>1</sup> Written by Jos. L. M. Mullie, printed by Uitgeverij Het Spectrum, 1947

as the Chinese teacher. In the early years of the Sinology department, in addition to Ms Paron, there was another Chinese teaching position for a teacher delegated by the Chinese Government. Because most of the teachers delegated in the early days were from the Beijing Language Institute, the textbooks used in the Sinology department were the "Fundamental Chinese" (in Chinese "Ji Chu Han Yu Ke Ben")<sup>2</sup> which were produced by the Beijing Language Institute. There had been three teachers from the Beijing Language Institute teaching in the department before the Chinese government stopped delegating teachers in the middle of the 1980s. From then on, in addition to the local Belgian teachers, there were also some Chinese immigrants teaching in the Sinology department of KU Leuven. It is in the year of 1998 that the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOTCFL) resumed delegating Chinese teachers to the Sinology department of KU Leuven, and up till now NOTCFL has delegated 12 Chinese teachers to teach there, and the service term of most of them is 2 years. Today there are 7 language teachers, 2 sinology professors and 4 PhD candidates in the Sinology department of KU Leuven. The professors and the candidates are concentrating upon studies such as "the cultural communication between China and Europe in the 17th and 18th Centuries", "the pre-Qin philosophers and their modern interpretation" and "the cultural communication between China and Africa".

Modern Chinese courses for a bachelor's degree in the Sinology department of KU Leuven include an intensive reading course, listening course, reading course, writing course, and so on. However, except for the intensive reading of all 3 grades and the phonetics course of grade one<sup>3</sup>, there are no designated textbooks for the courses, and the teachers can choose teaching materials for themselves according to the audience, the location or other courses. The textbooks for the intensive reading courses of all 3 grades have experienced a 3-phase improvement: early, the "Fundamental Mandarin" (in Chinese "Ji Chu Han Yu Ke Ben") textbook alone; later, the "Practical Chinese Reader" (in Chinese "Shi Yong Han Yu Ke Ben") textbooks<sup>4</sup> and the series of "Beginning Chinese" (in Chinese "Chu Ji Han Yu Du Ben"), "Intermediate Chinese" (in Chinese "Zhong Ji Han Yu Du Ben") and "Advanced Chinese"

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<sup>2</sup> Edited by Beijing Language Institute, printed by Chinese Teaching Press.

<sup>3</sup> Textbook for phonetics course is "Expressway to Perfect Chinese Pronunciation", written by Prof. Yilu Zhao from Sinology department of KU Leuven, printed by Peeters, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Edited by Xun Liu, Enming Deng, and Shehui Liu, printed by the Commercial Press.

(in Chinese “Gao Ji Han Yu Du Ben”) edited by Mr John De Francis [US]<sup>5</sup>; And now, the “New Practical Chinese Reader” (in Chinese “Xin Shi Yong Han Yu Ke Ben”) textbooks<sup>6</sup> and the “Integrated Chinese” (in Chinese “Zhong Wen Ting Shuo Du Xie”) textbooks<sup>7</sup>.

From the evolving composition of the Chinese teachers of the department, we can tell that, since the very establishment of the Sinology department of KU Leuven, there have always been native Chinese speakers participating in the Chinese education, and that the Chinese government has provided great support and help to the Chinese education of the University. With regards to the textbook choices, the department insists on using textbooks composed by the teachers from Beijing Language and Culture University<sup>8</sup>, as well as taking advantage of overseas Chinese education materials. As a famous sinologist and linguist, Mr John De Francis composed his series of textbooks “Beginning Chinese”, “Intermediate Chinese” and “Advanced Chinese” with inspiration from American structuralism linguistics. Mr Yuehua Liu and Mr Daozhong Yao, the co-authors of the “Integrated Chinese” textbook, are both experienced Chinese teachers who always teach overseas, therefore their books take a closer approach to the daily life of American Students.

### **Curriculum and Its Designing Philosophy at Sinology Department of KU Leuven**

The curriculum in the Sinology department of KU Leuven also experienced a continuous adjustment process. At the very beginning students in the Sinology department had to learn Chinese, Japanese and Buddhism at the same time. Only in grade three could the students make the choice whether they will go on with learning Chinese or Japanese. And this situation lasted until 1986, when the Japanese department was separated completely from the Sinology department. In 1995, the curriculum in the Sinology department experienced another significant change, which was from the date of enrollment, first-year students at the Sinology department would be divided into two groups, an economic group and a cultural group. And it is the same situation up to the present day.

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<sup>5</sup> Edited by John De Francis, printed by Yale University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Edited by Xun Liu, printed by Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

<sup>7</sup> Edited by Yuehua Liu & Daozhong Yao, printed by Boston Cambridge Press.

<sup>8</sup> Beijing Language and Culture University was formerly Beijing Language Institute.

As we mentioned in a former part of this article, we know that there are no reference textbooks for courses in the Sinology department of KU Leuven except for intensive reading courses for each grade, and a phonetics course for grade one. Most teachers have to organize teaching materials by themselves. They always try to use fresh original language materials and emphasize coordination among all the courses. Generally speaking, teachers will choose original Chinese sources for the raw materials for the courses. For instance, they will select original Chinese songs, Chinese news and interview programs for listening courses, articles and news online or in newspaper for reading courses. In spoken Chinese classes they will ask the students to make dialogues in a simulated context which is very similar to the real context, or make a discussion on some real topical issues. This special Chinese teaching approach ensures the students not only learn some fresh Chinese language, but also helps them to know about the real China, and to understand the perceptions of Chinese people nowadays, even though they do not learn Chinese in the target language environment. In addition, it can also serve to avoid the problem where students can only understand the Chinese in the classes or spoken by their teachers, but can not understand the language that is spoken by someone else or when the language is used in daily life. Of course, all the teaching materials are not chosen at random. In the horizontal dimension, most teaching materials for the courses of the same grade should match the theme of intensive reading, then it can make the new words and grammatical forms that the students learned in the intensive reading classes reappear effectively. Meanwhile it can help to deepen students' understanding of the same topic from many different perspectives. In the vertical dimension, it also emphasizes coordination among all the grades. If we take the phonetics teaching for example, there is a special phonetics class for grade one students in the Sinology department of KU Leuven, and when the students go to grade two, they still have some dedicated time to practice their pronunciation in their listening classes, including practice reading Chinese texts or retelling what they have heard from the listening materials. So it is called the "Listening and Phonetics Course". The reason why it is done like this is to strengthen the teaching effectiveness of phonetics achieved in grade one. Up until the second semester of grade two, the time for pronunciation practice is gradually reduced. Anyway, these special teaching methods of putting constant emphasis on phonetics teaching help make the students appreciate the importance of pronunciation, and it will be very helpful for them to maintain their good pronunciation level.

Even the teachers of spoken Chinese for grade three and grade four will continue to emphasize the importance of the students' pronunciation. About writing courses, teachers of different grades will arrange the writing topics according to different syntax projects and different functional items, then pointless duplication can be avoided.

Students in the Sinology department who intend to get a bachelor's degree should get 138 public credits and 42 optional credits. The 138 public credits are obligatory for both the students in the economic group and in the cultural group. All the courses are divided into five parts; "reflective consciousness", "professional skills", "Chinese philosophy", "regional module", and "language modules". The regional module includes Chinese culture, Chinese history, Chinese religion, Chinese geography, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese politics, Chinese law and so on. Among these five parts, language modules account for the largest proportion both in credits and in class hours. There are 86 credits in this part, accounting for 62% of total public credits; 858 language class hours, accounting for 67% of all the 1274 class hours. The 86 credits in the language modules include 8 credits for classical Chinese, and 78 for modern Chinese. Different optional courses constitute the big difference between the economic group and the cultural group. The 42 optional credits for students in the economic group include 8 credits for their bachelor degree thesis and 34 credits for the courses they choose in the department of Economics, such as the Chinese economy course, the global economy course, the accounting course, the markets and trade course, and so on. While the 42 optional credits for the students in the cultural group include 8 credits for their bachelor degree thesis, 4 credits for the courses they choose in the Japanese department, 6 credits for the courses they choose in other departments, and the 24 remaining credits relate to Chinese language, Chinese literature, society and east Asia arts<sup>9</sup>.

Through this curriculum, we can see that the emphasis of the training program for students of Sinology at KU Leuven is not only to focus on improving students' Chinese language skills, but also to take the introduction to the whole picture of China into account. Then the students will not only learn a language, at the same time they can constantly improve their understanding of China. Most students who study for a bachelor degree will have the opportunity to study Chinese in one of the Chinese universities for

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<sup>9</sup> "Bachelor of Arts in de taal-en regio studies: sinologie" [EB/OL]. [http://onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/n/SC\\_51016901.htm](http://onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be/opleidingen/n/SC_51016901.htm)

one year, with the support of a Chinese government scholarship, which will further deepen their understanding of China. In addition, the advantage for the division of economic groups and cultural groups is that the students can minor in another profession while majored in Chinese, which will help them have interesting employment prospects. Moreover, the Sinology department of KU Leuven has close exchanges with the Sinology departments of other European universities, they have joint training programs for students in each other's Sinology departments, and they will recognise their mutual credits as well. This kind of training project can provide students with better educational resources.

Students who have passed all the exams of the three years can apply for one of the Master's degree courses, which can be finished in one further year. There are four modern Chinese courses for postgraduate students, reading and writing course, translation course, speaking course and listening course, and there are 5 class hours in total for each week. If the students pass all the exams in this year and finish their Master's degree thesis to the correct standard, then they can get the Master's degree. There are no textbooks for all the courses in this year, but they still emphasize coordination among all the courses. For example, teachers for listening and speaking courses will always choose the same topic, and what the students read and write in the reading and writing course will always relate to their Master's degree thesis. In reading and writing courses, the students always choose the studying materials by themselves, and they will study with the teacher one to one.

### **Examination System in the Sinology Department of KU Leuven**

It is fairly easy for Belgian students to enter universities or colleges, but very difficult for them to get a degree. There is no admission exam for universities or colleges (except some special majors, such as medical). However, once you study in these schools, the examination system is very strict for each semester. Modern Chinese courses for students from grade one to grade three in KU Leuven were divided into two parts, "linguistics" and "exercises". Generally speaking, linguistics courses are courses where teachers need to impart a lot of knowledge in the class, such as grammar courses and Chinese character courses; while exercises courses are the ones where students need to use the knowledge that they have learned to practice skills, such as spoken Chinese, listening courses and reading courses. In the final exam, the highest score for both "linguistics" and "exercises" is 20, and the passing score for each of them is 10. If the students did not get the pass-

ing score in the linguistics courses, they have to do a make-up examination for all the courses that were included in the linguistics courses, even though they may have passed some of them. Exams for exercises courses are in the same situation. And students will have only one chance to do the make-up examination for each year, which will take place at the end of August or the beginning of September. Although the students who did not pass the exam will be allowed to study in the next grade, they still need to do the make-up examination, until they passed all the courses. As there is no admission exam for universities and colleges in Belgium, the elimination rate for the exam in grade one is quite high – up to 40% to 50%. Most of the students in grade one who did not pass the exam will choose to study in grade one for another year, and some of them might go to grade two. The division of the exam between linguistics courses and exercises courses will be effective to test both language skills and verbal communication skills of the students. And it will encourage students not only to learn Chinese language knowledge, but also to have the awareness of applying their knowledge in a communication context. Meanwhile the high elimination rate of the exam can ensure a good quality of students from the Sinology department of KU Leuven, and it can also encourage the students to study hard.

### **Conclusion**

By introducing the situation of the students, teachers, textbooks choices, curriculum and its designing philosophy, and the examination system in the Sinology department of KU Leuven, we can see that the quality of teaching is at a high level in this department. They have professors specializing in Sinology studies who can not only give Chinese lessons to the undergraduates and postgraduates, but also guide PhD candidates with their research in Sinology studies. As Chinese teachers delegated by NOTCFL will teach here regularly, to some extent, it can ensure that there will always be native Chinese speakers participating in the Chinese education here. This will be very helpful to effectively improve the accuracy of students' language skills. What's more, Chinese teachers in the Sinology department of KU Leuven pay great attention on selecting authentic teaching materials, and most of the materials that the students get are up-to-date real life language. Therefore the students in the Sinology department of KU Leuven are well known for having "a good phonetics outlook" and "a strong Chinese communicative competence". For example, in the recent "Chinese Bridge" competitions, Sophie Matthé won the grand prize in the seventh "Chinese Bridge" com-

petition. Arnaud de Schaetzen, Sid Gulinck and Vincent Vanassche got the first prize in the second, ninth and eleventh competitions. Students Sara Van Tournhout and Tina Davidson in this department won the second prize in the fifth and sixth “Chinese Bridge” competitions, and Alice E.L. de Bontridder won the third prize in the eighth competition. These successes are the best proof that the students from the Sinology department of KU Leuven are graduating with excellent language and communication skills. One of the key factors that ensures the quality of graduates in this department is the strict examination system. Many graduates from this department work at the embassy or companies where they can use Chinese, even some of them become professors of Sinology. It can be said that the Sinology department of KU Leuven has made brilliant achievements in Sinology studies and Chinese education. Meanwhile, among the four colleges and universities which have set up Sinology departments or related majors in Belgium, each of them has its own characteristics. For example, the Sinology department of KU Leuven pays more attention on training application-oriented Chinese personnel with good listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, while the Sinology department of Universiteit Gent focuses on training the academic Chinese talents with a deep knowledge of Chinese language and literature accomplishment. And the other two colleges, Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et Interprètes and Institut Libre Marie Haps, cooperated with each other to specialize in professional translation. All of these differences in emphasis can provide a better choice for the Belgian students who would like to major in Chinese but with differing learning goals.

Meanwhile, we also find some problems that need to be improved. For instance, students who intend to obtain a bachelor’s degree from the Sinology department of KU Leuven are required to get 180 credits, but there are only 78 credits for modern Chinese courses, accounting for only 43.3% of total credits. With regard to the class hours, there are totally 806 class hours for modern Chinese in the three years, while 1274 class hours for all courses in the Sinology department, the proportion is only 63.3% if adding the class hours of optional classes from other departments, the proportion will drop to only 50%. Especially for grade three and grade four, there are only 8 class hours of modern Chinese for grade three, and 5 for grade four, which makes many students think they are majored in culture or economics rather than Chinese. At the same time, there are also a lot of other courses besides Chinese language courses in the Sinology department of Universiteit Gent, such as the Asian culture course, Buddhism course, oriental litera-

ture course, east Asian languages course and so on<sup>10</sup>. To a certain extent, although these courses can broaden the students' academic field of vision, it may also cause the situation where the students have a little knowledge in each field they have learned, but specialize in no field. All of these points mentioned show that there are some problems with the Chinese education curricula in Belgium universities. In addition, the theme of each student's degree thesis is a book review. Each student is required to read a book that relates to China, but almost all the books that are chosen by the students were written in English or Dutch, rather than Chinese. And all the parts of the thesis except the abstract are written in Dutch instead of Chinese. Even the thesis for getting a Master's degree is in the same situation. The same thesis writing requirement applies for students in the Sinology department of Universiteit Gent, too. Such an arrangement for the courses and requirements for the thesis will not be conducive to further improvement of the students' Chinese language skills. About the choices of modern Chinese teaching materials, both the teachers in the Sinology department of KU Leuven and in Universiteit Gent prefer to choose vivid authentic language materials, which can ensure the students learn the real language of daily life. But without the basis of a grammar and language functions project, there is something missing in the system. Especially for the senior grades, as most of the exercises courses, such as listening courses and speaking courses were taught by the Chinese teachers that were delegated by NOTCFL in these grades, and most of them will serve only for two years. The teaching materials that were chosen by them were different from the localized materials, and it is difficult to ensure materials with the same complexity. To a certain extent, this also affects the stability of the teaching quality. What's more, with an insufficient Chinese grammar knowledge system, it is also difficult for the students to further improve their Chinese level. This is another problem that can not be ignored for these two Belgian universities which have set up Sinology departments.

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<sup>10</sup> "Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures" [EB/OL]. <http://studiegids.ugent.be/2011/EN/FACULTY/A/BACH/ABOOTCCC/ABOOTCCC.html>

# Teaching culture – teaching language. The role of popularization lectures and seminars – case study of the Confucius Institute in Krakow

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This case study of the Confucius Institute in Kraków (CIK) shows the rationale for its establishing in the context of Chinese studies in Poland and the risks involved in dealing with China soft policy. It presents the CIK mode of operation in local conditions and describes the cultural activities it organizes, divided into two categories: for the participants and for the audience. The aim of the first kind of activities is to spur students' interest in the subject they learn, encourage them to self-study and give opportunities to learn extra-curricular (organizational and personal) skills, and as a result to "drive them deeper" into the realm of Chinese culture. Activities of the second kind are primarily understood as focused and well-addressed advertisements, presented to people already interested in Asian culture, in order to guide and focus their attention upon China. If it comes to popular culture, China cannot compete with its neighbours: Korea and Japan. This lack of immediate appeal makes it necessary for university-level units to provide basic-level courses and lectures, laying the groundwork for future generations of China specialists.

## **Teaching language and culture – what does it mean?**

It would not be an exaggeration to say that "combining language and culture teaching" is now a mainstream of language education and everybody stresses the importance of culture training in language learning. There are

also many institutions which emphasize “teaching culture” over “teaching language”, especially in a business environment. Negotiators from different countries will usually have no time to learn the language of the other party and will employ translators; however, in order not to commit any grave *faux pas* and offend their potential customers, they should acquire some knowledge of intercultural communication. For example, there are plenty of books for European and American businessmen advising against giving Chinese clocks and watches as gifts or instructing them on how to arrange (or survive) a Chinese-style banquet.

Because of their purpose and target audience, this kind of self-help books necessarily limit their scope to the most obvious questions of local good manners and business organization, although some of them can be interesting and helpful (see for example Seligmann, 1999). They represent only a very small fraction of “culture teaching” activities, which can take on many forms.

Many countries establish networks of specialized, language-and-culture teaching institutions. The British Council, Goethe Institute, or Alliance française are among the best known. As of 2009, the French organization was the largest, with 1081 branches (Starr, 2009: 71); in 2011 the Goethe Institute had 149 branches in 96 countries (Falk, 2012:58). Large funds are involved: according to its Annual Report, in the fiscal year 2011-12, the British Council’s expenditure on organizing various activities amounted to 720 mln GBP, of which 420 mln was used for “developing a wider knowledge of the English language” and 38 mln pounds for “encouraging cultural scientific and technological co-operation” (British Council, 2012: 68).

Although it is a latecomer to the game, China tries to catch up fast. According to the webpage of the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, commonly known as Hanban, which provides organizational framework and funding for the CIs: “China began its own exploration through establishing non-profit public institutions which aim to promote Chinese **language and culture** in foreign countries in 2004” (Hanban, n.d.; underlining by the author of this paper). Seven years after the opening of the first Confucius Institute in Seoul, by “the end of August, 2011, 353 Confucius Institutes and 473 Confucius Classrooms had been established in 104 countries and regions in the world” (Hanban, n.d.).

But what does “teaching language and culture” actually mean? Any anthropologist or other social scientist will agree that language is inseparable from culture, that most of culture is language, and all of it can be expressed

through language. Culture training is embedded in language teaching – the simplest explanation about greetings (which phrase is used to greet whom, when and in what circumstances) carries a lot of information about the cultural norms of the other society (social structure, perceptions of time etc.). The days of sterile grammar rote-memorizing are gone, today languages are taught through scenes, dialogues, interactive plays, all of which carry a lot of cultural information.

Therefore, “teaching language-and-culture” has almost become a mere slogan. However, I would like to once again pose the following question: what does it mean to “teach culture”? There are many definitions of culture, but most of them agree that people live immersed in culture, which shapes the way they work, eat, sleep, court and procreate – there is simply hardly any human activity which is not shaped by one’s culture. We learn to live according to certain rules mostly during the period of early socialization; what we acquire is a vast amount of knowledge, which we apply intuitively and almost instinctively. It is very difficult to “go native” and few people can actually do it. Descriptions of even the simplest cultures, are long and complicated; descriptions of such a long-lasting, rich and developed culture like the Chinese can take an entire library and still cannot claim to be exhaustive.

Taking into account this immeasurable richness of Chinese culture, we can consider whole university programmes as merely introductions. I myself teach an introductory course called “Confucian Culture” at the IMFES; quite similar topics (such as traditional Chinese virtues, traditional social structures, the philosophical ideas behind them etc.) are covered by several other courses which develop the ideas mentioned in my first lecture series. Therefore it takes several semester-long courses, complete with additional readings, taught by several university lecturers, in order to give students a rudimentary understanding of the very basics of traditional Chinese culture.

For the reason explained above, the following question will appear justified: what is the point in giving a 25 minute-long lecture on the same topic (i.e. Confucian culture) as part of Chinese New Year Celebrations, targeted at the general public and organized by the Confucius Institute? There also arises another, more fundamental question: what is the role of the CI itself? Our University already has a well-developed Chinese language programme, and there are specialized agencies that organize cultural activities. Why should an institution established within our university act as an impresario?

In order to answer these questions, I will analyze the case of the Jagiellonian University Centre for Chinese Language and Culture „Confucius Institute in Kraków” (CIK) and its relations with the main Chinese studies centre at our university, the Institute of Middle and Far Eastern Studies (IMFES), which is part of the Jagiellonian University’s Faculty of International and Political Studies. I will describe the rationale behind establishing the CIK and its mode of operation, noting that although it is quite similar to the other CIs in Poland and in Europe I am acquainted with, much caution is necessary before making any generalizations.

### ***The Confucius Institute in Kraków and its “working environment”***

Until very recent times, Poland did not have extensive contacts with China. China, and in fact most of Asia, basically anything that lay farther east than the European part of Russia, was almost unknown in Poland. Most of the knowledge which reached Poland was „second-hand”, coming through other countries, more connected with „the East”. Relations became closer after the Second World War, when both China and Poland became parts of the same communist block, however, after the Sino-Soviet split in 1960s, Poland sided with the USSR, and contacts with China were further downsized.

Since 1989, after democratic and economic reforms started in Poland and economic ones in China, the relations between these two countries have become warmer and economic exchange significantly increased. The growth of trade and, to a smaller extent, of investments, caused the emergence of a serious need for „China experts” – translators, advisers, sales representatives etc. At the same time, however, public awareness of the importance of the Far East in general and China in particular was growing quite slowly. It was not until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that Chinese films started to appear more often in the cinemas and China became more present in media discourse, which started to provide more detailed descriptions of this country<sup>1</sup>.

There is no Chinese minority in Poland. Historically, Poland had been always a multicultural and multinational country, although its “easternmost” minorities were Armenians or possibly Tartars<sup>2</sup>. However, because of the trag-

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<sup>1</sup> Before that, China appeared in media under three kinds of circumstances: in case of some huge natural calamity, when some Tibetans were persecuted, or in the case of high-level diplomatic visits.

<sup>2</sup> Tartars in Poland were descendants of the Golden Orde, and therefore had long been settled in Eastern Europe, Crimea etc. They were not fresh immigrants from Central or East Asia.

edy of World War II and subsequent large-scale migrations, Poland became a remarkably monocultural and mono-ethnic state, with the remaining minorities almost fully assimilated. In particular, there are very few Chinese in Poland, even counting those staying for a relatively short time. Most Poles have no practical experiences of dealing with cross-cultural differences and conflicts, should the need arise. With ca. 3000 Chinese dispersed among ten major cities and 38 million Poles at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, it is not surprising that hardly anybody has had a chance of meeting a Chinese person, let alone having him/her as a neighbour or a colleague.

The Jagiellonian University was one of the institutions which responded to the growing demand for Asian (Chinese) studies by establishing a Chinese-language course at its Foreign Language Centre in the early 1990's. Later on, in 2000, professor Andrzej Kapiszewski established a Chair of Middle and Far Eastern studies within the Faculty of International and Political Studies, with a curriculum centered upon Asia, especially the Arab countries and China. As a sociologist and a former diplomat, he considered the modern formula of regional studies to be the best in order to meet the needs of Polish business and state institutions. The aim of the new Chair (which in 2010 became an Institute<sup>3</sup>) was to provide its students with broad, interdisciplinary knowledge concerning the area they were interested in, and good, communicative knowledge of the local language (i.e. Chinese, Arabian, Hebrew, and also Japanese).

The IMFES has been growing dynamically ever since – now, in 2013, we have almost 700 students. At the same time, however, it suffers from problems common to the Polish higher education system as a whole: inadequate funding and excessive bureaucratization.

The establishment of the IMFES was a response to a real and growing need for „Asia specialists“ in Poland; however, this need was not fully understood by representatives of many institutions. This lack of understanding in itself was a measure of how dire the need was and of how necessary was the basic education about Asia. It was a kind of paradox that IMFES attempted to educate specialists, when, in fact, any basic „Asia knowledge“ was so sorely lacking. However, one could not start teaching, for example, school-

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<sup>3</sup> For the sake of simplicity, from now on, I will refer to this unit as the Institute of Middle and Far Eastern Studies, or IMFES, without specifying whether at a certain moment it was an Institute or a Chair, as it does not make much difference with regard to the subject of this paper.

children, without having properly trained teachers to begin with. Professor Kapiszewski, being a visionary, sought to cut through this vicious „circle of impossibility“. To do so, he had to struggle against serious obstacles and look for opportunities, as they presented themselves, in order to obtain necessary resources (not only financial). The Chinese plans of developing the network of Confucius Institutes seemed to him to be such an opportunity.

After prolonged negotiations both within and without the university, the Jagiellonian University Centre of Chinese Language and Culture „Confucius Institute in Kraków“ was officially established in September 2006, as the first in Poland and the 108<sup>th</sup> in the world. It has to be noted that there was some opposition, even inside IMFES itself, against establishing the CI. The most important argument against the CI was the likelihood of political influence from the PRC, which could compromise academic integrity, and of pressures from the Chinese partners to change the established and well-functioning Chinese-language teaching programme at the IMFES. Fortunately, such worries have proved to be largely unfounded, although the fears were not unreasonable: there is a quite significant amount of critique of the CIs, especially with regard to their unclear relations to the propaganda units of the PRC and CCP (see e.g. Chey, 2008). It was obvious that the CIs are a part of China “charms offensive” and very important part of its soft power projection as it is now widely described (Falk, 2011; Kurlantzick, 2007; Starr, 2009).

### **CIK activities – teaching culture or encouraging to learn culture?**

CIK was created as a supporting unit for the IMFES, and both institutes are very closely connected. IMFES remains the main place for full-scale academic studies, whereas CIK offers language courses for the general public, organizes various cultural activities and workshops for students, junior and senior scholars. Some of these activities take place on a regular basis (the library is open daily, there are regular Chinese language and calligraphy courses, public lectures are organized as part of certain projects etc.). Some of the activities organized by the CIK take place rarely, albeit regularly; among them are cultural festivals that take place once a year, such as the festivities related to the Chinese New Year, or the “CI Christmas Meeting”, scientific conferences and *Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi* Chinese language exams (once or twice a year). There are also many less regular activities: screening of Chinese movies, lectures, shows, theatrical performances etc. Some are organized almost on an *ad hoc* basis – for example, when a famous China specialist visits Cracow and agrees to give an additional lecture at the Institute.

For the sake of this analysis I will divide the above-mentioned activities into two broad categories:

1. activities for the participants
2. activities for the audience

### **Activities “for the participants”**

Classic examples of the first category are scientific conferences and students workshops. The topics of conferences, especially those in which senior scholars participate, are usually too specialized and narrow to be of much interest to general public. Their main goal is to facilitate scientific exchange. Students conferences, as we see them, have a slightly different aim. Some of the papers presented may not be paragons of exceptional scholarship, and the general level of such conferences may vary quite a lot.

However, we encourage our students to organize and participate in such events, as we uphold the old saying that “The best way to learn is to teach others”. Participants are “forced” to learn *actively*, independently searching for materials on a given topic. Active learning is the most important part of any learning process, especially when the student faces such an immensely vast subject as “Chinese culture”, whose sheer quantity may have a discouraging effect. He or she searches for information which are of interest to to him/her, not the ones required by a teacher.

Aside from the (more or less detailed) knowledge about chosen fragment of the Chinese universe, there are additional skills, important, but not always taught in regular classes: the ability to prepare a presentation and communicate one’s thoughts clearly and succinctly; to organize an event; to draw a budget for the event organized, to request funding and finally to account for the expenses etc. Even some personal skills, such as the ability to control one’s stage-fright, can be learned during such small-scale events.

In order to facilitate the organization of such events, CIK provides a venue with necessary equipment, some funding (very little in fact: such events are cheap and the students are to look up for funds on their own) and most importantly, an organizational framework<sup>4</sup>. This last point is crucial, especially when the students-organizers are dealing with outside organizations. The main point of this whole exercise is to get them engaged, and by doing so – to *sustain their interest in learning outside the class*. And this, in our

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<sup>4</sup> And of course, lots of good advice – for free!

opinion, is the crucial point of culture-learning: the amount of knowledge that can be taught in class is limited; studying a certain culture is a life-long task. The only way to learn effectively is to study on one's own, to read yet another book, look up yet another fact on the internet etc.

In order to sustain such interest, the students must be willing to become involved in the process of event-organizing; ideally, the programme of their workshop (or film screening accompanied by a discussion, or other events) should be of their own choosing. Organization should be flexible and respond to the needs of participants.

In order to show what can be gained (or what opportunities can be lost) while participating in cultural events, I will discuss an example of the annual "Hanyu Qiao" – "A Bridge to Chinese" competition. The competition is targeted at university students; its main organizer is Hanban; before the final stage which takes place in China, local preliminary contests take place in various countries across the world, sponsored by local Chinese embassies.

At a first glance, the contest is a perfect combination of culture and language learning, as it consists of three parts:

- a speech on a topic established in advance (a different one each year), which illustrates individual language competence
- answering questions (the complete set of questions is also available on the contest web site), which combines language competence and cultural knowledge (about a certain field of Chinese culture);
- cultural performance prepared by each participant.

The prizes are quite attractive (the main one is a full-paid trip to Beijing to participate in grand finale), which should boost interest. Unfortunately, the contests' format is quite ossified. In fact, the competition goes on not between the students, who actually participate, but rather between the Chinese teachers, who supervise them. This is because the speech part is hardly ever prepared by the participant him- or herself – it is at best drawn by the participant and re-worked by his or her teacher to such an extent, that it is hard to recognize the original. More often than not, speeches are written by teachers, with an emphasis on "cultured and elegant" language, extremely bookish and sprinkled with *chengyu* and rarely used expressions. Sometimes the jurors, veteran sinologists with doctoral degrees, with many years of teaching and translating experience, can hardly understand it. In some cases, students themselves do not really understand their own

speeches, which they simply (painstakingly) memorize. For this reason, their language competence does not really increase.

The “show” part is uneven and difficult to judge fairly. It may consist of songs, instrument playing, painting, Chinese calligraphy, or anything else the participant can think of and perform in front of the audience. Neither are the jury qualified to truly judge vocal or calligraphic abilities, nor can such varied performances be in any sensible ways compared. Who is better: a student with a beautiful voice, who slightly mispronounced several words in the Chinese song he or she sang, or a student who voicelessly showed some kung-fu moves, whose meaning and usage nobody in the audience comprehends? Some of the participants do not really have any particular “artistic” gifts, but they are “forced to perform” (against their own cultural conventions – people in Poland are not so eager to sing karaoke or perform before an audience as the Chinese are) by the competition format. Hanyu Qiao is (at least in Poland) unpopular with students, who are more “coerced” to participate than they are willing to do so.

The problem, in my opinion is twofold: first, the forced combination of language competition and “culture” competition, where culture is narrowly understood as something to do with “arts”: songs, paintings, dance or – at best – kung-fu; second, it is participants-oriented event, but they have no say in its organization and form, they cannot for example choose the subject they want to compete one year.

### **Activities “for the audience”**

Typical activities of the second kind are annual celebrations of the Chinese New Year (which usually consist of a main event, e.g. a concert by Chinese orchestra or a Chinese acrobatics show) and a series of workshops and short lectures, for children and adults.

On the plus side, people coming to such events have the chance – quite unique in Poland – to “touch” the reality of Chinese culture. Due to the already mentioned lack of a Chinese minority, people in Poland have no chance to visit Chinese-style temples or to see dragon dances performed in the street.

The value of such performances for cultural education is not very high, as most viewers will not be able to understand what they are watching. For example, without additional explanations, the symbolism of a lion or dragon dance will be lost on them. The same can be said of such performances as puppet shows. Several years ago, the CIK hosted a puppet show;

the skills of the performers were very much appreciated, but the audience could not refer to previous knowledge of the context of such shows in China, neither could they understand the plot.

Therefore, for most viewers, such shows and smaller-scale workshops have mainly an entertainment value. Getting one's name written in Chinese characters with a calligraphy brush will not really bring about much understanding of the Chinese culture, or even the Chinese script. There is nothing wrong in a bit of entertainment, but it reminds of the question posed earlier: should university units organize recreational activities and concerts? Shouldn't they rather leave it for specialized agencies and organizations?

We believe, however, that it is necessary and worthwhile to divert some of our time and resources to such purposes. We consider it as a kind of advertisement for our Institute, and more generally – for the Chinese world we teach about. For all its long history and cultural richness, modern China does not have a great cultural impact – especially not in the realm of pop culture. The huge damage brought about by such policies as “Destroy the Four Olds” campaign of the 1960s robbed China of much of its cultural heritage. Since the name of Confucius is mentioned often in this paper, it is worth remembering that the site of his birth and burial was completely ransacked in 1966; over 6600 publicly registered cultural treasures were destroyed, and the main complex only barely saved from being burnt (Slavicek, 2010: 65-66). Political persecutions, especially the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and (from the 1950s to the 1980s) the subordination of arts to the revolutionary case of the Chinese Communist Party, silenced or destroyed entire generations of artists, who could create modern, interesting variations of Chinese arts, including attractive, modern Chinese pop culture.

Although the Chinese culture is the most ancient and rich of all Eastern Asian cultures, it is the least present in popular imagination: the cuisine and *kung-fu* are the two elements immediately recognized as “Chinese”, and even them are mostly popularized through emigrants or fringe (Hong Kong) Chinese communities. The Japanese have *manga* and *anime*, which are so immensely popular worldwide, that even if a tiny percentage of their fans decide to choose Japanese philology or Japanese studies as their university major, it is enough to generate a steady flow of new students. For the Koreans, it is the success of their television dramas (apart of course from their economic boom), which fulfills the same role (Ren, 2011).

At the beginning of this essay, I mentioned the paradox of the IMFES trying to educate specialists, when basic education about the Far East is necessary in Poland. One of the main reasons for establishing the CIK was to gain resources to do such groundwork. The IMFES curriculum is aimed at teaching future specialists, and the CIK's activities are mainly addressed to the general public. We are aware that short lectures on various topics can only give a hint on what was and is going on in China, and that different cultural events have more of an entertaining than an educative value. In fact, they serve mostly as advertisements – we use them to connect with large group of people who “are interested in the East”, but whose interest is quite general. These short lectures and shows do not constitute “cultural education” *sensu stricto*. They are opportunities for the audience to get in touch with lecturers from different institutes (the IMFES being the closest one), students and volunteers from affiliated clubs and associations, and to learn from them about other possibilities of pursuing their interests. These activities should be understood as incentives to learn, rather than “packages of knowledge”.

I have also questioned the usefulness of such short lectures, which can present but a tiny amount of information. If we treat them more as adverts than as serious “lectures”, the fact that Chinese culture is such a vast territory becomes an asset, not a liability: we have a lot of topics to choose from to present to our audience. Adverts must be attractive; therefore, we take care not to bore our audience, whose members are regular attendants of CIK activities (we cannot offer the same content over and over again). In order to keep people interested, and encourage them to seek more knowledge on their own, it is necessary to break away from an ossified, stereotypical imagery of China (*kung-fu pandas* and Great Walls). There are many topics which can be fascinating if they are well-presented. Moreover, although such presentations cannot convey complex, detailed academic knowledge, they can touch upon very interesting topics on the margins or outside of mainstream, stereotypical Chinese culture. Nobody complained when during Chinese New Year celebrations we discussed such topics as “ancient Chinese methods for producing strong beers using mouldy rice” or “17<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit missionaries’ research into Chinese flora”. Because we do not have the necessary amount of time and resources, we have not conducted full-scale research into the effectiveness of such “advertising campaigns”, but I can testify for at least several students of IMFES, who have already finished their post-graduate studies and who had originally entered our institute because they had attended popular lectures organized by CIK.

## Summary

The Confucius Institute in Kraków was established in order to support the Institute of Middle and Far Eastern Studies, and to provide opportunities for spreading basic-level education in Chinese language, and (to some extent) culture. Establishing the CIK within the structures of such a prestigious high-learning institution as the Jagiellonian University required some courage, as the CIs are commonly perceived to be tools of “soft power” policy of the People’s Republic of China. However, we believe that so far we succeeded in preserving academic integrity. Our Chinese partners have not tried to impose their political views on our students, neither have they tried to pursue any politicized agenda. We managed to establish Chinese language classes in several primary and secondary schools, offering a possibility to for continuous study up to university level at the IMFES. During over six years of CIK operation, we have worked out a model of organization of cultural activities which may serve as starting point. We do not think that through these activities we can actually *teach* a lot about China; our aim is rather to *incite* people to *learn*.

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# Dynamic Cultural Impact and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) for Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

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HAOPENGYOU CHINESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Culture provides a common understanding transcending immediate individual experience – a social reality to guide human being's actions. Individual human beings differ with respect to a multitude of demographic physiological and psychological variables, including age, sex, social status, health, intelligence, temperament, and life circumstance. The differences are due in varying degree to genetic causes, inherited wealth or social position, and individual experience and achievement. Many of these differences involve attributes that can, at least in part, be affected by social influence, such as tastes, preferences, mood, values, cognitions, beliefs, attitudes, habits, and lifestyles among others. These characteristics are important because they shape how people act and react toward the world and each other. Therefore, the domain of dynamic social impact theory is to explore any socially influential attribute or aspect of an individual. Latane<sup>1</sup> proposed that a dynamic social theory impact is to account for how coherent structure of cultural elements emerge from the interactions of people located in space; in this conception, social structure is seen to result from individuals, differing in their ability to influence each other, affecting each other in a dynamic iterative process. Latane considers that the social impact theory could be applied as a sociological approach to cultural communication. He proposes five propositions for structural influence to cultural communication. Five propositions include:

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<sup>1</sup> Latane, B. (1996). *Dynamic Social Impact: The Creation of Culture by Communication*. "Journal of Communication", p. 13-25. Blackwell Publishing.

1. individual differ,
2. individuals have relatively stable location in space,
3. social influence is proportional multiplicative function of the strength, immediate, and number of sources,
4. the iterative, recursive outcome of individual influence processes will lead to the global self-organization of socially inalienable attributes and the emergence of group-level phenomena,
5. social influence will be incremental for unimportant issues, catastrophic for important ones.

Latane further presented a theory to conduct a research on the issue – how individuals located in social space influence each other to create a high order pattern of structure. His theory asserts that human society functions as a collection of subcultures, and organic changing entity feeding on an evolving by communication. Moreover, Latane suggests that the changing technology of communication may have profound effects on the future evolution of culture. For this reason, Latane concludes that “by facilitating and controlling social interaction, the technology of communication helps determine the shape or geometry of social space and the kinds of social influence processes that can take place within communication”. However, numerous definitions of culture exist, but no consensus definition has emerged within or across disciplines. Culture, for example, can be conceived as everything that is human made (Herskovits<sup>2</sup>, 1955) or as involving shared meanings (Geertz<sup>3</sup>). Hall<sup>4</sup> equates it with communication. Birdwhistell<sup>5</sup> suggests that “culture and communication are terms which represent two different viewpoints or methods of representation of patterned and structured interconnectedness. Berger<sup>6</sup> defines “culture as the focus is on structure; as communication it is on process”. Based on the previous definitions of culture, Keesing’s<sup>7</sup> concluded that there are two predominates in his cultural theories: culture is an adaptive system and culture is an ideational system. Keesing considered that these two systems could be applied to overcome dilemma in both definitions (cognitive reductionism and a vision of the world

<sup>2</sup> Herskovits, M. (1955). *Cultural anthropology*. Knopf, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of culture*. Basic Books, New York.

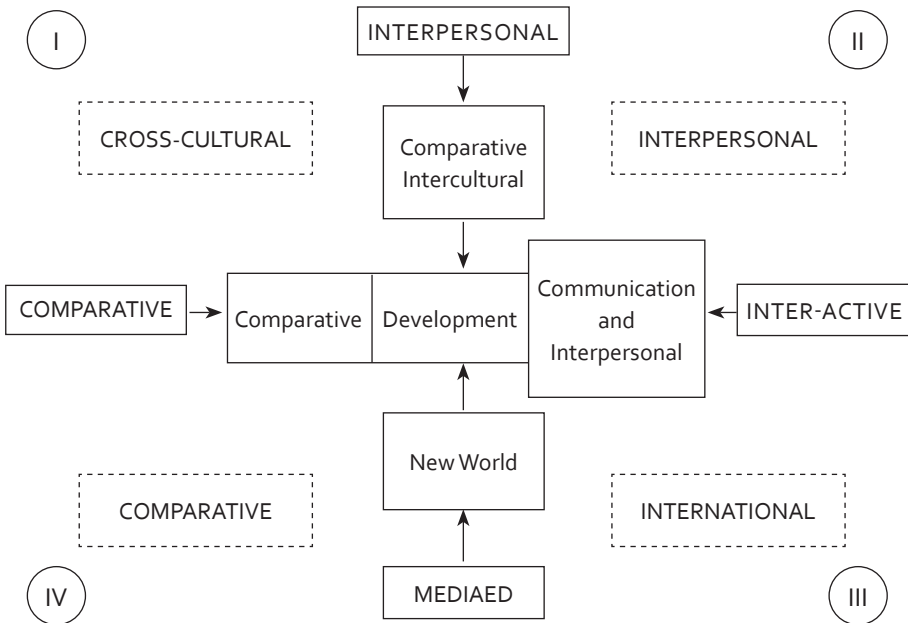
<sup>4</sup> Hall, E. T. (1959). *The silent language*. Doubleday, Garden City, New York.

<sup>5</sup> Birdwhistell, R. (1970). *Kinesics and contexts*. Ballentine, New York.

<sup>6</sup> Berger, C & Chaffee B.S. ed., (1987). *Handbook of Communication Science*, p. 847-889. SAGE.

<sup>7</sup> Keesing, R. (1974). *Theories of Culture*. "Annual Review of Anthropology" 3, p. 73-97.

cultural symbols as spuriously uniform), respectively. Keesing, moreover, borrowed the distinction between “competence” and “performance” from linguistics to explain culture. According to Keesing’s definition, culture focuses on “competence,” but “sociocultural performance” also must be studied. Culture, therefore, must be distinguished from the social system, such as the behavior of people who share a common culture, including networks of social relations and patterns of social interaction and society (Geertz<sup>8</sup>; Parsons<sup>9</sup>).



**Figure 1.** Areas of inquiry in the study of socio-cultural variability and communication

**Source:** Gundykunst, W. B., ed. Deborah A. Cai (2010). *Cross-Cultural comparison*. “Intercultural Communication”, p. 214. Sage.

Quadrant I represents intercultural communication research; that is interpersonal communication between people from different sociocultural systems or communication between members of different subsystems (e.g., ethnic or racial groups) within the same sociocultural communication research. Quadrant II represents cross-cultural communication research. Quadrant III and IV differ in that the phenomenon studies is mediate communication.

<sup>8</sup> Geertz, C.(1973).*The interpretaiton of culture*. Basic Books, New York.

<sup>9</sup> Parsons, C. (1951). *The social system*. Free Press, New York.

Research in Quadrant III focuses on mediated communication from socio-cultural system to another – research typically labeled international communication. Quadrant IV, in contrast, involves comparison of media systems across sociocultural systems (comparative mass communication). The following review of research devote to outlining a theoretical framework for the study of sociocultural variability and communication.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to the study of how a second language is acquired. It is a fascinating field that covers non-first language and foreign language learning. A distinction is made between learning (a conscious process) and acquisition (a subconscious process). Second Language Acquisition and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) are interrelated significantly. Moreover, culture is often seen as mere information conveyed by language and as separate from language. However, culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth option that comes after the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Learners must be aware of the linguistic choices that exist, how they are to make those choices and the significance of those choices when studying a language. However, learning a foreign language is not just a matter of learning the rules – the language learner must also to understand the culture of the speaker to gain an insight into a native speaker's thought process so that s/he can deal with those situations where the rules are undefined. Hence, learners should be aware of the similarities and differences between their culture and the L2 (the second language) culture.

In conclusion, there are numerous benefits to include culture an element into a CALL program. First of all, CALL increases learner autonomy. With a CALL program, learners can work at their desired and expected pace. The learner can spend more time on those topics that are causing difficulty. Secondly, the learners can keep their privacy. CALL programs is the private environment it offers for self-conscious language. A lot of learners are shy in a traditional classroom setting, not participating as much as they would like, for fear of making mistakes and being the object of ridicule. The computer assisted language learning program provides a forum where learners can lose their self-consciousness. The third benefit is to self-evaluated feedback. Again, in the traditional classroom setting, it is usually not possible to provide immediate feedback to each individual learner, but the computer can give feedback at the touch of a button. It is important that errors are cor-

rected before they are converted into part of the learner's "language knowledge". The fourth benefit is to motivate self-learning. Motivation encourages greater learner effort and thus greater language performance. CALL generally increases students' levels of motivation.

The fifth benefit of CALL is the control of not overloading the learning information. A CALL program has the potential to provide more information to the learner while conversely, learners can avoid information overload if they feel they are being overwhelmed. In a traditional classroom setting, students cannot usually leave if they feel overloaded. The students must wait until the class has ended. With a CALL program, the user can leave when s/he wishes and come back to where s/he left off and start again. The fifth benefit is that computers promote interactivity. Learners have to interact with the computer and cannot hide behind their classmates. If the learner does nothing, nothing happens. At the very least, learners have to start the CALL program. Usually the learners have to use the target language in exercises within the program. They have plenty of opportunities to practice the language in a one-on-one situation. CALL programs promote interactivity using many senses. Not only is text presented, sound can be heard and videos viewed. Sub-titles to videos can be switched on and off. Videos can be viewed in mute mode, so that learners can use various strategies to ascertain what is happening. The most important is that CALL programs should not just imitate what happens in a traditional classroom situation but enhance the learning process by doing things that are only possible with the use of the computer. One such area is that of examples. New exercise types have been introduced which can not only test the learner's knowledge, but also avoid the boredom associated with constant repetition of the same types of exercises. The various exercises are designed to maintain the student's interest. Audio and video are features possible in CALL that cannot be as smoothly integrated into the more traditional learning courses. Another benefit of CALL is the ability to repeatedly review information. This repetition can aid reinforcement; this can be provided either by text, audio or video. Learners can listen to audio portions until they are satisfied. Video segments can be watched in various modes as many times as the learner expects. This is obviously beneficial to the learner and is a definite advantage over the traditional classroom situation. Hence, it is suggested that to apply the CALL program into a second foreign language learning and second language acquisition, especially in Chinese language learning.

# Micro Mobile Mandarin in Education

**SŁAWOMIR CZEPIELEWSKI**

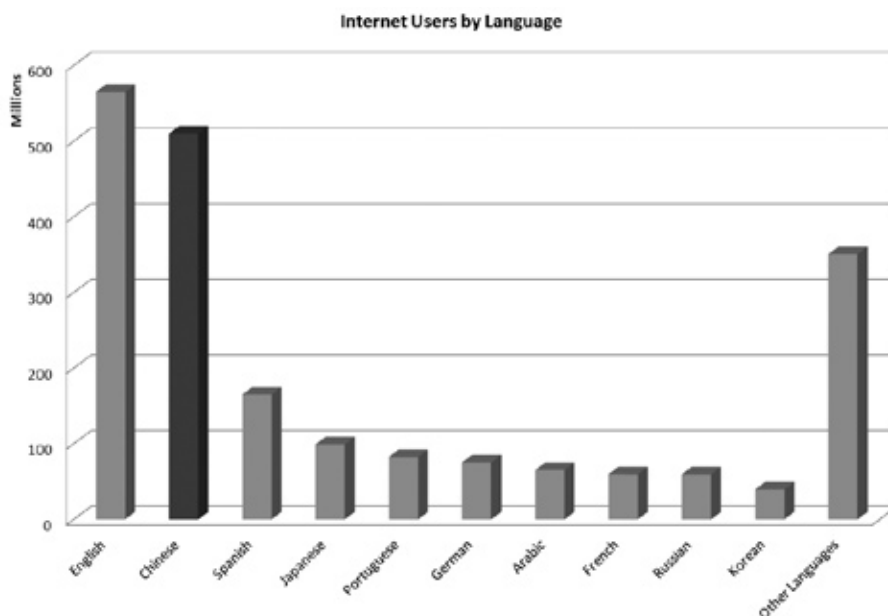
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## 1. *Why Mandarin?*

The Chinese language is gaining more and more popularity and importance in the field of culture, business and science. The term “Chinese” should be associated with the Mandarin dialect, which is the official language of the Republic of China. Even 20 years ago learning Mandarin was as exotic as learning Arabic or Hindi. However, the economic and scientific expansion of China causes the map of the most popular languages in the world to change dramatically.

According to statistical data, the most important language in the world is invariably English. Despite the fact that there are “only” 340 million native English speakers, it is the second language (at various levels) for a further 1.6 billion people, giving it a leading position in every language ranking. The second place in terms of reach and popularity goes to Spanish, which is the native language for 400 to 500 million people, but it is the official language in 21 countries around the world. Moreover, approximately 100 million people are learning it. However, all these data are not as impressive in comparison with the number of people who speak Chinese as their official language. It is the native language for 1.3 billion people living in People’s Republic of China. On top of that, according to official figures of the Chinese government, a further 24-40 million people are learning it worldwide. This number also includes people of Chinese descent living outside of the country.

Interesting data is provided by statistics on participation of individual languages in searching for information on-line. They show a significant increase in information searched for in Chinese, which is now in the second place right after English. Recent rankings made in the year 2012 indicate that the number of search terms in English is 565 million, which represents 28.6% of all searches. Meanwhile, the Chinese language is only 4.4% less with the outcome of 24.2%. Other languages are far behind.



**Figure 1.** Internet Users by Language

**Source:** Top 10 languages used on the internet <http://www.star-ts.com/translation-blog/index.php/2012/06/14/top-10-internet-languages/> [30.05.2013]

**Table 1.** Internet Users by Language

Top 10 Languages	Internet Users	% of Total
English	565 004 126	26.8
<b>Chinese</b>	<b>509 965 013</b>	<b>24.2</b>
Spanish	164 968 742	7.8
Japanese	99 182 000	4.7
Portuguese	82 586 600	3.9
German	75 422 674	3.6
Arabic	65 365 400	3.3
French	59 779 525	3
Russian	59 700 000	3
Korean	39 440 000	2
<b>Top 10 Languages</b>	<b>1 615 957 333</b>	<b>82</b>
Other Languages	350 557 483	17.8
<b>World Total</b>	<b>2 099 926 965</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Top 10 languages used on the internet <http://www.star-ts.com/translation-blog/index.php/2012/06/14/top-10-internet-languages/> [30.05.2013]

It is worth noting that the number of search terms means an increase of terms prepared in a given language. It can therefore be assumed that not only popular and translated texts are published in Mandarin, but also scientific articles, documents or legal acts important for people who maintain business relations with the Middle Kingdom, and scientists who wish to keep up with the latest developments of the rapidly growing Chinese science. Therefore, the most important reason for increased interest in learning Chinese in Europe is the economic and scientific expansion of China, which results in intensification of commercial and scientific contacts between China and Europe. Currently, China is an economic, innovation and scientific powerhouse. Their only rivals in the struggle for leadership in the world are United States and Japan. Knowledge of Chinese may be crucial for Europeans. It can greatly affect their personal and professional development, as well as development of companies. Trading with China may be of great importance for both EU and individual companies. China has a huge financial surplus and is now the largest creditor in the world. It is also potentially the biggest investor in the field of finance and direct investment. We must not forget that education and science is also developing intensively in China, which means that many of the most valuable research materials are published in Mandarin. The Chinese language is increasingly making its presence in diplomacy, where the command of it is more often required. The opening of the Middle Kingdom to contacts with the outside world also contributes to the development of tourism. China is more and more often visited by tourists from all over the world, and vice versa – Chinese citizens are becoming richer and embark on journeys around the world. Therefore, European tourists wish to know the basics of the Mandarin dialect, and the same applies to Europeans associated with the tourism industry.

While searching for an answer to the question whether it is worth to learn Mandarin we must not forget about cultural issues. We must remember that the Chinese people are very attached to their traditions, including their language (which they consider to be unique) and are very sensitive to showing them respect by other people. Limiting to English in business contact may be seen as neglect and lack of professionalism. For a Chinese person it is not as important to have a perfect command of the dominant Mandarin dialect – Chinese people consider their language to be so difficult that a foreigner cannot learn it properly. However, they will appreciate hard work and enthusiasm put into learning. The attempt to learn about the Chinese culture and language is considered a token of respect and makes it easier to establish business and private contacts.

## 2. Use of modern technologies in learning Mandarin

More and more Europeans are starting to learn Chinese. The pioneer in the field of promoting Chinese learning in the formal education system is Sweden. Not long ago, the Swedish Ministry of Education decided to introduce Chinese as a mandatory language in the final year of primary school and in high school. This was followed by France, the Netherlands and Finland. In Poland the number of language schools which add Chinese to their offer is growing rapidly as well. Chinese is becoming visible in high schools, primary schools and kindergartens, and the number of Poles who speak Chinese is growing systematically. More and more people take HSK exams organised by different schools and Confucius Institutes. These are six-level state exams analogous to the European Framework for Languages Reference: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2.

In case of high schools the introduction of Chinese learning is often associated with the creation and development of Confucius Institutes. These institutes are institutions exerting considerable influence on popularization of the Chinese language and culture throughout the world. Their primary purpose – besides teaching Chinese – is breaking down the stereotypes associated with the Chinese language that tell us it is impossible to learn. The first institute was established in Tashkent in 2004. Its success contributed to the rapid growth of the CI chain. In a short time branches were established in Korea, USA, Australia and several European and African countries. Today, in Europe alone there are about 90 Confucius Institutes. The first Confucius Institute in Poland was established in 2006 at the Jagiellonian University. Today, this institution also functions in Poznan, Opole and Wroclaw. The Confucius Institutes offer (in addition to language teaching) trainings for institutions, connected, for example, with the art of negotiation or understanding cultural differences. They also have a rich resource of publications, teaching materials and books on China, and also develop Polish-Chinese and Chinese-Polish dictionaries and textbooks.

Unfortunately, despite the increase in its popularity, the opportunities to learn Chinese are limited to large cities. This is very often connected with the lack of Chinese language teachers. Fortunately, today, working with a language teacher is not the only way to learn, though this form and direct contact with the language will always be the basis for learning Chinese. The solution for those who are not able to work with a language teacher is learning with ICT. While until recently on-line Chinese courses in Polish were an abstraction, it is now possible to utilize the availability of several websites

offering Chinese language training. An excellent and innovative solution available today for almost all interested are mobile applications for learning Chinese, available to download to a smartphone or tablet. Such applications are very useful for tourists who are willing to visit China. This means that all smartphone and iPhone users are able to download lessons to their devices and enjoy them while travelling, which may greatly help them move around China. This formula, in addition to reading the message, gives the opportunity to view it on a phone display or use its content in audio format.

### **3. Definitions of micro-learning**

Micro-learning is a teaching methodology of providing small portions of knowledge and allowing consolidation of the knowledge by repeating the portions according to the adopted algorithm. Micro-learning should be therefore understood as a way of teaching and learning based on relatively small lesson units, short-term learning activities and loosely linked together educational activities. In general, the term “micro-learning” refers to micro-perspectives in the context of science, education and training. This term is more and more often used in the context of e-learning and is based on the design of educational activities based on “micro-steps”. In a broader sense, micro-learning is a term that can be used to describe an informal way of learning, which increasingly relies on 2.0 technologies and wireless technologies. The process referred to as “micro-learning” can range from a few seconds (such as when using mobile phones) to 15 minutes or more.

Micro-learning combines different approaches to learning. It also facilitates self-education, which perfectly relates to the idea of Life-Long Learning, and may be easily integrated into the rhythm of daily tasks of the learner. Learning by “small steps” using micro-content facilitates learning on demand at a time convenient for the learner. In this way micro-learning allows people to participate in today’s knowledge society, and offers a real opportunity to complement the more time-consuming and formal ways of learning, such as classroom courses or on-line training.

By definition lesson units in a “micro” format should be designed in small sizes allowing the learner to immediately find information. For example, messages presented on a computer or smartphone screen should be visible as a whole without having to scroll down. Also important is the format allowing for easy reception using any device, i.e. small capacity or lower resolution. Another attribute of micro-content should be the clearly defined subject, explicitly indicating the contents of the message, focused around a single

sentence, text or dialogue. Micro-content must also be autonomous, that is understandable to the learner without having to seek additional external information. That is why in micro-learning the context and knowledge of potential recipients is so important. Micro-learning combined with formal learning and embedded in on-line communities has the potential to support continuous professional development.

An important aspect of micro-learning is its contextuality. Cognitive psychology can give us information about the effectiveness of contextual learning of a foreign language. According to its findings the important aspects are:

1. Specific encoding, which means that the transformation and encoding of information work best when we learn to use the language in a specific context, which should help us recall the elements of the language based on the context of when and where we need to use it.
2. Revision intervals. This means that learning is most effective when the learning content is spread over time instead of occurring rapidly one after another. If we learn the language in small quantities and in real places, we will be able to naturally recall them in a similar space and time.
3. Knowledge cannot be completely separated from the activities of the learner, habits and cultural contexts in which the language is being developed. The language is better understood when it is used in a specific context and results from personal experience.

The contextual use of language occurs naturally in various places, where the learner is accompanied by mobile devices that immediately provide relevant learning content, because such opportunities are naturally present in different places.

Studies have shown that repeating words in steadily increasing intervals is a more effective way to learn and remember new words than continuous revision. Text messages sent at regular intervals using a mobile phone make it possible to effectively meet this requirement.

#### **4. Sources of micro-learning**

The idea of micro-learning is rooted in the theory of Dr. Pimsler published back in 1967. The scientist claimed that the human brain is most effective during the first 30 minutes of learning. Then the concentrations decreases and we experience problems with associating and remembering. Based on

research and observations, Dr. Pimsler has developed a language course in which each lesson lasted 20-30 minutes. The course also assumed everyday learning at any place and time (when the mind is not tired and the external conditions are favourable), one lesson a day, revision and development of the material during subsequent lessons, loud speaking, repeating words, phrases and sentences after the teacher, translating words and phrases from the learner's native language into the target language, and automatic verification of knowledge.

Dr. Paul Pimsler has also developed a revision system, which was intended to move knowledge from short-term to long-term memory. Initially, revisions take place in very short intervals, extending over time (5 s, 25 s, 2 min, 10 min, 1 h, 5 h, 1 day, 5 days, 25 days, 4 months, and 2 years). A new lesson consists of both new and previously learned information.

Micro-content is also used by Rosetta Stone language learning programme created in 1992. This method is based on an audio-visual presentation of concepts without translating them, and aims to a complete "immersion" in the target language. Learning is based on memorizing sounds and images, in line with the natural way of learning a language, similar to the way in which young children learn their native language.

Another source from which micro-learning derives is the widely known Leitner system. With the help of several compartments (such as in a box) or separate boxes with flashcards it is possible to learn and revise data, words, facts or dates.

An example of learning using flashcards and three boxes: Initially all the flashcards are placed in compartment 1 – revision of these flashcards is made daily. Flashcards in compartment 2 are revised every second day, and flashcards in compartment 3 even less often. If the learner already knows the answer, he/she moves the flashcard to the next compartment. If the learner doesn't know the correct answer, the flashcard is moved back to the lowest compartment. The purpose of the process is to put all flashcards into the last compartment. The Leitner system is used by very popular applications, such as Anki (also available on modern smartphones or tablets) and Mnemosyne.

Recent research in neuroscience confirms that micro-learning conveys knowledge in a brain-friendly way. In a recent interview, prominent European brain researcher Gerhard Roth illustrated the effectiveness of micro-learning based on recent neurobiological experience. The neuroscientist con-

firmed that small learning units and frequent revisions optimally support the brain during the learning process. According to Gerhard Roth, micro-learning provides a brain-friendly learning situation. The solution is currently being marketed under the name Knowledgepulse® version 1.5. Roth recommends dividing learning material into short lesson units – up to five minutes, since this is the optimal time, in which information may be processed in one part of the memory, commonly referred to as the “attention span”. During those five minutes, every 30 seconds the learning content must be repeated. Another session can include another five minutes of learning content. Such pattern can be repeated for up to 30 minutes.

## 5. Definitions of mobile learning

The history of m-learning begins at the end of the nineteenth century and is associated with the first attempts of distance-learning. Today, the definition of mobile learning is closely related to mobile technology. First studies on its implementation has already begun in the 40s of the twentieth century, however, the popularisation of mobile learning falls in the 80s. A rapid development of this learning method started in the 90s of the twentieth century and continues to this day.

In the simplest meaning mobile learning (m-learning) is a learning method that utilises mobile information and communication technologies. According to M. Sharples mobile learning process always takes place “when the learner is not in a place pre-designated for that purpose, or the learning takes place when the learner gains benefits from learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies”. In conclusion, “m-learning means learning with the use of wireless, portable equipment such as laptops, PDAs, tablet PCs and modern mobile phones – smartphones”. However, for the process of m-learning to take place, all these devices must have permanent access to the Internet. Mobile learning combines the capabilities offered by wireless networks, mobile technologies and e-learning, where m-learning should be understood as a specific modification of e-learning.

Mobility of learning can be considered in two aspects. Firstly, from the perspective of the service recipient, who can learn at any time and place of his/her choice. Secondly, in terms of technologies and tools, the design of which (such as a wireless form) allows for free movement and use of educational materials at any desired location. Contemporary pedagogy understands m-learning as a modern form of education which belongs to the constructivist stream.

Educational content intended for m-learning purposes must meet its educational function and must be prepared according to certain rules:

1. Development of short and synthetic of information (instantiation). Learning methods must be tailored to the specifics of the instruments used. Mobile technologies are associated with miniaturisation of communication tools, so the information packages should be presented in a form convenient for receptions in mobile access conditions.
2. Division of transmitted information into "learning objects", where it is necessary to develop a concept of future merge or integration of these objects into the information resources already owned. Another learning condition is to develop a system of exercises, presentations and tests that should be adapted to capabilities of a mobile tool. According to the concept of constructivist learning, these are the components integrating traditional teaching methods with the methods of distance education. The forms of mobile learning create a virtual context for the existing knowledge and allow the learning process to be personalized to a greater extent than e-learning.
3. Learning objects communicated by mobile devices should be short, allowing for quick reading and recalling. For this reason, the dominant form is graphic (pictorial) transmission.
4. In view of the miniaturization of media forms and short periods of time devoted to learning, very important is the "multimediality" of the developed material that promotes activation of intellectual processes at the levels of consciousness and subconsciousness
5. Due to division of knowledge it is necessary to create an e-learning system of merging individual objects together. The m-learning system should therefore include schemes that will support the reconstruction of a whole, taking into account the holistic view of the world and contextual learning.
6. Particular attention should be paid to the type of tools provided for use in the mobile learning, as developing a single model of m-learning for all types of tools used in the process poses considerable difficulties.

There are two models for implementation of m-learning:

1. M-learning as a form of work in fact benefiting from distance learning technologies, but mainly developing on the basis of specific communication tools:
  - a. independent forms of intentional and personalized learning based on memorization of small learning objects (such as words in a foreign language) in short time units,

- b. independent forms of rapid updating of the information available for professions requiring permanent improvement (such as doctors or pilots),
  - c. a system for coordination of activities (including educational activities) implemented collectively.
2. Part of a comprehensive “blended learning” instructional model – working with a teacher, supplemented by forms that also use mobile technologies:
  - a. in educational institutions (higher education facilities),
  - b. in institutions engaged in popularization of culture (museums, galleries, libraries),
  - c. forms of Intellectual stimulation of younger age groups through short educational games and activities, in coordination with an e-learning platform (operating within the school education system or independently executing specific teaching and educational objectives).

## **6. Synchronous and asynchronous micro-mobile-learning**

In synchronous e-learning the teacher remains in contact with the student in real time, but the relation is entirely virtual. The teacher and the student are located in different places, and interact with each other only through ICT tools. In asynchronous e-learning there is no such relation. The student uses previously prepared materials (files stored in the server) and solves problems through an educational platform, without communicating with the teacher. The whole process of education is computer-implemented as a part of self-education. Mobile learning is a method in which the teacher-student relation practically does not exist, and even if it exists – it is highly objectified. In this method, the student becomes familiar with the material on his/her own (just as in asynchronous e-learning), but the communication (educational) tool is not a computer, but a mobile device, such as a mobile phone. Mobile learning is the perfect way to achieve goals related to self-education, as it makes it possible to easily absorb small portions of material virtually anywhere, at any time.

There are even experiments that use localization technologies in asynchronous language teaching. There are systems that use localization in lifelong learning, in tasks that involve interactions with native speakers in given spaces. The system indicates which phrases and questions to ask according to coordinates indicated by GPS. These are selected from the database

and sent to the learner's mobile phone. In addition to GPS there are also experiments that use RFID technology for contextual teaching. The JAPELAS system was used for teaching conversational skills in marked rooms, and the TANGO system was used for teaching speaking skills involving objects marked with coordinates. RFID readers are also used for studying at home, where the learner (in contact with objects located at home) has to give nouns in the target language. Of course, the basic tool for learning was micro-content delivered to a mobile phone. The use of readers allowed for full contextuality of the learning process.

Similarly to the division of e-learning into synchronous mode and asynchronous m-learning (including micro-learning), these may also exist in two forms. The first includes educational materials being sent (for example via text messages) to the student by the teacher or by a programmed application. The second occurs when the user downloads teaching materials by himself/herself (usually from the Internet) and then installs it on a mobile device to use for both educational and practical purposes. The first method refers to the idea of synchronous e-learning, although it is followed by a large reduction in contact with the teacher, and the second method is an asynchronous model of m-learning, pursuing similar goals as the asynchronous model of e-learning. What differentiates the asynchronous method of e-learning and m-learning is the technology and scope of material that can be communicated in the given method. E-learning is comprehensive and virtually unlimited in terms of the scope of communication, while m-learning is limited mostly by the technology of mobile devices itself and psychology of use of mobile devices. The determinants of mobile learning are: short time, small portions of material and simple message.

In this way, mobile learning (especially in the asynchronous form) is a good way to achieve the goals of micro-learning – “condensed” learning, including small range of material that can be learned in a short time using mobile devices.

## **7. Micro-mobile-learning on the example of Chinese for Europeans**

The purpose of m-learning in the project “Chinese for Europeans” is to cause an increase in activity of Chinese learners, diversification of the learning process and inspiring to further education. The use of mobile devices for learning the language provides easy and wide access to specific language con-

tent. The wide availability of mobile telephony also allows for immediate use of language material contained in the phone memory. A mobile phone may serve as a strictly educational device (for systematic language learning) and a language guide (a hand-held dictionary with a collection of terms or phrases).

Micro-learning was used in two modules of the project “Chinese for Europeans”: “Business” and “Tourists”. The scenario of both these modules was reduced accordingly and closed in three parts: a brief introduction to the subject in the form of a dialogue, a glossary of key words and phrases, and revision exercises.

### 7.1. Synchronous micro-mobile-learning – “Business” module of the project “Chinese for Europeans”

The “Business” module consists of ten lessons containing language materials and cultural information useful for those who keep business relationships with Chinese companies. Learning in this part takes place in two ways: through lessons contained in the e-learning system of the project, and micro teaching materials sent to users by e-mail at intervals adapted to their needs. Moving to another lesson requires solving problems related to the current lesson. Teaching material of the module has been developed by experts in business, familiar with the reality of cooperation between European and Chinese entrepreneurs. Therefore, after completing the entire course, the material can be used contextually in situations relevant to business contacts.

In order to participate in the course, it is necessary to visit the project website and create an account, giving an e-mail address, to which the teaching materials will be sent. Then, after logging into the system, in the “Select a topic” menu we have to select micro-learning parameters: the number of lessons that will be available to the user at any given time (up to 3) and the frequency of e-mails (daily, every two days, every three days). The rule is that every lesson unit has e-mails associated with it. Usually these are about eight e-mails per lesson. So if the user has selected two lessons and marked that he/she would like to receive e-mails every day, then there will be two series of eight e-mails (every day for 16 consecutive days).

学生 Chinese for business | Choose the lesson

*Microlearning - select a topic*

Lesson subject	Frequency of e-mails delivery	Lesson status
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On a trade fair	every day	in progress
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Making an appointment	every day	in progress
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting of prospection	every day	in progress
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Lunch	every day	unavailable
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit of the factory	every day	unavailable
<input type="checkbox"/> Reception of a counter visit	every day	unavailable

Figure 2. Lessons selection

Source: own work

E-mails with small amounts of teaching material will be sent to the given e-mail address. Typically, one teaching unit (one e-mail) contains micro-material dedicated to a specific lexical or grammatical issue. The purpose of each e-mail (in a psychological sense) is to arouse interest in the material and show that the teaching material does not have to be difficult. On the other hand – in the didactic sense – the purpose of the e-mail is to provide a single sub-topic of the lesson.



CHINESE  
FOR EUROPEANS  
欧洲人学中文

**Greetings (1)**

**您好!** *Nin hao!* – Hello!

 [link to the listening file](#)

**Nin hao** is the formal form of saying "hello".

**您** is the polite form of "you", used when addressing superiors or elders.

The informal "hello" greeting is **你好** *Ni hao*.

**你** is the informal form of "you".

Figure 3. Example of an e-mail

Source: own work

Each e-mail has a similar structure. First, in a special box, a Chinese character is being presented. The character is translated into one of the project languages (each user receives an e-mail in the chosen interface language), and a link is given below the character, allowing the user to listen to an audio file with the character pronunciation. Then, in the body of the e-mail, there is a brief description of the grammatical or lexical issue.

It is worth noting that the micro-learning materials (e-mails) are available from both the user's mailbox and the project website, in the "Received emails" menu. Using the system interface each user can at any time view (revise) all teaching materials sent to him/her.

The screenshot shows a web interface for learning Chinese. At the top, it says '学生 Chinese for business | On a trade fair'. The main content is a dialogue titled 'Dialogue'. The text describes a scenario where Michael has arrived at a trade fair in China. Below the dialogue is an 'Advice' section with a bullet point explaining a social protocol: 'It is a requirement of social protocol to hand over and to receive the business card with both hands. The same goes for handing over documents or gifts in a formal or business related situation. This is a traditional token of respect.' Below the advice is a section titled 'On a trade fair' with three radio buttons: 'show chinese characters', 'show pinyin notation', and 'show chinese characters and pinyin notation'. The dialogue itself is presented in two parts: 'Mr. Li' says '您好！欢迎您来我们的展台！' (Hello! Welcome to our booth!) and 'Michael' says '早上好！我叫迈克。这是我的名片。' (Good morning! My name is Mike. This is my business card.). Each line of Chinese text has a 'Translate' button and a small audio icon. On the right side, there is a 'Context Menu' with 'Dialogue', 'Vocabulary', and 'Exercises'. Below that is a 'Help' section with 'Select a topic', 'Received emails', and 'About Microlearning'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Products' section with buttons for 'Chinese for you', 'Chinese for children', 'Chinese for students', 'Chinese for business', and 'Chinese for tourists'.

**Figure 4.** Teaching material posted in the system (Dialogue component)

**Source:** own work

After reviewing the e-mails the user is required to enter the system and read the full material (entire lesson). Each lesson consists of three components: dialogue, vocabulary and exercises. The task of the learner is to read the dialogue and vocabulary and perform the exercises at the end. Proper execution of an exercise marks the lesson as passed, allowing the learner to select another lesson (there are ten lessons in the system). Therefore, only the performance of all exercises in a single lesson allows the learner to gain access to the next lesson. Each user can monitor his/her learning progress. Information on all attempts to solve the exercises is visible in the user menu "Achieved Results", including: lesson name, date, time, result and mark.

After completing the entire course the user receives a diploma that can be saved and printed.

Materials stored in the e-learning system, as opposed to materials sent by e-mail, are (for obvious reasons) more complex. E-mails are intended to motivate the user and organize the teaching process. On the other hand, teaching materials stored in the system (dialogues, vocabulary and exercises) are used for the learning process itself, that is for systematizing and consolidating the material. For example, the dialogues in this module are more extensive compared to other modules of the project, as they are an example of a business conversation regarding a specific issue. The vocabulary consists of two parts: dictionary and basic phrases/expressions. It has also been expanded to include new functionality that allows the user to create a pop-up glossary with individually selected words. The first part consists of new words used in the dialogue, with the possibility to listen to them using audio files. A new feature is the “Add to favourites” functionality for adding the selected key phrases.



Figure 5. “Vocabulary” component and the “Add to favourites” functionality

Source: own work

Marked words are placed in the tab on the left side. This functionality provides the user with instant access to the most commonly used words. The second part of the vocabulary contains entire phrases and expressions frequently used in business relations. During the course the user performs ex-

ercises. The exercises vary in terms of content and functionality. There are, among others, multiple-choice tests, in which the user has to finish a sentence by choosing the right word, or exercises, in which the learner has to create a meaningful dialogue using phrases provided in a non-chronological order.

### 7.2. Asynchronous (contextual) micro-mobile-learning – “Tourists” module of the project “Chinese for Europeans”

Within the project there are five applications available. Each application is a contextually and thematically closed teaching material dedicated to the following topics: Travel, Hotel, Food & Drink, Sightseeing, and Health & Safety. The “Tourists” module is addressed to all those wishing to visit China. During the preparation of the material no restrictions have been made regarding the target: age, professional specialization or education of the user. The primary objective of the module is to learn the basics of Chinese using mobile devices, and to gain the ability to use it in real-life communication situations. Mobile applications of the project are designed to adapt the learning process to the location of the user and situational context. The “Tourists” module contains information primarily useful in travel, and the materials focus on everyday situations, questions about directions, prices, etc.

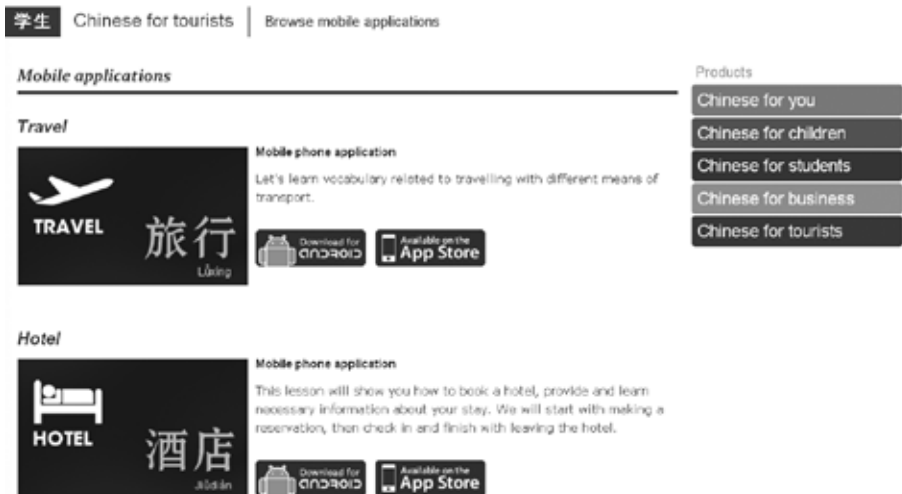


Figure 6. “Chinese for Tourists” module page  
Source: own work

The materials were prepared for two environments, Android and iOS, and the applications are placed in dedicated services: Google Play and App Store. This means the applications can be quickly downloaded and installed directly from the mobile device.

The structure of each application is identical. The application includes the following components: Dialogues, Vocabulary, Characters and Audio Quiz. The materials have been prepared based on mobile learning methods, in particular micro-learning. In each application there are three short dialogues related to the subject of the lesson. Each dialogue consists of three short chapters. There are nine short dialogues in total. The user can listen to each dialogue in a whole or in parts (phrases). Each phrase is presented in three phonetic systems: Chinese, pinyin and the interface language (there are 23 European languages available). The dictionary part consists of two sub-parts: first (Vocabulary) includes the most important key words and phrases related to the topic of the application and the dialogue, second (Characters) includes information signs typical for the situation (for example located in public) or names of objects related to the topic. Both sections present words in the same way: each word (similarly as in the dialogue) is presented in three systems, and each of them can be listened to. Additionally, in Characters the terms are graphically illustrated (with photographs or graphics).



Figure 7. Dialogue

Source: own work



Figure 8. Vocabulary

Source: own work



Figure 9. Characters

Source: own work

An important element of the application are exercises based on three different functionalities. The first consists of choosing the correct character based on an audio file (Correct word), the second consists of creating

a logical statement using the listed characters (Correct order), and the third consists of choosing the correct picture or character based on an audio file (Correct picture).



Figure 10. "Correct word" exercise

Source: own work



Figure 11. "Correct order" exercise

Source: own work



Figure 12. "Correct picture" exercise

Source: own work

## 8. Summary

In the 70s of the twentieth century Americans initially estimated that at the beginning of the twenty-first century in economically developed countries there will be approximately one million active mobile subscribers. The latest World Bank report indicates that approximately 75% of population has now access to a mobile phone. The number of active devices (both pre-paid and subscription mobile phones) has exceeded 6 billion. This gives as a picture of the technological capacity to implement micro-learning and mobile learning methods.

Mobile learning provides a precisely selected content that the user may expect. The content in mobile learning must be presented in an interesting, accessible and visually aesthetic way, and must correspond to specific user needs. Furthermore, educational mobile applications must be prepared for devices in possession of mobile users now or in the near future. It is worth noting that mobile learning is also an inspiration for developers, as it encourages creative approach to teaching, processing information and developing the capacity of managing the acquired knowledge.

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# Chinese, new lingua franca in the world?

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The popularity of the Chinese language in Europe is growing systematically. The sinology major is thriving nowadays. Language schools, one after another, enrich their offer with Chinese language courses. No wonder – the role of China in the world economy is constantly growing. And thus trade, tourist or scientific contacts with the Middle Kingdom become something obvious.

## **Position of the Chinese language among the languages of the world**

Since the times of the First World War, the English language has been considered as the international language of business, trade, show-business, science and diplomacy. It is a mother tongue of approximately 400 million people. The further 1.6 billion people uses it as their second language. It can certainly be called a global language. In terms of language range the Spanish language comes in second. Furthermore, its position in culture and business is constantly growing. Spanish is used by approximately 400-500 million people. It is an official language in 21 countries, and approx. 100 million people are learning it. The Spanish language also holds the second place in the statistics concerning national languages. In this ranking the Chinese language comes in first. When we think about the “Chinese” language, we mean the Mandarin dialect, which is an official language in the People’s Republic of China. It is a mother tongue for 1.3 billion people. The official sources, including those acknowledged by the Chinese government, lead to assessment that from 25 to 40 million people are learning the Chinese language worldwide. This number includes also the people of Chinese origin, who are living beyond the country as well as national minorities living in China.

Yet, as much as the data concerning the number of people using the given language are only approximate, the Internet is a source of specific information on this topic. The basis for analysis is searching for the information

on the Internet in a given language. The English language remains here on the first place, but it has only inconsiderable advantage over the Chinese language. Growth in the number of information provided in the Chinese language is so dynamic that it can soon be greater than of this provided in a currently dominant English language. In 2011, a number of users using the Chinese language on the Internet amounted to 509,965,013 and was only ca. 55 million less than the number of the Internet users using the English language (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** A number of the Internet users using a given language.

10 most of ten used languages on the Internet	Number of Internet users speaking a given language	Frequency of the presence of a given language on the Internet	Increase in the use of a given language on the Internet (2000-2011)	Internet users speaking a given language (data in %)	World population speaking a given language (2011 estimates)
English	565,004,126	43.4%	301.4%	26.8%	1,302,275,670
<b>Chinese</b>	<b>509,965,013</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>1,478.7%</b>	<b>24.2%</b>	<b>1,372,226,042</b>
Spanish	164,968,742	39.0%	807.4%	7.8%	423,085,806
Japanese	99,182,000	78.4%	110.7%	4.7%	126,475,664
Portuguese	82,586,600	32.5%	990.1%	3.9%	253,947,594
German	75,422,674	79.5%	174.1%	3.6%	94,842,656
Arabic	65,365,400	18.8%	2,501.2%	3.3%	347,002,991
French	59,779,525	17.2%	398.2%	3.0%	347,932,305
Russian	59,700,000	42.8%	1,825.8%	3.0%	139,390,205
Korean	39,440,000	55.2%	107.1%	2.0%	71,393,343
<b>World ten (total)</b>	<b>1,615,957,333</b>	<b>36.4%</b>	<b>421.2%</b>	<b>82.2%</b>	<b>4,442,056,069</b>
Other languages	350,557,483	14.6%	588.5%	17.8%	2,403,553,891
Whole world	2,099,926,965	30.3%	481.7%	100%	6,930,055,154

**Source:** Prepared on the basis of *The Internet World Users By Language. Top 10 Languages* Internet World Stats, <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm> [02.07.2012]

This table is not, however, reliable, since it does not list, e.g. the Hindi language, which is used by approximately 430 million people. This language is used marginally on-line owing to poor Internet access in the areas of the world, where it dominates. A high position of the Chinese language is not surprising, considering the fact that PRCh alone is presently inhabited by more than 1.3 billion citizens. Considering this information, it can be assumed that information in the Chinese language is sought after, however, mainly by people using this language as their mother tongue. At the same time, next to the national languages, English is an official language in a few dozen countries of the world. Among the Chinese-language countries, Singapore has introduced it for use. It is there where English is being taught as the first one and the Chinese language as the second one. The goal of the country's leader Lee Kuan Yew was to open the country to the world, to facilitate involving it in the global economy, to discover and learn the specific nature of the English language. The leader from Singapore advises the same to other Chinese-speaking countries, especially to China. It is questionable, however, that such a great country, with centuries-old tradition and respect for own culture will ever introduce English as its official language. Although the Chinese, especially those operating in the sphere of business, learn English, the Chinese language is worth learning with the purpose of finding a level of agreement with the inhabitants of the Middle Kingdom.

For this reason, the English language will not be, as some anticipate, superseded by the Chinese language. It is indisputable, however, that the Chinese, and their language along with them, have been marking their presence increasingly in the world arena. After the years of economic and cultural isolation, China is regaining its position in the world economy and culture and opening to trade with the whole world. The Chinese language will fail to supersede English or Spanish. Certainly, however, it will soon become the third global language in the world.

### **Why Chinese?**

The command of languages is of critical importance for the mobility of the Europeans. In the future, more and more inhabitants of Europe will use a foreign language in everyday life and at work. For many people, the lack of command of a language is a barrier in their professional and personal development.

Research on e-marketing proves that the Internet users enter the web pages written in a language they understand far more willingly and are more will-

ing to make purchases there. This proves that a language is building trade, customer trust and makes it possible to understand their needs better.

The research was carried out in 29 countries in 2003 and was aimed to determine:

- Do the companies have access to the language skills necessary in their activities?
- What is the impact of the command of languages on their competitiveness?
- What is the macroeconomic impact of the command of languages on the EU economy?

The research proved that 11% of SMEs had lost significant contracts due to the lack of command of languages. It also demonstrated that companies, which had taken care about the possibility to establish commercial contacts in four key languages, increased their efficiency by 45%. It was also indicated that the command of languages became important not only for the development of trade between the European states, but also for the contacts of Europe with the whole world. The research leads also to a simple truth that the knowledge is good for the development of trade, and the trade development is good for economic growth. It is clear that the larger the economy, the more the possible commercial contacts with it. There are, at the same time, interrelations between the quality of economic relations and the possibility of reaching agreement at a language level. In the recent years, China has become a key economic partner of Europe and the rest of the world. It has become the second economic power in the world and catches up with the leader, which is the USA, at a fast pace. The Europeans must thus adapt to the intensification of commercial contacts with China.

The interest in the Middle Kingdom and the language of its inhabitants result simply from extraordinary growth in its business expansion. Among many benefits that may be brought by learning the Chinese language can certainly be the fact that its command may happen to be a necessary element of personal career or business development. Trade with China has become a strategic element of the development of so large entities as states and so small as single companies. Previously, import was the dominant form of commercial contacts of Europe with China. Currently, however, also export to China has become important for development of both world potentates and small and medium-sized companies. In the recent years, China has become the largest creditor of the world and possesses a vast financial

surplus. The experts from financial markets stipulate a significant growth in the role of China as the largest investor in the world of finance and direct investments.

As if that was not enough, we can observe a dynamic growth in the development of science and higher education in China where the government spends more than 4% of the GDP on the development of science and higher education. As a result, many valuable scientific publications are available only in Chinese – and thus, its knowledge increases availability of the new sources of information for the European scientists. Not so long time ago, it was common for the Chinese themselves to study in the US or Europe. Nowadays, the number of foreign students in China is growing rapidly. Probably soon, their number will exceed the number of Chinese people learning abroad. This is fostered by a very favorable grant policy of the Chinese government.

The Chinese language is also very strongly entering the world of diplomacy. Many state officials from the US or Europe speak Chinese. Its knowledge is welcomed and sometimes simply required. Also, the development of global tourism is an important element of growth in interest in the Chinese language. According to the estimations of experts, as early as in 2020 China will be the most often visited country by tourists in the world. The growth in the wealth of the Chinese citizens will result in significant increase in the number of Chinese tourists visiting other countries of the world. For this reason, there is a high possibility that in over ten years, the command of Chinese will be equally profitable as the command of English at the moment.

And thus, a reason why interest in learning the Chinese language is growing today is the same as the one that induces people to learn other languages. The statistics basically state that more than 40% people learn foreign languages in order to increase their competitiveness on the job market. 17% of the surveyed indicated tourist purposes as the reason for learning languages. The other motives are personal development, planned philologist studies, interest in a given cultural circle. The reasons guiding those learning the Chinese language do not differ. Learning Chinese is no longer an exotic adventure. It is as common activity as learning English or German.

We can ask a question at this point whether the average command of the Chinese language may, however, bring actual benefits? It is known, after all, that in order to use the Mandarin dialect efficiently and freely it is required to learn it for a few years and be in direct contact with the language. Would not it be better to use the services of a translator and use English, well-known

to both parties, in direct contacts? The facts are such that although the Chinese learn English, you cannot unconditionally rely on establishing relations in this language. Additionally – although you can count on the command of English in the area of business – it is entirely different story beyond this environment.

Learning the Chinese language can form a cultural issue and obligation. The Chinese value professionalism, diligence and showing respect to the other person. An assumption that the English language is enough may be recognized as a sign of disrespect. For a Chinese person it is not so much important to have excellent command of the dominant Mandarin dialect – the Chinese believe that their language is so difficult that a foreigner will be unable to learn it properly. They will certainly, however, appreciate the enthusiasm and effort put into learning. An attempt to get to know the culture as well as the Chinese language is considered as a sign of respect and makes it so much easier to establish business and private contacts.

### **Is Chinese difficult?**

The time is now for breaking the stereotypes about China – including language stereotypes. Is Chinese truly so difficult? We may think that so a popular phrase in Poland “to speak Chinese”, used to identify incomprehensible statements, could be replaced equally well with “to speak Arabic or Finnish or Hungarian”. What is it about the language that one is recognized as difficult and the other as the easy one? Is, for example, the Estonian language substantially easier for learning for a Pole than the Chinese language? Each language that hardly exists in the common awareness – that rarely appears in the mass media or as a language used by the interlocutor is difficult. Also and above all each language belonging to a language group other than our own will seem difficult, especially when it is associated with cultural autonomy and distance in space. For a person using languages from the group of Indo-European languages, the Chinese language, belonging to the group of Sino-Tibetan languages, is thus simply a radically external phenomenon.

The formation of stereotypes about the complexity of the Chinese language, strictly speaking, about Mandarin, is influenced by the fact that it is based on pictographs. An European often cannot understand why the Chinese have not resigned from traditional writing for the benefit of an alphabet. The language diversity of the region constitutes an explanation of this issue – this writing enables writing down, almost in the same way, a dozen or so of

the Chinese dialects that are not always mutually understandable. The basis for agreement between the people living in the Middle Kingdom is thus not a spoken, but written language.

The idea of the Europeans about the language is associated with sounds. Meanwhile, the Chinese language does not have these. It only consists of 400 syllables, which are uttered in a different voice. In the Chinese language, each character corresponds to one syllable, therefore it is called a logo-syllabic or mono-syllabic writing systems. The vast majority of characters have also a separate meaning as a word. A lot of words is composed of two, three characters.

The Chinese language counts a few dozen thousand of characters along with their versions. To use it for daily purposes it is sufficient to know from 2 to 5 thousand characters. In order to proficiently read professional texts you already need to know approximately 10 to 15 thousand characters. A person knowing below 2 thousand characters is deemed illiterate. These numbers can discourage. Worth noting, however, is the fact a small dictionary of Polish language contains approximately 25 000 entries. In order to relatively efficiently use any language you need to learn the meaning of approximately 10 000 words.

In fact, the Chinese pronunciation does not cause any greater difficulties to Poles. Grammar also proves straightforward. It has no tenses, declination or conjugation. Tonality as well as recognition of characters may be a problem. With the passage of time, however, discovering its wealth may in itself become an adventure. Surprising is the logic and simplicity governing the Chinese word-building, where, e.g. ice + box=fridge, electricity + brain=computer, week + one=Monday or month + one – January. Although the grammar of the Chinese language is very simplified, the syntax is very rigorous.

Among 13 dialects of the Chinese language, the Mandarin dialect, known as the common language of PRCh – Putonghua, in Taiwan known as Guoyu, is selected most often. It is formed on the basis of the dialect, which is used by the inhabitants of the capital of China, Beijing. It is also a dialect considered an official language, which all the Chinese should master. Sometimes, especially in the south of China, Cantonese is taught, used in the area of Canton and Hong Kong. Several systems have been prepared for easier writing of the Chinese language by means of letters. The most popular and officially accepted by the authorities of the People's Republic of China is pinyin.

The Chinese language can be learned just like any other language. In didactics much more attention should however be paid to the elements that are significantly different. During the first stage of learning, it is recommended to focus on the spoken language. The next stage is gradual introduction – proportional to learning progress of the spoken language – of the Chinese characters. At this point, we should remember about the basic components of the writing system called radicals, which amount to approximately 200. They form a basis for more complex characters, with even more than 30 dashes and dots. In the process of manual writing and memorizing characters, it is important to remember about a sequence and direction of drawing dashes. Therefore, the mastering of the process of writing and reading the Chinese characters requires quite a long time and many tedious exercises to which a student needs to be encouraged. Too fast introduction of the Chinese characters often discourages from learning Chinese further.

More and more Europeans start learning Chinese. The European pioneer in the field of dissemination of learning Chinese in the system of formal education is Sweden. Not long time ago, the Ministry of Education decided to introduce the Chinese language as mandatory in the last year of the primary school and in all classes of secondary school. France, the Netherlands and Finland are following Sweden. Poland has always had very good relations with China. As opposed to some EU countries, it has never been an aggressor or invader in China. Just the opposite, many Poles have contributed to the development of China with their work, for example the most known Polish minority in Charbiń.

### **Chinese for Poles**

In Poland, the number of language schools that introduce the Chinese language courses to their offer is growing dramatically. The number of Poles speaking Chinese is growing systematically. More and more people seat HSK exams organized by various schools as well as the Confucius Institutes, namely state exams with six levels, similar to the European Framework of Reference for Languages: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2.

Although there are no specific data about the number of people learning Chinese in Poland, the constantly growing interest in learning this language is noticeable. Not a long time ago, sinology was an exotic major, with any materials in the Polish language used for learning Chinese being practically unavailable on the Polish market. The only source of knowledge was a Polish-Chinese dictionary issued as early as in the 1950s. For several years now,

there have been revolutionary changes in this field. The market acquired new Polish-Chinese and Chinese-Polish dictionaries in a book form with the quality guaranteed, among others, by such trustworthy publishing houses as Polskie Wydawnictwo Naukowe (Polish Scientific Publishers). Also the youngest learners have their own dictionary now – *1000 chińskich słówek. Ilustrowany słownik języka chińskiego przeznaczony dla dzieci* (En. 1000 Chinese Words; an Illustrated Chinese Language Dictionary for Children). On the market we can also find Chinese language courses in the form of books with CD recordings as well as textbooks for grammar and many other issues related to the Chinese language.

On-line you can find websites in the Polish language devoted to the issues related to learning the Chinese language. The increasing number of websites offer translations from the Chinese language to the Polish language and vice versa. This service has for a long time been also offered by Google Translator, Język-Chiński.com, Chiny.pl or Chiny.yo.yo.pl, allowing to translate even the whole phrases. The Chinese language learning also appears in primary schools, junior secondary schools, secondary schools and higher education schools. The Chinese language is offered by some schools in Krakow. This idea has appeared also in Poznań, Warsaw or Częstochowa. Still, however, the number of teachers of Chinese is very low. Therefore, the Chinese language appears only in few schools. Meanwhile, more and more young people want to learn nothing else but Chinese. Many of them see their further education connected to it. So far, it is unknown which schools in Krakow would start teaching Chinese from September. An initiator of the idea is the Confucius Institute, operating at the Jagiellonian University.

Thus, the Chinese language is also entering the institutions involved in the education of children, state as well as private institutions. More and more often the Chinese language is available in kindergartens. The majority of large cities already have kindergartens offering education of the youngest in this field. The first system action appeared in Rzeszów, where the Chinese language courses were introduced to as many as 15 kindergartens. Children are taught by a Chinese student. Her salary is paid by the city which signed a partner agreement with the city of Fangchengang. Rzeszów is the first city in Poland where the youngest can learn Chinese free-of-charge. Before that, the paid studies were introduced by few kindergartens, among others, in Wrocław and Warsaw. Lessons for children are also offered by the Chinese School in the capital city, Warsaw. The classes, in spite of being very costly,

are very popular. Parents gladly enroll their children in the classes, but not only to provide learning of a foreign language. They, first of all, think about extending the thinking horizons of children, teaching about the culture of China as well as creating basis to increase competitiveness of their own children in the future.

In the case of universities, the introduction of learning of Chinese is often related to the establishment and the development of the Confucius Institutes. The Confucius Institutes are an organization having considerable effect on the popularization of the Chinese language and culture all around the world. Their main purpose is – next to teaching the Chinese language – overcoming the stereotypes related to considering the Chinese language as one that is impossible to be learned. The first institute was created in 2004 in Tashkent. Its success resulted in fast development of the CI network. In a short period of time, branches were established in Korea, the US, Australia, several African and European countries. The first Polish Confucius Institute was created in 2006 at the Jagiellonian University. Today, this institution is also operating in Poznań, Opole and Wrocław. The Confucius Institutes offer, apart from learning the language, also training for institutions related, for example, the art of negotiations or understanding of cultural differences. They have rich teaching materials and publications or books relating to China and also create Polish-Chinese and Chinese-Polish dictionaries as well as textbooks for learning.

### **How can we learn Chinese?**

Nowadays, learning languages goes beyond learning by using a stationary method with a language teacher, although this form as well as direct contact with the language will always constitute the basis for learning Chinese. Along with the popularization of the Internet access and the development of information-communications technology, increasing recognition is given to e-learning. Teaching by means of ICT proves successful in many fields, but its particular usefulness is shown in the language education. Although, the Internet courses of the Chinese language in the Polish language have stopped being abstract only recently, nowadays, you may use offers of a dozen or so websites offering Chinese language courses. Most of them are available against a small fee, but several offer free learning. And thus, everyone can choose a method of learning adapted to their needs and capacities. On-line you can also find the first multimedia lessons for children. Didactic

materials for the youngest learners are presented in the form of animations, games, graphics and audio files, which help children familiarize with the tonality of the Chinese language.

An interesting and modern solution covers also mobile applications for the Chinese language learning, ready for download to a smartphone or a tablet. These applications are very useful for tourists willing to visit China. This means that all holders of smartphones and iPhones will be able to download lessons to their phones and use them during travel. It will to a large extent facilitate travelling across China. Such a formula, apart from reading a message, will also provide the possibility of presenting it in a phone display or using its content in the form of audio.

The Chinese language irreversibly enters the global linguistic arena on a scale which has not been so far observed in the history. It is high time to stop being surprised with this phenomenon, but accept it as natural and start treating learning the Chinese language just like learning other languages.

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# Good practices for studying Chinese via video conferencing. Case study: Orientalmente methodology

PAOLA COSTA  
ORIENTALMENTE

## 1. Characteristics of traditional Chinese teaching system

### 1.1. Reference of traditional Chinese teaching system

**HANBAN:** Confucius Institute Headquarters, as a public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, is committed to providing Chinese language and cultural teaching resources and services worldwide, it goes all out in meeting the demands of foreign Chinese learners and contributing to the development of multiculturalism.

#### **CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES WORLD-WIDE NETWORK:**

By the end of August, 2011, 353 Confucius Institutes and 473 Confucius Classrooms had been established in 104 countries and regions in the world.

#### **HANBAN MISSION:**

- To make policies and development plans for promoting Chinese language internationally
- To support Chinese language programs at educational institutions of various types and levels in other countries.
- To draft international Chinese teaching standards, develop and promote Chinese language teaching materials.

According to the data published in 2010, Hanban inaugurated 322 Confucius Institutes in 96 Countries and activated 28.000 Chinese language and culture courses for more than 5 million of students.

### 1.2. Group lessons

Hanban through Confucius Institutes set the guide lines for Chinese language and culture teaching.

There are thousands of private and public institutions that organize Chinese language and cultural courses using the traditional system of group lessons. Currently it's easy to find Chinese courses organized in every city all over the world, starting from kinder gardens to Universities. There are thousands of private language schools that organize courses for private and corporate customers.

The traditional group lessons can be organized in very small groups of 3-4 students, as in typical group courses organized in private schools, up to very big groups, as in typical group courses organized by public universities, schools and Institutions.

In any case, the group lesson teaching system possesses the same characteristics. The program and the materials are the same for all students in the same group. The lessons schedule is the same for every student in the group.

### 1.3. *Traditional e-learning*

The traditional E-learning methodology is based on the self-learning methodology. Students study by themselves using teaching materials by the course organizer. Generally the materials are multimedia, which include audio, videos and self-correction of exercises. At the end of the course, there generally is a final exam arranged by the course organizer or a self-evaluation. This methodology offers flexibility in organizing study-sections, but there is a lack of interaction and practice. This often causes demotivation and generally demotivated students give-up.

### 1.4. *One to one private lessons*

One to one private lessons offer flexibility to arrange the schedule according to student's needs. Private lessons allow to personalize the programs following the interests and the level of each student. The main issue with private lessons is the high price per hour and also the difficulty to meet the right qualified teacher that can full-fill the student's needs.

## **2. *Inadequacies of traditional Chinese teaching system***

### 2.1. *nadequacies of group lessons*

- **FLEXIBILITY:** One of the characteristics of group lessons is the fixed schedule and an established place to attend lessons. There is a lack of flexibility that do not allow students with fixed schedules to follow the group courses.

- **PERSONALIZATION:** The programs of group courses are not personalized to the real needs and interests of each single student. Usually it is a generic Chinese language program that doesn't allow students to choose which part of Chinese language to study.
- **PRACTICE:** Students that attend a group course generally don't have the chance to practice what they learnt with native speakers. Generally in traditional group courses, teacher speaks over 60% of the time, explaining the program and students have a passive receptive attitude.
- **ALL LEVELS:** It is easy to find Chinese courses for beginners and elementary levels, but it is quite difficult to find satisfactory offers of intermediate and advanced Chinese group courses.
- **COURSES IN SMALL TOWN:** The offer of qualified Chinese group courses in small towns and villages is very small and in some cases inexistent.

## 2.2. Lack in traditional e-learning

- **INTERACTION:** In traditional E-learning systems, students neither interact with a live instructor or with class mates. This causes demotivation in many students and the consequence is that many students give up their courses.
- **PERSONALIZATION:** Programs of Chinese multimedia courses are generally created with the aim of reaching out to the highest number of potential students. These courses are usually generic without any personalization and possibility to be adjusted to the students' personal needs and interests.
- **PRACTICE:** E-learning programs are based on the self-learning methodology. Students who attend these kind of courses generally do not have the chance to practice the language with live instructors or class mates.
- **MOTIVATION:** Lack of interaction and practice often end up in a lack of motivation. It's very difficult to learn a complex language such as Chinese by self-study, without the support of a live instructor.

## 2.3. How to compensate these inadequacies?

One to one private lessons can compensate the above mentioned inadequacies of group lessons and traditional E-learning programs. A private instructor offers flexibility to arrange lessons according to the student's needs- personalizing lesson content to every student and level. There are

two main problems related to one to one private lesson: the difficulties to find a very well trained and experienced Chinese teacher and the high price of each lesson.

### 3. Purpose of orientamente methodology

The purpose of Orientalmente's methodology is to offer the advantages of one to one lessons with a private instructor at a price comparable to that of traditional group lessons.

Orientalmente developed a unique, Chinese teaching methodology which offers:

- **Flexibility** to study Chinese in **any place** where there is Internet connection, at **any time** convenient for the student.
- **Personalized** Chinese program that allows students to learn the content and areas they are really interested in.
- **Availability of all levels:** Orientalmente courses are available at every level.
- **Communicative methodology** that allows the students to practice Chinese language since the first day.
- Qualified and trained **native speaking teachers**.
- **Reasonable prices** comparable to that of group lessons prices. You can get a private personal instructor tat the same price of a group class course.

### 4. Orientalmente methodology and web platform

#### 4.1. Methodology

Orientalmente's teaching methodology follows the communicative and situational approach. The language teaching begins with the spoken language. Material is taught orally before it is presented in written form. New language points are introduced and practiced in a given situation. Items of grammar are graded- simple forms are taught before complex ones. Reading and writing are introduced once a sufficient lexical and grammatical basis is established.

The main strength of Orientalmente methodology is the personalized content of the course. Each student has different needs and interests that motivate him/her to study Chinese. The main purpose of Orientalmente is to meet each student's needs in order to offer the right content that can motivate him/her to go forward.

The instructors use Chinese on the first day and they push students to use Chinese language since the start of the course. The students focus their effort to memorize words and sentences that they really need and can use in their daily lives.

#### 4.2. Web platform

Orientalmente developed a user friendly **web platform specifically designed to support the interaction between teachers and students.**

The main function of the platform is to provide students flexibility to study Chinese everywhere and every time.

By using this platform users can **overcome time difference issues.** The key function of this platform is an **interactive calendar** where teachers indicate their time availability in their time zone and students see teachers' availability in their own time zone. It is convenient to book, cancel and reschedule lessons. Students can also purchase new lessons packages and Chinese books.

The platform is also a mean to **download teaching materials** and follow students personal progress in language learning.

Orientalmente's web platform is also a forum for students to interact. It is a virtual square where they can share their experiences, doubts and questions about Chinese language and culture.

### 5. **Traditional Chinese teaching system versus Orientalmente methodology**

When a student enrolls in a Chinese language school with a **traditional teaching system**, normally will face the following limitation:

- **FIXED SCHEDULE:** Students cannot change the lesson schedule according to their own needs.
- **FIXED PLACE:** Students need to go to a specific place to attend the lessons.
- **LIMITED FIXED CONTENTS:** Course content cannot be adjusted to students' interests and needs.
- **LIMITED LEVELS:** Generally group courses are only available up to intermediate levels
- **LIMITED PRACTICE:** In group lessons each student has few chances to practice the language.

**Orientalmente** offers a different teaching methodology based on a new approach that offers to students:

- **TIME FLEXIBILITY:** Students can choose when to attend their lessons.
- **PLACE FLEXIBILITY:** Students can attend lessons where ever there is a computer and Internet connection.
- **CUSTOMIZED CONTENT:** Course content can be adjusted to students' interests and needs.
- **EVERY LEVEL:** Courses are available at every level
- **CONSTANT PRACTICE:** Students practice the language during their one to one lessons. This means constant practice.

## 6. *Orientalmente achievements in 12 months*

Orientalmente launched its Chinese courses in the EU market on June 2012, since then in a period of 12 months the results are:

- 30 teachers
- 120 students
- 5 corporate customers
- Winner of Google price "Euronews Business Awards"

## **Bibliography**

The Majority of the content in this document is derived from market research done between February to April 2012 in Barcelona, Madrid and Rome. The basic information comes from 15 personal interviews done on five students of Chinese language at three different capability levels, five Chinese teachers, one high school master, two language private school owners, Coordinator of Confucius Institute in Madrid and in Barcelona. The aim of this market research is to understand the characteristic of the Chinese teaching environment in Spain and Italy in order to develop a unique teaching & learning methodology that can meet market needs and improve the quality of Chinese teaching methodology in the European Union.

Hanban web page: <http://english.hanban.org/>

Confucius Institute web page: <http://english.chinese.cn/>

SIL International: <http://www-01.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/waystoapproachlanguagelearning/situationallanguageteaching.htm>

# European Projects

## Chinesecom and Chinese for Europeans: contemporary tools to improve European awareness of Chinese world

FRANCESCA BONATI  
ITALY CHINA FOUNDATION

### **Preliminary remarks**

Currently China has become one of the most powerful nation in the world which can influence not simply the economic balance of many European nations but also their internal strategies and political decision: this is what is going to happen in many African countries. European Union has therefore decided to give to its citizens the possibility to understand these great changes with useful tools exploiting also new technologies.

When searching on the net 'free online Chinese courses', there will appear about 778.000.000 hits. Very few of them are really available for free, even less can be considered professional Chinese courses, and just a dozen are courses co founded by European Union.

Italy China Foundation had the possibility to participate and realize 2 of them: the former one (2007-2009) is ChineseCom ([www.chinesecom.eu](http://www.chinesecom.eu)) and the current one is Chinese for Europeans ([www.chinese4.eu](http://www.chinese4.eu)).

### **Aims and objectives**

Both projects share the main concept of Lifelong Learning Programme which states that “learning to speak other languages can open many doors. For individuals, it can pave the path to a better career and help them to live, study or work abroad”, while for businessman and companies “multilingual staff can smooth the road to European and global markets”<sup>1</sup>.

Actually, China is one of the most interesting markets into which EU companies intend to focus and invest for increasing their own business. Nevertheless, the distance (geographical but especially the mental/cultural one), the lack of knowledge about language, culture, habits and manners is so difficult to gain that many Europeans fail to reach this goal.

This is the final aim of ChineseCom project, which mainly focus on creating a Chinese course (about language and culture as well) for improving competitiveness in European companies giving a new tool that helps the acquisition of competences on China.

This aim is shared by Chinese4Europeans project as well, even if the latter address to 4 different targets and do not focus exclusively on business. Moreover, while Chinese4Europeans uses also new ICT tools, adjusted to the target they addressed to, ChineseCom has only a multimedia approach.

Definitely, both courses intend to be useful instrument to European Union citizens (but worldwide as well) to understand not only Chinese language but also its culture, habits and manners, mentality to encourage integration and mutual understanding.

In our experience we have noticed that many companies have faced too many difficulties, sometimes even losses and failures because they were not prepared to deal with China.

The lack of knowledge of Chinese mentality or awareness about basic business manners has caused many problems which could have been solved by following some simple rules and advises.

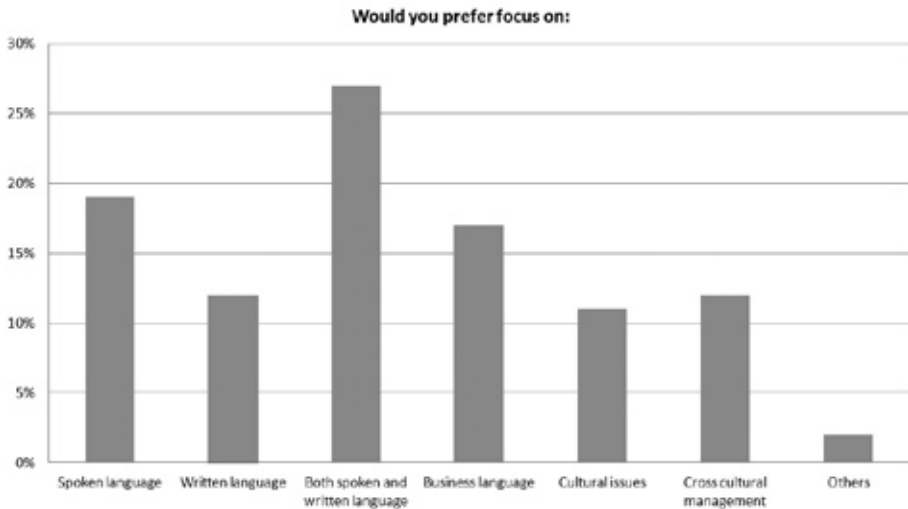
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<sup>1</sup> [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/ka2/languages\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/ka2/languages_en.php)

This is the fundamental point we shared with all our partners in both projects.

**Need analysis**

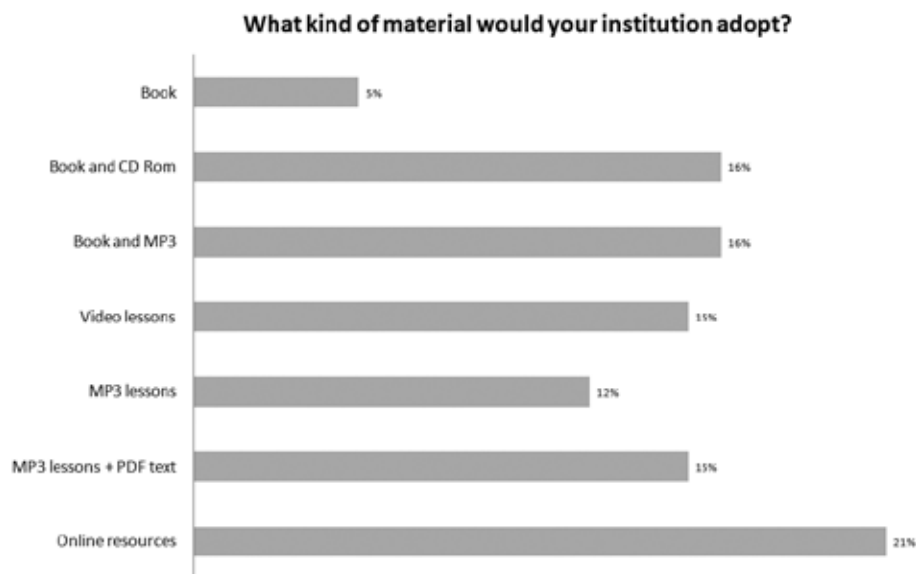
ChineseCom, in its very first phase, needed 2 general surveys for better understanding the material already available online and in libraries about Chinese language and, in this specific situation, about business Chinese. The second survey addressed to companies, businessman, SME which deal with China in order to better understand their specific needs and focus on these particular issues.



**Figure 1.** Report on Chinese language material available and entrepreneurs needs in EU on China.

**Source:** ChineseCom property

The result of surveys and researches stressed the needs of creating material about Chinese language and culture to allow people to study basic and business Chinese in their own native language and not through the translations from other languages just like English or French. Moreover, books available in libraries or Mp3 lessons on that period, lacked of business references about Chinese language and contexts, thus, according to the goal of ChineseCom project (creating competences in elementary Chinese to develop business) the need of creating useful and appropriate material was a must. Companies needs focused especially on lack of Chinese courses for beginners (A1 level) about business Chinese, while further levels (B-C levels) were available.



**Figure 2.** Report on Chinese language material available and entrepreneurs needs in EU on China.

**Source:** ChineseCom property

According to all these information the partnership decided to create a business Chinese course for beginners which could be easy to practice and useful in terminology and situational dialogues. Spoken and written language were described as key issues as well for several reasons. Spoken language is certainly much more immediate to use and presents results and progress which are evident to anyone, since the feedback is immediate. Anyway, difficulty in learning tones and pronunciation is one of the most sensitive issues in this language, therefore, the need of creating a part totally dedicated to audio was fundamental. On the other hand, written language is definitely difficult to learn and it represents one of the reason why people give up the course: anyway, according to the company needs survey, it has been outlined that written Chinese plays an important role even when moving in China (recognize the metro station, addresses...).



Figure 3. Home page of ChineseCom

Source: [www.chinesecom.eu](http://www.chinesecom.eu)

In Chinese for Europeans project, on the other hand, the need of an informal market research was useful as well to identify which kind of beginner Chinese courses were already available and which were their strength and weak points. The research allowed the partnership to confirm the general idea of creating 5 modules dedicated to specific target and, moreover, to use the new technologies appropriate and suitable for each specific end users (children, students, businessmen and tourists). Technology, in this case, played a very important role in methodology as well. That is why for business module, the partnership has chosen micro learning methodology and not multimedia learning which was used for ChineseCom.

### **Products and outcomes**

According to the surveys and outcomes of researches, ChineseCom was structured in order to fulfill the needs of businessmen going to China and be an helpful and innovative tool for them both from a cultural and from a linguistic perspective as well.

The partnership, than, developed a website which held the main products of the project: the language course, general information about Chinese culture and a forum.

Concerning the project, the partnership considered helpful to the users to have a video introducing the Chinese course, just like an instruction book. Also, a part dedicated to China's social and physical characteristics of China and few explanation about linguistic features of Chinese were hosted into the website.

Definitely, the most significant part concerned the course itself which was developed into 10 situational dialogues (video and audio) which had as protagonists two persons of the same company going to China for business reasons. Moreover, in order to check the real comprehension of the text and grammar structures within a business contest, the partnership developed also several exercises for each unit which included both grammar and listening and comprehension tests.

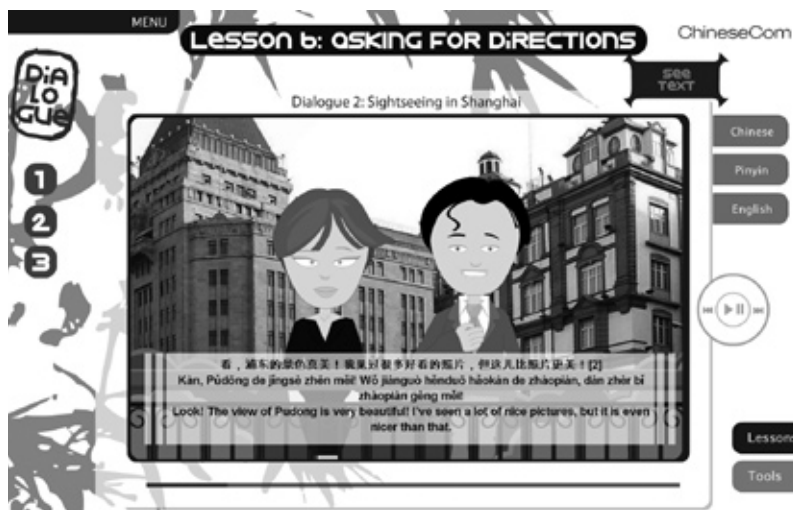


Figure 4. Screenshot of Unit 6 from [www.chinesecom.eu](http://www.chinesecom.eu).

### Methodology

In ChineseCom, the methodology which was chosen was the direct reply about businessmen needs which principally is lack of time; therefore a multimedia learning was preferred since the course can be followed on line. When necessary, people can stop and re begin the course according to their personal needs.

The main problem, from a didactical point of view is that there is not a way of checking the real progress and achieved results.

We can confirm that mostly, the learning strategies were left to the user who could practice the language freely.

On the other side, this methodology suits well to the users' lack of time but, on the other hand, the risk that the user is not encouraged in going on with the course and go through all the lessons available is quite high. Anyway, this is a risk which belongs to any multimedia course since there is not a physical presence of a teacher that can encourage and prod the student, or simply be available for solving doubts and reply to questions.



Figure 5. Screenshot of Business Module („On a trade fair“ – dialogue) from Chinese4Europeans.

Source: www.chinese4.eu.

In Chinese4Europeans, within business module, the methodology which was chosen was pretty different.

Recently, the needs of businessmen have changed quite a lot in the last years: generally speaking there is less free time, therefore continuity in learning a language is a difficult goal to achieve and also, from a psychological point of view, Chinese language does not allow the learner to immediately realize his progress and this is one of the reason why many people give up the courses. Micro learning methodology applied to Chinese4Europeans bypass this problem while sending by email the most relevant sentence of the unit or the dialogue: than, the user can go on with the course once he has finished the unit according to his/her schedule.

According to the other three targets of Chinese4Europeans project, the partnership decided to plan each module adjusting the most suitable methodology to each target, therefore, while multimedia learning was left as nice tool for any target; for children it was necessary a multimedia methodology system and for student e-learning methodology was the most suitable solution.

Concerning tourist module, the partnership developed mobile application which is definitely the most suitable tool for people moving in China not only for leisure trip but also for business as well. Actually, also businessmen need to book an hotel or a train ticket or even, ask for a taxi. As Italy China Foundation we had a tourist group which has been to China on april 2013 and had used tourist module which is an app for Iphone© or android©. the general feedback we had was positive since the dialogues, questions, words were exactly what was needed in that particular situation.



**Figure 6.** Screenshot from “Chinese for Tourist” mobile application (vocabulary section) from Chinese4Europeans.

A common strategy for both projects we participate was creating a plot which could in some way let the end user to identify himself/herself with the story and the character. Identification with the main characters is one of the key issue since the end user can in some way cast his/her mind into that

particular situation which is close to his/her reality, therefore there is much more involvement and learning is easier.

This idea shared by all also for all the 4 modules of Chinese4Europeans: children, students, businessmen and tourist. Situational dialogues close to reality are much more useful also considering the immediate possibility to use the same sentences available in the course.

### **Language**

Since one of the main objectives of both projects was to create more awareness of Chinese world and translations into European languages were a key point.

The products of Chinesecom were translated in the partnership's language: this meant that the course and all the other relevant information were available only in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Galician and Chinese. This is a limit which was strictly connected with times deadlines and also with budget restrictions.

On the other side, Chinese4Europeans is a project in which the availability in all the languages of European Union (23 languages) of all the products is a key issue, since it becomes a useful tool to any citizen of EU no matter what language the user speaks. Therefore, the project adhere totally to the idea that all the European Union citizens can get more awareness of Chinese language and culture.

According to the surveys which the partnership referred to, in Chinesecom project there is a lack of material on business language for beginners, therefore, the first five lessons of the course are A1 level, but we have noticed and have been informed by users that from lesson 6 ongoing the lessons are much more difficult and complex and actually, the words used refers often to A2 level.

In Chinese4Europeans level A1 has been kept as reference for all the modules.

### **Dialogue with users**

Both projects have developed a platform dedicated to dialogue and contact with users, who represents the target of all the job done by the partnerships. However, purpose and methods are very different.

In ChineseCom the partnership considered useful to create a "place" to give the users the possibility of asking questions and information to the other us-

ers or even to the partnership. In this way, the relationship with target was immediate.

Many of the threads launched were about clarification or explanation about grammar issues or terminology.

In Chinese4Europeans the necessity of a dialogue depended on topics to be discussed among bloggers who launch a thread for starting a discussion. Here there was not the necessity of having a “quick” contact among users and partnership or user and user also because module 0 which is common to all targets, is exhaustive about basic topics (grammar, sounds, pronunciation, written language), and therefore there is enough free space for topics which are not strictly related to grammar or language but more focused on Chinese contemporary reality.

The aim is to create a platform for exchanging ideas, opinion, share information and implement mutual comprehension with the Chinese world.

## Blogs // Sławomir Czepielewski

### China takes a lead

07.06.2010 09:44

Blog language 

In my last blog I presented some ideas about increase of the position of China in world ranking of GDP. China has taken the second position on this list in 2010 overtaking Japan with USA only ahead.

Taking into account the extrapolations of the growth expectations of GDP in both countries, it is expected that China will be a leader in 2020. This seems to be very realistic due to the change of growth policy in China and achieved results. Chinese government decided to give support to the policy of innovations. In such a case it is not only cheap labour, which is a competitive factor, but as well the strongest force of the competitors which is innovative economy.

United Nations affiliation World Intellectual Property Organization presented recently the report "World Intellectual Property Indicators 2012". The report proves the dramatic increase of the number of patent filings. For the first time in the history the number of patent filings in the world is more than two million. Every fourth filing was executed in China amounting to 525 412, at the same time the number in USA came up to 503 562, the third Japan reached only 342 610. This means that China took the position of leader in this competition. The position of leader seems to be sustainable in the coming years due to very strong contribution of China to the growth of patent filings. In the years 2009 to 2011 more than 70% of growth was due to China. The most innovative turned out to be telecommunication and green energy sources industries, essential decrease in number of patent filings was observed in pharmaceutical industry.

It seems to be a historical moment, the trend shows the change in geography of innovation centres, moving to Asia, with China on the leading position and Japan with South Korea on the third and the fourth ones. Within the last one hundred years only 4 countries enjoyed the position of the leader in patent filings, it was Germany, Japan, since 2006 USA and now China. Do you think China is to be the leader in 21<sup>st</sup> century? Taking into account the indicators of growth and resources, it seems to be the only solution.

Sławomir Czepielewski



Vice Rector for international cooperation at Institute Academy of Computer Science, Management and Administration. Very experienced projects initiator and executor, more than 20 innovative high-tech companies. He was very active in the international cooperation creating joint venture companies with American, German, French, Swedish, Czech and Beneluxian partners and developing business links. Team cooperation with many Asian companies, first of all from China.

Blogs

All blogs
Bloggers list
Blogs: English
Blogs: Polski

Figure 7. Screenshot of Blog Section from Chinese4Europeans.

Source: [www.chinese4.eu](http://www.chinese4.eu)

## Culture and mentality

ChineseCom considers that the simple knowledge of Chinese language is not enough to understand Chinese mentality: it was therefore fundamental to create a product which could be of a high value and helpful to the targets. A section was then devoted to convey general info about Chinese manners and habits as well as to geography, climate, handicrafts, tradition... Actually,

this section could have been implemented visually since it may result difficult to learn as it cannot be downloaded, even if it is complete about Chinese traditional culture.

In Chinese4Europeans the partnership decided to grant a module totally devoted to these information, but focusing on the aspects of Chinese culture that could be helpful for the specific target of the project. Therefore in Module 5, users may get notions about Chinese scholastic system or about business manners as well.

Practical information about presents, Chinese tourism or superstition can be useful concepts to be aware of.



**Figure 8.** Screenshot of „Things to know before you go“ from Chinese4Europeans.

Source: [www.chinese4.eu](http://www.chinese4.eu)

### **Dissemination and sustainability**

One of the most relevant parts of any European project is related to dissemination. Considering that both projects provide technological tools, this sensitive issue has been coped by exploiting the most popular networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter. Moreover, traditional dissemination activities have been displayed during the whole life of the projects. Seminars, workshops, conferences newsletters but also banner exchange, mailing

were important activities for the promotion, dissemination and exploitation of the projects.

In Chinese4Europeans one of the best solution which was considered helpful in this working phase was connecting and addressing to the target which had to be informed about any activity on that moment: therefore, we sent email and newsletters to tour operator or to middle schools to inform about the availability of module 4 or 1.

### **Conclusion**

Considering that both courses have different aims and share only one target (businessmen), it is difficult to propose a fair comparison.

Anyway, Chinese4Europeans can be considered much more complete due to the wide range of the targets involved. According to the aim of creating a correct methodology suitable to the users the module refers to, the project achieved its goal, moreover, the translation into 23 languages of European Union, make the whole course as really helpful tool for any citizen of Europe, no matter what his/her language would be.

On the other side, ChineseCom can be considered more “advanced” since from lesson 1 to 5, the language level refers to CEFR A1, but from lesson 6 to 10, it often reaches CEFR A2. Moreover, while in Chinese4Europeans business module is conceived for self study, in ChineseCom the course is useful not only for self studying but also for learning in class, becoming also complementary material for language ordinary courses.

Considering the above mentioned statements, we can easily confirm that both courses and project are extremely helpful in getting more awareness of Chinese world and represent complementary tool to improve business opportunities with China.

# Mission Possible: Chinese for Europeans

**AISTE DABULEVICIUTE**

**SOROS INTERNATIONAL HOUSE**

“Mission Possible: Chinese for Europeans” (MPCE) is a European project with the main goal to bring the entirely distant Chinese language closer to Europeans. In a reality when China is the largest trade partner of the European Union and when almost all business sectors are connected to China, the realisation of this goal becomes a high priority. Given this situation the project is targeted at business companies, cultural organisations and educational institutions which support any direct or indirect relations with China. MPCE is directed towards facilitating the everyday activities of those target groups by helping them to overcome the language and cultural barriers with China and enhance mutual understanding.

MPCE addresses those needs by developing non-traditional methods for providing language information in Chinese in an easily accessible way. The project methodology and the main project product (bilingual conversational sets in Chinese-Bulgarian, Chinese- Lithuanian, Chinese-Italian, Chinese-Portuguese and Chinese-Dutch) are directed towards providing information about the specifics of the Chinese language, the Chinese culture and behavioural norms which should be taken into consideration in the communication with Chinese people. Through the conversational sets the project beneficiaries can become familiar with the basics of the Chinese language as well as a certain lexical volume united in the so-called “associative hieroglyph chains”. The chains are grouped by topic and built in such a way that one and the same hieroglyph connects few different words. This way after learning a word the other one is easier to remember as it has a part of the former. Topics covered include money, costs, payment, purchase, transport, merchandise, import, export, trade, presentation, negotiations, personal identification, staff positions, culture of communication, food, restaurant, drinks, travel, directions, hotel, weather, culture, family, education, numbers and time.

The language information included in the conversational sets is helpful for developing basic communication and comprehension skills in Chinese in situational contexts. The project website ([www.chinese-for-eu.eu](http://www.chinese-for-eu.eu)) also supports the achievement of the project objectives. It contains useful information about China, the Chinese language, culture and philosophy and downloadable bilingual conversational sets.

For realisation of the project activities the partners have created a network of representatives from all three target groups which served as a dissemination channel for involving the potential beneficiaries in the development of the project products and their application in practice. This network was formed out of 86 organisations.

A second dissemination channel was established through advertising and PR campaigns carried out in all partner countries. Each partner released a series of announcements and publications on the project in order to involve people in the upcoming activities.

During the second project year the partners used the created dissemination channels in order to form groups of potential beneficiaries and involve them in practical workshops. They went through blitz-courses in Chinese according to the developed methods and based on the conversational sets. They were also able to share their experience with the project products at contact seminars organised at the end of the project in each partner country. The contact seminars were attended by businesspeople, public servants working with China, representatives of Chinese embassies, educational institutions, migrant and cultural organisations.

The MPCE consortium includes 6 partner organisations from 5 EU countries: *Znanie Association*, Bulgaria; *KU TU Ltd.*, Bulgaria; *Soros International House*, Lithuania; *Amitie*, Italy; *F.L.E.P.*, Portugal; *Pressure Line*, the Netherlands. All of them offer methodologists, language centres and teachers, advertising and PR specialists, identity developers with expertise to cover all main aspects of the project. The project activities were self complementary so the different fields of expertise covered by the consortium added to the professional performance of every task.

# INTEGRA Migrants' Integrating Kit – Basic Language for Dealing with Financial Matters

GILETA KIERIENE

SOROS INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

INTEGRA ([www.integra-project.eu](http://www.integra-project.eu)) – the LLP Grundvig Multilateral project was implemented by 11 partner institutions from Lithuania, Greece, Germany, Spain, Turkey, Ireland, the Netherlands, Romania, the UK, Poland and Belarus. INTEGRA addresses the need to create a Europe wide network of relevant institutes in order to reach migrants in partner countries to improve their integration into local society by providing them with opportunities to gain language skills on basic financial matters. These needs arise in the context of increasing mobility in the global knowledge society and facilitate migrants to face various challenges before they can settle and feel part of a new community.

## **The project aimed to enhance:**

- the basic language skills of migrants living in partner countries, specifically relating to financial matters. The objective has been reached in terms that INTEGRA survival KIT which was developed by INTEGRA project partners with the material available online at the project website and in 2 CDs. The two CDs were aimed to reach two different target groups and addressed their content meeting the needs of:
  - final beneficiaries with the contents of the CD “Migrants integration kits”, aimed for self learning;
  - trainers and other beneficiaries with the contents of the second CD containing methodology “Materials for training migrants financial language skills”. This content is available to migrant community members, willing to become trainers for migrants and facilitating them with the language skills in the area of financial matters.

- Trainings were organized and basic language skills specifically in the area of financial matters were developed among participants, while trainers were trained on how to spread the skills and knowledge among migrant communities.
- migrants' potential for mobility within the EU labour market. This objective is reached via skill development and training migrant representatives on very basic necessary skills to communicate in English in a foreign country. Migrant representatives confirmed during training sessions, providing feedback to trainers and project partners, filling in online interview form for external evaluation, as well as in presence in the international conference that linguistic skills and ability to solve basic practical matters in a foreign country, such as financial matters, are essential for a person to be mobile within the EU.
- intercultural learning and empathy in migrant communities for international communication in different countries. The majority of migrants participating in trainings and in the final international conference agreed that INTEGRA project contributed significantly to building awareness that migrant communities lose a lot of possibilities if they are not open to local community matters and if they are not willing or aware of the importance of international collaboration and communication. Target users of INTEGRA project acknowledged that communication skills and habits are crucial for immigrants, as well as mutual understanding of local and immigrant communities, sharing of intercultural practices and experiences, providing benefits to each other.
- self-confidence among migrants. Self-confidence among migrants was one of the red-line topics in the project. This issue was addressed by training contents, by training method (drama method was chosen for training migrants on self-confidence and more of self-esteem), and invitation of migrant representatives to participate in international events on equal rights was acknowledged by the representatives themselves as a very important and very highly valuable project approach.
- ability to break personal and cultural frontiers. This objective is inter-related with intercultural communication, but adds to the depth of it. The most evident testimonies were received during the final conference, again, where migrant representatives presented their life stories and how trainings and participation in INTEGRA project helped them to start communication and collaboration with intercultural communi-

ties. At the same time, they expressed the wish and saw examples from other country representatives (from Spain in particular) on how they can become leaders and facilitators among other international migrant communities.

INTEGRA project also had specific objectives which are:

- analyse the needs of migrants in terms of basic local language knowledge in relation to financial matters, financial terminology, basic financial documentation as well as specifics of financial systems in partner countries in order to fulfil everyday needs,
- compare good practice used for introducing basic local language on financial matters and basic country specific financial operations in old EU member states (members before 2004) as well as in new EU member states (joined EU in 2004 and later),
- collect materials for the development of an essential Kit for migrants, which will consist of financial terminology, financial glossary and guide with main information on financial institutes or information sources in partner countries' and migrants' languages corresponding to migrant needs,
- organise and implement trainings together with language professionals and financial experts to representatives of migrant communities in order to cascade that training to ultimate beneficiaries-migrants of the partner countries.
- collect materials to create and develop an active web portal with the support and direct involvement of social partners.

The main INTEGRA added values and benefits are the following:

- migrant communities members have highly accessible and available INTEGRA training Kit developed during the project and the web portal for their everyday use, and they have been trained by the trainers- representatives from migrant communities, equipped with the methodology – available in one CD and on the website uploaded in training material section – to educate wider range of migrants on how to use it and its contents;
- migrants who do not belong to migrant communities involved in the project, are able to use the web portal and Kit for their self-learning of basic language on financial matters,
- general public can access and use Kit and web portal material as an informal way of learning,

- education institutions can use project material as non-formal way of teaching.

The final project conference organized by the project coordinator Soros International House on 15 June 2012 in Vilnius (LT) demonstrated a high value deep involvement by consortium institutions into the issues of migrants. The scope reached by the project is very impressive. The reports on the training sessions show that there is 41 community addressed in terms of both, trainee training and final target used training sessions. Partners invited target group representatives from all partner institutions to attend the final project conference. Migrant communities had a separate session to discuss the motivation factors (internal and external) for learning and training needs for integration into a local community. Migrant representatives had also a possibility to present their experiences during training sessions and the impact of INTEGRA training upon their community lives during the plenary sessions during the final conference. All of them provided testimonies on the spread of INTEGRA network and the needs that are already identified among their community members for training and support. Therefore, the fact that the network was created during the project and that it was created on a very natural setting, involving migrant community members, is the evidence needed for a project like INTEGRA that the results will be used by the target users, in the network developed, and that exploitation of project results is highly ensured.

Varia

## East Asia ahead with visualisation

**WOLFGANG PAPE**

CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN POLICY RESEARCH, BRUSSELS

An old Chinese proverb says it all: “There are a thousand words in one picture!”

But even Google’s co-founder Sergey Brin had to learn it, albeit lately, when he was recently eating a meal with his high-tech Google ‘Glasses’ on. In a fast reply to a text message he relied on what he saw with the other eye and just snapped the built-in camera to send a picture of the scene surrounding him. He did not need to fumble around and write alphabetised text or utter sounds for a spoken message<sup>1</sup>. One click was enough to communicate plenty of relevant information to his dia-‘logue’ partner. A Japanese best-selling book of 2005 confirms that their input via the eye amounts to more than 90 percent of all information<sup>2</sup>. In the slower lane, however, we in the West are still talking and inefficiently typing (if not rather scribbling indeci-

<sup>1</sup> International Herald Tribune, 1.7.2013.

<sup>2</sup> See book by Takeuchi Ichiro entitled 人は見た目が9割 (Humans via seeing eyes 90%), Shinchosha, Tokyo 2005.

pherably) alphabetic letters of sounds without proper meaning, unless it is in the right context of one culture (spoken language).

Disclaiming the “Asian miracle,” the economist Paul Krugman in the year 1994 claimed that East Asia’s growth was based mainly on the mobilisation of resources, notably of labour and capital, rather than on increases in efficiency, consequently rendering it “less sustainable”<sup>3</sup>. Thus it should come as no surprise that there is a growing acceptance in development planning that informational efficiency will significantly promote performance of the overall economy<sup>4</sup> in the long term.

The region of East Asia, between Russia to the north and Australia to the south, spread over thousands of islands and separated by the world’s highest mountains is known for its wide diversity if not stark contrasts in terms of geography, ethnic origins, myriad languages, religious beliefs and philosophies. In the efforts to link this vast variety of peoples and their business and cultural patterns, the means of communication play an increasing role. Thus, notably for the prospering intra-regional trade, issues of communication reach beyond their importance in the West’s debate on the information society and digitalisation. If a smart-phone crosses borders as a semi-finished product up to a hundred times in the Asian value chains of modern manufacturing before it hits the final market as a fully functioning gadget, it has to carry along immense amounts of information on its state of play.

However, in East Asia people are spread over a vast continent and separated by some of the world’s highest mountain-ranges as well as thousands of islands. Hence, different value systems and forms of expression developed throughout their history when there was little communication. Hence, we find the extreme example of Japan’s isolation during the Tokugawa Era when the archipelago was – for more than two centuries! – almost completely closed and void of communication with the outside world (*sakoku jidai* 鎖国時代) and when the Japanese society developed its so-called “unique” features (in spite of Chinese and some remaining Malayan traits contradicting the infamous “*Nihonjinron*” 日本人論). Simply associating this experience of isolation with Japan’s *faiblesse* in international communication even nowadays, we perceive the impact, which the peripheral location, in our euro-

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<sup>3</sup> P. Krugman, The myth of Asia’s miracle, in: Foreign Affairs, Nov. 1994.

<sup>4</sup> D. Lamberton, The Information Revolution in the Asia-Pacific Region, in: Asia-Pacific Literature, Vol.8 No.2, Nov. 1994.

centric view common to most of the East Asian countries, can have on the course of history<sup>5</sup>, at least since the Industrial Revolution.

Of course, China – still the ‘Middle Kingdom’ (中國) in its own and in its Japanese naming – seems to prove to the contrary with her enormous continental base of the Han-people and her world-wide Diaspora of Sinic culture that commonality of (written) language and moral codes survive even at great distances over centuries, originally without advanced means of communication. A fortiori, now that the international telephone network has turned mobile and – already with several billions of handsets “the world’s largest machine” – extends its functions more widely through digitalisation also into transfer of visual information via Skype etc., the Chinese link is considerably strengthened.

The wide gap in communication capabilities between the islanders of Japan and the more universalistic Chinese<sup>6</sup>, however can be expected to narrow greatly with the increase in visual communication having started with television and advancing rapidly with the use of icons, symbols, ideogrammes and multimedia etc. through and beyond the keyboard input for computer networks.

The input of information only indirectly through phonetic letters like in alphabetic English is extremely cumbersome and time-consuming as is its retrieval of reading by combining alphabetic letters into meaningful words, not only for Google boss Brin. Much more direct and economical is the input as well as output of information in visual symbols as it has been increasingly used for computer software and “architectures” (sic!) in buttons of symbols to be clicked on the screen (cf. Windows’ original spelled out “Home” button was soon replaced by its omnilaterally recognised symbol of a little house). Vision is a much faster input with the highest-bandwidth of information transmission to our human brain, which is at the same time storage and processor of the information. Moreover, the comprehension of such symbols is mostly trans-cultural and beyond any particular language. We encounter this as a matter of fact daily with traffic signs and at venues of international events like conferences, sport championships (Olympic disciplines!) etc. It is proven as well most importantly on our computer screens where long phras-

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<sup>5</sup> However, the “death of distance” thanks to technology and competition in telecoms (The Economist, 30.9.1995) might have the converse impact of undoing such particularities.

<sup>6</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *Capitalism’s Future*, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Sept./Oct. 1995.

es (e.g. 'emergency exit') for obvious reasons of faster understanding by all concerned increasingly have to be replaced by logotypes and other explanatory graphics, if not photos.

This universal trend towards visualisation of information will also hardly be stopped by theoretically possible, but technically still cumbersome and extremely expensive voice input systems<sup>7</sup> in view of the necessary adaptation to individual differences in pronunciation, intonation and so on. The current fear of "Americanisation" of cyber-space<sup>8</sup> because of Washington's English still being – though decreasingly – the main language used in the digital world, therefore might not last very long. It is increasingly diluted by diversity and the penetration of culturally neutral and omnilaterally understood symbols starting from charming smilies to signs for emergency exits with only flashes for directions. The latter are already truly universal not only as traffic signs.

Whereas the wider use of visual symbols is a rather recent phenomenon in the West in particular along with internationalisation, it emanates from millennia of culture in the Sinic sphere of civilisation<sup>9</sup>. Just very recently, researchers found evidence of Chinese character writing in stone dating back to some 5000 years BC, thus being almost two millennia older than scripture found in Mesopotamia, so far deemed to be the oldest. The practice of calligraphy is along with painting not only the major form of art in China, but has been maintained as essential learning for cultured men and women in most of East Asia with particular respect accorded to it also in Japan where it was adopted from the continent around the fifth century AD<sup>10</sup>. After simplifications under Mao in mainland China as well as MacArthur's "democratization" of the script in Japan and with the fast expansion of word-processing, the use of Chinese ideographic characters seems to be again widening

<sup>7</sup> N. Negroponte (Being Digital, New York, 1995, p. 145) has pointed out the difficulties of voice recognition notably in English, but less in Turkish – and apparently not to Negroponte, also less in Japanese!

<sup>8</sup> Yomiuri Shinbun, 29.5.95, with headline: "外国の支配 心配 ('Gaikoku no shihai' *shin-pai*)" (fear of 'foreign control').

<sup>9</sup> Singapore's Minister for Information, G. Yeo, sees the widespread use of English anyway eventually contested and the Internet become multicultural; Daily Yomiuri, 26.5.95.

<sup>10</sup> Unlike the script systems developed in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Babylon etc., today's Chinese writing is a direct continuation and evolution of the original culture of 5,000 B.C. (C. Lindqvist, *Eine Welt aus Zeichen*, Munchen 1990, p. 16).

in daily life in most of East Asia<sup>11</sup>. The learning of these letters with direct meaning basically promotes the comprehension of symbols and enhances greatly the capacity of the visual memory from early childhood, reinforced by such reading and writing in all sectors of life. Certainly, at the early stages of word-processing the multitudes of Chinese ideographs provided difficulties for language input as well as output. However, with greatly increased computing capacity, in the context of the advances of the visualisation of information through computers, one is tempted to regard Chinese calligraphy as a “cultural comparative advantage” in the age of digitalisation over the West’s uneconomical phonetic writing system of the alphabet.

A simple example illustrates this Chinese head-start drastically: The German computer company Siemens has more than twenty production sites all over the world, but because of their enhanced visual memory it is the software writing staff in Beijing which works with the least mistakes by far compared to those of the other plants. This example also underlines the attraction of outsourcing of in-coding software work to anywhere in the world where there is a cheap nimble labour-force educated just enough for visual or numeric input (e.g. for airlines, hotels, banks etc.), while only the creative high level software design is done in the more advanced countries.

Not only China, Taiwan, Japan and traditional Korea share to a large extent the script of characters, but before European occupation also Vietnam and other parts of Indochina used meaningful Chinese script. By no means is this a mere legacy of the past. To the contrary, at this year’s Northeast Asia Trilateral Forum, a regional platform that drew about thirty political, business and academic experts from the three countries, scholars from China, Japan and South Korea<sup>12</sup> have reached an agreement to release a selected 800 popular Chinese characters among the three countries to further promote the commonality of their writing symbols with emphasis on the importance of images<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The vocabulary of today’s Japanese is 41% based on Chinese according to the National Language Research Institute of Japan, but the use of Chinese characters in Japanese writing (kanji) is much wider.

<sup>12</sup> As writing basically derives from the image, it is expected that “it will again return to it”, also in the West (A.M. Christin, Text and Image, in: European Review, Vol.3, No.2, London 1995, p.129).

<sup>13</sup> See <http://news.163.com/13/0709/00/93A6G50N00014JB5.html> 2013-07-09 / 新闻

### **Cyber-space and the “Asian Model” – A basis for leapfrogging by East Asia?**

The link between telecommunications (“tele-density”) and economic development can be considered axiomatic. Besides the direct contribution of public telecommunications to economic activity there are indirect effects through equipment markets, private services and the broader information sector. Some elements delaying the information revolution turn out to be very deeply embedded and very difficult to change: the nature of the education process, property rights, vested interests and entrenched power situations. By most measures Asia had lagged in the access to the early worldwide web (remember CERN) and on-line services until around the turn of the century. With East Asia outside Japan among the fastest-growing economies globally, the region’s demand for telecommunication and services has been “dizzying” with an increase of 17% a year already in the 1990s. Notably the newly rich urban middle-class seems to be “bleeper-mad”. China – still with a relatively low tele-density – then ranked eighth in terms of equipment capacity and here had the highest growth rate of all countries.

In the context of the information society which implies spreading knowledge and communicating widely also at horizontal level more than preserving tightly knit insider-circuits, the traditional Asian pattern of closed connections within groups and hierarchies can be an obstacle in the beginning, as suspicions still run deep against the unknown outsider who happens to join the open (e.g. computer) network or nowadays the cloud. The Asian (Malayan) notion of communication as a face-to-face relationship of interpersonal trust (again contrasting with the highly mobile, if not superficial American case) is by nature blocking the opening and liberalization of connections in general.

Furthermore, the physical isolation of the person sitting alone at the keyboard and becoming a social outsider (cf. phenomenon of one million *hikikomori* 引き籠り, withdrawn youngsters in Japan) deter people more in the East than “hunting pioneers” in the West. However, technology can contribute to overcome the isolation of lonely computer users and render it group-user friendly through new social networks like Facebook etc.


Therefore it seems to be difficult for the “Asian model”, to accept the fact that the increasingly interconnected networks of computers and telecoms with multimedia are in principle open to anybody who has the necessary equipment and skill to accede.

South East Asian societies with a high proportion of under-thirty year olds and “Nintendo-kids” and with high economic growth-rates and their cheaper hard- and software (incl. counterfeits...) seem to be best placed to benefit and to overcome the above-mentioned socio-cultural obstacles in building a market-driven info-society.

In conclusion, one can summarize that there are certain socio-cultural aspects common to East Asian economies that seem to suggest homegrown difficulties in their accelerating smoothly onto the info-highway. With a certain exception made for Japan (which is building a consensus to “catch up again” under ‘Awanomics’), these inhibitions could be swept aside by the countless techno-mad young professionals serving as models of success in the fast pace of economic growth of the East Asia region. They are pushing the rapidly expanding middle-class into “cyber-space”, – at the same time widening the gap with the less advanced layers of their societies. Furthermore, the political implications of the East Asian societies opening up wider to the international flow of data and consequently the farther sharing of resulting knowledge could have profound influences also on the processes of their governance in the longer term. However, their long lasting visual orientation as exemplified in the Chinese script increasingly will play out as a comparative advantage over the West’s still lingering fascination with the spoken word and rhetoric sounds that seem to make a ‘per-sona’ here.

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\* This article complements a comprehensive essay on East Asia that Dr Wolfgang Pape has recently published at <http://www.ceps.eu/book/evolving-integration-east-asia-too-many-reservations>. He can be reached at [wolfgang.pape@gmail.com](mailto:wolfgang.pape@gmail.com)



# Summary of the keynote presentation made by Barry Tomalin to the China for EU conference in Antwerp on June 7 2013

**BARRY TOMALIN**  
CULTURE-TRAINING

This article discusses Chinese language learning, Chinese culture, the role of technology and the role of the Confucius Institutes in spreading Chinese language and culture around the world.

## **Reasons to learn**

Three reasons to learn Chinese. The first is business. Increasingly, this will become the driver. Chinese is going to become one of the world's leading business languages as Chinese commercial power grows internationally. Second, culture. China benefits from a 5,000 year culture and civilisation which we and the Chinese are rediscovering. Thirdly, history. China has a rich and varied history and its relations with the West and other Eastern nations will become increasingly important internationally as a background to understanding the Chinese.

## **Language**

The problem is, Chinese is considered difficult to learn. The ideographic script, the tonal language and the complicated Chinese culture all make it an exceptionally challenging language. In China you need to learn by heart 3000 characters to understand a newspaper in Chinese. As a huge and varied culture, China also has different dialects and different scripts in different areas. However, the whole country learns a unified form of Mandarin writing at school. Increasingly Mandarin is the spoken Chinese variety used in China and overseas. It also has a romanised alphabet 'Pinyin'.

Over a fifty-year period the English language developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century a standardised form known as modified received pronunciation. This is sometimes called, BBC English. It also developed a carefully graded programme for learning and building English language skills in understanding, speaking, reading and writing and teaches it around the world.

Chinese will need to harmonise, simplify and grade its language learning programme to improve international communication in Chinese.

### **The 'App' store**

I learned Arabic script through video. It is much easier to learn the Arabic alphabet if you can watch as the letters form. I think the same goes for Chinese. This is why I think the computer revolution will help Chinese grow more popular. Apps can give learners the opportunity to learn to read and write Mandarin Chinese characters and also to understand and practise Chinese speech. There are already a large number of Chinese apps on the Web. However, the existence of programmes, such as Chinese for EU with EU backing will have greater authority. And as the use of technology expands so will access to Mandarin.

### **Culture**

When you want to understand a business culture, the important thing is to know what to look for. Businesses working with China need to understand Chinese expectations of the relationship, how the Chinese communicate and what their management style is. Expectations, communication and management style are the three keys to business culture. When we consider expectations and communication we study the notion of hierarchy in China and the respect culture, the importance of indirect communication to save face and the value of building good relations through the exchange of favours through 'guanxi'. When we talk about management style we are comparing how business is organised, how teams operate, the leadership style and how decisions are taken and communicated. We also need to consider etiquette. It is interesting that what scares many British business colleagues most is the etiquette of the Chinese banquet!

### **The Confucius Institutes – China's language and cultural ambassadors**

Since the early nineties China has increasingly invested in its language and cultural mission abroad. It has done so through the nearly 1000 and growing

Confucius Institutes, based in universities around the world. Its Confucius classrooms programme pays for Chinese language assistants to give conversation classes in primary and secondary schools. Inevitably, the quality is variable but will improve.

A comparison with the British Council is useful here. Founded in 1934 and operating in over one hundred countries, the Council has become one of the world's most successful international relations organisations working in English. It is funded by a grant in aid from the British Foreign Office but also makes money through its English language teaching operations worldwide. Alongside other agencies, including its US equivalents, it has contributed to the international standard of English language learning and teaching in a number of ways.

- Syllabus and teaching methodology

It has promulgated standardised approaches to the teaching of English. It has reflected developments in linguistic approach and course design and promoted this through its teaching centres and consultancy service worldwide.

- Student qualification

It has promoted a graded system of student language qualification in association with the leading examination bodies, notably Cambridge English exams. Its IELTS 9 grade qualification is now a leading world indicator of English Language Proficiency for university entrance and business employment.

- Schools assessment and recognition

The British Council recognition scheme has improved the level of contributing language teaching organisations to a common standard worldwide.

- Teacher qualification

This is perhaps its most lasting contribution. It has promoted Teaching English as a Foreign Language education and qualifications in collaboration with examining bodies such as Cambridge English exams and Trinity College. As a result it has helped raise the quality of teaching English as a foreign language worldwide.

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, the Confucius Institutes might do the same for Mandarin. It will take a while but patience and the long-term view are Chinese virtues.

### **Will China take over the world in Mandarin or English?**

China is on course to become the world's leading economy by 2050. Language learning is driven by business. Will Mandarin replace English as a world language?

My opinion is that China will 'both' it. China produces the world's largest number of graduates in English. China is sending huge numbers of students abroad to study in English. The Chinese diaspora in the US and other English speaking countries is returning home. English will remain a leading world business language. Over the next 50-100 years Mandarin will rise to equal and maybe displace it. But it's a long term project which will need careful management. Until then, congratulations to Chinese 4 EU for helping to set Europe on the path to a Chinese future!

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# Differences in inbound travellers profiles between Chinese and Polish tourists

**AGNIESZKA PUTKIEWICZ**

MAZURKAS TRAVEL, FURNEL TRAVEL, TUMLARE

## **Introduction**

How to make tourism in Poland more open to Chinese travellers? And is it worth to do?

Should Polish travel market provide more attractions which are more oriented on Chinese travels (let's say: to be "Chinese-like") or it is better not to be too flexible in making Poland "a second China" and show some "Polish style"? Of course it was humorous doubt looking from today's point of view, but it is good to ask because our world is changing so quickly and therefore we have to make decisions, sometimes very quick one, which may have huge influence on our economy and position.

According to my experiences as a travel guide who worked in Polish-Chinese travel market for twenty years, we should have already decided as a country whether we want to make more money on Chinese travellers giving them what they are used to get when they are thinking of travelling or should we pay attention to "slow but harmonious growth in mutual relation of understanding" even if it is not so easy and fast. I am for the second option.

Why? Let me explain giving you an example. I know a very good Polish-Mandarin speaking guide. He is a young man. I have seen him working with different types of Chinese tourists. He likes to explain to all of those tourists about Polish history, literature, character – to let the other side understand the Polish historical and cultural "phenomena".

If there was a cultural and wise group who was listening to him – it was appreciating this kind of guidance; if there wasn't – group wasn't glad meeting such kind of attitude.

What does he show except facts and figures? An attitude of an European man who is proud of his country and doesn't look at people through their position. If we respect ourselves – we respect the others as well. Most of people respect somebody who respect himself even if sometimes they don't like him too much. It is also a truth about Chinese (as well as any other nation). If we want to become 'a slave' – it is easy for some people, but is it good for the picture of our country?

It is of course important to be kind, but we shouldn't forget that we are hosts here and "while in Rome (Poland) do as Romans (Polish) do". We are here to show Chinese visitors our view of life and our attitude to people, history, historical places or amusement places. Our foreign guests provide their own personalities and meet us – Slavs – with our values and points of views. The purpose is to meet "in between" if possible to understand each other. Some of our values are similar to Chinese (like love for family), some are different (like love for freedom as appreciating individualism).

And it is nothing bad in such status as differences can show us world from different perspective and enlarge of view of surrounding countries and values but only under one condition – both sides not only have to but must show respect to each other.

This is important as we differ in so many areas – geographical, political, social, personal, etc. But what about the tourists from China who don't want to understand Poland and just like to spend nice time here according to their needs? What if some people like to come to Poland just for shopping? It is of course all right as well but we shouldn't call such groups 'Travelers', they are just a visitors.

After such a personal introduction let's go to some facts about inbound tourism – in Poland and in China.

### **Chinese tourists in Poland**

Organized Chinese tourism in Poland has started in early nineties of XX century. It was Taiwan who first payed attention to the Post-Communicistic Countries like Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary. Those times Asians were usually coming through two polish big travel agencies – Orbis and Mazurkas. They were visiting all those three countries – for few days each.

While they were in Poland Taiwanese tourists stayed for one, two days in Warsaw and two days in Cracow. In Warsaw they used to visit Royal Castle,

The Old Town, The Royal Road, Lazienki – The Chopin Park and Chopin's birth place – Zelazowa Wola, sometimes also Wilanow Palace. While in Cracow – Wawel – the Royal Castle, The Old Town with Sukiennice, St Mary Church and Plants, The Salt Mine Wieliczka and Nazis concentration camp in Oswiecim.

When the group was travelling by minibus or by bus – it was going from Cracow straight to Prague in Czech Republic (seeing many forests on the way what always is very interesting for Asians as well as Polish variety of dogs' races). Small more luxurious groups were travelling by train from Warsaw to Cracow, then by plane from Cracow Balice Airport to Prague Airport.

After Taiwanese, Chinese tours from mainland China started appear in Poland. It started from small groups coming for business and – mainly – tourism, then – big groups of tourists appeared. They needed to have a very good accommodation including hotels and restaurants. They were sometimes disappointed that Polish hotel standards are sometimes different for example there is no sleepers and toothbrush in every room which is a standard in Chinese hotels.

Few Chinese and Chinese-Polish travel agencies appeared in Warsaw – first it was Panda Travel (now – CT Poland) and New World travel agency, later China Town travel agency and others.

In 90-ties there were very few Polish people working as Mandarin-speaking tour guides, in that time not too many people had possibility to study Chinese language in Poland. Those times there were only two universities – Warsaw University and Mickiewicz University in Poznan which provided Chinese faculty (Sinology).

After twenty years situation has changed – now there are many places where Polish students can study Chinese – few universities, many language schools as well as kindergartens, primary schools, high schools and co-founded by Chinese government Confucius Institutes. Except Polish also Chinese (mostly – students) started to be interested in getting tour guide's licence and of course due to demand there were some who were working without the licence. Now-a-days usually Polish-Mandarin speaking tour guides are divided Polish are working for Polish travel agencies and Chinese are working for Chinese travel agencies in Poland.

Chinese like to have a Chinese as a local guide – they prefer young boys, they feel the safest with such a local guide.

### **Polish tourists coming in organized groups to China**

On the other hand there are many Polish people who travel to China. The trend has started within last ten years. They are mostly traveling with such travel agencies like CT Poland, Sigma Travel, Opal Travel, Nilpol and others (as well private one). Usually they go for 10 to 14 days tours visiting Beijing, Xian, Luoyang, Shaolin, Shanghai, Suzhou and Hangzhou, some go to other places like Yunnan or Tibet in west part of China. Polish groups are travelling with their tour-leader and there is a local tour guide (who speak at least English) in each place they are visiting.

While in Poland Chinese tourist don't like to eat Polish food all the time, they normally eat half time polish food and half time Chinese food or even eat Chinese food all the time. From all kind of Polish food Chinese like the most pork and stripe, they also like mushroom soup and cheesecake. Behaving in European way and using fork and knife in restaurant cause some stress for some Chinese, as they are not used to them.

Contrary, Polish tourists in China eat almost all the time Chinese food. As to souvenirs – Chinese people like to buy amber and Chopin music CD-s and Polish tourists like to buy ink paintings, silk, jade or minority handicrafts. Some Chinese tourists like to buy polish vodka like Zubrowka or Goldwasser. As to Polish tourists – they like buying Chinese green tea when in China. It is worth to add that there is a growing number of individual Chinese tourist in Poland – there are mostly exchange students – but there are still very few of them.

### **Polish and other European countries' individual tourism**

Contrary, there are quite many individual tourists from Poland and other European countries especially France, England, Italy, Scandinavian countries and Germany travelling to China. It is rather 'low budget group of people staying in hostels, totally different than businessmen in hotels. They like to visit places with great Chinese culture like Beijing, beautiful landscapes like in Yunnan and Sichuan Provinces. They also prefer to visit mountain areas like Tibet, Sichuan, Yunnan famous also for many minorities living there, Huangshan in Anhui province or Taishan; Donghuang grottes in Gansu province, Suzhou parks, Big Buddha Statue in Leshan, West Lake and Longjing tea place in or near Hangzhou and many more. I would like to point out that it is easy and safe to travel in China – to be honest enough is to buy a 'Lonely Planet' guide book with English and Chinese names of places and use it while

in China. Tourists know well that big cities are much more expensive than a province so they try not to spend too much time in big Eastern Chinese cities. Those European Travellers like to use different means of transport while in China – bicycles, motorbikes, horses, riksha, etc. They are trying all kind of delicious Chinese food like Chinese dumplings or Beijing style roasted duck, while contact with locals it can be an important reason to pack and visit China, even now.

### **Summary**

Hope there will be more and more contacts between both sides (China and Europe). It must be! And the cultural differences will be just something interesting and attractive not so hard to go through. Better knowing of both languages and cultures will help Chinese and Europeans to enjoy mutual contacts and cooperation not only privately but also officially in business. Even there is a contradiction between Chinese hierarchic social life and European democratical one – both sides have a great opportunity to know each other and understand which can help us understand world and make it better place to live. What can I add it spreads horizons and that is the reason why we travel, isn't it?

# Gauging the business climate

THE EUROPEAN UNION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
IN CHINA

**PULL QUOTE:** "Improvements to the rule of law and the promotion of fairer competition and fewer monopolies, alongside promoting domestic consumption, continue to be seen by European companies as the major potential drivers of Chinese economic performance over the next few years".

On 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2013, The European Union Chamber of Commerce in China released its annual Business Confidence Survey. The purpose of the survey is to take an annual snapshot of European companies' successes and challenges in China. Published since 2002, it has enabled the European Chamber to build a rich data set to serve as a broad indicator for how European companies judge the business environment in China, both now and in the future.

The European Chamber invited its members to take part in the *Business Confidence Survey 2013 (BCS 2013)* over a two-week period during March 2013. The survey was conducted in cooperation with Roland Berger Strategy Consultants.

There were 1,403 eligible entities. With 526 respondents completing the survey, the *BCS 2013* achieved a response rate of 37 per cent. Of those respondents, 61 per cent participated in last year's survey. This number has increased each year, suggesting an increasing stability in the data set. It has also enabled year-on-year comparisons, coupled with new insights identified by first-time participants.

The survey comprised 47 questions, grouped under four key themes:

- Company Profile and Statistics;
- Outlook on China, Competition, Company Strategy and Regulation;
- Human Resources;
- Financial Performance.

## Executive Summary

Tougher business conditions, both globally and in China, have led to a diminished financial performance for European companies in China in recent years. In 2012:

- Increased revenues were reported by only 62% of companies, versus 75% and 78% in preceding years;
- Profitability was only reported by 64% of companies, compared with 73% and 74% in preceding years.

Many market dynamics are contributing to this. Key factors having strong impacts on net profit margins include:

- Slower economic growth in European and Chinese markets named by 40% and 38% respectively;
- Labour costs cited by 52% of companies;
- Competition from privately-owned Chinese companies mentioned by 30% of companies.

The relatively poor financial results are further exacerbated by the regulatory environment.

Missed business opportunities owing to market access and regulatory barriers were reported by 45 per cent of all European companies. These challenging market dynamics, coupled with a difficult regulatory environment, show that significant economic reforms are needed more than ever before to ensure continued strong growth, mitigate cost increases, unlock market opportunities and create an overall well-functioning and efficient business environment.

But as uncertainty still prevails, with 53 per cent deeming that market access issues will also continue to be a significant challenge, optimism is waning:

- Optimism about future revenue growth has shrunk to a four-year low of just 71% of EU companies.
- The outlook for optimism regarding profitability for the next two years has reached an all-time low of only 29% of companies.

Despite many of the lowest business confidence results since the onset of the global economic downturn, it is clear that China is still being perceived as the best of a challenging global situation. China continues to be a priority in global strategies and a mainstay for global revenue generation. European companies are resigning themselves to this reality and remain committed to the Chinese market:

- China is seen as increasingly important in global strategies by 64% of companies, albeit a decline from 74% in 2012.
- China is rated as a top-three country for future investments by 43% of companies.
- Further expansions to current China operations are considered by 86% of European companies.

Going forward, respondents are overwhelmingly united in their view of the key drivers for China's future economic performance:

- Rule of law and transparent policy-making was identified as a significant key driver by 76% of companies.
- The promotion of fairer competition and fewer monopolies was also regarded to be a potentially significant driver of China's future economic performance by 68% of companies.

To download a full copy of the European Business in China Confidence Survey 2013, please go to [www.europeanchamber.com.cn/en/publications-business-confidence-survey-2013](http://www.europeanchamber.com.cn/en/publications-business-confidence-survey-2013).



# GoChina Strategy

## **POLISH INFORMATION AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT AGENCY**

The year 2012 witnessed further intensification of the Polish-Chinese political and economic relations. The visit of the premier of Chinese People's Republic Wen Jiabao, the first official visit of that level in 25 years, was definitely the most dominant event of the recent bilateral relations. During the visit the '12 steps programme' was declared by the premier with a goal of furthering bilateral cooperation, especially economic wise. The Polish government followed the suit by developing GoChina initiative, which aims to support Polish entrepreneurs interested in the Chinese market. GoChina is a comprehensive platform that supports trade and investment cooperation with PRC and helps build up the know-how necessary to do business with Chinese partners. Furthermore, the initiative seeks to coordinate the efforts of the central ministries in regard to scientific and cultural cooperation with PRC. However, the main goal of GoChina is to support Polish small and medium enterprises with professional knowledge and practical tips, in order to encourage them to expand their operations to China.

The Poland-China Economic Cooperation Centre works as a part of Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency and was established as one of the means of realising the goals of GoChina strategy. The significant work done by the centre helps improve the bilateral relations between Poland and China. Following the strategy 'More Poland in China, more China in Poland', the Centre works towards creating a positive atmosphere around Chinese investments in Poland. It also receives Chinese governmental and business delegations and helps Polish companies to establish links with Chinese partners.

Various seminars and conferences were organised by the Poland-China Economic Cooperation Centre in the year 2012, including "Poland-Central Europe-China Economic Forum", which was one of the accompanying events of the premier Wen Jiabao visit to Poland. The total number of people who attended the conferences and seminars organised by the Centre is more than 2700.

In addition to that, the centre organises B2B meetings that provide Polish entrepreneurs with an opportunity to acquire some valuable business contacts and to meet potential partners. Over 500 Polish and 150 Chinese companies took part in the meetings of that type in 2012. Furthermore in that period, over 90 official Chinese delegations visited the Centre. The Poland-China Economic Cooperation Centre welcomed in total 417 representatives of the Chinese local governments and the Chinese business world.

The analytical and publishing work on Polish-Chinese cooperation topics is also one of the tasks of the Centre. Last year's greatest success in that field was a business guide titled 'Biznes w Chinach, jak osiągnąć sukces' (Business in China, how to succeed). The publication aimed to offer advice to Polish entrepreneurs interested in operating in the Chinese market. Several successful companies were asked to share their experiences of doing business in that difficult market, which was then compiled and published in a form of concise and practical guide. One can learn from the booklet how to succeed in China and more importantly how to avoid some of the most common dangers and threats of that market.

The portal GoChina was created in order to establish a convenient way of maintaining contact with the companies interested in working with the Chinese counterparts. It proves to be extremely successful, consistently attracting more visitors. At the moment the portal receives over 50000 visitors a month. China related news and the reliable information can be found on the portal. A businessman visiting our website has a chance to directly ask our expert a question, organise his business trip to China, where he will participate in the trade fair and find out about upcoming China related events. It is also possible to subscribe to GoChina Newsletter, which recaps the most important events of the month in a brief and visually attractive form.

We believe that Polish entrepreneurs should go global and start investing in non-European markets. There are more and more Polish companies operating in the Chinese market, 27% increase in our export to China this year is a great example of that rising level of activity. While we are not doing badly, we can do more. China has a potential that innovative Polish companies can take advantage of. Their competitive advantages, such as the products desirability in the Chinese market and high quality of those products should help them do so.

Every international expansion requires a thorough preparation; however in case of China it proves to be particularly important. Indeed, the main reason why the GoChina strategy was developed was to support Polish businessmen. We would like to inform them about the opportunities available for them in China and provide them with knowledge and tools that will ensure their success.

*Discover China with us!*

# Authors

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Francesca is Cultural Responsible at Italy China Foundation (Italy). She has a degree in Chinese and a Master in communication for Italian companies dealing with Far East Countries. Since 2009 she cooperates with Italy China Foundation and is responsible for cultural activities. She has been involved in different EU project and is currently project manager of Chinese for Europeans project ([www.chinese4.eu](http://www.chinese4.eu)).

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Daniel Van Den Bulcke is Emeritus Professor of International Management and Development at the University of Antwerp and fellow of Academy of International Business. He is Director of the Center of International Management and Development of Antwerp-CIMDA since 1989 and Chair of Advisory Board of the Euro-China Centre at Antwerp Management School.

He was awarded the Friendship Prize of the P.R. of China for his contributions to the Chinese economy in 2000. He has been teaching in China for more than 20 years in different management programs. He has substantially published in the field of the international business management.

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Paola Costa is an entrepreneur currently based in Barcelona, originally from Rome.

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In 2012 Orientalmente received Google's 'Euronews Business Award'.

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In his opinion the successful application of new technologies requires changes of traditional approach to education. He participated in many national and international projects of this kind, some of them resulted in success others in failure, especially these failure ended projects were a good experience to share with others to avoid similar problems in the future. He has been project manager in 7 LLP projects.

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Her MA thesis in Polish linguistics, awarded in 2007, discusses professional communication and the influence of sociolinguistics on everyday language. She also works as a Public Relations Specialist, Press Officer and marketing coordinator in Poland. Her responsibilities in everyday work are internal and external communication as well as coordination and administration of people and projects.

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Since 2004 works in Poland as a professional Chinese language teacher. She worked as an English teacher for adults and children as well as a Chinese language teacher for foreigners in Chengchi University in Taipei from 1997 to 2004. In 2011 has completed intercultural and sociological courses in University of Warsaw and in 2013 submitted a doctoral dissertation at Polish Academy of Sciences. Title of her Ph.D. dissertation is "Strategies of Managing Diversities In Multicultural Environment: Problems of Taiwanese Managers In Intercultural Communication and Management In Poland".

In 2008 with her husband has established a Chinese language school in Warsaw – Haopengyou Chinese language school.

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Ms Hongjuan Liu is a lecturer at the Arts and Humanities department of Qujing Normal University, China. She got her master degree in applied linguistics from Tianjin Normal University, 2006. Her research interest is TCSL (Teaching Chinese as a Second language), and so far she has got a number of publications in this field, and also a book named "Research about Ten Difficult Grammar Problems in Teaching Chinese as a Second language", of which she is the deputy editor. She worked as a Chinese teacher in the Sinology department of KU Leuven from November 2010 to October, 2012, delegated by the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a foreign Language (NOTCFL).

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Krzysztof Pstrong is a project manager specializing in ICT usage for business and educational purposes. He has knowledge and skills in both managerial (Warsaw School of Economy) and technical (Warsaw University of Technology) aspects of the projects. He has extensive experience in the implementation and management of national and international wide projects, as well as extensive experience in the field of implementation of systems and database applications for commercial solutions (tens of implementation). He is also advisor on using of modern ICT solutions in the process of distance learning.

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From 1993 was working as a Chinese-English-Polish translator and also as a tour-guide for Chinese inbounds in Poland and Polish inbound in China. From 2000 up to now is promoting Chinese culture to Polish society including teaching language, culture, calligraphy and presenting Chinese ceremony – how to prepare and drink Chinese tea.

Her book "Puka in China" was edited in 2010, now she finished writing the second book about cultural differences between Chinese and Polish citizens and their relation while in Poland.

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**THE EUROPEAN UNION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN CHINA**

The European Union Chamber of Commerce in China is a members-driven, non-profit organisation that seeks greater market access and improved operating conditions for European companies operating in China. Unifying the voices of over 1.700 members, we act as a communication and lobbying channel to European and Chinese authorities, business associations and media, and monitor China's compliance with the WTO and other international commitments that impact business. The Chamber has chapters in 7 regions: Beijing, Nanjing, Pearl River Delta, Shanghai, Southwest China, Shenyang and Tianjin. For more information about our activities and our services, visit our website: [www.europeanchamber.com.cn](http://www.europeanchamber.com.cn)

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The Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency (PAIIZ), helps investors to enter the Polish market and find the best ways to utilise the possibilities available to them. We guide investors through all the essential administrative and legal procedures that involve a project; we also support firms that are already active in Poland. We provide rapid access to the complex information relating to legal and business matters regarding the investments, help in finding the appropriate partners and suppliers, together with new locations. PAIIZ's mission is also to create a positive image of Poland across the world, promoting Polish goods and services.

# Chinese for Europeans

To take advantage of all modules of the course Chinese for Europeans, just set up an account at [www.chinese4.eu](http://www.chinese4.eu), start learning, make friends with the Chinese language, and simply have fun with it. The website also contains useful information about cultural differences between the western and eastern traditions and practical advice on behavior during a trip to China. Download the publication: China. Things To Know Before You Go and start preparing your trip to China.

If you are interested in:

- European Union – China dialogue for future cooperation
- Learning or teaching the Chinese language
- Prospects for European Union – China business relations
- Chinese culture

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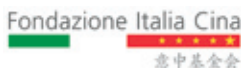
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