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From idea to reality:

**lessons learned from three Sino-Danish collaboration cases in higher education
sector**

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List of acronyms

AAU	Aalborg University
BNU	Beijing Normal University
CAS	Chinese Academy of Science
CAS	Chinese Area Study
CCAT	Cross-cultural adaptation theory
CI	Confucius Institute
CI AAU	Confucius Institute in Aalborg University
CPT	Cultural psychology theory
DIR/CIR	Development and International Relations/Chinese International Relation
GUCAS	Graduate University of Chinese Academy of Science
Hanban	Confucius Institute Headquarters
HES	Higher education sector
ICT	Intercultural communication theory
IHE	Internationalization of higher education
ITH	Internationalization of triple helix theory
PBL	Problem based learning
SDC	Sino-Danish Center
TH	Triple helix theory
UIR	University of International Relations

Abstract

In a globalization era, internationalization of higher education sector influx drastically. With the rise of China, the scene of internationalization of higher education sector becomes more complex. China has changed its role from one of the largest outbound countries to host country as the demand for smart brains rises alongside the fast economic development. Denmark, as a small EU member country, which is an open and innovative economy with cutting-edge technologies in industries such as renewable energy, environment related waste treatment, biochemical, life science, nano technology and social welfare, has a long cooperation history with China. How does the Sino-Danish collaboration in internationalization of higher education sector look like? Is language the biggest barrier during cooperation? How to overcome barriers to reach a mutual goal for both parts?

This thesis is aiming to address this research question “why there are obstacles during Sino-Danish collaboration in higher education sector and what lessons can both parts learn from each other?” The deductive method with semi-structured qualitative interview approach is used to analyze three cases - DIR/CIR from AAU, SDC, CI AAU. By applying the combination of intercultural communication theory, where context theory, cultural variation theory are chosen to form the theoretical frame for this thesis. Within internationalization of triple helix theory, interactivities between university and university helices is the focal element for this thesis. About the cultural psychology theory, the cross-national cultural adaptation theory is the chosen theory for this thesis. Thereby, the combination of all these theories construct the theoretical frame for this thesis.

By analyzing DIR/CIR, SDC and CI AAU, this thesis finds out that language is not the biggest obstacle during Sino-Danish collaborations, mindset is. Socioeconomic environment changed with time has a more deep effect during such collaboration. Open-minded and willingness to acknowledge the cultural difference is the first step towards a smooth collaboration. Respect, accept, learn and embrace each other is a pathway for future Danish actors who want to create collaboration with China, nonetheless, cultural adaptation activities indeed help to narrow down the cultural gap.

Introduction

In the globalization era, internationalization of higher education (IHE) has become a competitive battlefield for various players. Universities and research institutions, governments who are using bilateral agreements for attracting and retaining the best brains. Indeed, knowledge economy does need smart brains to produce, exchange, transfer, and manage knowledge in order to transform them into productivity for modern societies.

In G20 Leaders' Communique Hangzhou Summit (2016), innovation, integration, openness, inclusiveness are the words that repeatedly appear on the 7-pages long official document. Keynotes including to strengthen policy coordination, break a new path to growth, establish more effective and efficient global economic and financial governance, make international trade and investment robust, establish inclusive and interconnected development. Determination from all G20 leaders are willing to create an innovative, invigorated, interconnected, inclusive world economy to usher global growth and sustainable development following the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action and the Paris Agreement.

In Lena Winther's report about G20 summit (2016) on Danish national TV station, economy tops the agenda. The recognition of China has moved away as the world factory has cost Danish enterprises losses, since its two digital growth rate has downsized to 6.5% annually. According to Helge J. Petersen, chief economist from Nordea Bank, China's decreased growth rate will still create more jobs in Denmark, because in 2015, 5.6% of total Danish export was to China which was doubled since 2005, as long as China keeps its "new normal" growth rate, there are still space for Danish export to grow in the near future.

Denmark (2016) is a small nation with 5.7 million people spread on an area of 43.000 square kilometer soil. Denmark is an open knowledge-based economy with innovative characteristics in finding unique niches in various industries, particularly in renewable energy, waste treatment, biochemical industries, innovative education and many other environmental friendly niche sectors. Due to its size, Danish industries are constantly seeking new export markets. Recently, the Danish model of elderly care is also an attractive export item, since many societies worldwide have to face the aging population issue. The Danish way of using the public service on the elderly in accordance with sufficient medical care, and applying robots for companying the elderly to avoid loneliness has

led to a project in Shanghai, China where Danish experts are helping Shanghai government to establish a well-functioned pensioners' building (Dansk Erhverv, 2015). Because of its size, economists and other experts from think tanks has predicted that not in the near future, Denmark will be lack of well-educated workforce to preserve its socioeconomic and political system.

China is now facing an aging population and massive environmental issues, which Denmark has expertise and hands-on experiences in dealing with such problems. To create a long-term cooperation between these two countries will be benefit for both countries. Historically, Sino-Danish relationship can be traced back more than one century ago. Denmark (2016) is the only country that have unbroken relationship with China since 1908 and officially exchanged notes to establish diplomatic relationship with the People's of Republic of China on May 11th 1950.

In a knowledge based economy society, who can generate and transfer and transform knowledge into productivity will have an important say in general. With government support, knowledge transfer should go smoothly. In reality, institutions like universities and research institutes have a different voice in terms of creating an innovative knowledge based society. Budgetary cutting has led universities to cut down several non-profitable programs. Economy has hang over the universities for survive. International student economy has become a hot and fastest growing business where universities trying their best to attract international students, because with international students comes the money, which might help universities to survive.

Meanwhile, as a member of EU, Denmark has different rules and regulations when it comes to IHE project with partners outside of EU. Such a marriage with one EU member country and one non-EU country is a hard process due to different laws and regulations in each country, not to mention the language and management barriers to overcome.

Since 2004, China has established many Confucius Institutes (CI) around world as implementation of its soft power strategy. In Denmark, there are three CIs, two located in Copenhagen area, one in Aalborg University. Development and International Relationship with specialization of Chinese International Relations (DIR/CIR) is a joint double degree master program of Aalborg University (AAU) from Denmark and University of International Relations (UIR) from China, which enables students to spend one year studying in AAU and one year in UIR. This joint program stands out as a pioneer Sino-Danish joint program in the field of social science in higher education sector.

Sino-Danish Center (2016) for education and research (SDC) is a joint collaboration of eight Danish universities, the Danish ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, the graduate university of Chinese Academy of Science (GUCAS) and Chinese Academy of Science (CAS). The purpose of this joint organization is to enhance the overall collaboration and cooperation between Danish and Chinese research and development of learning environment to get a win-win effect for both countries. The Danish secretariats of SDC is situated in Aarhus while the Chinese secretariats was going to be fully operational in Yanqihu Campus near Beijing with the capacity to have up to 100 researchers, 300 graduate students and 75 PhDs from Denmark and China in 2014.

The existing literatures about the IHE focus primarily on USA, Canada, Australia and other immigration friendly countries. Denmark, as a small EU member country with restrictive immigration regulations does not appear on IHE literature often. Is there any good advice to share with future actors? If so, what are the main hindrances that need to deal with towards the expected outcome? Is language the biggest barrier? In order to find answers to these questions, this thesis is going to explore and explain the research question of **“why there are obstacles during Sino-Danish collaboration in higher education sector and what lessons can both parts learn from each other?”**

Methodology

This chapter shows the construction of this thesis. Starting with a brief introduction of the methods used through the whole thesis including two ways of collecting interview data; then follows a short introduction of the combination of three theories as the main theoretical framework. The limitation of the theoretical framework is presented afterwards. The next part is the short presentation of detailed information on how the three interviewees are chosen and interviews are collected, following the literature review of secondary data. The limitation of the empirical data is presented right after. The next part is the explanation of why the combination of theoretical framework is the suited theories for analyzing the empirical data.

Deductive with qualitative semi-structured interviews approach

This thesis uses deductive with qualitative semi-structured interviews approach implying that by applying theoretical framework to analyze gathered three first-handed interviews, with secondary literatures as given general conditions about the IHE sector. The reason for choosing this particular approach is the following: firstly, the timeframe of four months for construction of a master thesis is not an advantage if one wants to make a research project on time, qualitative approach prioritize the representative cases. With limited time, quantitative research is not realistic. Secondly, there is no extra funding for further investigation if one wants to do a quantitative project. Thus, finding the existing theories to analyze a specific problem founded in empirical data gathered from real life is the chosen approach.

Since the thesis subject has been decided of the Sino-Danish collaboration in HES, the main objects become clear, namely, to find Sino-Danish research collaboration centers, and/or the joint degree programs, and other forms of Sino-Danish cooperation within HES. Aalborg University not only has a Confucius Institute (CI) which is an Chinese funded organization aiming to teach Chinese in the Danish context, but also has DIR/CIR as the pioneer joint double degree master program in social science field. The newly operating Sino-Danish Center (SDC), which is the highest level of Danish eight universities together cooperate with one Chinese university. It is obvious that these programs need to spend time and energy to dig deeper. To interview deputy managers of CI and SDC, the coordinator of DIR/CIR is the way to find out fruitful information from these first-handed persons for rich insights.

Brief introduction of combination of the theoretical framework

It is a tough task to pick the right theories to analyze Sino-Danish collaboration in HES. Because it involves issues like IHE, Chinese Danish collaboration, international student economy and the obstacles and problems along the way. In order to get a holistic understanding of all these issues, one has to combine several theories to cover the angles to reach an understanding of why obstacles and problems occur. The chosen theories are intercultural communication theory (ICT), internationalization of triple helix theory (ITH) and cultural psychology theory (CPT). The combination of the three theories is the fundamental theoretical framework for this thesis, though it has to be said clearly right at this moment that it is picking some of the elements out from each of the three-abovementioned theories to form the theoretical framework for this particular thesis. Detailed explanations will be lay out in theoretical framework part.

The limitation of the theoretical framework

Because the chosen components of each theories are purposefully combined to analyze the gathered empirical data, there are some angles this thesis does not cover. Issues such as Chinese students' perceptions when they are studying in Denmark; Danish students' perceptions when they are studying in China; and the experiences from institutional leadership level from both AAU and UIR. This thesis focus on the practitioners' view, other core elements such as students, lectures and institution leaders' point of view are not including. Of course, these angles are worth investigate in the future to get a more comprehensive view of Sino-Danish collaboration in HES.

This thesis is trying to find out why there are problems during the collaboration process when both sides have strong will and intention to establish a long-term strategic collaboration functional, and what lessons both parts can learn from. The interviewees are first-handed practitioners. Cautiously treat the contents of interviews is bearing in mind to avoid subjectivity. Nonetheless, the contents from various websites should also be looked at with critical lens, since normally only the good stories are published on websites for promotion.

Short presentation of empirical data

Primary empirical data

Two forms of interviews has used for collecting interviews, face-to-face and telephone interview. Pre-requested questionnaire is only asked by DIR/CIR coordinator Professor Li Xing and the other

two interviewees are informed that English will be used as interview language, and the interview process will be recorded in order to use transcripts as appendix for the thesis.

Telephone contacting the interviewees for requiring interviews to make appointments is used. The semi-structured interview questionnaire for Professor Li Xing has reached him before interviewing him on August 23rd 2016 as he requested. Interview with deputy manager of CI Thorsten Budde Haensel has taken place on September 21st in his office at Aalborg University, the following day September 22nd the telephone interview with deputy manager of SDC Morten Laugesen has taken place.

It must be said that face-to-face interview gives more details during interviews, because one can observe the interviewee's facial expression and communicating with the interviewee in an open and direct way to dig more information from the interviewees. The telephone interview is based on vocal communication, which lacks the some level of interactivities between the interviewer and interviewee. Without observation where both interviewer and interviewee are in the same room, the interview is distant and unlively. The preferable interview form will be face-to-face interview.

Literature review of secondary data

One G20 communique and a Danish journalist report has led the introduction to demonstrate the rise of China and its impact to the rest of the world, especially in the Danish context. Though the journalist focuses on the economic growth, it is necessary to point out the relation among knowledge, economic growth, and the importance of Sino-Danish collaboration.

The sage encyclopedia provides intercultural communication theory in public sphere, which is chosen as one of the theoretical framework for this thesis. Encyclopedia has gathered the updated theories, one has to choose the suited angels for specific purpose.

Most of literatures about the internationalization of higher education sector focus on countries such as USA, Canada, Australia and Japan (Ardakania et.al. 2011). Issues like international student economy, international student mobility (Choudaha & Li 2012, Gürüz 2011), international student migration (Tillman: 2011), measurement of joint programs' quality (Johnes & Li 2008), and strategies to attract and retain smart brains are the main themes (Bertlesen, Du, Søndergaard 2013). India and China are the two biggest outbound countries (Argawal 2006, Johnes & Li 2008), and the role of China has shifted from outbound country to host country alongside the rise of China (Min 2004).

The Danish higher education system has changed accordingly with the global trend (Forest 2013). The role of higher education institutions has changed in China and Denmark, employment rate after graduation has become a key quality measurement criteria (Heitor 2015). Cultural perspective is not a well-written angel when it comes to analyze ITH (Sørensen & Hu 2014; Bellini et.al. 2016; Ranga & Etzkowitz 2013; Smith & Leydesdorff 2014), yet the trends indicate that cultural influences have an important say in ITH. Concepts like cultural broker (Bertlesen, Du, Søndergaard 2013), human hubs and go-betweeners (Beck 2016) has surfaced as the cultural influences has become more obvious and important in Sino-Danish collaboration in HE. Cultural psychology perspective enables one to take a deeper look into the roots of intercultural misunderstanding during collaborations among universities for establishing joint program projects (Shafaei & Razak 2016; Esteban-Guitart 2014).

The limitation of empirical data

The limitation of primary interview data can be seen as the following: firstly, during the semi-structured interview process, there will be angels uncovered due to pre-designed interview questions. Because the theme of the interviews has pre-decided, thus the answers from interviewees are somehow also framed around it. From the transcripts of the interviews, main messages are presented in the empirical data part in the thesis. Secondly, as it mentioned before, this thesis focuses on practitioners' point of view, cautious interpret contents of the interviews is on alert. Thirdly, other elements such as students view is not included in this thesis, though it is a core element as students are one of the focal elements in IHE.

About the secondary data, it must be said that due to the timeframe, there is a chance that new trends might occur during and/or after the writing process of this thesis. Secondly, it would be a good help if there is direct access to some of the Chinese database for precise information about outbound and inbound international students since some of data presented in analysis are from secondary data written by scholars.

Why the combination of the three theories is the suited theoretical framework for this thesis

In order to have a comprehensive and holistic understanding of why there are problems during the Sino-Danish collaboration in HES since both parts have ambition to establish a long-term collaboration project for both countries, it is necessary to dig deeper than just focus on the surfacing challenges, such as language barriers. The intercultural communication theory in public sphere

presents a solid foundation of theories. The internationalization of triple helix theory focuses on the interactivities among helices which enables us to understand how universities, universities and governments work with each other. SDC and CI are collaborations between Denmark and China at top level, therefore ITH is the right tool for analysis. Cultural perspective has not appeared on social science field very often as one was told that cultural point of view is hard to explain clearly since culture is hard to define and changes constantly with time. In this thesis, cultural psychology perspective, especially cross-cultural adaptation theory gives a unique chance to explore why the language is not the biggest barrier in cross national collaboration in IHE field since English has been used as instruction language in IHE. Thus, the combination of ICT, ITH and CCAT explains why there are problems surfacing during Sino-Danish collaboration in HES.

Theoretical framework

In this chapter elements from ICT, ITH and CPT will be presented and explained in details, then the combination of the chosen elements which form the theoretical framework will be explained.

Elements from intercultural communication theory

According to Sage encyclopedia (2013), there are many aspects of ICT. Many traditional culture researchers see culture as an empirical paradigm and accept culture as a learned collective or group process connected to communication. Communication is a meaning making process. Thus, intercultural communication is about making meaning of the messages from a different culture. Intercultural communication theories are the ways organizations communicate with international public efficiently depending on a variety of cultural and societal forces, affecting relationships between the organizations and the public in the host countries.

The context theory is the foundation for understanding the various cultural differences influencing interpersonal communication. Context is the environment or situation that involving a communicative interaction. If one understands the context of the situation, the organizations gain the meaning and cues to guide people in acting and reacting in an interpersonal encounter. **Edward Hall (1984)** points out two types of context. High-context cultures means communication is driven by the cues of both the situation and the relationship between the parties, such as Asian and Latin American countries. People evaluate the environment and understand the meaning of the situation without many words. In other words, polite tones and formal communication with little room for negotiation. In low-context cultures, the tone and context is based on spoken and written words. Understanding of the situation is relying on spoken words, written documents and formal agreements. It is the words guiding people's understanding of the situation, not the situation itself.

Geert Hofstede (1984) created **cultural variation theory** including five dimensions of culture. Power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individual-collectivism, masculinity/femininity and Confucian dynamism are the five dimensions. Power distance refers to the openness of upward communication across societies. Uncertainty avoidance refers to the tolerance of ambiguity among organizational members. Masculinity/femininity explores the distribution of work tasks across a culture and examines whether tasks are equally distributed to both genders. Individual-collectivism examines the relationships between the individual and the group. With high individualistic values,

self-actualization and career progression is characteristics in the organization. With high collective values, the benefits to the organization stands in front of the interests and rights of the individual. Confucian dynamism shows the ideas of thrift, perseverance and the desire for orderly relationships with others in some cultures, including China and Russia. There are two levels of impact of cultural variation theory to the practice of international public relations: firstly, within the organization, and the secondly, at the societal level.

William Gudykunst (1995) created **theory of anxiety/uncertainty management** to understand interpersonal, organizational, and society levels of risk tolerance. **Hall's** time dimension shows different cultures organize and experience time differently. Polychronic cultures believe that time is flexible and can involve multitasking at one time. Monochronic cultures think scheduled events and punctuality must be met.

Hall's high and low context culture, Hofstede's power distance, individual/collectivism and Confucius dynamism of cultural variation are chosen for formation of the theoretical framework because there are big differences between China and Denmark in these areas.

Elements from internationalization of triple helix theory

The three helices, business, state and university are the main components in triple helix theory. The interactions among three helices in different ways make the complexity of the triple helix theory lively. Issues such as patent, knowledge transfer and management, optimization of business and university, state and university, business and state surface later on.

Ranga & Etzkowitz (2013: 237-262) deconstructs the Triple Helix theory (TH) into the interactions of three key features of university-industry-government as analytical tool and defined as a set of components, relations and functions. It further distinguishes between R&D and non-R&D innovators; single-sphere and multi-sphere institutions and individual and institutional innovators. There are five types of relations between components, which are technology transfer, collaboration and conflict moderation, collaborative leadership, substitution and networking. The overarching function of TH system, which is generation, diffusion and use of knowledge and innovation, is gained through activities among knowledge, innovation and networking areas. This perspective adds a view of the circulation of knowledge flows and resources within and among the areas and help to identify gaps. Wearing TH hat, the articulation and the non-linear interactivities between areas might

generate new combinations of knowledge and resources, which could advance innovation theory and practice, especially at the regional level.

Dudin et.al. (2015: 230-238) says that a goal-oriented and consistent partnership between state, business, and science within the frame of the information society and the knowledge economy helps to resolve issues of ensuring sustainability not only at the level of national social-economic systems but of the World System as a whole. The shift to new social-economic relations requires reforming links between social entities and redistribution their roles in ensuring national social-economic development. The Triple Helix (TH) model in practice is a basis for the self-organization and evolving of national innovation systems. By inclusion of global social responsibility in it as an element helping proper interrelationship of the components, it neutralize the negative consequences of the action where the market mechanism caused by the creation of innovations and maximizes the positive effects of the systemic globalization of the innovation sphere.

Smith and Leydesdorff (2014) points out that the TH continuing and mutating relations and the circumstances under which a TH might be unraveled. The pressure on university, industry and government when one wants to understand how economies change through interactions with science and governments needs attention. The looseness of high tech manufacturing and knowledge-intensive services industries counteract the embedded current in medium technology manufacturing. Among nations and regions, it is expected to see the TH relationships might be sustained.

Etzkowitz (2013: 44-59) points out the inevitability of knowledge-capital marriage and says it is the origin of contemporary academic enterprise and predicts that the future enterprises will rely more on the knowledge - capital combination. Safiullin et.al. (2014) says the importance of interactions of TH is the source of creation and development of incubator procedure, increasing research centers and venture capital, may it be private, public or social. The effect of implementing such model is to create the foundation of favorable innovation environment, because it promotes the growth of its components, synergize the increasing innovative activities.

The chosen helices for formation of theoretical framework for this thesis are university and state, because SDC has the Danish Education Ministry and all eight universities in Denmark as the driving force from the Danish side, Education of Ministry of China and Chinese Social Science Graduate

School from the Chinese side. CI is a Chinese organ operating in Denmark aiming to teach Chinese in Danish context. DIR/CIR is a joint double degree program between a Danish university and a Chinese university.

Elements from cultural psychology theory

Esteban-Guitart (2014) reviews Carl Ratner's book "Macro Culture in Mind: Linking Culture, Policy, and Psychological Functioning" and points out micro cultural factors are subsumed within macro cultural factors and thereby social institutions, cultural artifacts, and cultural concepts are the cornerstones of society forming the origins and characteristics of psychological phenomena. Macro cultural psychology is a political philosophy of mind, which provides a new understanding of how the mind works in relation to the world we live in.

Shafaei & Razak (2016: 701-720) presents a model of the field theory & Cross-Cultural adaptation theory in their research and points out the psychological and sociocultural issues international students facing when they come to a new environment in host country. Suggestions to higher education policy-makers and management in higher education institutions to pay attention to the psychological and sociocultural adaptation of the international students to improve reputation of host higher education institution in host countries and thereby increase competitiveness in international student market to attract and retain global talents.

Cross-cultural adaptation perspective is the chosen angle in forming the theoretical framework for this thesis, because the mobility of international students and researchers are the core elements in producing and transferring knowledge, how they are psychologically prepared does have a say in their performance. Though this thesis do not have the students' view, DIR/CIR and SDC has made cross-cultural adaptation activities to ease cultural shocks before sending students out to Beijing. To add another level onto it, the practitioners and leaders from host universities also have to get an adaptive mindset in order to create a smooth Sino-Danish collaboration.

Combination of the abovementioned elements from three theories

The abovementioned elements from ICT, ITH and CPT are the components for the theoretical framework for this thesis.

The complete theoretical framework functions in the way to explain why the obstacles occur during Sino-Danish collaborations in HE sector from intercultural communicative, interactions between

university-university, government-university and cross-cultural adaptation perspectives in the following analysis part.

Empirical data

This chapter starts with description of IHE in general, following by the presentation of China's double role in IHE, the change in Danish HE will be presented afterwards. The important messages from three interviews are on the next paragraphs.

General trend in IHE

Knowledge is power, especially in the 21st century's global knowledge-based economy transformation era. Those, who carry out, distribute & transfer, infuse, manage new knowledge will have tremendous influence onto the world we live in. One of the advantages of globalization is the mobility of people. In IHE, it is about the mobility of international students, teachers and researchers. How to enhance this particular migration segment to its full potential, and thereby speed up the generation, transformation of new-knowledge into productivity is an important issue for government leaders worldwide.

National strategists, leaders of institutional management and collaborators with outbound universities are undoubtedly major players in IHE sector. Ardakania et.al. (2011: 1690-1695) says that IHE sector today has the following issues to concern: learning and teaching, education, evaluation, professional development, the measurement and the quality of graduated students. The values and intercultural understanding is also on the agenda and is seen as an integral part of the usual educational programs in the higher education field and the training courses for the academia. USA emphasizes on infusing international content to the curriculums while Canada focuses on training of international graduates. Australian is making a globalized native curriculum and Japan is passing from the traditional internationalization, which means flexible international programs, international institutes and virtual courses.

Choudaha and Li (2012) says in the United States, international student economy has increasingly become a major part of HE institutional financial parameter. The downsized budgetary and fierce competition become the forces that push institutions strategically attract more international students. China and India are the two major outbound international student countries. Every fifth of the world's international student are from one of these two countries, with more than 700,000 tertiary students enrolled abroad outside their home country. In the U.S., between 2000-2001 and 2010-2011, China and India took 84% of all increases in international student recruitment. In 2010-

2011, 1/3 of all international students in the states studied at bachelor level while the master's and doctor's level is outstripped.

The role of university has changed alongside the IHE. Heitor (2015: 276-293) after examining a Portugal-US joint project with MIT says that structured international relationships might act as agents of change if the relevant activities totally differ from the traditional role of universities, which, in most of the times, refers to capacity building and various types of socio-economical appropriation of knowledge. Universities also need to understand the nature of international cooperation, which is beyond the exporting/importing of "academic services" in all the institutions involved. Moreover, such activities obviously break traditional boundaries of "national systems of innovation" and bring new challenges such as the institutional integrity, which is the universities' obligation to preserve and foster.

There are four main points need to consider. Firstly, large networks are interesting and relevant, but not effective in promoting change. The competitive networks depend on many factors, requiring increasingly focused partnerships. Secondly, by analyzing the MIT and its many cooperative partners including governments and universities worldwide, the social, political, and economic challenges related of establishing top science and technology institutions are often underestimated by people. Thirdly, by multiply science-based networks, the generation and diffusion of new knowledge has been stimulated. It also pushes scientific development forward at a time of constant change when the internationalization of the science base itself is a phenomenon of permanent flux. Lastly, the MIT Portugal joint venture shows that Portugal functions as a scalable laboratory for design and testing systems in order to meet the market demand. The role of universities may increase in the society we live in if the internationalization and specialization of universities is seen and understood as an important strategy in international affairs as governments and industry intervene through knowledge.

Shift in Chinese HE and China's double role

Min (2004: 53-83) explains the historical evolvement of Chinese HES, from indigenous ancient Chinese HSE to modern HES adopted from the Western model. As one of the largest HES in the world, China has more than 3,000 universities including 1,225 full-time universities and colleges, 686 adult HE institutions, more than 1,202 newly established private universities and colleges.

Chinese HES covers 13 million students and more than 1.45 million staff members, where 554,000 are faculty members. 12 million enrolled in the public sector and 1 million in the private sector. In the public sector, 7.19 million as regular full-time students and 4.55 million as adult HE. Adult HE has both full-time and part-time programs and some of them offers bachelor's degree and usually no advanced degree program to follow. Among the total enrollment, engineering major has been the largest group of all time since 1950s. Currently, there is increase in the numbers of students in management, law, economics and other applied fields while there is decrease of enrollment in basic science and humanitarian in accordance to the labor market.

As the most important ways the European university model has influenced the Chinese HES – the student-abroad program for Chinese scholars and students started seven years after the Opium War in 1840. Rong Hong, Huang Kuan, and Huang Sheng went to the USA for university studies followed their teacher, Samuel Robbins Brown. After received bachelor degree from Yale, Rong Hong went back to China in 1854 and effortlessly worked on to establish well-functioned student-abroad program with others, and in 1872 the Chinese government sent out 120 students to the United States which could be called the first official study-abroad program. Later the student-abroad programs also operated in United Kingdom and other European countries as well as Japan. More than ten thousand Chinese students studied in Japan during the end of 19th century to the early of 20th century. The returned Chinese students has become the driving force carving the development of Chinese universities.

During 1860s to 1880s there has built Western-style military and navy academies and foreign language institutions in China. In 1898, Capital Metropolitan University, which was the predecessor of Peiking University was established by the state, and it was the first modern comprehensive university in China and symbolized as a milestone in the development of Chinese HES. During the presidency of Cai Yuan Pei, who himself has studied in Germany from 1908-1911, introduced the European university model and drafted the 1912 education reform legislation. In 1917, after his second overseas study in Germany and France, Cai was appointed as the president of Peiking University and valued institutional autonomy and academic freedom highly. He also pointed out the importance of arts and sciences as core area in curriculum followed by the Western university model. In 1922, the university legislation was implemented, which was quite similar with the American 6-3-3-4 schooling system (six years in primary school and then three years in junior high school

following another three years in high school before enter a four-years program in college). This system functioned until 1949 and still had major influence on Chinese education today. In 1949, China had 205 HE institutions, among them 124 public universities and colleges, 21 missionary universities and colleges and 60 private universities and colleges containing 117,000 students.

The Soviet influence had gone to China in 1950s as all universities and colleges had become state-run institutions. The Soviet system believed that the all HE institutions were projected to serve the government and central planned economy; national unified plans were implemented in all universities and colleges. The Soviet model has generated the Chinese HES into more departmentalized and segmented under different central-line ministries. Chinese Academy of Science (CAS) was also adopted back then, which was an independent national system contained hundreds of research institutions in China. Departmentalization, segmentation, overspecialization and the separation of research and teaching are the most far-reaching influences from the Soviet model.

From 1949 to 1978, the Chinese HES has changed dramatically, including takeover of the Soviet model in the 1950s; the Great Leap Forward and educational revolution from 1958 to 1960; readjustment and reorganization from 1961 to 1963; the steady progression from 1963 to 1965; the disastrous Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 and the recovery from 1976 to 1978.

The overall framework of Chinese HE of 1979 still carried central planning model adopted from the Soviet model back in 1950s and this has to be remembered when we look at the contemporary development began in the early 1980s.

The labor market plays a vital role in the Chinese HES, which has influenced the wage structure of graduates by level and type of education. The government uses various channels to influence, supervise and coordinate with HES. Since universities and colleges at the national level were under the jurisdiction of 62 different ministries and the provincial universities and colleges were under the corresponding provincial-line departments. The recent reform focus on restructuring to merger universities or collaborate arrangements among HE institutions to breach the boundaries between different ministries. During 2000 to 2003, hundreds of universities and colleges has reconstructed. In some degree, the current structural change is bringing the Chinese HES back before the Soviet

model was adopted in 1950s. From 1993 to 2001, 708 universities and colleges has merged into 302 institutions in China.

Alongside the rapid economic growth, the increase of skilled labor demand the Chinese HES to produce well functioned manpower to keep the pace with the hyper economic development in China. China has reduced 1,400 specialties from 1980 to 200 in 2003, and this trend will continue. Curriculum reform is coupling reforms of teaching and learning. The shift from memorization to establishing creativity and critical thinking, problem solving, information acquisition and generation, and intellectual independence.

In financing, although China began its education reform in 1980, the actual expenditure on education remains low concerning international standards. In 2003, China has 5% of the central government's budgetary allotment on education. In the HES, total government spending has increased from 54.5 billion RMB from 1998 to 111.4 billion RMB in 2001. Cost-sharing and cost-recovery system in the financing reform is another major characteristic in Chinese HES reform. Before there is free dormitory for all students in universities and colleges, in 2000, among the total recurrent expenses of 98.3 billion RMB, 21.7 billion RMB is paid by students from tuition and fees. Since the middle of 1980s, Chinese universities not only allow its human capacities to generate revenues for themselves, but also by incubating spin-off companies as well.

Promotion of private sectors has changed the landscape of Chinese HES. *The provincial stipulation for the Establishment of MinBan HE institutions* from August 1993 was issued in order to stimulate private actors to promote the development of the Chinese HES. Now there are more than one thousand private universities and colleges with two or three-years study programs in China. A new law was adopted to promote private education in China in the 31st session of the Standing Committee of the Ninth People's Congress in December 2002. This law officially gives the private universities the same legal status as the public institutions with guaranteed autonomy. This legislation shows the official recognition of private universities do serve the public interests, thus there will be rapid growth in the private universities in China.

China has the ambition to become advanced science economy and thus want to upgrade the quality of the leading national universities to top-class status in the world. To create top-class universities in the world has been a dream for several generations through more than a century started with Cai

Yuanpei. To strength the faculty becomes the focal point in the whole process since it is faculty that reform the curriculum in the teaching and learning process, as well as in order to upgrade Chinese universities to the world's leading universities. From 1998 to 2001, the average annual income had doubled from 12,000RMB to 24,000RMB. In the meantime, the Chinese government also spent 114.4 billion RMB to teachers' living conditions, not to mention there has built fifteen square feet of new faculty housing from 1994 to 2001. Nowadays, the academic profession has become an attractive job option for the young scholars.

To sum up, the adaptation of the Soviet model has caused the Chinese HES ineffective, connected to the central planned economy, thus out of the international HES milieu in social, economic and political senses. It was malfunctioned onto several thousand years' cultural and educational tradition and more than one hundred years' Western influenced university model. China's HES reforms started in the early 1980s echoed to the open-door policies in order to take China into the 21st century with well-educated work force to continue its growth.

Zha (2009: 41-58) uses enrolment as a parameter to point out the profound changes in the Chinese HES by investigating 594 universities in the end of 2001, and emphasizes that such changes are directing more towards comprehensive knowledge, where universities seeking to a broaden coverage of their curricula. Alongside with the convergence of programs, the Chinese HE institutions are constructed hierarchically in accordance with functions and goals. Johns & Li (2008: 679-696) has used data envelopment analysis (DEA) to investigate 109 Chinese universities in 2003 and 2004, their findings shows that research efficiency in comprehensive universities is higher than specialist universities and coastal universities performs better than those in the western region. Wan (2006: 19-32) argues that expectations to stimulate domestic consumption, the release of the labor market pressure, the high public interest in and demand for HE in China and the political will from the Chinese government are the forces that push expansion of Chinese HES. In reality, the picture is different. The pressure caused by enrolment expansion press the Chinese HES further reform itself in various fronts, the structure, curricula, administration and last but not least, the equity issue has arisen.

Shift in Danish HE

Forest (2013: 327-330) says the Danish HES has changed dramatically in the past 30 years, from an elite portion for the Danish society, like any other stereotypical Western European country, to a higher education for mass people in society. The consequence has led to the struggling between the growth of students and the quality of education. The Danish University under the direction of the Danish Ministry established the *Bachelor of Arts Degree Ordinance* in 1990.

The Danish HES saw the first daylight in 1479 with the founding of the University of Copenhagen, the Royal Academy of Arts, the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University and the Technical University were established later. In the 1920s, Denmark's second largest university, the University of Århus was founded. The rest three universities, Odense was established in 1964, Roskilde in 1972 and Aalborg in 1974. The increasing students who require a higher education put the institutional climate, culture and limited budgets of the universities under severe pressure.

Alongside the increasing student enrolment, the low graduation rates, as in 1987, only 25% of students who started in 1980 has completed their master degree (normally it takes five years). Thus, the ministry of education ratified the Bachelor of Arts degree, which takes three years for education with flexibility, ability of transferring coursework to other areas of study within the university, focus on short-cyclical studies and development applicable competences in workplace as its main characteristics. Institutions has to create specific plans for curricula and detailed examination criteria. Such change implies a shift in the function of HES from shaping the students characteristics to preparing large number of students for careers in post-industrial society.

The Danish HES focus on the efficiency of using resources, quantifiable outcomes, to be exact. It contains the following three components: 1) three years of student financial aid (SU); 2) taxi-meter system, which means financially rewarding institutions for successfully passed student exams; 3) Using the end of the first year's exams as qualification tool to determine whether the students are "academically suited" for the rest of the education.

Sino-Danish collaboration

Bertelsen et.al. (2013: 66-87) points out the motivations of Danish business engagement with Chinese academia, the outcomes from such collaborations which contributes to innovation, research and development, science and technology, and the absorptive capacities in China within

certain areas aiming to create high-level reputations in Sino-Danish business arena. At the same time, the Chinese higher education and research institutions can play a vital role in transforming China into a sustainable knowledge based economy according to Nye and Keohane's concept of "global interactions", which refers to moving ideas, information, talent and financial resources across borders. Higher education institutions are able to connect a range of public, private and civil societies transnationally to achieve a greater goal. Nonetheless, the higher education institutions also function as a cultural broker to bridge different cultures together.

In June 2013, the Danish government has launched an action plan (2013), which points out the importance for Denmark to collaborate with global societies to sustain as a knowledge economy. The first part of the plan is to strengthen the competences of the Danish students on the international learning environments, the second part is to seek better solutions to attract and retain the international talents in the future. The first part concretely holds 31 initiatives, such as better foreign language skills, more students go abroad for internship or study are the main objectives the Danish government want to increase to meet its goals. Initiatives include the following: 1) increase the number of joint education programs; 2) simplify the scholarship for study abroad administration procedure; 3) increase incentives to send students abroad and abolish the balance between incoming and outgoing mobility; 4) possibilities to utilize study abroad scholarship with establishing exchange programs with attractive international fee-paying educational institutions; 5) to set up a new website for inspiration and information; 6) continue develop the SDC, enhance the participation in European and Nordic education programs; 7) encourage institutions to establish strategic partners; 8) recruit more international external lecturers; 9) hold annual meeting in language area; 10) strengthening foreign language education are some of the initiatives that might pave the way in the right direction.

Important messages from interview with Professor and coordinator Li Xing from DIR/CIR

Li says that there are different education systems, approaches and cultural traditions in Denmark and China. Because of Li's Chinese background and more than three decades of studying and working experiences in Aalborg University, Li initiated the idea of collaboration with Chinese university around 2007. Still, even Li speaks the same language with leaders from UIR in Beijing, there are explanations to do in order to explain the AAU PBL model, structure of curriculum,

teaching style for approval from the Chinese side before further development of the collaborative process.

Based on the feedback from students, Li says that in Denmark, the initiative and interest of each student has a say in choosing thesis topic and engagement in studying activity. Although in AAU, there is only two months teaching and two months project writing in one semester, the work each student has to perform is intensive. Students have to work for their freedom. In China, students have to come on time, work hard and students cannot write whatever they want, there are some topics, which are sensitive. In Denmark, students can choose the topic, which they are most interested in. The motivation factor is the main driving force that pushes students to work hard. In China, the teacher work together with students, because if the students fail, it will decrease the teacher's reputation. In Denmark, the teacher only give guidance and supervision.

At the management level, the leaders from AAU give green light when Li comes with initiative to collaborate with Chinese university. "Know how" and "Know who" is different in China and Denmark. In China, "know who" referring not only to "Guanxi", but generally the cultural approach. Without approval from Chinese leaders at UIR, there would be no hope at all. In China, it is the top-down approach, where in DK it is the opposite. In China, everything has to be agreed from the top level first. "Know who" does not have to mean to know somebody personally, it refers to the authority.

"Know how" is also important, it means how to do it, the procedures, the regulations and the implementation procedure is more important in Denmark. In Denmark, everything is legally defined, very complicated according to the law. There are many regulations, without helps from colleagues and the rector, the project will die in the middle of the process. It is the rules and regulations rule – the rule of law in Denmark. One has to know the right people in the right business, especially the colleagues in the faculty of law. DIR CIR involves some cross-national regulations, such as the transfer of ECTS system into China. AAU wants to know how to export the 60 ECTS of one year to China, and what kind of the legal guarantee of quality from China. UIR has to present the study syllabus to prove the quality of one year's study in UIR.

In China, it is the authority that makes such guarantee, not individuals or professors or the rest of teaching groups. The leaders, as a whole makes such joint program functional. In Denmark, the secretaries and faculty staffs who know the law make things functional. There are two different

tracks, once they understand each other, which means the Danes understand the Chinese ways of doing things and after the Chinese leaders are committed, everything can be done. In Denmark, not only the authority committed but also the secretaries and those people who have expertise need get on board, without their consensus, nothing can be done.

Important messages from interview with Deputy Manager Morten Laugesen from SDC

Deputy manager Morten Laugesen says SDC is backed up by the Chinese and Danish government although the agreement was signed by eight Danish universities and one Chinese university. The obstacle under the establishment was to find the proper financial model, which two parts both agreed. Cultural differences are the reasons such obstacle came out, because one has to learn to understand and communicate with partner before going further to solve issues. The whole procedure was a learning process.

SDC is designed from the beginning that dual partnership infiltrates the whole organization, from leader structure to management. SDC is a strategic long-term investment in Sino-Danish higher education sector hoping to contribute to science and technology and innovation development in both countries and globally. In principle, there is no tuition fee for enrolled Chinese and Danish students, though some of the international students may pay tuition fee and later reimburse from their home government. It is a complicated model due to EU regulation. SDC has prepared cultural differences seminar before sending students to China to avoid cultural shock.

September 2012 SDC has launched four 2-year master programs in neuroscience, environment, innovation management, public management and social development, and one year later three new master programs followed in the area of nanoscience, omics and chemical & biochemical engineering.

In July 2014, near 100 master students graduated from SDC's master program and SDC is now establishing its own alumina for tracking graduated students and following their carrier. SDC hope the graduated students will keep contact with each other after graduation, because the network one has involved during university period might contribute to collaboration in the years to come.

Important messages from interview with Thorsten Buude Haensel from CI AAU

Deputy manager Thorsten Budde Haensel says that *Hanban* is the main institution, which organizes and funds all CIs activities worldwide. It is not an agreement between Danish and Chinese government, but it is in its essence a bilateral agreement between a part in China and a part in Denmark. This is at university level and *Hanban*. It has three parts in such an agreement, on the one side, that is the *Hanban*, and each CI has two universities attached, one in China and one abroad.

CI AAU is established in 2009, from the beginning, it is about innovation and learning, the focus was to do research on teaching Chinese as foreign language in the Danish context. Most CIs are getting more and more specialized, they do many cultural activities, Chinese language teaching in various levels, they also do various researches with the attached universities, but mainly it is about the culture and Chinese language teaching. All CIs in Denmark agree that in order to be valuable assets to the local universities, CIs have to do researches for the host universities as well. CI in CBS do business related research, CI in Royal Music Conservatory do Chinese music related research. CI AAU does what they think is their strength here in Aalborg, because CI AAU's partner university Beijing Normal University (BNU) has very strong tradition in education, and the previous director has strong belief in PBL (problem-based learning), so CI in AAU should do research on combination of Chinese language teaching and PBL.

Because there is big difference in teaching traditions in China and Denmark, one cannot take the Chinese tradition into Danish context, Danish students will get bored if one does that. CI AAU has to adapt whatever the Chinese teachers have learned in Beijing and construct new ideas and build upon them. It is not saying that the Chinese teachers from BNU are wrong, they have been sent to hundreds of different countries, so they cannot be educated in how to teach Chinese in Denmark, *Hanban* does not have that kind of knowledge and resources. It was the idea of CI AAU to have some PhDs, research programs and conferences in this regard.

When it comes to long-term goal, Thorsten says that the goal constantly changes in accordance with the Danish government. Right now, it is actually not a good time for CI in terms of the political surrounding within education sector in Denmark. There are many humanistic education programs have been cut down. The high schools are now going through a major reform, which prioritizes the

nature science and language teaching. However, apparently, only the German and French teachers have been doing the lobbying, because these two languages are the foreign languages, which you can learn now. All the other languages, including Spanish, Russian, Japanese and Chinese will have much weaker stand.

CI AAU's initial idea was to build a holistic approach from primary school, high school to university as a wonderful pipeline with Chinese language teaching. Since the development of Chinese language teaching started ten years ago, Chinese was the biggest non-European language offered in high school. There are 50 high schools offering Chinese language teaching. CI AAU thought it was doing all right, in order to improve Chinese language standard in high school, CI AAU should work with the primary schools to see the possibility of teaching Chinese there. Two years back, it was CI AAU's goal and CI AAU would work to reach that goal. However, if the middle part of the bridge was gone, why build the bridge ahead? It was quite disillusioning. CI AAU is rethinking. CI AAU has been working on helping the high school teachers to argue for the importance of keeping the Chinese in high schools, but failed. Now CI AAU has to see what the reform in reality will bring, maybe there will be adjustments. Nobody knows anything yet.

There are political obstacles for CIs, because CI is funded by the Chinese government. There have been numerous reports about CIs in the Danish media. 2 years ago in "*Information*", some time ago in "*Weekend Avisen*", not so much about CIs here in Denmark, but CIs in general, of how they work, what they do, and why they are not good. Deputy Manager Morten gets quite annoyed, because the argument of saying because it is foreign money, therefore it will not be good is very thin. And this will influence the freedom of speech, academic freedom. Such arguments make one to think, is Denmark really so weak and afraid of outside influence? Is Denmark not strong enough to withstand under such pressure? Here is talking about one million DKK CIs get from *Hanban* each year, is Denmark that cheap? Deputy Manager Morten does not think so, and he hopes not Denmark is so cheap, but apparently, people are afraid.

This is a bilateral agreement collaboration, and it is an agreement that both Danish and Chinese law should be respected. Of course, this is impossible. Because you cannot respect Chinese law without talking about the Tibet and at the same time protecting the Danish freedom of speech, it is

contradiction and unsolvable. Either one part should make compromise, and Morten thinks it is not always easy to achieve that.

It is important to give all our students some kind of knowledge and tools to understand, or at least to see that mostly there is more to it when one talks about the Chinese government suppressing human rights lawyer or whatever the topic it might be. Of course, that is wrong, but why. Students should understand the whole perspective and then make a decision. Criticism to China is quite too easy and quick.

About the management, CIs send many reports to *Hanban* and CIs have annual Nordic conference. Originally Baltic countries and Scandinavian, now it also includes Holland and Belgium. The reason being that is most of CIs in Sweden are closed because of the political resistance.

The reason is quite simple. In 2013, the annual Sinologist conference was held in Portugal partly funded by CI, partly by ***Jiang Jingguo Foundation***. The CI logo was next to ***Jiang Jingguo Foundation*** logo, some of the content in the paper were critical. Xu Ling, the leader of *Hanban* was there too and saw that, she told her staff to tear pages apart of the program. That was a big scandal.

At that time, Stockholm University, who has the first CI in Nordic countries, and one of the first in the world, has reached the end of the 5-year term contract. After the conference they informed *Hanban* that they have achieved their goal in terms of getting relationship close to Chinese universities, there is no need for CI any more. This is the first snowflake of the snowball reaction in closing Swedish CIs. If one takes a close look at who has CI, it is mainly the small universities. In Denmark, Copenhagen University said no, then CBS got one. Århus University said no, Aalborg University got one. That is the general trend. Stockholm University and Helsinki University are the only two big universities in the Nordic countries. Maybe they think the things they get out of *Hanban*, such as support of Chinese language teaching and networking are not worth in terms of reputation by having a CI. Deans and presidents of universities keep contact to each other. Blekinge University was closed down officially due to cuts of funding, which is true. They have cut down programs in different parts of university and CI was one of them. It would be a valuable asset because CI brings money into the university. It is probably some kind of excuse. Now, there is only one CI in Sweden.

Analysis

DIR/CIR

Problems, even though AAU coordinator speaks fluent mandarin

DIR/CIR coordinator Professor Li Xing from Aalborg University came to Denmark in the 1980s. He has gained Ph.D. from AAU and has worked in AAU for more than three decades. Because of his Chinese background, his research interest is focusing on the rise of China and its consequences for the rest of the world.

Li initiated the idea of collaborate with Chinese university back in 2007. Chinese Area Study (CAS) was in the beginning a specialization in humanitarian faculty. In 2008, CAS become a specialization of Development and International Relations (DIR) in social science faculty. In 2010, Li started to raise the issue of make a double joint degree with University of International Relation (UIR) in Beijing, China. Because he has been in dialogue with leaders of UIR during the years. When he got the green light from leaders of AAU, the negotiation with leaders of UIR began.

Because of Li's Chinese background, it should not be any problem for him to communicate with leaders in UIR. Still, Li has to explain to UIR leaders about AAU structure, PBL learning model, administration regulations about the ECTS transfer and other details.

Speak the same language does not guarantee a smooth understanding and collaboration; sometimes it creates new challenges. Li has lived in Denmark for more than three decades, as a social person, environment changes one gradually. Li has noticed the different mindsets and working procedures when he met leaders in UIR.

In Denmark, a university rector, a professor and a department secretary are three jobs with different functions, rector focuses on political, economic and social tasks of running the university efficiently and smoothly; professor is in charge of teaching and research while secretary make all the administration tasks done in time. If one wants to do something, one has to find out how to do it him or herself within the law and regulation.

With helps from various colleagues in different departments from AAU, things went on slowly and steadily. Li knew how important it is to know the right person, especially the department secretaries.

In Denmark, “know how” means how to do things according to law and regulations, and “know who” means who can make things done.

In China, “know who” refers to “Guanxi” when one wants to have things done. Such networks are hard for foreigners to discover and act upon to it. Although Li has Chinese roots, three decades of overseas living changed his way of doing things and mindset. Such differences appear among diaspora when they visit hometown. Rule of law has not yet established completely in China and the “Guanxi” has its power in China.

To explain why AAU only have two months of teaching and two months for project writing for one semester which students will gain 30 ECTS is harder than Li thought. Leaders of UIR think the students will have too much free time, and begin to worry about the quality of the program structure. Li has to explain the differences between the Chinese and Danish teaching styles, student engagement factor and other details for convincing the leaders of UIR. When AAU wants to know how UIR can guarantee the quality of one-year studying in Beijing for 60 ECTS for the Danish and international students, Li wants leaders of UIR to present syllabus as evidence, which again is not normal for UIR.

In China, it is the authority that guarantee the quality of HE, not leaders of one single university nor the professors. “Know who” means know the authority. Only when the two parts totally understand each other, the DIR/CIR joint programs became a reality and was launched in 2012.

	Know who	Know how
China	The authority, “Guanxi” network	The procedure to get things done.
Denmark	The persons in practice, know how to get things done.	Law, regulations and the procedure to get things done.

The differences of “Know who” and “Know how” in China & Denmark

Li’s first-handed experience tells us many facets of cultural understandings. According to Hall’s context communication theory, Li himself has changed from a high context culture country, which is China, to a low context culture, which is Denmark. More than three decades of living in Denmark has changed his mindset, which he does not know consciously. This is a very import element in the case of DIR/CIR.

Culture is not static; it is also changing in accordance with time. People within a culture changes too. When one from one certain culture moves to another culture, it is obvious that one changes according to the surrounding culture along the way. Diaspora has double cultural backgrounds, one is the home country and the other is the host country. In Li's case, he has lived in Denmark for more than three decades and holds a Danish passport. His initiative of starting a double joint program with Chinese universities is based on his Chinese roots.

Context cultural communication theory alone cannot explain the multi layers of the creation of DIR/CIR. Therefore, cultural psychology theory is needed to explain the reasons behind the misunderstandings between Li and leaders of UIR. In the case of DIR/CIR, language is not the biggest barrier, mindset is.

Firstly, the importance of social environmental influence needs more attention and prioritizing in understanding intercultural communication in public sphere. Surroundings around one human being definitely changes one's mindset, way of doing things, and more importantly, it changes without one's notice, unconsciously and gradually. Secondly, language as medium might play a vital role within the scenario of intercultural communication in public sphere. In order to understand each other needs more than language, the open mindset is more important than language.

From Li's experiences, the two sides, AAU and UIR do want to establish a joint program. During the negotiation, even Li speaks Chinese mandarin he still has to explain to UIR leaders about the AAU structure, PBL model and other details to get UIR leaders commitment. Likewise, when AAU wants the guarantee of UIR, Li has to persuade UIR leaders to explain why AAU wants that guarantee from UIR. The different way of doing things, the interpretation of "know who", "know how" in China and Denmark make collaborations complicated. Thirdly, Li's Chinese background does have a say in his pursuing of make DIR/CIR into reality. Li himself is a successful integration example, his mentality is more to the Danish side, because his way of doing things is more about to follow the rule of law instead of using "Guanxi" to solve problems. The driving force from Li to push DIR/CIR becoming a reality is another example of his mindset. In Denmark, if one wants things happen, one has to find out how to do it by oneself. Li got support from his colleagues about the idea of collaboration with a Chinese university; helps from colleagues from different departments in AAU, especially the

department of law that guided Li to the rector, and the rector got in touch with the Danish education ministry to find out the procedures of establishment of a joint program with a Chinese university.

The creation of DIR/CIR shows to the future practitioners, who are interested in collaborating a joint program with a Chinese partner, fruitful insights and points out the importance of intercultural understanding is necessary for such collaborations.

Problems AAU faces when AAU wants to internationalization of its PBL model

AAU is a young university with its 42 years of existence, PBL model is AAU's trademark. PBL learning model stimulates the students' interests and boosts the analysis competences they gain from AAU with practical experiences.

According to ITH theory, interactions between helices generate new arena within global knowledge society, the more interactions the merrier. It is during such interactivities new research angel surfaces (Ranga & Etzkowitz 2013; Safiullin et al. 2014; Smith & Leydedorff 2014; Sørensen & Hu 2014). Infusion and creation new knowledge requires smart brains to produce and share for generating new perspectives to explain the unknown, yet the progress might take long time. Research institutions need large finance to optimize equipment, recruit the fitted talents and to find new ways for correcting mistakes from previous tests. All these not only require brain capacity, it also need political and financial support. To transfer knowledge into productivity is not as easy as people think. In a dream scenario, generating, communicating and transferring knowledge without thinking of national boundaries and financial risks is too good to be true. In reality, issues of intellectual property rights, government incentives and support, and local talent resources do have a say on IHE sector.

Interdisciplinary approaches, straightforward problem solving skills, think independently and have team-work spirits are competences labor market require (Dudin et al. 2015; Johnes & Li 2008; Tillman 2012). Leaders of AAU wants to internationalization of AAU PBL model, and DIR/CIR is a good experimental program to see how to implement AAU PBL model to Chinese students. Seminars of PBL learning model for lecturers from UIR who will be guest lectures at AAU for short visiting period has arranged. When DIR/CIR coordinator Li went to Beijing to negotiate with leaders of UIR, he explained the importance of apply PBL model when Danish and international students go to Beijing for one-year studying.

Since the launch of DIR/CIR in 2012, the results has not reached the level as AAU expected, not only had been episodes of Chinese lecturers criticized PBL model directly in front of students during lectures, AAU also found out that in UIR, there had not pay attention to applying PBL model.

Financially, students enrolled at DIR/CIR are normally tuition fee free. AAU and UIR guarantees the student dorms both in Aalborg and Beijing. The quality of teaching relies heavily on lecturers' qualification, not only academically but also personal charisma. Why internationalization of PBL model is so difficult to implement in UIR and why Chinese lecturers would criticize PBL model during the class in Aalborg? There are reasons behind these phenomena, which the next session of cultural psychology gives detailed explanation.

The AAU "buddy" program is a get together activity initiated by students themselves aiming to welcome international students and make them feel comfortable while they live in Aalborg. Study board of DIR has student representatives; each September in the beginning of a new semester, there will create student board with volunteered students to arrange activities for the whole year. Additionally, students from DIR had arranged various activities to welcome Chinese students with little help from AAU administration. The Danes show Chinese students how to celebrate a traditional Danish Christmas and the famous Danish concept "hygge" (coziness). The Chinese students prepared Chinese traditional foods, such as homemade dumplings, mooncakes, commonly used Chinese medicine and music as cultural exchange. Students are cultural agents where intercultural communication happens smoothly. During one-year studying in UIR, Chinese students who have studied one year earlier in AAU become hosts for the Danish and other international students in Beijing with practical help. Cultural brokers (Rasmusen et al. 2013) at the student level happens easily and naturally. It is unknown at the lecturers' level, which would be a perspective to research more in future.

It is not here to judge which teaching style is best, just to mention when two different teaching styles meet, it will take time to accept, digest and embrace. A joint degree program not only gives students revelation to explore the world, it also provides the involved universities chance to learn from each other in terms of teaching style, managerial method and thereby create future collaboration opportunities.

Because of lacking concrete information from leaders of AAU and UIR, it is not possible in this thesis to analyze how institutional level from involved universities have learned from each other. Based on Li's interview it can only be summarized that with commitment from both sides, it is possible to establish a joint double degree program with one Danish university and one Chinese university in social science discipline.

Open-minded mindset for both partners is essential for future collaboration

The creation process of DIR/CIR is an example of two different managerial styled universities go hand in hand towards the same goal. "We know what we know; and we do not know what we do not know" is a sentence Li has repeated numerous times during his lectures. In order to create a path from the unknown to obtain knowledge, open-minded mindset is a necessity. For collaboration in HES, open-minded mindset is also important for the leaders of universities. From idea to practice, it has several stages with various issues to solve along the way. Because when it is an international joint program with one European university and one outside the boundary of EU, both parts need to follow national and international law and order.

The different meanings of "know who" and "know how" from Li's interview show the importance of intercultural understanding for such collaboration. Language might be a problem, but more obviously, the mindset and the way of doing things is expanding the gap of understanding each other. Without complete understanding of each other's ideas, it is hardly realistic to establish an international double degree master program with one university in Denmark and one university in China.

Many Danish enterprises, especially SMEs, underestimate the importance of cultural value in business practice. When negotiating with Chinese partners, the Danish leaders should know in advance that business practice in China is different from doing business in Denmark. Sure, the contract is a contract, but the approach of being acquainted with Chinese partners is different from what the Danes are familiar with.

Internationalization of HE might not be a good example to illustrate what looks like for Danish enterprises doing business with Chinese partners. DIR/CIR is an exception. AAU coordinator speaks Chinese mandarin. There is no language barrier, but other obstacles appear, namely to convince Chinese partners the structure of AAU model and the quality of PBL learning. This shows that in

managerial level, there is a need to create an environment where diversity is embraced. Leaders and practitioners need to get to know the cultural adaptation related approaches for future collaboration.

Cultural psychology perspective

The rise of China has enormous impact to the world. In IHE sector, China has changed its role. From one of the largest outbound country to inbound country, with government incentives to attract, encourage, and retain talented brains in China. The macro environment has put China at a favorable position, and this has given universities around the world new challenges.

According to Li's interview, preparation of cross-cultural understanding has to be in place before actual activities for future actors who want to establish cooperation with China. The mindset first, the actions will follow. This is easy said than done; even Li himself have found the difficulties when negotiating with leaders of UIR.

Time is another factor, which human beings cannot control, yet people change gradually and unconsciously. Li has studied and worked in Denmark for more than three decades, the timeframe in Denmark of Li's life is longer than his upbringings in China. It is inevitable that the combination of East and West cultures have given Li the perfect chance to bridge Denmark and China in creation of a double degree master program for AAU, his Danish employer and UIR, one in China within the discipline of his research interests.

Cross-cultural adaptation is a process that many actors can participate. From the students' side, the "Buddy" program from AAU is a good example where host students help international students get to know the campus, the city and other facilities around the city. Student council from DIR department is another example, where several volunteered students hold meetings once a month to arrange cultural events such as Christmas lunch party, Friday beer party and movie nights etc. From AAU side, seminars of practical information about the China before sending Danish and international students to UIR has given students an idea of what they can expect for the studying life awaits in Beijing. Due to the different rules and regulations between China and Denmark, students need to know in advance what they shall and shall not do to avoid embarrassment and unnecessary unpleasant.

To sum up, DIR/CIR is a pioneer joint double master degree program in Danish HE sector with one Danish university and one Chinese counterpart. AAU coordinator Li Xing with his Chinese upbringing and decades of teaching experiences at AAU has contributed to initiate, facilitate, and push forward in Denmark and China to the creation of this program with many helps from AAU colleagues and leadership.

The different mindset is the biggest obstacle during collaboration process when the Danish and Chinese business cultural meets. Speaking the same language does not guarantee a smooth collaboration. Li has to explain to convince UIR leaders about program structure and PBL learning model. This phenomenon needs more attention for future actors who want to cooperate with China, not only in HE sector, but in general. An open-minded mindset has to be in place before two parts begin the real negotiation procedure. Cross-cultural adaptation activities help the participants to understand the differences between two cultures thereby understand and get along with each other during the collaboration procedure.

SDC

Intercultural barriers in understanding partners

SDC functions as an umbrella organization, where Chinese and Danish partners facilitate, coordinate, and cooperate to create an enhanced learning environment for Chinese and Danish youngsters. It is a long-term strategic project between China and Denmark. To contribute in tomorrow's research and development, innovation, knowledge infusion globally is SDC's goal.

During such an ambitious collaboration process problems surface, the intercultural barriers where two parts need to learn to understand each other before finding solutions is a phenomenon needs investigation.

According to Hall's contextual theory, China is a high-context cultural country. People observe the situation for evaluation with formal gesture and polite tones. Chinese leaders give partners little room for negotiation. Denmark is a low-context cultural country. Danes communicate with each other by spoken and written words. Understanding of the situation is relying on spoken words and formal agreements. Words guide people's understanding of the situation, not situation itself.

When Chinese leaders with high-context culture meet Danish leaders with low-context culture, it is not difficult to understand why there are obstacles. High-Context cultural Chinese leaders evaluate

the situation while low-context cultural Danish leaders eager to speak out their demand. The politeness from Chinese side might be seen as cold and resisting for the Danes; and the eagerness from the Danish side might be seen as anxious for the Chinese. Misunderstanding occur easily.

Then the translation process of written documents might also create misunderstanding. It is impossible to present any of the documents in the thesis to prove this argument, but since Danish and Chinese are two very different language in grammar and syntax. The author has Chinese Danish translation experience with Danish Royal Police for several years, based on these experiences, it is said that direct translation from one language to another would be the best solution in any circumstance. In order to fully understand former documents do need more time, not to mention if the documents are written in English. By using a third language does not wipe away all the above-mentioned problems, though English is a common communication tool in negotiation.

Deputy Manager Morten Laugesen from SDC has mentioned the finance model where two parts need to recognize and agree is the obstacle during the collaboration process. Despite all the politeness, former documents written in English, the financial model for SDC has a vital impact for the whole organization. Though the Danish side has the funds already in the beginning of the process, the Chinese side has to find the money. How to register expense, who to report to and all these details need address first before negotiate with the Danish partner. A well-functioned financial structure fits both in China and Denmark has technic and managerial issues to cover.

According to Hofstede's cultural variation theory, power distance, individual/collectivism and Confucius dynamism have different meanings in Chinese and Danish context.

In China, openness of upward communication across society is rare. Top-down political structure makes such upward communication extremely difficult, not to mention openness. Freedom of speech is one of the rights that the West criticizes China most, this thesis is not going to explain why, merely to point out that there is very rare to observe an open conversation between a Chinese leader and his/her staff.

In Denmark, open conversation among employees and employer is normal. Open communication is used as a managerial tool for effectively organizing enterprises. Speak up your mind is not only a slogan, but it has to active on and realize in everyday if one wants to change something. Thus, the two opposites meet again when Chinese and Danish leaders want to establish SDC. How can they

not have problems? Imagine a Danish member comes to a Chinese leader and suggests how to do things differently with good intention, what will the Chinese leader think? Rude, ignore, refuse, turn away? Then, imagine such a scenario, when Chinese leaders tell staffs to close the deal and lean back without any more word, what will the Danish staff think? Why the leaders do not say any word? Who is in charge? Why are we talking with staffs, not the leaders? This might seem strange to both sides, but according to intercultural communication theory, it is normal. Because of the different context cultures China and Denmark have, the result is illustrated above.

Cultural influence lies deeper than what one obviously sees and hears. The upbringing environment, education background, influence from family and friends and career experiences, all of them have a say in one's cultural background. In China, although the open policy has thrived for almost four decades, collectivism still is important comparing to personal achievement. Collective goal stands before individual ambition, one has to serve for the great good. This has passed on generation after generation, such ideology might not exist in the younger generation born in the millenniums, but this still has strong influence in those who are now in their 50s and 60s – the leaders.

In Denmark, personal achievements is appraised from one was born. To do what one is good at and achieve one's life goal is ultimatum, though one has to learn to cooperate with other people. Just think of such an image, a middle-aged Chinese leader meets the ambitious Danish staff, what would happen? When the negotiation goes too hot, who has to take a step back first? How to proceed after a heated discussion? Again, cultural influence has impact on international collaboration. To acknowledge cultural differences might be the first step, then respect, accept, learn to understand each other might pave the way in future Sino-Danish collaboration.

Confucianism has been treated as Chinese spiritual guidance. Confucian dynamism, which shows the ideas of thrift, perseverance and the desire for orderly relationships with others, is normal behavior for Chinese people. Entering into a negotiation table with Danish partners, the politeness, and orderly behavior might hinder the collaboration procedure, because the Danish result-orientated mentality need concrete actions to achieve the goal. Not to mention both parts do not use their mother tongue during negotiation procedure, in order to understand each other to solve problems occurring along the way, it takes longer time and need patience for both parts.

Even the Chinese and Danish sides have good intention to establish such a long-term strategic collaboration, intercultural barriers occur because of both parts are lacking knowledge of cultural differences between China and Denmark, more importantly, knowledge of the business culture when cooperating during the negotiation. These lessons are vital for future practitioners who want to create Sino-Danish collaboration.

Implementing internationalization of university to university helices collaboration

Cooperation and collaboration among universities have different forms, such as seminar, short-term exchange programs, research based exchange programs etc. To establish joint programs is different from arranging a two-day seminar. From institutional leadership to managerial staff, a new set of structure has to be in place, plus the contents of syllables for each joint programs, examination regulations, transferring of ECTS credits and financing issues.

Because the Danish side of SDC has gathered all eight universities and supporting from the Danish government, the financial means which combines both from the government and eight universities themselves, has already in place before entering the practical negotiation with Chinese partner. In other words, the Danish side has a leap in the start phase of establishment of SDC.

The Chinese side although only has one university attached to the bilateral agreement, it also has Chinese government's backup. When the Chinese government has committed, the funding comes to the right place in time.

Deputy Manager Morten Laugesen from SDC has mentioned how difficult for both partners to find the suitable finance structure. The most important issue is how to manage the funding where both parts understand how the finance structure function effectively and properly. Since in the beginning of the establishment SDC has created the dual structure for clearly prioritize each part's specific tasks, the final financial structure also follow this pattern. The Chinese and Danish side register, manager the funding they have control over and make the tasks done. The Chinese side provide the research labs in suburb of Beijing. The Danish side coordinates within eight universities to find the most advanced technology in Denmark as the starting point for programs and find out finance options for both Danish and international students, who are interested to take a two-year master joint program with SDC. Joint master programs give Danish and international students the

opportunity to study in China for one year and the Chinese students to study in Denmark for one year.

According to ITH, interactions between two helices are the essence of the development of ITH. When examining the establishment of SDC, it is seen that even both parts have strong will to realize this project; the implementing process still has problems to solve.

The design of SDC has given leaderships free hands on each side to finish the promised tasks according to the agreement. Such structure might be a good example for future actors. Due to the geographical distance, the management freedom of each side functions well. Though there has been problems in finding the suited financial structure, SDC finds out the solution in the end. Because Denmark is an EU member country, Denmark has to follow certain regulations in terms of recruiting students, which should be open to all youngsters in EU countries who are interested in studying in China for a joint master program. The Danish side might have some amount of paperwork regarding to EU regulations, thus the preparation for future Danish and EU students will take SDC more time, energy and staffs to deal with these tasks.

The establishment of SDC exemplifies as a fruitful collaboration of an EU country and China in HES. Managerial problems such as financing structure, delegating tasks, recruitment of students according to EU regulations can be solved. To find the suited collaboration structure according to the existing law and regulations is a path for future actors to take.

Cultural psychological preparation courses for students for better learning

China and Denmark are two very different countries. Cultural differences can be found in language, food, lifestyles, mentality and other aspects. In order to prepare the Danish and international students who are going to study one year in Beijing with “soft landing”, SDC has made seminars with relevant lecturers and invited former students who have been studied in Beijing to share their experiences. Such seminar is a good example of CCAT activities.

According to deputy manager Morten Laugesen from SDC, the seminar do have positive effects on outbound students. It is clear that the students have to be well-prepared before they land in Beijing. Cultural difference seminars give the students some basic knowledge, so they can settle down and cope with the new environment as soon as possible.

Due to the lack of empirical data of the lecturers, leaders of SDC, the CCAT do not have any result, which opens the possibility for future search on these segments.

CI

CI as a Chinese organ operating in Denmark

CI as a Chinese organ has the purpose to teach Chinese in the Danish context, which makes it sensible from its construction. *Hanban* is the Chinese organization that administrative all CIs around the world including the financial funding, outbound Chinese teachers and teaching materials. CI AAU is related to the Beijing Normal University (BNU). BNU focuses on innovative teaching and the purpose of CI AAU is therefore to teach Danes Chinese with Chinese culture embedded and research of innovative teaching methods. Nonetheless, the teachers and researchers from BNU should also participate in internationalization of PBL model from AAU.

Intercultural communication problems

According to deputy manager Thorsten Buude Haensel from CI AAU, there are several issues when sending Chinese teachers out to high schools if the topics concerning about Tibet, Taiwan and other sensitive subjects. Language teaching is the first step when one wants to know another country's history, socioeconomic, cultural and political situations. Especially when it comes to China, with its 5000 years history, one and the only survival ancient civilization in the world. To let the Danes know the fruitful Chinese historical and cultural fundamentals is not an easy task. How to overcome the language barrier is only the first problem CI teachers have to solve, then other delicate issues such as the freedom of Tibet, Taiwan election and its influence on China – Taiwan relations, how to understand the independence of Hong Kong surface during discussions in the classrooms.

Due to CI's structure, CI from its beginning has two levels of intercultural communicative tasks. Internally, the Danish and Chinese staffs sending from China have to find a way to communicate efficiently in terms of achieving the common teaching goal. Externally, CI as a whole organization has to find a proper way to face the Danish public, including students, high school principals, and other institutions and media.

According to deputy manager Thorsten Budde Haesel, Chinese colleagues sent from *Hanban* do not know the Danish education system in advance, thus, it is necessary for the Danish staff to give Chinese colleagues some brief introduction about the Danish school, students and possible

questions students might ask during the lectures. *Hanban* might have given outbound teachers instructions on how to deal with situations such as when students asking about the sensitive issues before departure, as long as the Chinese staffs go along with these regulations, the Chinese courses and activities related to Chinese culture CI AAU offer in universities and high schools should go smoothly.

For deputy manager Thorsten Budde Haesel himself, he emphasizes during the interview that when he is out to give lectures, he is not going to avoid talking about the bad side of China. Because China is a big country with lots of good things happening but also some serious problems Chinese government has to deal with. To be objective is what Thorsten wants to do when he gives lectures. As a Dane, Thorsten loves China. For him personally it would be wired if he cannot answer the questions when students asking about the independence of Tibet, the Taiwan issue and other delicate topics. To give a comprehensive picture about China to the students and let them make their own judgement after taking a thorough consideration is what Thorsten wants the Danish students to do.

In the case of DIR/CIR, Li has to explain to UIR leaders about how AAU structure master program and the PBL learning model. In CI's case, Thorsten has to be cautious about his behavior because he is a Dane teaching Chinese in Denmark. Intercultural communication in public sphere is not only about the different language, something lies deeper. Gradual and unconscious changes along with social economic environment has transformed one's mindset, which causes different approach to solving issues. A specific research area has made one circumspect to behavior in one's own country. According to Hall's high low context culture theory, when these two different cultures meet, the misunderstanding occur. From the two cases of DIR/CIR and CI, it can be summarized that the willingness to succeed and cautious consideration about the implementing practical approaches are the paving forces to overcome the different context cultural barrier.

Different teaching and managerial style

According to Thorsten, the agreement of CI is a construction of *Hanban* from the Chinese side, which organize all CIs around the world, and one Chinese university and one university abroad attached. CI AAU is the collaboration of Aalborg University (AAU) from Denmark and Beijing Normal University (BNU) from China. BNU is specialized in education, thus the purpose of CI AAU is not only teach

Chinese in the Danish context, but also contribute to internationalization of PBL model from AAU. In the agreement, both participated universities are agreed to contribution in research of innovative educational environment besides Chinese courses. In practice, different teaching styles from China and Denmark has to merge in order to fit the local teaching surroundings.

Danish university students do not have to attend to the lectures every single time, because there is no such rule. In Chinese universities, each student has to come to every single lecture because there is a name registration system in the beginning of each lecture. In Denmark, the syllabus of each course is available before the course starts and the students can read online or download to read in advance. During the lecture, the teacher would invite students for an open discussion on certain topics and the teachers encourage students to raise questions that troubles the students by using group discussions to find a solution. To train students' critical thinking capability is one of the Danish universities' goal.

PBL model is an AAU brand. This learning method stimulates students' initiatives and encourage students to find out what they are interested most, thereby to learn to find a solution to a real problem. The former director of CI AAU Ms. Du Xiangyun is a professor at philosophy and learning department of AAU. She starts the CI AAU in 2009 and has worked hard to internationalize PBL model.

At the managerial level, every CI sends reports to *Hanban* several times a year for self-monitoring and supervision. *Hanban* gives one million DKK to CI AAU every year with teaching materials and other Chinese culture related items, such as calligraphy sets, traditional Chinese furniture and paintings. The Chinese staffs are on the payroll from *Hanban*, and the Danish staffs are employed according to the Danish labor law and regulation.

According to ITH theory, interactions between universities at various levels shall create, facilitate, generate and stimulate innovative education environment for students and involved institutions. Such collaboration should lead the corporation further in the right direction. Since BNU is specialized in education, CI AAU has the capacity to teach Chinese for the Danes and use the Chinese staffs as AAU PBL ambassador to internationalize the PBL model when they get back to China. Academically, there are several Chinese PhD fellows focusing on the innovative learning as contribution to internationalization of PBL learning model to AAU.

Adaptation attitude to the local environment and tradition to avoid backfire

CPT with CI AAU is a delicate issue, which means CI AAU as a Chinese organ operating in Denmark needs to adapt to the Danish local environment to obtain its own goal. Here local environment refers to the Danish education policy and the Danish political situation in general.

Denmark is a democratic country with elected political parties to form a coalition government. Under the Social democratic government from 2007 to 2015, foreign language teaching is highly prioritized. Chinese as a second foreign language has flourished in high school curriculum. According to Thorsten, Chinese has been the biggest non-European language high school students can choose to learn. It would be CI AAU's ultimate goal to start Chinese language teaching from primary school to high school, which lead to university as a complete pipeline where Danish students can get a holistic Chinese learning environment from an early age.

Since the new government has taken place from late 2015, drastic changes have been made. A new high school reform is on its way, which might cause cutting off Chinese teaching programs in high schools. If the middle part of the pipeline is broken, then CI AAU has to re-think its goal and implementation strategies. That is why Thorsten is hesitated to answer the question about the CI AAU's goal in the near future.

Local political conditions sure can change CI's operational strategies, but how about the behavior from leaders of *Hanban*? Is there any lesson that *Hanban* should learn through the years? CCAT does not mean one way towards the outbound partners. *Hanban* should also learn to take cautious considerations when entering international conferences, especially when it comes to sensitive political issues which occurs unexpectedly.

The episodes of closing down Swedish CIs, which Thorsten has told during the interview, really need more attention. *Hanban* as a Chinese organ represents China when it comes out of the national boarder, what *Hanban* says and does will be judged as a Chinese official meaning. *Hanban* functions as a diplomatic organ. Outside the Chinese boarder, everything *Hanban* does needs think twice, or even three times before taking action. With the rise of China, the West is curious about how China will behavior in various circumstances. What *Hanban* has done during the 2013 Sinology conference was regrettable, unforgivable and undiplomatic. It only decreases CI's reputation and China's credential, which is not *Hanban's* initiate intention.

CCAT means accept, embrace and then combine the two nations' cultural and social heritages to co-create a harmonized environment for the locals and the new-comers. When landing on a foreign soil, try to take a deep breathe first, take a good look at the surroundings, make some new friends first and then introduce one's own traditions. Adaptation takes time, patience and cautious planning, execution and adjustments along the way.

Sum up

The abovementioned three cases DIR/CIR, SDC and CI AAU are three different forms of Sino-Danish collaboration in HE sector. From intercultural communication perspective, the establishment of DIR/CIR does not have the language barrier issue, rather the mindset and the way of thinking to reach consensus with both parts. SDC does have the language issue, using English as a medium might not be the most efficient communication tool during negotiation. Another phenomenon is the different context cultural background which influences the process, especially in the beginning phase where two parts needs time to learn how the other part think and react. CI AAU in its origin has two levels of intercultural communication issues to solve – internally where Danish and Chinese staffs to work closely and externally CI AAU as a whole to face the Danish public.

Social environment changes people's mindset in time gradually and subconsciously, even two parts have strong willingness to create a long-term strategic collaboration have to take the different cultural influences in mind before the real negotiation starts. To know there is a difference between two countries is a first step, then learn, respect, accept and embrace the differences and move on to solve the real problems might be a way to overcome obstacles during the collaboration process.

From the internationalization of triple helix perspective, whether it is a mutual government agreement or institutional agreement, there is a need for suitable and understandable structure for both parts to follow. With commitment from leadership to practitioners who go through all the steps to create such projects successfully, teamwork towards the same goal is an approach.

From the cross-national adaptation perspective, some preconditions have to put in place before any planning for such cross border collaboration. Any individual outside its national border is seen for others a representation of one's nationality, accepted or not, that is how one is perceived from others' eyes and ears. Behavior cautiously, think twice or three times before taking any action will be a good start. Especially after the rise of China, leaders of Chinese organizations do have to be

aware of their behaviors. Cross-national adaptation applies to all national organs who operate outside its own territory boundary, which means to learn, respect, accept and adjust according to the local environment. Good purpose with bad behavior does not carry out fruitful results.

Conclusion and discussion

This thesis is trying to address the research question **“why there are obstacles during Sino-Danish collaboration in higher education sector and what lessons can both parts learn from each other?”**

From the three cases analyzed above, the general trends they shared in Sino-Danish collaboration in higher education sector are the following. Firstly, there is a lack of intercultural understanding for both parts. It is not only the language skill, more importantly, the mindset where two parts are willing to respect, accept, learn and embrace to get a mutual understanding to reach a common goal. Secondly, acknowledging internationalization of higher education is an increasing global business, the question is how to measure the quality of Sino-Danish collaboration, expand joint programs, attract and retain the smart brains. Thirdly, cross-cultural adaptation courses are necessary for students, researchers and scholars to familiarize with the local environment to better performance. Though the forms of such cross-cultural adaptation activities might vary, the importance of such actions needs institutional leaders' attention.

To further enhance Sino-Danish collaboration in future, be it in higher education sector or other spheres, here are some advice for those who have intentions to bridge the Sino-Danish cooperation in general. For the Chinese parts, first off, think before act when set foot outside China. It is essential for each Chinese officer to be aware of. The episode of closing Swedish CIs should not happen again. Academic discussion has its freedom of what the researchers want to discover, discuss and open to new research areas. Do not elevator everything up to the political arena, it only gets worse and will go the opposite way to improve the reputation of China. Secondly, make a thorough plan to launch the internationalization of Chinese culture program. CIs around the world has begun the Chinese language teaching process, the following culture programs should follow. It is not good enough to arrange some cultural events here and there, a holistic overview of how to internationalize the traditional Chinese culture should be in place. With modern technology, it is workable and efficient to make integrated cultural activities to reach public worldwide.

For the Danish parts, it is necessary to get a learning mindset ready before meeting the Chinese parts. To avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, the Danes need to get some intercultural communication courses and/or seminars about how Chinese think and work in advance. During the collaboration process, patience pays off in the end. Another point that needs to address is the

perception of China in the Danish context. China is a rising power and there is always good and bad sides of a rising emerging power. Before judging China please check out all the factors. It is easy to criticize China than to find out the reasons and help China out. In order to get a healthy collaboration relationship, the mutual understanding attitude needs to be in place.

This thesis is not able to predict the outcomes of future Sino-Danish collaboration in higher education sector, yet all the evidence shows that there will be more Sino-Danish collaborations in the years to come. An open mindset for take in, digest and combine the best of the two countries will lead to a smooth cooperation procedure and fruitful achievements.

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Appendix

Transcripts of interview with Professor Li Xing on August 23rd 2016

1. When and why has DIR begun to work on joint programs with Chinese universities? Does it have anything to do with your Chinese background?

Aalborg University has cooperation with many Chinese universities, but joint programs are very few. In fact, the DIR CIR is one of the few joint programs, and maybe the pioneer one, in terms of joint program with Chinese university.

The negotiation process of DIR CIR started in 2010, and launched the program in 2012.

DIR usually engage with development studies and international relations. Many years ago, development studies refer to Africa and underdeveloped countries. DIR has been working on Africa, Latin America and China as a developing country. With the rise of emerging powers, international relations has changed. The importance of China is getting more and more obvious, and the Sino-Danish relationship is good. Chinese government is sending lots of students to study abroad, the presence of China, politics, economics and in daily life is getting more and more attention. To have a joint program with China is a kind of common consensus.

There is a strong reason with my Chinese background, because the idea of making a joint program comes from me. I did my best to push forward during the process. Many other colleagues shared my idea, they supported me and we discussed things together. The success of this joint program in Aalborg University was largely due to my background. As a Chinese, I understand how to establish collaborative relationship with Chinese partners.

2. How long has it taken to construct DIR/CIR?

If we take the whole period in consideration, the timeframe is longer. In 2007, some of colleagues and I started to discuss about the Chinese Area Studies (CAS) as a specialization, after one year or two, CAS was finalized. At that time, CAS was under the Humanity faculty. In 2008, I sent an application to establish Chinese Area Studies in social science affiliated with DIR, so CAS was a social science specialization since 2008. Then in 2010, I began to raise the issue about establishing a joint degree program. Before that, I was invited to UIR several times and I have already engaged this discussion with UIR leaders. When I got a positive answer from the Chinese side, I started to push it forward in AAU.

3. What is your experiences as the coordinator when building up this program under the process? Is "know who" more important than "know how", if yes, why? If no, why?

"Know who" is definitely the case in China. Here "know who" referring not only to "Guanxi", is generally cultural approach. In the previous answer, I had mentioned that I had already engaged with Chinese leaders. Without Chinese leaders at UIR, there would be no hope at all. In China, it is the top-down approach, where in DK it is the opposite. In 2007, I started with colleagues discussing the idea of implementing Chinese Area Studies, leaders just said "go ahead". In China, everything has to be agreed from the top level first. "Know who" does not have to mean to know somebody personally, but this "who" refers to the authority. "Know how" is also important, it means how to do it, the procedures, the

regulations, implementations is more important in Denmark. Because in Denmark, everything is legally defined, very complicated according to the law. There are lots of regulations, according to my cultural background are deadly confined and very passive. I have to talk to colleagues, and through them I contact our rector, and ask him to contact Copenhagen to find out about the rules and regulations. In Denmark, it is not the authority but the rules and regulations rule – the rule of law. In Denmark, you have to understand the rule of the game. You have to know the right people in the right business, especially the colleagues in the faculty of law. DIR CIR involves some cross national regulations, such as the transfer of ECTS system into China. Aalborg university wants to know how to export the 60 ECTS of one year to China, and what kind of the legal guarantee of quality from China. So UIR has to present the study syllabus. In China, it is authority that makes such guarantee, not individuals or professors or the rest of teaching groups. The leaders, as a whole that makes such joint program functional. In Denmark, the secretaries and faculty staffs who know the law make things functional. There are two different tracks, once they understand each other, which means the Danes understand the Chinese ways of doing things and after the Chinese leaders are committed, everything can be done. In Denmark, the authority committed without secretaries and those people who have expertise, without their consensus, nothing cannot be done. The leaders in Denmark is not important.

4. What is the main obstacle in construction of such a Sino-Danish joint program in higher education sector?

The main obstacle is the two different education system, different approach, different cultural tradition. In Denmark, it is open-minded approach in a way that is not only on politics, but also in education sector. The tolerance range is very wide, students do not need to attend to the lectures, they can choose the topic they want to write in projects, there is not restrict rules that confine students must come to all the lectures. Students feel very relaxed. In China, there is discipline, you have to be in classroom on time, have to study hard and do your job correctly.

Another difference is the PBL model in AAU, we have two months teaching and two months project working. In China, they think two months teaching is too little. In the beginning of the negotiation, they think the other two months of project working, the students have too much free time. Later, when they understand the system, they change their mind. The Danish system depends very much on students' self-discipline and interest. If they want to do a good job, they will work very hard. In China, it is not up to you, the system says that you must, the level of freedom is a little bit lower in China.

The third difference is the teaching methods. Here, many Chinese students are very impressed by my teaching in a way that I mainly present different schools, not dictate to say that this school is better than that school. Here I invite students to think from their own prospect. They have to be introduced to different disciplines, ideologies, different theories, different data, and it is up to students themselves to choose. In China, it is more authoritarian, in a way that the teachers are more deterrent, in terms of theories and ideologies. Some theories and ideologies are considered politically incorrect. There are differences, and the students find they are more free here in Denmark than in China, in terms of choosing topic, theories, the problem areas, whereas in China, some questions and research areas are considered to be very complicated, such as human right issues, Tibet issue, Taiwan issue, the minority issue etc.. Some issues are very touchy in China, but in Denmark, the students can write whatever they want.

In Denmark, you have your freedom, but you have work for your freedom. The students have the freedom to choose topic, theory and research question, and the teacher gives guidelines. In China, the working culture is different. The teacher sometimes think the student's work is a part of their reputation and spirit. If the student fail, it is considered the teacher's fail as well. The teacher work very hard for the students, they engage much more. There are advantages and disadvantages regarding each side.

5. Is there any advice you like to share with future actors in China and Denmark in higher education sector?

If any other university or institute want to establish a connective relationship with China, they have to be open-minded first. They have to understand the contemporary China, not the stereotypical old China image. They should not be confined by the political ideologies; and my experiences with some of the colleagues here in Aalborg University, especially one from here, whose political ideology is very biased. They think the western standards and ideologies are perfect, they try to criticize China, sometimes they even demonize China in different ways. On the other hand, they are affected by the way that China is rising, and China is developing. They do not know how to explain such phenomenon according to the modernizing theory and the western theories. China as a communist dictatorship ruled country should not have developed according to the western theories. China has developed very successfully, comparing with many other countries, and soon will be the largest country. I have been doing many research works in the last couple of years on emerging powers.

If you want to engage collaboration with China, you have to understand the changing China, not the stereotypical old China. That is very important. You have to agree with China's development and achievement. Of course, there are a lot of limitations, and lots of improvements China have to make. Do not collaborate with China as if you can educate China, as if you can pass your knowledge to China. This is completely wrong. Do not forget, China can also give you knowledge along the way. It should be a mutual collaboration.

6. What is your view on the future perspectives of Sino-Danish cooperation in general, and in higher education sector in specific?

According to my assessment, there will be more and more collaborations, I know there are many joint programs and exchange programs in Copenhagen. Aalborg University has also lots of exchange programs, not only with students, but with researchers. Sino-Danish Center, where the Danish secretariat located in Århus, and the Chinese campus located in Beijing has been fully operated from 2014. I was one of the discussants that started this SDC discussion; Aalborg University has four areas, nano technology, wind technology, innovation and social welfare. DIR is not a part of it. Other colleagues will play a much more important role. The Nordic Center in Fudan University in Shanghai is also an example. The latest years, I have been invited to China quite often, I am guest professor for five Chinese universities and I will be director of research institute in Jia Xing University starting from this year. You can see, a person like me, who has roots in China, and educated and worked in west for three decades now, I am the perfect combination of East and West. I, myself is a good product of Sino-Danish cooperation, from the increasing role that I am playing. If I become more successful, it means that the collaboration between Denmark and China is also successful.

I know that not only at university level, if you lower down to high school level, as far as I know of the Chinese language has been the second or third foreign language for almost 2/3 of high school students in Denmark. Hjørring, Støvning and many other high schools have Chinese in their curriculum. Another player is the Confusion Institute; there is one here in Aalborg, one in CBS and one in Royal Music Academy. Collaboration is at many levels, in terms of research level, there are hundreds of Chinese software developers and researchers working in Danish companies, many of them in Northern Jutland. I know that Telia has employed many Chinese engineers, Novo Nordisk has employed many Chinese chemical engineers as well. Sino-Danish cooperation in general is very good, in education sector, not specifically higher education, it is also going stronger.

Transcripts of telephone interview with Morten from SDC on September 22nd 2016

1. How long has SDC ongoing before its launch in 2013?

The idea to establish a joint university center with Denmark and China was born in 2007, 2008. I am not exactly sure. After some consideration and exploration in China, the negotiation with the Chinese part began in 2009. The joint agreement of partnership were signed on April 2010. We have spent a couple of years to develop master programs, which were launched in 2012 and 2013. There was a process from approximately from 2008 to 2012, four years until the first master program were launched in Beijing.

2. What is the biggest obstacle during establishment of SDC?

When you negotiate a big project like SDC, you always encounter obstacles. Because there are different cultures and traditions, but there are also legal and judicial issues. As I recalled, one of the obstacles, not a major obstacle was during the discussion with our Chinese partners was to find the financial model – how much money to invest in SDC from both sides and how to collaborate on the funding side. This was, I believe a minor problem, because overall, there was a willingness both from the Danish and Chinese system to establish collaboration. The partners were very eager to join forces to establish this project. After being committed, of course, you have to deal with all the details, which programs to launch, which research activities to incorporate. We have discussed such issues many times before we actually launched our programs. There were issues we have to solve during the way, I do not see them big obstacles. Some of the obstacles are coming from different culture, doing things differently in Denmark and China. When you sit down for the first time and second time, you often talk not directly to the point, you need to slowly learn and understand your partner before you can actually start to make real progress. This was also a leaning process.

3. What kind of an agreement SDC has created between Denmark and China? In terms of funding, management, and what is the goal for such a collaboration?

SDC is a result of two countries government's decision to work together. We have the strong backing from the Chinese government, and we have the backing from the Danish government as well. If you look at the Danish side, it is collaboration between all eight Danish universities, also the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology, Education and Innovation. It is a national program and it is also backed by MOE (Ministry of Education) from China. Even though the agreement are signed between eight universities in Denmark and one university in China, it is backed on from a much higher level.

4. In practice, how do both parts cooperate and coordinate? Any specific example?

The funding issue that mentioned before, it was not about the amount. From the Danish side, we have funding up to the front, government allocated money, the universities too. In the very beginning of SDC, there was money from the Danish side. This was not the case in the Chinese side, we could actually spend more money in the Danish side, but we have also more expenses related to, such as we have people transported or commuted to China. The Chinese side provides access to lab facilities and education infrastructure. It was more about finding a model, which actually put this partnership into reality rather than having a discussion about how much money to spend. Because there are not much money between the partners, there is a minor budget that the two directors can use on the joint activities, but much of the activities at SDC are funded by in-kind.

5. Apart from funding, what about the management issue?

SDC is a joint project, everything has done in SDC is jointly, which means that there is mutually agreement on management as well. We have Danish and Chinese students, professors, researchers, and management. There is a Danish director and a Chinese director. They are in charge of making all relevant decisions in SDC, and there is a joint Danish Chinese board, you can find it on SDC organizational chart. SDC has annual board meeting, where half of the members are Chinese and half of the members are Danish. The principle of having joined decisions, management and leadership infiltrates the entire organization. Everything is done by joined agreement from both sides.

On the Danish side, there are eight different universities involved, so there are a lot of coordination on the Danish side, where the office I sit here in Århus. We spend a lot of time and resources coordinating between the Danish universities. Likewise, there are people in China who are coordinating activities in Chinese side.

When you look at the Danish contribution, there are of course need for coordination, this is what the Danish office has to do.

6. What is SDC's 5-year or 10-year goal?

We launched four programs in 2012, and three more in 2013. Of course we would like our researchers to publish their research results, but we do not set up goals like they need to publish 25 articles per year in relevant magazine. The vision of SDC is to train youngsters from Denmark and China in an international environment and make them attractive to employers. Our goal is not to train 200 students per year in 10 master programs, we want to train attractive students that can find employment after graduation. One of the reasons for establishing SDC is also to bring bright minds together from Denmark and China at a very early stage in their careers. Because the network in China is very important. When students meet each other as students, after they begin their career in Denmark, China or elsewhere, they still have these networks, so hopefully this will also pay off the investment in the future of having stronger collaborations on scientific areas between Danish and Chinese research environments. It is a strategic investment with the long-term perspective seen from the Danish side.

7. What is the financial issues for the students who join your program?

Basically, our programs are tuition free, which means that the Chinese and Danish students generally do not have to pay tuition fee. But, there are some exceptions. Because Denmark is a part of European Union, which means that students all over Europa have the right to enrolled at any university. We have a very complicated model, some of our students actually have to pay tuition, which is 40.000 RMB per year. Most of the Danish citizens are able to get the foreign student grants, which means the Danish government will reimburse the tuition payment. For the individual student, it would be free of charge. Some international students have to pay tuition. We have some students that decide to pay the tuition fee, some of them can get the money from their own government.

Since Denmark is a member of EU, we cannot make regulations only for Danish students. We have to make regulations that cover all EU students. Since this is a Sino-Danish center, of course, our main goal is to train Danish students. We have a model to define who has to pay the tuition fee and who can have the tuition fee reimburse.

8. What is the employment rate for the graduated students?

We do not have actual numbers. We did a survey last Autumn on first and second Bachelor graduated students, where we can see that large majority of our graduated students actually found jobs. Right now we are building alumni database, so we can track our students. Because we have to document how our Chinese students find employment. We can see that our students find jobs in many different sectors, just like the Danish students do. We can also say that many of our students continues PhD programs, but I do not have the specific timeline to tell how long after graduation they have found job, I do not have that number.

9. How do you prepare your students for differences in cultural and teaching style etc.?

Most of our educational activities find place in Beijing, the Danish and Chinese students study together in Beijing, and some of the Chinese students come to Denmark for part of their program, for example, during the thesis work. It is not a cultural shock. Everything is different in China, things are done differently in China. We spend a lot of resources try to prepare the Danish students before they go to China. We have a big guideline about how to do things in China. We also have a seminar in Denmark for 2 days before we send the Danish students to China where we invite people who know about China, for example Ane Bislev, from Aalborg University, and some of our former students and program coordinators to inform coming students on how to behavior in China and what to expect. Because there is different background between Danish and Chinese students with different learning environments. It is very important that the Danish students know why the Chinese students behave the way they do. Also the Chinese students have to know why the Danish students behave the way they do. One thing is to prepare them, another thing is what really happen when you bring them together. I think we can see the results of our investment, compare to what was like four or five years ago, I think we can say that we have a pretty good environment in the classroom. Our teachers both from Danish and Chines side are very focused on these issues.

Transcripts of interview Thorsten Buude Haelsen on September 23rd 2016

1. When has CI established in Denmark? Why there are two in Copenhagen, only one in Jutland?

It was in 2007 or 2008 at Copenhagen Business School, and CI in Aalborg University was established in 2009. Copenhagen is the capital city of Denmark and there is large demand. Most importantly, there are two very different CIs in Copenhagen. One is business orientated, the other is the one and only in the world that focused on Chinese music, and that is the one that located at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory. They are in nature very different; therefore there are space enough in Copenhagen. There are lots of CIs in other cities. London has five, Milano has two or three, so that it is not only in Copenhagen that there are two CIs in one city.

2. How is CI organized between China and Denmark at governmental, institutional level? Any example?

It is not an agreement between Danish and Chinese government, but it is in its essence a bilateral agreement between a part in China and a part in Denmark. This is at university level and Hanban. It has three parts in such an agreement, on the one side, that is the Hanban, which organizes and funds all these CIs' activities, and each CI has two universities attached, one in China and one abroad.

In 2012, President Hu Jintao was in Denmark, the development of CIs was written into the agreement between Denmark and China. Mainly, the agreement is about the trade, but the development of CIs was also written in that agreement.

3. What is the purpose of CI in AAU?

From the beginning, it is about innovation and learning, the focus was to do research on teaching Chinese as foreign language in the Danish context. Most CIs are getting more and more specialized, they do lots of cultural activities, Chinese language teaching in various levels, they also do various researches with the attached universities, but mainly it is about the culture and Chinese language teaching. All CIs in Denmark are agreed that in order to be valuable assets to the local university, you have to do researches to the host universities as well. CI in CBS do business related research, CI in Royal Music Conservatory do Chinese music related research. We do what we think is our strength here in Aalborg, because our partner university Beijing Normal University has very strong tradition in education, and our previous director, has strong belief in PBL (problem-based learning), so CI in AAU should do research on combination of Chinese language teaching and PBL. Because there is big difference in teaching traditions in China and Denmark, not saying that one is better than the other, just different. But if you take the Chinese tradition into Danish context, Danish students will be bored. So we have to adapt whatever the Chinese teachers have learned in Beijing, partly unlearned, and construct new ideas and build upon them. I am not saying that the Chinese teachers from BNU are wrong, they have been sent to hundreds of different countries, so they cannot be educated in how to teach Chinese in Denmark, Hanban does not have that kind of knowledge and resources. It was the idea of CI in AAU. So we have some PhDs, research programs and conferences in this regard.

4. What is the long-term goal (5 years, 10 years ahead) with CI in Denmark?

It is actually changing constantly. Right now, it is actually not a good time for us, not in terms of the political surrounding within education in Denmark. As you know, lots of humanistic education has been cut down. The high schools are now going through a major reform, which prioritizes the nature science and language teaching. However, apparently, only the German and French teachers have been doing

the lobbying, because these two languages are the foreign languages which you can learn now. All the other languages, including Spanish and all the strange languages, Russian, Japanese and Chinese will have much weaker stand.

Our initial idea was that we should build a holistic approach from primary school, high school to university as a wonderful pipeline with Chinese language teaching. Since the development of Chinese language teaching started ten years ago, and it was the biggest non-European language offered in high school, I think there are 50 high schools that can offer Chinese language teaching. We thought it was doing all right, and we thought, in order to improve Chinese language standard in high school, which is not very high, because the students start with scratch, we should work with the primary schools to see if we can have Chinese in there.

Two years back, I would say that was our goal and we would work for that. However, if the middle part of the bridge was gone, why build the bridge ahead? It was quite disillusioning; we are rethinking what we should do. We have been working on helping the high school teachers at high schools to argue for the importance of keeping the Chinese, but failed. Now we have to see what the reform in reality will bring, maybe there will be adjustments etc., we do not know that yet. Depending on who you are asking, which school leader you are asking, you will get different answers on how bad it will be. Some says, there will be no change and some says they will close Chinese down. No matter what, it will not be as good and promising as before.

5. What is the main obstacle for CI operating in Denmark? What is the solution?

As the answer abovementioned, the foreign language teaching has not been highly prioritized as before. Until recently, I just noticed that in the UK, they have launched a huge program with so many million pounds that in 2020, UK want to have so many young children to speak fluent Chinese by introducing Chinese in some special classes in CIs' classrooms. CIs in Britain will actually run that program, and it is wonderfully bridged the other political dimensions to ask, would that be possible in Denmark that CIs in Denmark to run a government funded program from foreign language teaching? Definitely no, it would never happen. Just like the Danish government would never allow Chinese engineers to build a nuclear power plant. The case of the American bought parts of most of DONG Energy. That was a huge issue. Imagine what would happen if it have been the Chinese, then the issue will be many times bigger.

There are political obstacles for CIs, because CI is funded by the Chinese government. The concerns, especially from the Chinese public or the media, because the Danish government is Chinese friendly, so, some of them are ungrounded, and some of them might give some senses, but still not sound grounded. Because no matter if it is the Chinese government or another government, you should be careful of what kind of tasks you can give away within your country.

There have been numerous reports about CIs in the media, 2 years ago in "Information", some time ago in "Weekend Avisen", not so much about our CIs here in Denmark, but CIs in general, of how they work, what they do, and why they are not good. Often I get quite annoyed, because they cannot say it is foreign money, therefore it will not be good, it will influence the freedom of speech, academic freedom, and this make me to think, are we really so weak and afraid of outside influence? Are we not strong enough to withstand under such pressure? Here we are talking about one million DKK we get from Hanban each year, are we that cheap? I do not think so, and I hope not we are so cheap. Apparently, people are afraid.

This is a bilateral agreement collaboration, and it is an agreement that both Danish and Chinese law should be respect, and of cause, it is impossible. Because you cannot respect Chinese law without talking about the Tibet and at the same time protecting the Danish freedom of speech, it is contradiction and unsolvable. Either one or the other part should make compromise, and I think it is not always easy to achieve that, however, by all CIs being headed by a foreign director – the Chinese perspective. Right now, I am the director here, before that, it was Xiangyun Du, who is a Chinese, a professor here at AAU. We guarantee things are running in accordance with what the Danish public and government would find acceptable. So we are not going to arrange conference on Tibet independence or why Taiwan should do this or that. That's unrealistic, you have to respect the money. If you apply for the money from fighting against cancer fund in Denmark, you will not be able to make a research project on how to improve cigarettes. This is the general curtesy. Just like you do a research on independence of Tibet you will not get funded by Hanban, the logic is the same. The logic in both cases is sound. We should accept that. Even though it is perfectly fine to talk about Tibet, I am teaching Chinese in Denmark, so it is different. There are other places at the university to arrange conference on Tibet independence, not us. There have been, however, stories about some university in USA inviting Dalai Lama, then Hanban and CI putting pressure internally at the university. I sincerely hope that Hanban would not do that, because it would only intensify the negative side of CI, it just proved all the arguments against Hanban and CI. The more Hanban push, the more negativity come out. People do not always think logically. I do not think it would happen in Denmark, because USA is not a soft power battleground, in the US, there have been incidents, because there are much more at stake. Denmark is just not so important, still, we have to be careful about what we do. Be cautious about all the political influences.

When I, or CI go out to teach, I will talk about the negative things about China that the Danish media and Hanban would not like me to talk about. I always do it fairly, I do not demonize China because I do not want to do that, and there is no reason to do that. I like China, of cause, I do not like everything about China. If I, as a Danish staff at CI, go out and not talk about these things, then it will be really weird and the school who has invited me would think there is something wrong here. CI would not be taking seriously at all any more. It is different when we send out the Hanban teachers, because they are in pay by Hanban, who tell them not to talk about this and that. If they are being asked, they can always try to explain from a Chinese perspective, say that I understand what you are saying, but from the Chinese perspective, if the Daila Lama is doing this and that, and that is what the Chinese government says. So just keep it at that level, it would be fine. The Danes also need to understand the Chinese perspective. If I go out and do that, it would be suicide. I need to be honest about what I think and do it in a fair way in order to respect Aalborg University, the Danish culture and traditions, but also to be fair to Hanban, because I would only harm Hanban if I would not talk about these things.

6. Any suggestion for further development of CI?

We do what we think is best like we used to do. We use the materials from Hanban for language teaching. Next week I will teach a class here in the university about the Chinese religion, and the second part of that lecture will be the spiritual vacuum in China, the lack of belief or things to believe in. Because the communism is gone, capitalism has taken the place. It is all about the money, lots of Chinese have returned to Confucianism, Buddhism, or Christianity. I will teach in the way that I think is right. My mission be that in the University or at the primary schools or high schools, we should always be objective and fair to both perspectives. There is no point not to talk about Tibet or Taiwan, at the same time, there is also no point to say China is so evil, trying to suppress the Tibet culture. There are

two things in that. First of all, Denmark has done the same in Greenland, Britain with Ireland, so nobody is innocent. Of course, that does not mean that we should not criticize. Even though you are not innocent, you are still wrong. We should put things into perspective and tell the Danish students why is the Chinese government says that it is in its good right, or if you ask a Chinese, if Tibet is a part of China, yes, of course it is a part of China. They should know why these arguments come from and being used. I think we should always be sure to show the complexities of China, because it is so difficult to understand things about China, how big and diverse China is. On the other way around, many Chinese do not understand how small Denmark is.

It is important to give all our students some kind of knowledge and tools to understand, or at the least to see that mostly there is more to it when we talk about the Chinese government suppressing human rights lawyer or whatever the topic. Of course, that is wrong, but why. They should understand the whole perspective and then make a decision. It is fine if they still think it is wrong. Criticism to China is quite too easy and quick. China is polluting, yes, but China is producing all of our stuffs. All the "made in China" products should add to the Danish CO2 quote. It is often too simple to blame China not being able to handle it. Just criticize China and help China, and tell them if you do this and that, you will be able to reduce CO2. That is my stand, and how I want us to teach Chinese no matter what Hanban thinks and says, because that is in the end in the interest of Hanban.

7. Is there any conflict between local CI and Hanban? How do Hanban manage local CIs activities?

We send many reports to Hanban, and we have annual Nordic conference. Originally Baltic countries and Scandinavian, now it also includes Holland and Belgium. The reason being that is that most of CIs in Sweden are closed because of the political resistance.

One of the teachers from CI in Sweden is now at CBS, she was asked what is the difference between Denmark and Sweden. Her answer was it was almost the same, but Danish like Chinese, Swedish do not like Chinese. It is very funny, because Sweden has always been the leading country in Scandinavian in Sinology studies.

The reason is quite simple, Hanban has done things in a stupid way, that is my opinion. In 2013, the annual Sinologist conference was in Portugal, it was partly funded by CI but was also partly funded by Jiang Jinguo Foundation. The CI logo was next to Jiang Jinguo Foundation logo, some of the content in the paper were really critical. Then Xu Ling, the leader of Hanban was there, and saw that and told her staff to torn out the pages of the program, it was a big scandal. Hanban has banded their head to the wall. Stockholm University, who has the first CI in Nordic countries, and one of the first in the world, has reached the end of the 5-year term contract, said that they have achieved their goal in terms of getting relationship close to Chinese universities, there is no need for CI. If you look at who has CI, it is mainly the small universities. Like Copenhagen University said no, then CBS got one. Århus University said no, Aalborg University got one. That is the general trend. Stockholm University and Helsinki University are the only two big universities in the Nordic countries. Maybe they think the things they get out of Hanban, support of Chinese language teaching and networking are not worth in terms of reputation by having a CI. Deans and presidents of universities keep contact to each other. Blekinge University was close down officially due to cuts of funding, which is true. They have cut down programs in different parts of university and CI was one of them. It would be a valuable asset because CI brings money into the university. It is probably some kind of excuse. Now, there is only one CI in Sweden.

