2025 Collection of Exemplary Cases of Confucius Institute

Digital Applications and Practices

中国国际
中文教育基金会
Chinese International
Education Foundation

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Preface

The Chinese International Education Foundation (CIEF) launched an initiative at the 2025 Confucius Institute Day, designating the period from 2025 to 2027 as the "Year of Digital Intelligence for the Confucius Institute" under the theme of "Building a Smart Network for Chinese Language Education and Sharing High-Quality Chinese Language Education Resources." Rooted in the Confucius Institute's more than two decades of continuous exploration in the path of informatization, digitalization, and intelligentization, this initiative creates an important practical arena and provides valuable experience for the digital and intelligent transformation of international Chinese language education. The CIEF attaches great importance to the digital development of Confucius Institutes. Through initiatives such as building a dual-end global portal (ci.cn/Confucius Institute App), developing the "Confucius Institute Cloud" management service system, and establishing a digital educational resources database, it guides and encourages Confucius Institutes worldwide to apply various digital and intelligent technologies and tools, driving the quality and efficiency improvement of Chinese language teaching and cultural exchange, and achieving remarkable outcomes.

Co-hosted by the CIEF and the University of Science and Technology Beijing, the First Selection Event of Cases on Confucius Institute Digital Applications and Practices was a key project of the Year of Digital Intelligence for the Confucius Institute. Under the theme of

"Digital Innovation Creates Value, Intelligence Inspires the Future" and focusing on three categories of Intelligent Teaching, Intelligent Cultural Exchange, and Intelligent Management, the event collected a total of 83 cases submitted by 60 Confucius Institutes (Classrooms) from 42 countries and regions across five continents. Among them, 49 cases fell under the category of Intelligent Teaching, 26 under Intelligent Cultural Exchange, and 8 under Intelligent Management; Confucius Institutes in Europe submitted 33 cases, those in Asia 24, in Africa 11, in the Americas 11, and in Oceania 4. Through the analysis and research of the basic indicators of the cases, including rationality, completeness, innovation, timeliness, and exemplary value, a total of 20 exemplary cases were selected, which provide a relatively comprehensive and objective reflection of the enterprising spirit and innovative efforts of Confucius Institutes worldwide.

First, the supporting role of digital and intelligent technologies in Chinese language teaching has become increasingly prominent. Nearly 60 percent of the cases focus on Chinese language teaching. For example, the Confucius Institute for Business, London, UK, carries out teaching management through a digital platform; the Confucius Institute at University of Nairobi, Kenya, independently develops video teaching resources; and the Confucius Institute at Yamanashi Gakuin University, Japan, guides learners to use interactive learning tools. Based on their actual conditions, the Confucius Institutes

have integrated digital and intelligent technologies into all aspects of teaching, learning, management, assessment, and research, greatly improving the efficiency of Chinese language teaching.

Second, cooperation between Chinese and local institutions in digital projects has become increasingly close. The implementation and promotion of many cases have received strong support from Chinese and local partner institutions. For instance, Kunming University of Science and Technology and Souphanouvong University in Laos have jointly renovated the teaching facilities of the Confucius Institute to meet the digital teaching needs of "Chinese + Vocational Education"; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Greece and Shanghai International Studies University have taken the Confucius Institute online "Pen Pal" project as a platform to effectively promote student exchange and academic interaction between the two universities; Southwest Jiaotong University works closely with the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools, providing online Chinese language teaching to over 200 primary and secondary schools in Scotland through the "Virtual Exchange Teachers" program, setting an outstanding example of digitally enabled Sino-foreign cooperation.

Third, the digital literacy and practical capabilities of the teaching team have been steadily improved. On the one hand, there has been a steady increase in the number of specialized training programs and competitions organized independently by Confucius Institutes. The Confucius Institute at Chiang Mai University in Thailand, the

Confucius Institute at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman in Malaysia, and the Confucius Institute at University of Niš in Serbia have all adopted the approach of "Promoting Teaching through Competitions," helping teachers learn and adapt to new teaching ideas and methods by organizing digital skills competitions. On the other hand, teachers are also actively exploring the application of digital and intelligent technologies in teaching and cultural exchanges. Teachers of the Confucius Institute at the University of Saint Thomas in Chile have used AI tools to design Peking Opera culture promotion activities; teachers of the Confucius Institute at University of Turin in Italy have carried out multimodal teaching by digital means; and teachers of the Confucius Institute at T. A. Marryshow Community College in Grenada have enhanced the Confucius Institute's online network through social media. These attempts have achieved positive results and enabled teachers to gain valuable experience through practical application.

At the same time, a comparative analysis of various cases has also revealed some prominent problems in the digital development of Confucius Institutes. For example, the application and practice of digital and intelligent technologies are highly dependent on infrastructure conditions; the level of digital development of Confucius Institutes varies greatly across different countries and regions, with Confucius Institutes in developing countries generally still at an early stage of digital development; the overall coordination of digital development among Confucius Institutes worldwide is relatively weak, and the

lack of effective and institutionalized communication and exchange mechanisms is not conducive to the sharing of experience and achievements, resulting in a certain degree of resource waste.

Adapting to the trend of digital and intelligent transformation in education and promoting the application and practice of digital and intelligent technologies and products in Confucius Institutes worldwide are key measures for enhancing the development level of Confucius Institutes, and a reliable pathway to supporting the high-quality development of international Chinese language education. Going forward, the CIEF will adhere to a problem-oriented approach and focus on the following key directions to promote the digital and intelligent transformation and upgrading of Confucius Institutes.

First, strengthen demonstration and guidance to stimulate innovation. Organize special events that align with the direction of digital and intelligent development and meet practical needs, select a number of high-quality digital resources and exemplary cases, commend and reward a group of outstanding Confucius Institutes and CIers, and strive to create an open, inclusive, and dynamic environment for digital and intelligent development.

Second, promote collaborative sharing and deepen exchanges and mutual learning. Make good use of the platforms of the World Chinese Language Conference and the Confucius Institute regional and alliance conferences to create more opportunities for Confucius Institutes worldwide to exchange experience in digital and intelligent development and share the achievements of smart education; give full play to the role

of the Confucius Institute Global Portal, App and Media Matrix, so that high-quality educational resources can serve more Confucius Institutes.

Third, drive digital and intelligent upgrading and improve governance capacity. Continue to improve the "Confucius Institute Cloud" management service system to enhance the quality and efficiency of Confucius Institute operations; promote the development of Confucius Institute data systems and provide scientific support for business guidance and decision-making; continuously strengthen the training in teachers' digital literacy and skills, and reinforce governance and protection concerning the security and ethics of digital education.

To better promote the exchange and sharing of advanced experience and outstanding achievements in the digital development of Confucius Institutes, we have compiled the *2025 Collection of Exemplary Cases of Confucius Institute Digital Applications and Practices*, which systematically presents the implementation background, development paths, practical outcomes, and innovative highlights. It is hoped that this case collection can provide reference and inspiration for the digital and intelligent transformation and high-quality development of Confucius Institutes worldwide, and contribute to the steady and sustainable development of international Chinese language education.

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CONTENTS

Intelligent Teaching

Intelligent Cultural Exchange

Intelligent Management

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at the University of the South Pacific (CI-USP) was established in 2011 through the cooperation of the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji and Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications in China. Characterized by its presence in "three countries and four locations," CI-USP's teaching network covers Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Cook Islands, and benefits 14 USP campuses through online teaching. Its core activities include diversified Chinese language teaching covering minor-degree programs, community classes, courses for primary and secondary schools, and corporate training, as well as rich cultural activities. In recognition of its outstanding performance, CI-USP was awarded the title of "Model Confucius Institute" in 2016. In 2017, its affiliated Cook Islands Confucius Classroom was named "Confucius Classroom of the Year," and the Lautoka teaching site was successfully upgraded to a Confucius Classroom in 2019.

The case leader, Wang Xuefei, currently serves as the Course Coordinator at CI-USP. She presides over the online and offline teaching of the university credit course CN101, coordinates designated teachers across campuses to ensure the smooth operation of the course system, and flexibly adjusts course arrangements based on the actual situations of different countries. The team is led and guided by Li Chunxue, the Chinese Director of CI-USP, who is responsible for the top-level design and structural optimization of the course system. Core members, including key teachers Qiao Yaxiao, Wang Yue, Liu Liye, Xing Runmei, and Zhao Shuang, are respectively responsible for the online live teaching, offline tutoring, and student support for Chinese 101 and 201 courses at various campuses. With clear division of responsibilities and efficient collaboration, the team has jointly ensured the successful implementation of the regional transnational remote Chinese teaching model.

Regional Online Chinese Language Teaching Practice Based on Webex and Moodle—Exploration in Transnational Remote Teaching

Confucius Institute at the University of the South Pacific, Fiji

Case Background

The University of the South Pacific (USP) was jointly founded by 12 Pacific Island countries and is one of only two regional universities in the world. With broad geographic coverage and highly dispersed locations, the Confucius Institute at USP needs to provide Chinese language education to multiple Pacific Island nations. However, these countries are scattered across different islands. Due to inconvenient transportation between islands and uneven distribution of educational resources, many students find it difficult to complete systematic studies relying solely on offline classes, making digital and remote teaching a necessary choice.

In addition, when promoting online teaching, the Confucius Institute needs to rely on the existing distance education system of USP to achieve the digital transformation of its teaching model. Therefore, based on the Webex and Moodle platforms, this case

explores the construction of a transnational, synchronous, and scalable Chinese course-sharing model to address challenges caused by geographical dispersion and resource scarcity, thereby promoting resource sharing and greater equity in Chinese language education in the South Pacific region.

In recent years, remote teaching has developed rapidly in the South Pacific region. In 2020, only about 22% of Chinese course enrollments at the Confucius Institute were online, while by 2025 this proportion had reached 47%, nearly equal to offline enrollment.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

1.1 Working Principles

Centered on the headquarters in Fiji, covering branch campuses in various countries to achieve transnational resource sharing.

1.2 Design Approach

Relying on USP's official Webex and Moodle systems, combined with auxiliary tools such as Quizlet and Kahoot, to create an online-offline blended teaching model that meets the learning needs of students in different countries.

1.3 Implementation Pathway

The project was implemented comprehensively through four aspects: platform development, course design, teaching model innovation, and teacher capacity building. (1) Platform Development: Integrating Webex (for real-time online teaching) and Moodle (for course resource management) to establish a stable online teaching support system. (2) Course Design: Integrating situational teaching and cultural experiences by introducing real-life scenarios into the classroom and incorporating elements of Chinese culture such as festivals and calligraphy, thereby enhancing the authenticity and enjoyment of learning. (3) Teaching Model Innovation: Providing diversified course formats according to

the conditions of different countries, including fully online courses and blended courses combining online teaching with offline tutoring, to enhance the course's adaptability and reach. (4) Teacher Capacity Building: Regularly organizing training on digital teaching tools and teaching exchange forums to enhance teachers' digital literacy and online teaching competence, thereby ensuring the smooth implementation of the project.

1.4 Considerations

Strengthening the development of asynchronous courseware and offline learning resources to cope with unstable internet connections in some regions; flexibly adjusting course schedules according to time zone differences across multiple countries to enhance participation and learning effectiveness.

2 Implementation Process

2.1 Phase 1: Platform Setup and Model Transformation (Around 2020)

The course platform comprehensively shifted to Webex and Moodle, forming a normalized mechanism for "online Chinese classrooms" and offering three types of courses: offline, online, and blended.

2.2 Phase 2: Course Design and Promotion (2021–2024)

The course design adopted diversified teaching formats, including synchronous classrooms (real-time teaching from headquarters), asynchronous classrooms (pre-class videos and post-class recordings), and group interactions (Webex Breakout Rooms). Statistics show that by 2025, the Chinese 101 credit course had covered 6–8 Pacific Island countries, including Fiji, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

2.3 Phase 3: Scenario-Based Operation and Adjustment (2024–2025)

In the Vanuatu campus, an earthquake once led to temporary campus closure. A blended model of "online teaching + regular face-to-face tutoring by teachers" was adopted to ensure learning continuity. In the Cook Islands, the Confucius Institute offered lunchtime online courses for working

students, enabling them to participate in learning during work breaks.

2.4 Phase 4: Teacher Capacity Improvement (2025)

The Confucius Institute hosted a digital education forum and organized teachers to participate in the "2025 International Chinese Language Teachers Digital Literacy Improvement Project," continuously enhancing teachers' digital teaching competence and teaching innovation capacity.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Implementation Outcomes

- Wide Coverage: A single Chinese course can simultaneously cover students from 6–8 island countries.
- High Participation: The average attendance rate for online courses exceeds 85%.
- Educational Equity: Learning costs are reduced, allowing students to receive systematic Chinese language education without going abroad.
- Cultural Exchange: Students from multiple countries study together, promoting regional cultural exchange.
- Model Innovation: A "regional remote Chinese education model" has been developed and has received coverage from major media outlets, including Phoenix TV and Beijing Daily.

2 Highlights and Features

- Regional Remote Model: Relying on the USP regional university platform to achieve transnational, synchronous, and scalable teaching, addressing the challenge of geographical dispersion.
- Blended Teaching Model: Flexibly adjusting to different scenarios, such as post-disaster situations and in-service learning, with strong adaptability to diverse teaching contexts.
- Integration of Digital Tools: Combining Webex, Moodle, Quizlet, and other tools to improve classroom interaction and assessment efficiency.
- Teacher Training Support System: Enhancing teachers' digital literacy through forums and project training, thereby promoting innovation in

teaching methods.

- Integration of Cultural Experiences: Incorporating cultural elements such as festivals, calligraphy, and dance into teaching to enhance students' learning interest.

■ Case Experience Summary

The project relies on the regional platform of the University of the South Pacific to integrate educational resources and make full use of its network and teaching system, enabling course sharing and resource connectivity among multiple countries.

In terms of technology application, Webex and Moodle serve as the core teaching platforms, supplemented by digital tools such as Quizlet, to meet the needs of different teaching scenarios. At the same time, flexible online, offline, and blended teaching models are designed according to local conditions, such as post-disaster teaching disruptions or the learning needs of working students, thereby improving the adaptability and sustainability of courses. In addition, the Confucius Institute regularly organizes digital teaching training and educational forums to enhance teachers' digital literacy and teaching innovation capacity, while developing targeted teaching solutions to address practical challenges such as geographical dispersion, economic pressure, and multiple time zones. In the future, the Confucius Institute will continue to promote the development of a regional Chinese learning resource library and explore the introduction of immersive technologies such as AR and VR to enrich language learning and cultural experiences, thereby supporting the sustainable development of Chinese language education in the South Pacific region.

The above experience provides a replicable model for Chinese language education in geographically dispersed regions globally and demonstrates the broad prospects of digital empowerment in education.

Overview of the CI

Established in 2009 and co-hosted by Chongqing Normal University and the University of Rwanda, the Confucius Institute at University of Rwanda (CIUR) was awarded the title of "Confucius Institute of the Year" in 2016. As the largest and most widely recognized Chinese language education institution in Rwanda, it operates one Confucius Classroom and 14 teaching sites, radiating across the entire country and having trained over 20,000 Chinese language learners. Over more than a decade of development, CIUR has formed three distinctive features: China-Rwanda language and cultural exchange, Chinese martial arts promotion, and "Chinese + vocational" education. It is dedicated not only to Chinese language teaching but also to actively serving local society through digital transformation, acting as a vital bridge for China–Rwanda people-to-people exchange.

This case is led by senior leadership from both Chinese and Rwandan institutions and implemented by frontline backbone staff, forming a highly efficient execution team.

Steering Group: Prof. Zhang Yan and Prof. Wang Guoyin from Chongqing Normal University provide strategic direction and overall guidance, ensuring project alignment and resource support.

Project Leads: Dr. Zeng Guangyu, Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute, is responsible for overall project planning, resource development control, and digital scheme coordination. Dr. Beatrice Yanzigiye, the Rwandan Director, handles local demand research, linguistic quality control, and local promotion coordination.

Execution Group: Yang Haixia and other Chinese and Rwandan teachers are responsible for bilingual resource compilation, recording, platform maintenance, and teaching application promotion.

Bridging Chinese and Kinyarwanda Through Digital Intelligence: A Case Study of a New Teaching Ecosystem Built on a Bilingual Digital Platform

Confucius Institute at University of Rwanda, Rwanda

■ Case Background

Since its official operation in 2009, the Confucius Institute at University of Rwanda (CIUR) has been dedicated to the development of Chinese language education in Rwanda. However, in serving local learners, it faced three critical challenges:

- Low adaptability of the medium of instruction: Existing Chinese resources predominantly used English as the medium of instruction. Given the limited English proficiency of many local learners, this created a significant learning barrier.
- Lack of bilingual resources: This resulted in a one-way transmission of language and culture, which did not fully reflect the Confucius Institute's principle of mutual learning.
- Limited educational coverage: Traditional offline teaching could only meet the needs of a small number of learners.

Against this backdrop, since 2020, CIUR has centered its work on mutual learning between Chinese and Rwandan languages and cultures. Building on 12 self-developed bilingual teaching resources, it has established an exclusive platform and developed digital tools to provide learners with more convenient and diverse learning channels. These practices have improved teaching effectiveness, advanced the principle of mutual learning, and expanded access to education, providing a practical model for the "localization + digitalization" development of international Chinese language education.

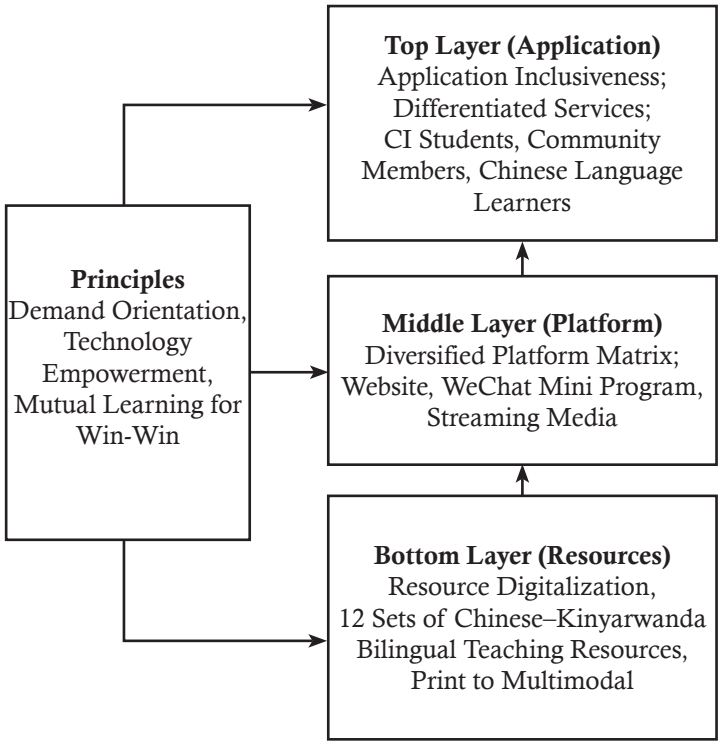
■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

Adhering to the principles of "demand orientation, technology empowerment, and mutual learning for win-win results," this case aims to build a digital-intelligent application platform suited to the Rwandan ecological context of Chinese language education to address key challenges in its development.

The case adopts a three-layer architecture of "bottom-layer resource digitalization, middle-layer platform diversification, and top-layer application inclusiveness."

- Bottom Layer (Resources): Based on preliminary research on Rwanda's linguistic context, 12 sets of Chinese–Kinyarwanda bilingual teaching resources were independently developed, transforming printed materials into multimodal digital resources (visual, audio, and reading).
- Middle Layer (Platform): Considering the ICT device ownership among Rwandan students, a diversified distribution network was established by combining a website, a WeChat mini program, and a streaming media matrix.
- Top Layer (Application): Differentiated services were provided for CI students, community members, and people interested in learning Chinese.



Three-Layer Architecture

The case follows a closed-loop pathway of "Research—Construction—Application—Evaluation." This entails identifying pain points to develop resources, then building digital platforms, followed by widespread application, and finally iterating and optimizing based on feedback.

2 Implementation Process

Launched in 2020, the project has been advanced through four overlapping phases:

2.1 Phase 1: Research and Content Development (2020–2022)

A joint China–Rwanda task force, comprising core CI teachers, Kinyarwanda experts, and technical staff, was established. They conducted in-depth research at various CI teaching sites and confirmed "Chinese–Kinyarwanda bilingual resources" as the core direction for development.

With support from the Center for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC), Ministry of Education of China, 12 bilingual textbooks, readers, and dictionaries, including the *Chinese–Kinyarwanda Dictionary* and *Tourism Chinese in Rwanda*, were compiled and published, laying the content foundation for digitalization.

2.2 Phase 2: Digital Resource Construction (2021–2023)

All 12 paper textbooks were digitized. Over 1,000 accompanying audio clips were recorded and edited, and 52 teaching short videos were produced, achieving a leap from "flat books" to "multi-dimensional classrooms." In addition, audio-visual materials were uploaded and shared through the official WeChat account and YouTube channel, forming a preliminary cloud-based resource library.

2.3 Phase 3: Platform Construction and Integration (2022–2024)

The "Chinese-Kinyarwanda Language and Culture Mutual Learning Platform" website was developed and launched. The "Chinese–Kinyarwanda Dictionary" WeChat mini program was developed and embedded, integrating 11,092 Chinese entries and 3,000 Kinyarwanda entries to enable instant bi-directional search and translation. A "Rwanda Observation" column was set up on the platform to present China–Rwanda cross-cultural research results digitally, enriching the platform's humanistic dimension.

2.4 Phase 4: Promotion and Iterative Operation (2023–Present)

Resources were integrated into classrooms across 14 CI teaching sites and promoted specifically to local enterprises and the Chinese community. Technical optimizations to webpage code and resource compression were implemented to address slow network loading in remote areas. An AI-powered response function is being planned to address the lack of guidance for self-learners.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Overall Outcomes

This case has successfully broken the "English language barrier" and "time and space walls" for Chinese language learners in Rwanda, achieving remarkable results in three main areas:

- Doubling of Service Scale: Digital resources cover the CI and its 14 teaching sites, serving over 5,000 students annually. Through the website and mini program, an additional 5,000 "time-constrained" learners who cannot attend offline classes are reached.
- Leap in Teaching Quality: For learners relying on Kinyarwanda-assisted learning, the registration rate for HSK Levels 1 and 2 has increased by 30% compared with the pre-implementation period, and the pass rate has doubled.
- Expanded Social Impact: The website has accumulated over 10,000 visits, of which 43% are users who are not offline CI students, positioning the CI as a core hub for inclusive Chinese language education beyond the campus.

2 Highlights and Features

The case demonstrates unique highlights in resources, platforms, and values:

- Resource Innovation: The project created the first large-scale, systematic "Chinese + Kinyarwanda" bilingual digital resource database, ending the previous reliance on English-annotated textbooks and significantly lowering the entry barrier to learning Chinese.
- Platform Innovation: A four-in-one all-media matrix (website + WeChat official account + mini program + videos) was established, enabling diversified platform services.
- Value Innovation: The project prioritized educationally underserved groups and enhanced national pride and cultural identity among Rwandan learners through the use of their native language.

■ Case Experience Summary

The successful implementation of this case has accumulated three core experiences for the characteristic development of Confucius Institutes in underdeveloped regions:

1 Top-level Planning is the Key: Strong Support from the Partner Institution

This case benefited from the high regard and top-level design of the Chinese partner university, Chongqing Normal University. The university's support provided a solid guarantee for the smooth implementation of the case, ensuring the continuity and stability of the CI's digital-intelligent development.

2 Collaborative Effort is the Core: Joint Teams Targeting Pain Points

The case established a deeply integrated collaboration mechanism between the Chinese and Rwandan teams. Through multiple rounds of field research and brainstorming, the joint teams accurately diagnosed major bottlenecks in local teaching—the language-of-instruction barrier and the lack of localized resources. Based on mutual respect, both sides jointly developed the teaching content. This close trust ensured that the digital resources precisely met the real needs of learners in Rwanda.

3 Innovation is the Driver: Determination for Transformation amidst Constraints

Facing challenges such as weak local network infrastructure and limited hardware, CIUR did not wait or retreat. Instead, it demonstrated a firm determination to seek breakthroughs under limited conditions. The project adhered to the principle of "adapting to local conditions and prioritizing urgent needs," starting with digital textbooks and gradually moving toward platform-based and intelligent development. This spirit of exploration—persisting in digital-intelligent transformation despite resource limitations—not only solved immediate issues of educational accessibility but also laid the foundation for introducing cutting-edge technologies like AI-assisted teaching in the future.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at the University of Lisbon in Portugal was jointly established by Tianjin Foreign Studies University in China and the University of Lisbon in Portugal in 2008. Its primary mission is to promote Chinese language and culture education in Portugal. Over the past decade, more than 20,000 learners have studied Chinese through the Confucius Institute, with over 100 students receiving scholarships to study in China.

Teaching programs cover primary and secondary schools, undergraduate education, and community learners, with a complete curriculum structure and an HSK testing center. In 2023, it was awarded the title of "Model Confucius Institute." In 2025, it led the establishment of the Confucius Institute Alliance in Portugal and was elected as the first rotating coordinating institution.

He Jiaxin, Case Lead, is a teacher at the Confucius Institute at the University of Lisbon. She is primarily responsible for language-related material design and teaching, external coordination, and preparation of the case documentation. Wang Jincheng, Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute, coordinates with the municipal government and participating schools at key stages, oversees implementation, and provides guidance and oversight on teaching quality and related documentation. Mariana Vivas (Huang Lan), a local teacher, is mainly responsible for cultural content design and teaching and participates in external communication and English case material preparation.

Application of Multimodal Digital Technologies in Chinese Language Classes at Portuguese Primary Schools

Confucius Institute at the University of Lisbon, Portugal

Case Background

This case took place in a Grade 3 Chinese language class at a Portuguese public primary school, where Chinese had been incorporated into the formal school curriculum. The students' first language was Portuguese, and they had no prior exposure to Chinese. Teaching practice revealed three major challenges:

First, due to their young age, students had a short attention span, and classroom discipline and participation levels fluctuated considerably. Second, Chinese differs significantly from students' mother tongue in terms of pronunciation, the writing system, and modes of expression, which makes learning particularly demanding and may easily lead to frustration, thereby undermining sustained learning motivation. Third, traditional teaching methods based on single-mode explanation and mechanical drills proved insufficient to stimulate student engagement, resulting in limited classroom interaction and weak retention of learning outcomes.

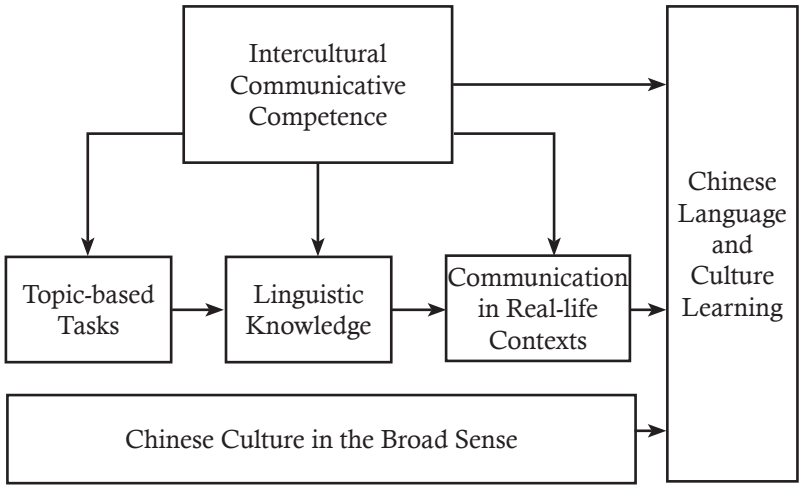
To address these challenges, this case explored the use of digital technologies to enhance teaching. Through multimodal presentation, gamified interactive tasks, and instant feedback mechanisms, the approach aimed to enhance classroom appeal and immersion, stimulate students' active participation, reduce frustration, and strengthen their memory and comprehension of Chinese through intuitive, vivid, and engaging learning experiences.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

The case entered its design phase in the 2023–2024 academic year. The core of the design was to use digital tools as a medium to guide students through interactive task chains, encouraging autonomous inquiry-based learning and gradually establishing a student-centered teaching model. At the same time, Chinese culture was systematically integrated into language instruction. Chinese teachers and local teachers co-taught collaboratively, enhancing students' cross-cultural communicative competence while improving their language skills.

During this phase, Professor Wang Jincheng, the Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute, engaged in multiple rounds of communication and coordination with the local municipal government, education authorities, and participating schools. The two Chinese teachers, He Jiaxin and Mariana Vivas, conducted repeated pedagogical discussions with education officials and class teachers, thoroughly examining teaching objectives, content design, and implementation pathways. Through this process, the current teaching plan and curriculum framework were jointly finalized.



Task-based teaching design integrating culture and language

2 Implementation Process

Under this framework, the case adopted an innovative approach by replacing traditional textbooks with digitally developed multimodal teaching materials. Based on students' cognitive characteristics and local learning conditions, the two teachers independently designed and produced multimodal PowerPoint materials integrating text, images, audio, and animation. This allowed abstract linguistic knowledge to be presented in a more intuitive and vivid manner, significantly enhancing students' attention and interest. Teachers were also able to dynamically adjust subsequent lesson content and presentation methods based on classroom feedback and learning outcomes, thereby responding more effectively to students' individualized learning needs.

AI-generated editable flashcards were introduced during lessons to enrich learning materials, and AI-based interactive games were piloted after class to reinforce review and consolidation. The design and production of these materials began in May 2024, were officially implemented at the start of the new academic year in September 2024, and have since been continuously iterated and optimized through teaching practice.

Once formal teaching commenced, classroom activities were organized

around interactive task chains, guiding students to complete language acquisition through active participation and exploration. A closed-loop learning process—"review and activation, vocabulary presentation, sentence pattern construction, and oral practice"—was formed, supporting efficient, student-centered interactive teaching.

- Review and activation: Previously learned sentence patterns were reviewed through dynamic, colorful jigsaw puzzles, activating students' prior knowledge while capturing their attention and providing a sense of achievement, thus preparing them for new learning.
- Vocabulary presentation: Students attempted to pronounce new words using pinyin knowledge and mother-tongue transfer, embedded them into previously learned sentence patterns, inferred meaning through images and context, and gradually developed linguistic intuition.
- Sentence pattern construction: Students attempted to produce sentences based on images and word meanings, after which teachers guided and modeled correct usage, summarized patterns, and standardized expression to facilitate the acquisition of new structures.
- Oral practice: After learning new sentence patterns, students engaged in spontaneous output through a "lucky sentence" draw, promoting immediate comprehension and repeated practice and further consolidating what they had learned.

In terms of evaluation and feedback, the case adopted a combined model of "instant feedback + formative assessment." On the one hand, quantitative indicators such as classroom response rate, accuracy of answers, and sustained attention duration were continuously tracked. On the other hand, students' oral feedback was regularly collected, and joint teaching and research meetings were held with homeroom teachers to adjust task difficulty and teaching procedures accordingly, gradually forming a sustainable optimization loop.

The project encountered two main challenges during its implementation, both of which were effectively addressed through teaching practice.

First, at the initial stage of formal instruction, the teacher found that, due to the significant differences between students' mother tongue and Chinese, students had a greater need for frequent review and repeated reinforcement. In response, the two teachers adjusted the structure of the multimodal materials by moving certain review tasks to the introductory phase of the local teachers' culture classes. This arrangement increased review frequency and exposure time without compressing new content, effectively activating students' existing Chinese knowledge and laying a linguistic foundation for subsequent cultural learning.

Second, as the academic year progressed, individual differences among students led to widening gaps in language proficiency within and across classes. To address this, the teachers implemented differentiated design for core lesson content, categorizing it into three levels: "content all students must master," "content most students should master," and "content for students with stronger language ability to further expand." These layers were organically embedded within the task chain. For the second-level content, repeated exposure and reinforcement in subsequent lessons eventually enabled most students in the class to achieve the learning objectives. This differentiated strategy respected individual differences while ensuring overall teaching effectiveness and accessibility.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

The case demonstrates two prominent strengths. First, in terms of teaching methodology, teacher-developed multimodal PPT materials replace traditional paper-based textbooks, guiding students to actively explore and construct linguistic knowledge through interactive task chains. This approach aligns with the cognitive characteristics of primary school students and local learning conditions, significantly enhancing classroom engagement and students' learning motivation.

Second, Chinese cultural elements such as festivals and food are organically integrated into language instruction, enriching cultural experience and fostering students' understanding of Chinese culture and cross-cultural awareness.

The case was implemented for one academic year in seven Grade 3 classes across four Portuguese public primary schools. Classroom observations and teacher records indicated a significant increase in student participation: by the end of the academic year, average classroom interaction rates exceeded 90%, with an average active participation rate of approximately 60%; accuracy in tones and word order improved markedly, and classroom atmosphere became more dynamic. Homeroom teacher feedback confirmed that the innovative teaching methods effectively extended students' attention span, improved lesson coherence, and enhanced instructional efficiency.

In terms of resource development, the case accumulated reusable digital materials and task templates, including image-based flashcards, dynamic puzzles, and random draw tools. These resources allow flexible substitution of vocabulary and sentence patterns to suit different themes and teaching objectives, substantially improving sustainability and scalability.

Following the pilot phase, the municipal government collected feedback from students, parents, and homeroom teachers, expressed high praise for the program, and signed a formal cooperation agreement with the Confucius Institute. By September 2025, the project had expanded to five primary schools with 21 classes, covering Grades 3 and 4 and reaching approximately 500 students. This expansion demonstrates recognition by local education authorities and confirms the model's viability for sustained implementation and broader dissemination.

■ Case Experience Summary

During the implementation of this case, a series of broadly applicable and transferable experiences were developed.

First, advancing digital applications with clear pedagogical objectives—rather than pursuing technology for its own sake—was key to stable implementation. Multimodal materials and interactive task chains were designed around language acquisition and cultural understanding, serving classroom structure and learning outcomes while avoiding the pitfall of "technology-first, pedagogy-weakened" approaches, thereby enabling this model to be adapted to different teaching contexts.

Second, a student-centered classroom organization built around task chains created a clear learning loop that effectively enhanced engagement and sustained attention among young learners. This structure is not dependent on specific textbooks or platforms and can be adapted across languages and learning stages, demonstrating strong generalizability.

Third, collaborative teaching and research between Chinese and local teachers provided essential support for successful implementation. Local teachers' understanding of learner profiles and classroom rhythm complemented Chinese teachers' expertise in language and culture instruction, facilitating integration into the local education system and strengthening project sustainability.

Finally, modular and reusable resource development generated a set of flexible digital materials and task templates, creating practical conditions for future expansion and dissemination.

Overall, the case demonstrates strong potential for broader application in terms of pedagogical philosophy, instructional structure, and implementation pathways, offering valuable reference for other Confucius Institutes and Chinese language programs worldwide.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at Yamanashi Gakuin University was jointly established in 2019 by Yamanashi Gakuin University in Japan and Xi'an Jiaotong University in China. It has long been committed to international Chinese language education, the dissemination of Chinese culture, and China–Japan cultural and people-to-people exchanges. The Confucius Institute provides multi-level and diversified Chinese language courses for university, secondary school, and primary school students as well as community learners, and actively explores innovative models that integrate Chinese language teaching with digital technology and intercultural communication. The annual enrollment remains at approximately 900 to 1,000 learners. In teaching practice, the Confucius Institute emphasizes the coordinated development of classroom instruction and extracurricular activities. Through course instruction, cultural experience activities, and digital learning methods, it continuously enhances teaching quality and learning experience.

This case is led and coordinated by Zhang Libo, a Chinese language teacher at the Confucius Institute and an associate professor at the Global Learning Center, Yamanashi Gakuin University. The team members include the Chinese and Japanese Directors of the Confucius Institute and several Chinese language teachers. With a clear division of responsibilities, the team collaborates in course design, instructional implementation, data collection, and effectiveness evaluation, jointly promoting the smooth implementation of the project.

Application Practice of In-Class and Out-of-Class Integrated Digital Learning Tools in University Elementary Chinese Teaching

Confucius Institute at Yamanashi Gakuin University, Japan

■ Case Background

With the development of information technology, digital learning tools have gradually become an important supplementary means in international Chinese language education. However, in university-level elementary Chinese teaching, problems such as wide variation in learners' language proficiency, inconsistent learning pace, and difficulty in sustaining extracurricular learning remain prominent. A single classroom lecture model is often unable to meet diverse learning needs, which affects teaching effectiveness and students' learning motivation.

In the 2025 spring semester "Basic Chinese I" course at Yamanashi Gakuin University, there were both absolute beginners and students who had previously studied Chinese in secondary school. These two groups showed significant differences in vocabulary size, pronunciation accuracy, and learning strategies. How to achieve effective teaching within limited class hours while

ensuring sustained learner participation thus became an urgent practical issue.

In response, this case draws on the platform advantages of the Confucius Institute at Yamanashi Gakuin University and introduces three types of digital tools: textbook-support tools, classroom interactive tools, and extracurricular continuous learning tools. By constructing an in-class and out-of-class integrated teaching model and empowering instruction through digital technology, the case aims to address learning differences, enhance learning interest and participation, provide practical evidence for optimizing and promoting teaching models, and explore feasible paths and practical implications for digital teaching in university elementary Chinese education.

■ Case Development Plan

This case focuses on practical issues in university elementary Chinese teaching, such as wide variation in learners' backgrounds, uneven classroom participation, and the disconnection between in-class and out-of-class learning. Relying on digital learning tools, it constructs a case development plan featuring "in-class and out-of-class integration, tiered support, and cyclical improvement." Through systematic design and phased implementation, the case explores replicable pathways for empowering international Chinese language education with digital technology.

1 Scheme Design

1.1 Working Principles

This case follows the principles of "learner-centeredness," "integration of in-class and out-of-class learning," and "equal emphasis on differentiated support and overall improvement." Under unified course objectives and scheduling, digital tools are used to provide flexible learning pathways for learners with different proficiency levels, thereby helping less-prepared learners reduce learning frustration while improving participation and learning outcomes.

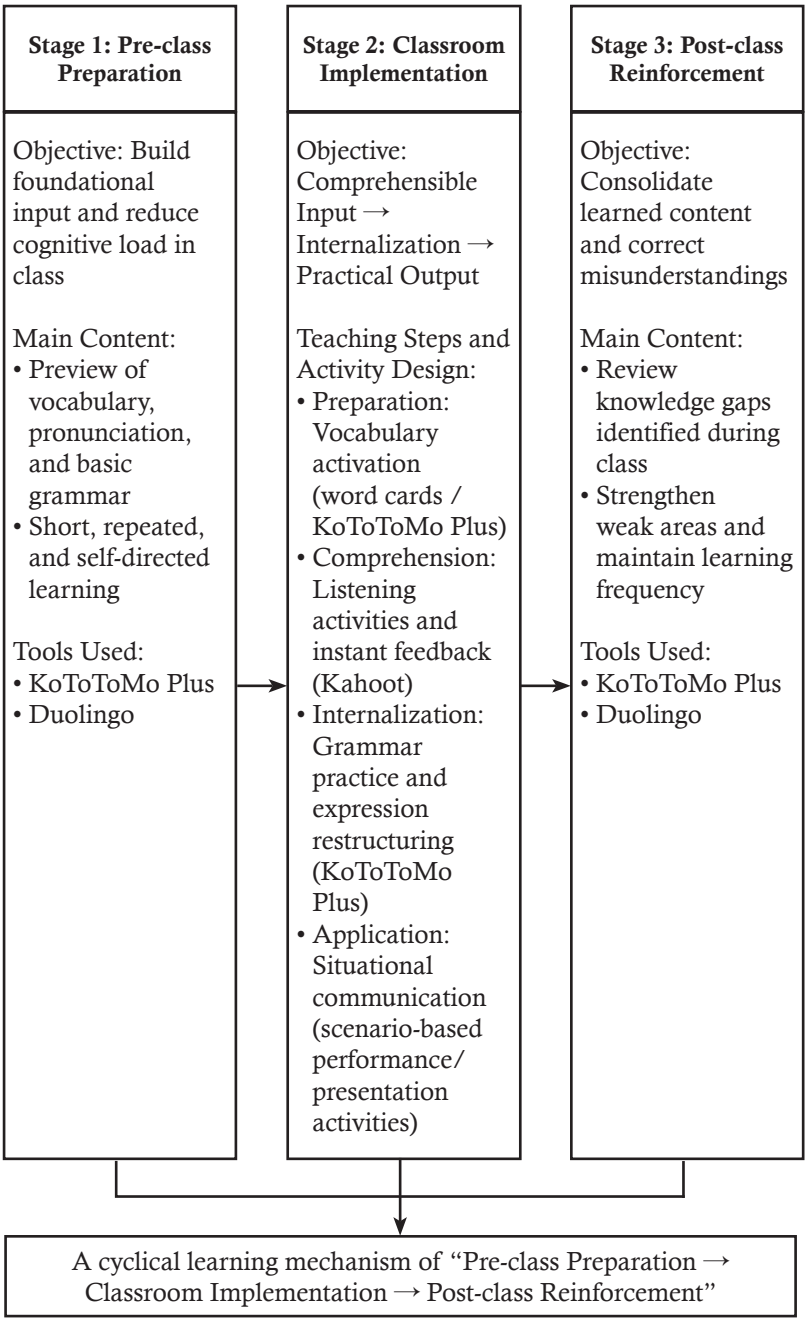
1.2 Design Approach

The core design approach of this case lies in the coordinated application of digital tools. Textbook-support learning, classroom interactive learning, and daily micro-learning are organically integrated to build a mutually complementary learning structure. During course implementation, the textbook-support learning tool (KoToToMo Plus) mainly supports learners' preview before class and consolidation after class, providing necessary cognitive preparation for classroom activities. The classroom interactive learning platform (Kahoot) strengthens learners' understanding of learning content and classroom engagement through instant feedback and participatory activities. Meanwhile, the daily micro-learning tool (Duolingo) extends learning time and contexts, encouraging learners to develop continuous learning habits.

Based on this functional division, the case further constructs a cyclical learning structure of "pre-class preparation—in-class understanding and application—post-class reinforcement," realizing the organic connection between in-class and out-of-class learning.

1.3 Implementation Pathway

At the implementation level, this case is carried out from three aspects: instructional design, learning support, and process management. First, digital learning is incorporated into the overall course structure rather than treated as an additional activity, ensuring alignment with course objectives. Second, in response to differences in learners' proficiency levels, students are guided to regulate their learning pace and focus autonomously, thereby strengthening learner agency. In terms of process management, learning records, classroom feedback, and stage-based assessments are combined to continuously monitor learning conditions and adjust teaching activities accordingly.



Implementation Flowchart of an Integrated In-Class and Out-of-Class Digital Teaching Case

1.4 Considerations

In the design of the plan, attention is paid to balancing tool use and learning workload to avoid overreliance on technology. At the same time, teacher guidance and feedback are emphasized to prevent the use of digital tools from becoming a mere formality.

2 Implementation Process

The implementation of the project consists of the following four stages:

2.1 Preparation and Organization Stage

At the beginning of the semester, the proper functioning of the network and equipment was ensured, students were guided to register platform accounts, and they were informed of the purposes, methods, and evaluation principles of digital learning, thereby reducing operational barriers.

2.2 Introduction and Adaptation Stage

At the beginning of the semester, students were guided to master the basic operations of the learning tools, and low-difficulty tasks were used to help them become familiar with digital learning methods. Classroom activities mainly involved low-burden interactive tasks to reduce psychological pressure and enable learners to gradually adapt to the digital learning model.

2.3 Routine Operation Stage

After teaching entered a stable stage, various digital learning tools functioned according to their designated roles. Extracurricular learning was mainly carried out through the KoToToMo Plus application and the micro-learning platform Duolingo, focusing on repeated practice for preview and review. In practice, teachers checked and tracked students' pre-class preparation and post-class review by examining the learning progress and completion rates in KoToToMo Plus, thereby monitoring students' completion of vocabulary and grammar exercises.

In classroom teaching, interactive quizzes were conducted through the Kahoot platform, which automatically generated data such as the number

of participants, answer accuracy rates, and rankings. Based on this data, teachers were able to quickly assess students' mastery of learning content and adjust the subsequent teaching focus accordingly.

Meanwhile, the continuous learning records on Duolingo and students' submitted stage-based reflections also provided supplementary evidence for teachers to understand learners' ongoing learning progress and attitudes. On this basis, teachers regularly summarized digital learning records and classroom observation results and made necessary adjustments to teaching activities and learning support methods, thus ensuring the stability and effectiveness of the teaching process.

2.4 Integration and Optimization Stage

In the latter half of the semester, activity frequency and task difficulty were adjusted based on earlier learning data. The functional connection between different tools was strengthened to avoid repetitive workload caused by overlapping tools. At the same time, through questionnaires and reflection activities, students were guided to review their learning process and internalize their digital learning experiences into learning strategies and abilities.

Key measures included regular teacher monitoring and feedback to ensure that tool use served course objectives; the adoption of formative assessment that incorporated the learning process into course evaluation; and the use of questionnaires and classroom communication to understand learners' needs and make timely adjustments.

3 Major Issues and Countermeasures

Major issues included some students' unfamiliarity with the tools at the initial stage and a perceived heavy workload. These were addressed by simplifying operational procedures, adjusting task scale, and introducing peer assistance, thereby ensuring the smooth implementation of teaching activities.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Implementation Outcomes

This case was fully implemented in the 2025 spring semester "Basic Chinese I" course, involving a total of 21 students. The usage coverage rates of KoToToMo Plus and Kahoot reached 100%, while the sustained usage rate of Duolingo remained above 85%. The digital teaching model was successfully established and gradually stabilized over the course of one semester.

In terms of teaching effectiveness, classroom interactivity and learner participation were significantly enhanced. The number of times students spoke in class increased noticeably, and enthusiasm for group interaction improved significantly. Absolute beginners gradually built learning confidence with the support of digital tools, while students with prior Chinese learning experience were further challenged through extended tasks, demonstrating clear results of differentiated instruction. Final examination results showed that most students achieved the course objectives, and overall learning outcomes were relatively satisfactory. In addition, questionnaire results indicated that over 90% of students believed digital learning tools positively contributed to enhancing learning interest and comprehension. Extracurricular learning was no longer limited to passively completing assignments but gradually developed into short-term, repeated, and self-directed learning habits.

2 Highlights and Features

First, the design integrates in-class and out-of-class learning. Digital tools integrate pre-class preview, classroom activities, and post-class reinforcement, forming a cyclical learning mechanism. Second, multiple tools are applied collaboratively. Learning tools with different functions each perform their roles and complement one another, avoiding the functional limitations of relying on a single tool. Third, both differentiation and overall coherence are considered. Within a unified course framework, flexible support is provided for learners with different proficiency levels, thereby enhancing instructional inclusiveness.

Case Experience Summary

The implementation of this case demonstrates that the key to the effective application of digital tools in university elementary Chinese teaching lies in whether digital learning can be integrated into the overall instructional design to form a systematic operational mechanism aligned with course objectives, classroom activities, and learning assessment.

First, instruction should remain goal-oriented, clearly defining the functional positioning of digital tools within the course and avoiding formalistic use of technology. Second, the integration of in-class and out-of-class learning is an important condition for improving learning effectiveness; extracurricular learning should serve classroom activities rather than exist in isolation. Third, teachers' process guidance and feedback are indispensable. Through regular monitoring and dynamic adjustments, the stability of the teaching process can be ensured.

In addition, this case has strong replicability. The tools adopted include both textbook-support applications and open digital platforms. The implementation model can be flexibly adjusted according to different institutions and courses, and thus has demonstrative and reference value for the digital transformation of international Chinese language education.

Overview of the CI

The Maritime Silk Road Confucius Institute in Thailand was jointly established in 2015 by Tianjin Normal University in China and Dhurakij Pundit University in Thailand. It is the world's first Confucius Institute named after the Maritime Silk Road. The Confucius Institute operates 4 teaching sites and 12 HSK test centers across Thailand, and has served nearly 10,000 candidates, gradually forming a Chinese language education service network covering universities, government departments, and communities.

Featuring "Chinese + vocational skills," the Confucius Institute collaborates with nearly 100 educational institutions and government agencies in Thailand, has established a multi-level teacher training system, and has trained nearly 2,000 local Chinese language teachers. It also provides customized Chinese courses for Thai university lecturers, civil servants, and media professionals, with its social impact continuing to grow.

The case is led by the Chinese Director Chen Wei, with team members including Yang Changjiang, Hou Xiaolin, and Guo Yufeng, who are responsible for curriculum design, content production, technical support, and data analysis.

Digital Teaching Innovation Based on the TikTok Social Media Platform

Maritime Silk Road Confucius Institute, Thailand

■ Case Background

Thailand has a large population of Chinese language learners, and the demand for learning Chinese continues to grow. However, traditional classroom teaching is constrained by time and space, making it difficult to meet learners' fragmented and personalized learning needs. Among young people in particular, short videos and live streaming have become important channels for acquiring knowledge, and they also provide new possibilities for innovation in Chinese language teaching.

Against this backdrop, how to effectively integrate international Chinese language education with social media platforms and artificial intelligence technologies, and build an efficient and sustainable teaching model, has become a major challenge in the digital transformation of Confucius Institutes.

The Maritime Silk Road Confucius Institute actively responds to this trend by using TikTok as a primary platform, combined with AI-assisted tools, to develop an integrated teaching system featuring

short videos and live streaming. This approach breaks through the limitations of traditional classrooms and enhances the reach and impact of Chinese language teaching.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

This case adopts a three-in-one model of "short videos + live streaming + artificial intelligence" to build a digital Chinese language teaching system.

In terms of platform selection, TikTok—widely used among young people in Thailand— is chosen to produce short and highly interactive Chinese language teaching video content, effectively enhancing reach and appeal.

In terms of teaching design, live-streaming classes enable real-time interaction, allowing teachers and learners to ask and answer questions and correct errors instantly, thereby improving participation and immersion.

In terms of technology application, artificial intelligence and digital interactive technologies are introduced to create virtual teaching assistants that provide personalized support for vocabulary learning and oral communication.

In terms of communication strategy, trending topics and cross-cultural content are incorporated so that Chinese learning is closely connected with real-life scenarios, thereby increasing learner interest and expanding the audience base.

2 Implementation Process

The project was carried out in several stages:

2.1 Infrastructure Development Stage

An official TikTok teaching account was established, equipment for filming, editing, and live streaming was put in place, and a team of teachers and technical staff was formed, thereby establishing a stable mechanism for content production and operations.

2.2 Content Design Stage

A series of short video lessons were developed around HSK vocabulary, daily conversations, and Chinese cultural knowledge. Each video lasted 30–60 seconds and focused on key learning points. Live-streaming classes were also conducted regularly to interact with learners in real time.

2.3 Technology Application Stage

Artificial intelligence and data analysis tools were introduced to produce interactive learning content. Through backend analysis of learner comments and interaction data, teaching content and delivery formats were continuously optimized.

2.4 Evaluation and Optimization Stage

A data monitoring mechanism was established to track indicators such as views, likes, and interaction rates. Questionnaires and online tests were conducted to evaluate learning outcomes, and feedback was used to continuously improve teaching design.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

To date, the Maritime Silk Road Confucius Institute's TikTok account has posted 141 teaching short videos and live-streaming clips, with total views exceeding 1,000,000. The highest number of views for a single video reached 280,000, while the highest number of duets for a single AI-based interactive video reached 249.

Live-streaming classes attracted more than 1,000 participants on average per session, with active comments and interactions, significantly enhancing the impact of Chinese language teaching. Followers included local Thai students, overseas Chinese, and international learners interested in Chinese.

In terms of teaching effectiveness, over 70% of surveyed viewers reported learning new vocabulary and expressions through short videos. Students generally found the short-video format engaging and fragmented learning easier to sustain,

while live classes effectively enhanced learning motivation and a sense of belonging.

Key highlights include:

- Establishing an integrated teaching model combining short videos, live streaming, and AI;
- Creating a new pathway for Chinese language teaching characterized by low cost and wide reach;
- Building a digital resource system consisting of a short-video course library, live-stream teaching archives, and AI interactive materials;
- Integrating elements of Chinese culture into digital dissemination to promote China–Thailand cultural exchange.

■ Case Experience Summary

This case demonstrates that integrating new media platforms with artificial intelligence technologies can effectively overcome the time and space constraints of traditional Chinese classroom teaching, improving interactivity and dissemination efficiency.

The following key insights are drawn from this practice:

- Teaching content should be closely related to real-life scenarios to enhance learner engagement.
- Flexible teaching formats are essential, and the combination of short videos and live streaming is highly effective.
- Technology should serve pedagogical objectives rather than being used merely for demonstration.
- Data analysis and learner feedback are crucial for the continuous optimization of teaching design.

In the future, the Maritime Silk Road Confucius Institute plans to further expand digital teaching pathways, including developing Chinese–Thai subtitles and intelligent assessment systems, building online learning communities, and strengthening resource sharing with other Confucius Institutes to form a digital teaching consortium.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at Chiang Mai University (CICMU) was jointly established in 2006 by Yunnan Normal University of China and Chiang Mai University of Thailand. It is a leading platform for Chinese language education and Sino-Thai cultural exchange in Northern Thailand, known for its large scale of operation and distinctive teaching features. Currently, CICMU manages 2 Confucius Classrooms and 14 teaching sites, forming a Chinese language education network that covers basic education, higher education, vocational colleges, and social services. It has established 32 HSK centers and has been awarded the title of "Global Excellent Test Center" for four consecutive years. Focusing on the three development directions of "Chinese + Vocational Skills," "Digital + Culture," and "Platform + Talent," the Confucius Institute continues to promote the integration of industry and education and the cultivation of skilled talents. In 2025, it delivered 9,526 Chinese language teaching hours, serving 7,554 learner visits.

In digital-intelligent innovation, CICMU drives pedagogical transformation through AI technologies. It has developed 59 dual-scenario teaching animations and 28 micro-lessons, forming a replicable digital teaching model of "Chinese + Healthcare." It has also proactively launched the "Meta Chinese" project, further expanding the boundaries of digital applications in international Chinese language education.

In terms of cultural activities and competitions, CICMU organizes dozens of large-scale cultural events each year and has established nationally recognized competition brands such as the "Zhongling Cup" and the "Zhongqing Cup," with its social impact continuing to expand.

This project is chaired by Lian Chen, Chinese Director of CICMU, and organized and implemented by Chinese teacher Zhang Xiaofan. The team members include four senior Chinese teachers—Li Ailun, Yang Han, Zheng Lu, and Zhang Qiuyang—who are responsible for training, instruction, operational guidance, and Chinese–Thai translation and interpretation.

AI-Empowered International Chinese Language Teacher Training and Teaching Skills Competition

Confucius Institute at Chiang Mai University, Thailand

■ Case Background

As the scale of Chinese language education in Thailand continues to expand, Chinese language teaching has placed higher demands on the professionalism and digital competencies of the teaching staff. Today, blended teaching has become a common practice, and the demand for the application of artificial intelligence in teaching resource development, classroom interaction, and learning assessment has become increasingly prominent. Consequently, local Chinese language teachers urgently require systematic training to enhance their digital teaching capabilities. Meanwhile, large class sizes, imbalanced regional resources, and the diverse cultural backgrounds of students further increase the difficulty of teaching organization and constrain the improvement of teaching quality.

Utilizing "AI empowerment" as its core, this case combines systematic training with practical competition to enhance teachers'

capabilities in developing intelligent courseware, multimodal materials, and AI teaching agents. It seeks to explore and form a replicable and scalable digital cultivation model for international Chinese language teachers, providing a reference for the high-quality development of regional Chinese language education.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

This project adopts "AI empowerment, China–Thailand integration, and integration of competition and training" as its core principles, aiming to promote the transformation and upgrading of local Chinese language teachers in Thailand through digital technology.

1.1 Working Principles

Adhere to the principle of "practice orientation" to ensure that AI tools directly solve practical problems in Thai classrooms; maintain "regional coverage" to reach remote areas of Northern Thailand through multi-site rotation training; and uphold "collaborative innovation" by encouraging cross-school and cross-site resource sharing and teamwork.

1.2 Design Approach

The project uses "Training + Practice + Competition" as its core framework to construct a complete closed loop from capability cultivation to achievement transformation. On one hand, a modular training system is used to enhance teachers' AI literacy and digital teaching capabilities. On the other hand, a teaching skills competition guides teachers to apply AI technology to real teaching scenarios, promoting the transformation of technical learning into classroom practice. At the same time, a cloud-based resource platform is utilized to accumulate and share project outcomes, enhancing project sustainability.

1.3 Implementation Pathway

A full-chain pathway of "three-location rotation training—online reinforcement—Chiang Mai finals—cloud sharing" was established. Basic

AI tool literacy was achieved through site-based offline intensive training, practical operations were deepened via self-directed learning sessions, and application results were ultimately tested through high-level competitions, with outstanding works converted into cloud-based digital resources.

1.4 Considerations

During implementation, attention is paid to the adaptability and stability of technological tools, prioritizing AI platforms with low operational barriers and high teaching applicability. At the same time, cross-cultural teaching awareness is strengthened to prevent technological applications from becoming detached from the actual situation of Thai classrooms, ensuring that the case outcomes are replicable and scalable.

2 Implementation Process

The implementation of the project is divided into four key stages:

2.1 Phase I: Planning and R&D (May–Early July 2025)

A digital literacy survey was conducted among Chinese language teachers in 11 provinces of Northern Thailand, establishing a core toolchain including DeepSeek, Wancai Animation Master (Animiz), Dreamina AI, and CapCut.

The Confucius Institute at Chiang Mai University teaching team developed courses around five core modules: intelligent courseware, multimodal materials, micro-lesson production, situational animation, and AI teaching agents. They also compiled the AI Tools Teaching Manual and established unified training schemes and evaluation standards.

2.2 Phase II: Three-Location Rotation Training (Late July–Mid-August 2025)

Offline training sessions were held successively in Mae Sot (Tak Province), Phitsanulok, and Chiang Mai, with nearly 150 participating teachers in total.

Using an "Explanation and Demonstration + Hands-on Practice" model, the project organized intensive practical training focused on the five core

modules. Teachers were guided to use AI tools to develop courseware, micro-lessons, and teaching aids within real teaching tasks. After the training, teachers were required to submit stage-based works, which served as the basis for subsequent selection.

During the rotation training at each sub-site, the Confucius Institute simultaneously conducted the preliminary review of the submitted works, focusing on technological integration and teaching applicability. To address issues exposed during operations, the project team provided targeted guidance through online Q&A sessions and demonstration explanations to ensure teachers could independently complete their instructional designs. Ultimately, 30 teachers were selected to advance to the final competition in Chiang Mai, based on a comprehensive evaluation of three dimensions: attendance, preliminary micro-lesson works, and practical performance in AI teaching agent development.

2.3 Phase III: Chiang Mai Grand Finals and Operation (Late August 2025)

The finals were held in Chiang Mai. Teachers who advanced from the rotation training stage were organized into cross-regional teams to deliver timed presentations based on real-world scenarios. The competition focused on assessing the effectiveness of integrating AI technology with instructional objectives.

The Confucius Institute invited experts from the Chinese departments of universities in Northern Thailand to form a judging panel, which conducted professional evaluations across five dimensions, including technological integration and teaching practicality, and ultimately selected the winners of multiple awards.

2.4 Phase IV: Outcomes Promotion and Cloud-Based Transformation (From September 2025)

The Confucius Institute systematically summarized the implementation outcomes and optimized course modules and toolsets based on teacher feedback. At the same time, it built an online resource platform based on existing digital resources for long-term access and use, thereby promoting

the consolidation and sharing of case outcomes and providing sustained teaching support for local teachers.

In addition, the Confucius Institute plans to continue offering training in other regions, such as Eastern and Northeastern Thailand, in 2026, further expanding the project's impact.

3 Major Problems and Countermeasures

- Large Gaps in Teachers' Digital Skills: The learning threshold was lowered through step-by-step explanations, modular demonstration exercises, and peer assistance.
- "Misfit" of AI-Generated Content: Targeted training in prompt engineering was carried out to help teachers define AI roles aligned with the Thai educational context, thereby enhancing content adaptability.
- Network Stability Risks: The project included a dedicated "Contingency Response" module aimed at improving teachers' ability to use AI tools to formulate emergency solutions when unexpected technical failures occur.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Overall Outcomes

The case was successfully implemented in 2025, generating significant social and educational impact.

1.1 Wide Coverage and High Participation

The training covered 11 provinces across 3 locations in Northern Thailand. Nearly 150 teachers participated, with 30 advancing to the finals and forming 7 cross-regional teams.

1.2 Significant Achievements in Digital Teaching Resources

A total of 50 hours of digital courses were developed, and over 60 AI-empowered teaching works were produced. A digital resource library featuring situational animations and AI teaching agents was established,

providing a reference model for the digital transformation of Chinese language education in the region.

1.3 Marked Improvement in Teachers' Digital Literacy

Participating teachers moved beyond traditional PPT-based lesson preparation and became proficient in using various AI tools such as DeepSeek and Dreamina. They achieved a capability leap from basic application to the independent development of intelligent teaching assistants, significantly enhancing classroom interactivity.

1.4 Positive Social Response

The project model received high praise from the Chiang Mai Provincial Education Office and the Northern Thailand Chinese Language Private Schools Association. This model can be further promoted and applied in Northern Thailand and other regions.

2 Highlights and Features

- Commitment to Real-World Teaching Orientation: AI tools are embedded throughout the entire process of lesson preparation, instruction, and evaluation, emphasizing pedagogical adaptability.
- Construction of an Integrated "Competition–Training" Mechanism: The project deeply integrates systematic training with teaching competitions. Through the "AI Collaborative Innovation Competition" with cross-site teams, it promotes the transformation of technical learning into practical classroom applications.
- Creation of a Full-Process AI Teaching Chain: It covers the entire teaching process, from content generation to intelligent grading. By introducing digital humans and AI speaking agents, it effectively relieves the instructional pressure caused by large class sizes.
- Strengthening Cross-Cultural Integration: Drawing on data regarding common HSK errors and Sino-Thai cultural differences, the project ensures that technology serves local instructional needs.

■ Case Experience Summary

Through the deep integration of "AI + Chinese language education," this case has explored a replicable and scalable digital teacher cultivation model. The primary experiences are as follows:

1 Equal Emphasis on Demand Orientation and Pedagogy Orientation

Starting from the actual classroom needs of local Chinese language teachers, the project embedded AI tools into the entire process of lesson preparation, instruction, and evaluation. By avoiding "technology for technology's sake," it ensured that training outcomes directly served classroom teaching and enhanced instructional effectiveness.

2 Construction of the Integrated "Training—Practice—Competition—Resource" Model

The project consolidated foundations through systematic training, verified results through competitions, and solidified outstanding achievements through a resource library. This promoted teachers' transition from "learning input" to "practical output," enhancing the sustainability and scalability of the project model.

3 Implementation of a Modular and Stratified Cultivation Path

AI teaching capabilities were deconstructed into modules such as intelligent courseware production, multimodal material processing, micro-lesson and situational animation production, and AI teaching agents development. This approach accommodated the learning rhythms of teachers with varying technical foundations, effectively lowering the learning threshold and increasing teachers' participation and sense of achievement.

4 Focus on Collaborative Development and Cross-Regional Linkage

Through cross-site teaming and multi-party collaboration, the project promoted the complementarity of teachers' experience and resource sharing. This effectively mitigated the imbalance in the distribution of regional Chinese language education resources and enhanced the project's

demonstration and outreach effect.

5 Strengthening Outcome Orientation and Continuous Support Mechanisms

Through unified evaluation standards, process-based feedback, and cloud resource sharing, the project ensured that training outcomes are evaluable, traceable, and reusable. This provides a replicable practical paradigm for the digital cultivation of international Chinese language teachers.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at the University of Milan in Italy, jointly established by the University of Milan in Italy and Liaoning Normal University in China, has long been committed to promoting systematic and sustained Chinese language education and China–Italy cultural exchange at Italian universities and across wider society. The Confucius Institute, grounded in the Italian higher education system and responsive to local societal needs, offers multi-level Chinese courses to undergraduates, postgraduates, and community learners. Its programs cater to language learners, specialized students, and social groups with specific practical needs, earning a strong reputation in both academic and social contexts.

In terms of teaching focus, the Confucius Institute closely aligns its programs with the practical needs of Italian learners, gradually developing a distinctive emphasis on Business Chinese and intercultural communication instruction. The curriculum integrates language knowledge with real-life applications, placing equal importance on language proficiency and cultural understanding. Special attention is given to learners' abilities in academic exchanges, workplace communication, and Sino-Italian intercultural interactions. This focus not only provides a practical foundation for exploring digitally and intelligently empowered teaching models but also sets clear objectives for the implementation of this case study.

During the implementation of the case, the Confucius Institute leveraged the resource strengths of both the Chinese and Italian sides. Chinese and Italian teachers collaborated in the design and delivery of courses, establishing a coordinated working mechanism. Chinese instructors contributed expertise in Chinese language teaching theory and practice, while Italian instructors provided insight into the local teaching environment, learner characteristics, and cultural context, ensuring that the curriculum was both adaptable and practical. At the same time, the Confucius Institute's management and technical support teams played an active role in teaching support and operational management, facilitating seamless coordination among teaching, technology, and administration.

Through team collaboration and mechanism development, the Confucius Institute at the University of Milan has developed a sustainable model centered on teaching practice, supported by digital and intelligent technologies, and maintained through standardized operational procedures. This model has laid a solid foundation for the successful implementation and continued development of the case and offers valuable organizational insights for other Confucius Institutes worldwide seeking to undertake similar initiatives.

Digital-Intelligent Empowerment, Smart Learning Classrooms: An AI-Enabled Chinese Language Teaching Practice

Confucius Institute at the University of Milan, Italy

Case Background

Learners of the Confucius Institute at the University of Milan in Italy primarily consist of undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as working professionals. With clear learning objectives, they place strong emphasis on practical language application and intercultural communicative competence. Traditional textbook- and classroom-centered teaching models have proven insufficient to meet their demands for efficiency, applicability, and experiential learning.

Against this backdrop, the Confucius Institute adopted a problem-oriented and teaching-centered approach, introducing artificial intelligence and digital technologies to systematically restructure the teaching process. The Confucius Institute enhanced teaching quality through digital-intelligent technologies and ultimately developed a sustainable and replicable model of smart teaching practice.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

Guided by the core philosophy of "serving teaching, empowering teachers, and supporting students," this case addresses the practical demands of the Confucius Institute. It adheres to the principle that technology should serve pedagogy and data should support decision-making. Artificial intelligence is positioned as a teaching support and collaborative tool, while fully recognizing teachers' leading role in the instructional process. The case design consistently emphasizes a problem-oriented approach grounded in pedagogical needs, avoiding technology-driven or purely formalistic applications. It ensures that the introduction of digital-intelligent technologies effectively addresses the long-standing, authentic challenges faced in overseas Chinese language classrooms.

In terms of the overall design approach, the Confucius Institute conducts systematic planning around the key components of instructional operation, focusing in particular on pronounced learner differences, insufficient classroom language output, heavy administrative workloads for teachers, and relatively limited assessment methods. In response to learners' diverse backgrounds and varying levels of language proficiency, the project leverages intelligent technologies to support differentiated instruction and personalized learning. To address limited opportunities for language output, digital resources and intelligent tools are used to expand language-use scenarios both inside and outside the classroom. In light of the substantial pressure associated with lesson preparation and assignment grading, AI-assisted mechanisms are introduced to undertake high-frequency and repetitive tasks. To complement assessment practices that rely primarily on summative testing, formative and diagnostic assessment approaches are incorporated, thereby enhancing the timeliness and specificity of instructional feedback.

Regarding the implementation pathway, the Confucius Institute adopts a systematic advancement strategy, organically integrating artificial intelligence into instructional design, classroom implementation, post-

class learning support, and teaching assessment to establish a coordinated and interlinked instructional support system. Through overall planning and phased implementation, the project avoids confining the use of technological application to isolated classroom activities or single-tool applications, facilitating the transition from "fragmented experimentation" to "mechanism-based operation." At the same time, in selecting technological pathways, priority is given to general applicability and cost controllability, minimizing reliance on any single platform or high-cost equipment. This ensures that the model can be flexibly adapted to different staffing capacities and teaching scales across Confucius Institutes, demonstrating strong replicability and scalability.

2 Implementation Process

During the implementation process, the Confucius Institute advanced the project in phases in accordance with the framework of "resource development—mechanism operation—assessment optimization," gradually establishing a relatively stable smart instructional operation model.

2.1 Phase One: Reconstruction of Teaching Resources and Digital Upgrading

Focusing on intermediate and upper-intermediate Chinese language courses, particularly the modules of Business Chinese and Professional/Workplace Chinese, the Confucius Institute conducted a systematic review and restructuring of the original teaching content, clearly defining the "cultivation of authentic pragmatic competence" as the core objective. On this basis, scenario-based digital learning units oriented toward real communicative tasks were developed, including business negotiations, meeting presentations, workplace communication, email correspondence, and intercultural interaction. Each learning unit integrated video, audio, textual materials, and interactive tasks to construct learning contexts closely aligned with real-life usage scenarios. Students were guided to apply linguistic knowledge comprehensively in the process of completing

tasks, thereby realizing the principle of "learning through use" and "learning through doing." The introduction of multimodal resources effectively compensated for the limitations of classroom time and the lack of an authentic language environment, laying a solid resource foundation for the subsequent implementation of AI-assisted teaching.

2.2 Phase Two: Establishment of an AI-Assisted Instructional Support Mechanism

At the level of instructional implementation, the Confucius Institute progressively established an AI-assisted teaching support mechanism centered on human–machine collaboration, clearly delineating the respective functional boundaries of teachers and technology.

In the pre-class stage, teachers utilized intelligent tools to deconstruct teaching objectives, obtain references for classroom activity design, and generate practice materials. This reduced repetitive preparatory work and enabled teachers to devote more energy to overall instructional design control and the selection of key teaching priorities. During classroom learning, AI technology primarily served a supportive role. It supported oral practice, monitored students' understanding in real time, and recorded learning data, thereby providing teachers with useful reference for instruction. At the same time, it helped teachers adjust the pace of teaching and the format of classroom activities in a timely manner based on student feedback, allowing for the dynamic optimization of classroom design. In the post-class stage, the system conducted preliminary analyses of students' oral and written assignments, identified common problems and individual differences, and generated learning feedback reports. On this basis, teachers provided targeted guidance, thereby achieving a balance between instructional efficiency and quality.

2.3 Phase Three: Optimization and Innovation of the Teaching Assessment Mechanism

In terms of teaching assessment, the project introduced the concepts of formative assessment and diagnostic assessment to supplement

and optimize traditional assessment practices primarily based on summative testing. In oral and writing tasks, AI technology was mainly used to provide analysis at the foundational linguistic level, including indicators such as pronunciation clarity, basic grammatical accuracy, and lexical diversity. Teachers, by contrast, focused on higher-order competencies such as communicative effectiveness, discourse strategies, and cultural appropriateness, guiding students to engage in reflection and revision. Through the continuous accumulation of learning process data, the system was able to identify common error types and learning bottlenecks, providing evidence for teachers to adjust teaching content and instructional pacing in a timely manner. This human–AI collaborative assessment approach effectively avoided the one-dimensional tendency of "focusing only on results while neglecting the process," and contributed to enhancing the continuity, targetedness, and stability of learning.

Through the phased implementation described above, the Confucius Institute gradually achieved the deep integration of artificial intelligence into instructional processes, providing a sound institutional mechanism for the stable functioning and continuous optimization of smart classrooms.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

Following the implementation of the project, significant and comprehensive results were achieved across multiple dimensions, including student learning outcomes, instructional support for teachers, and the stability of course operation.

Students demonstrated significantly greater initiative in classroom interaction, oral expression, and scenario-based tasks. Classroom participation and the frequency of language output increased markedly. With the support of intelligent learning tools and continuous feedback mechanisms, students' anxiety about

making errors during expression was substantially reduced. They became more willing to use the target language for communication and self-correction, resulting in a clear enhancement of linguistic confidence and sustained motivation for continued learning. Meanwhile, scenario-based digital learning units and AI-assisted post-class practice further expanded opportunities for language use beyond the classroom, helping to consolidate learning outcomes and promote the steady development of students' language proficiency.

At the teacher level, the appropriate integration of artificial intelligence effectively reduced the time teachers spent on lesson preparation, exercise design, and preliminary analysis of assignments. This enabled teachers to devote more energy to the design of classroom interaction, the guidance of learning strategies, and individualized instruction. The optimization of instructional support methods created practical space for pedagogical innovation, significantly enhancing teachers' sense of professional fulfillment and initiative in the teaching process. At the same time, the establishment of a human–AI collaborative mechanism also helped improve the stability of instructional support and prevent excessive reliance on the accumulated experience of individual teachers in maintaining teaching quality.

At the level of course implementation, the systematic embedding of artificial intelligence into the instructional process resulted in more standardized teaching procedures and organization, a more manageable teaching process, and a gradually improved course quality assurance mechanism. Instructional operation no longer depended on fragmented technological experimentation or teachers' spontaneous efforts; instead, it was established on a standardized and regular operational model, laying a solid foundation for the long-term and stable development of the Confucius Institute's teaching work.

The distinctive highlights of this case are mainly reflected in three aspects. First, artificial intelligence is positioned as "instructional infrastructure" and systematically embedded throughout the entire instructional process, achieving deep integration between technology and the teaching system. Second, the project adheres to the principle of human–AI collaboration, clearly defining the functional boundaries between artificial intelligence and teachers while ensuring the leading

role of teachers in instruction. Third, it replaces fragmented experimentation with mechanism development and, through institutionalized and process-oriented design, forms a sustainable smart instructional operation model with strong replicability and dissemination value.

■ Case Experience Summary

Practice has demonstrated that the key to digitally and intelligently empowered teaching does not lie in the technological sophistication itself, but rather in whether the technology can accurately respond to instructional objectives and authentic teaching needs, and whether it genuinely serves the development of learners' language competence and the enhancement of teaching quality. If divorced from specific instructional contexts and confined merely to functional display or the accumulation of tools, technological application will not only struggle to produce substantive results, but may also increase teachers' workload and undermine the coherence and integrity of instruction. Therefore, adhering to a teaching-objective-centered and problem-solving-oriented approach constitutes the primary prerequisite for advancing digitally and intelligently empowered teaching.

Based on this, the application of artificial intelligence can achieve long-term and stable operation only when it is embedded into instructional processes in an institutionalized and standardized manner. By clearly defining application stages, operational procedures, and technological boundaries, and by integrating digital-intelligent tools into key nodes such as instructional design, classroom implementation, post-class support, and teaching assessment, artificial intelligence can be transformed from "individual innovation" into "organizational capability," ultimately becoming an essential foundation supporting the overall teaching quality of the Confucius Institute. This mechanism-based embedding approach helps ensure the continuity and consistency of instructional support, while enhancing the stability and sustainability of instructional operation.

At the same time, the case further underscores the importance of maintaining teacher leadership and professional judgment. Language teaching is not merely skill training; it also carries the responsibilities of cultural interpretation, value guidance, and intercultural understanding—core instructional functions that cannot be replaced by technology. The appropriate positioning of artificial intelligence in teaching should be to assist teachers in handling high-frequency, repetitive, or data-processing tasks, thereby reducing workload and increasing efficiency, rather than weakening teachers' leading role in instructional decision-making and classroom guidance. Only on the premise of safeguarding teacher leadership can digital-intelligent technologies simultaneously leverage their efficiency advantages and preserve the necessary humanistic warmth and cultural depth in instruction.

Through systematic design and sustained practice, this case has explored a smart teaching pathway that is teaching-centered, grounded in human–AI collaboration, and driven by mechanism building. It provides Confucius Institutes worldwide, under varying resource conditions, with practical experience that demonstrates both realistic feasibility and strong potential for broader dissemination in advancing digitally and intelligently empowered teaching.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute for Northern Ireland at Ulster University in the UK was established in 2011 to foster academic, cultural and social ties between China and Northern Ireland, UK. The Confucius Institute works with over 160 schools across Northern Ireland, with a further 40 schools currently on its waiting list to join the programme, due to its high levels of success and popularity since its establishment. Schools in its portfolio range from children in Nursery (aged 3) up to 18-year-olds.

The Confucius Institute is committed to ensuring that it offers Mandarin in schools from every education sector so that children receive Chinese linguistic and cultural education regardless of their background. Currently, children in schools of all 5 of these distinct sectors receive Mandarin lessons, and the Confucius Institute has also worked hard to develop very strong working relationships with each sector. The Confucius Institute carries out regular meetings with colleagues in these bodies, and these colleagues provide strong support to the Confucius Institute's wide range of cultural events, attending and promoting important events such as the Confucius Institute's annual Chinese New Year celebration, as well as its annual poster competition.

The case leader is Mrs Naomi Trimble, who oversees all event-related materials on the site, including mock lessons, competition-winning entries, and best practice in events and competitions. The case team includes Mrs Carol Hamilton, who ensures the privacy and security of sensitive data and records held on the site. Mr Lu Kun manages the teaching records, attendance, schemes of work, and works with teachers on the development of lesson plans. Overall oversight is provided by Dr Liu Yan in her capacity as Director.

Management of Teaching Resources and Best Practice through Technology

Confucius Institute for Northern Ireland at Ulster University, UK

■ Case Background

The core purpose of the Confucius Institute for Northern Ireland at Ulster University is to foster educational, cultural, social and economic ties between China and Northern Ireland, UK, by teaching Mandarin and Chinese culture in schools. We employ over 40 Mandarin teachers each year with varied backgrounds and teaching experience. They work in a wide range of schools, with learners ranging from the age of 3 up to adults, across a variety of sectors, socioeconomic backgrounds, and learning abilities.

These factors represent the key challenge for us in ensuring equity of educational experience for all students in our network. Teachers follow the same YCT or HSK curriculum; however, it is essential for us to ensure that each child receives the same classroom experience, regardless of their age, socioeconomic background, academic ability, or who their teacher is. Our SharePoint houses a bank of lessons for all teachers to access, ensuring that all colleagues are teaching from the same materials and using the same levels of up-to-date AI and technological

tools in their lessons. It ensures access for all teachers, regardless of their location in Northern Ireland, and the materials provided ensure all teachers are using the same quality, standard, and style of lessons and AI and technological tools when planning and delivering their lessons.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

The overall design of this case project will be outlined below with reference to its working principles, design approach, and relevant precautions.

Firstly, in regard to the working principles of the project, the primary focus is on ensuring that our teaching of Mandarin is digitalized, modern, and equipped for the latest classroom teaching needs. It allows us to streamline our resources in a way that ensures all teachers are teaching from the same core materials, and it also allows our management team a suitable and reliable means of tracking the teaching progress of all of our teaching staff, and ensuring support can be provided where and when required. A key element for us in the SharePoint is the partnership and collaboration it encourages among teachers, who come together, both in person and online, to share, amend, expand, and create teaching resources, all pooling their own individual knowledge and skills in order to create a resource that is accessible and suitable for all.

The SharePoint is, crucially, a secure site, which can only be accessed by Ulster University staff, and so is not liable to copyright infringement or fraudulent behaviour. Teachers and management team staff alike must use their unique individual login details to access the site, ensuring that the platform remains secure. Importantly, despite being a secure resource for staff only, the site is also accessible remotely, which is essential as our teachers work and live all across Northern Ireland, and frequently prepare

lessons from their schools, local libraries, or their homes. This ensures that all teachers have equal access to teaching resources.

In terms of the design approach behind this project, it is important that the tool is readily accessible by teachers and the management team in an easy, user-friendly fashion, and across a number of electronic devices. The material is uploaded and stored in such a manner that all sections and files are clearly organized, dated, and categorized for easy and quick location, and each file that is accessible to our teachers is readily available to download and print for their students or for their own reference.

The SharePoint has been designed to keep in mind the breadth of students in our classrooms, as well as the range of learning styles that they each have, not to mention the range of classroom facilities our various schools have at their disposal. The site, therefore, ensures that lesson plans and resources are varied to suit the learning styles of our students, whether these be visual, auditory, reading, writing, or kinesthetic. The resources incorporate written tasks, videos, interactive games, AI tools, and more, to ensure that all learning styles are fully recognized and catered for. We also encourage collaboration and feedback from teachers to ensure that the resources are always evolving, and changing and adapting to suit the needs of an ever-changing modern teaching world.

As previously mentioned, the site is also strictly secured, meaning that no unauthorized access is permitted, and so tools and resources cannot be amended or removed by those outside of our team. Furthermore, the site is structured so that certain areas are accessible only to the management team, including sections where attendance records and records of competition winners are stored, so that these cannot unnecessarily be accessed by the teachers, who do not require them in their roles.

Finally, precautions around this project are key as we are, at the core of our purpose, working with young people under the age of 18 years old. We are conscious that each year our teachers arrive with a new set of modern and rapidly-developing skills, reflecting the ever-changing educational

landscape, and so it is crucial for us that we maintain an up-to-date awareness of changing educational practices, in Northern Ireland, across the UK, and internationally, so that the Mandarin language education the students in our schools receive is reflective of this. As a world-renowned leading digital hub in technology and AI, Northern Ireland's education sector holds a high reputation in terms of digital learning, and as an educational institution such as the Confucius Institute, it is of the utmost importance to us that we are able to hold ourselves accountable to these high standards, and ensure our practices move with this.

2 Implementation Process

In terms of the implementation of this project, the platform has been developed over several years by a dedicated core team, ensuring continuity and enabling it to be consistently monitored and adapted to the evolving needs of our educational context. Feedback from teachers over the years helps to shape the site's development as it helps us to be informed of ever-changing requirements from various sectors of schools in which we work. We ensure that the site is constantly evolving so that the latest AI and technological tools are reflective of what is being used in classrooms across the UK, while also keeping up with what is being used in classrooms across the world.

One of the main challenges in implementation revolves around the nature of our teachers' time with us, which lasts just a few years, meaning that the site needs to constantly adapt to be suitable for new cohorts of teachers as they arrive, who all have fresh and new ideas about digital teaching practice. In order to navigate this, we ensure consultation with our teachers each year, who provide feedback on how the site works for them and help us to shape it into a live project and a working tool which can mold and adapt to new cohorts of staff. This is a solution we have found to be most effective for this particular issue.

Another challenge is navigating firewalls and security systems when teachers may try to access the site in their schools, as all schools have strict rules in place regarding internet navigation. For this reason, teachers are able to access the platform remotely (at home, in libraries, or at the university).

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

In terms of the overall outcomes and impacts of the implementation of this particular case, the site has provided, and continues to provide, significant impacts on the teaching quality of our staff and the management of our resources, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Bearing in mind that our 45 teachers reach a total of 160 schools and 20,000 learners per year, this gives an idea of the scale of the project's success and reach on an annual basis. As mentioned above, these schools are spread across a variety of sectoral bodies, but with the help of this site, the students are getting the same Mandarin educational experience in the classroom, regardless of the educational sector in which they are being taught. Another successful impact of the site is that, regardless of a teacher's preferred teaching pace and content, all staff are teaching HSK and YCT lessons at the same pace, to the same standard, and are all answerable to the same schemes of work which are monitored by the management team.

The fact that teachers upload lesson plans weekly means that the management team can keep a close pastoral eye on colleagues, ensuring that we can see if any teachers appear to be struggling with keeping up to date with the admin side of their roles, and stepping in to support if required.

To ensure effective teaching, it is crucial that our teachers are aware of the teaching environment in which they work, and so housing materials such as mock lessons, presentations on the Northern Ireland educational system, and classroom management techniques on the site ensures that all teachers can access these details as a refresher at any point in the academic year when preparing their lessons. In addition, the fact that the site housed videos of winners of our past competitions allows our teachers to view and take inspiration for when they prepare their own

students for competitions, such as the Chinese Bridge.

Essentially functioning at its core as a live digital working platform, our site ensures improved coordination and governance across the Confucius Institute, strengthening teaching consistency, digital governance, and allowing for inclusive professional development.

■ Case Experience Summary

In terms of the universal and replicable development experience in the implementation process of this case project, we believe this project offers tools that are replicable and transferable to diverse education systems across the globe in the teaching of Mandarin.

The site is designed not on theory, but on real-life, professional, in-the-classroom teaching experience gathered for over 10 years from hundreds of professional teaching colleagues from all walks of life and educational backgrounds. While the site utilizes technology, the core purpose is to facilitate management and teaching in the Confucius Institute, and we believe the way in which we have developed—and continue to develop—this tool ensures longevity and multi-user adaptability.

The resource is accessible remotely, in a variety of locations, while also remaining safe and secure, accessible only to those with Ulster University login details. The site becomes inaccessible to teachers once their time at the Confucius Institute ends, as they can no longer access it once their staff account is dissolved, meaning that the resource is exclusively available to teachers currently in post in Northern Ireland, yet it allows for knowledge transference as these teachers can take what they have learned from the site during their time with us, and develop this for their future careers, adapting to other cultures, schools and countries.

The fact that the site is created largely by users and for users ensures that it is in touch with the needs of educators, as well as the needs of students who our teachers serve, rather than created solely by the management team, who may inevitably be

further removed from the realities of classroom contexts.

The site is heavily quality controlled, to ensure that only final and complete lesson plans and resources are stored, supporting best practice in both management and teaching. The fact that quality control is embedded into this site as a digital practice gives it stronger reliability than if it were subject to simple routine spot checks.

The site has a clear governance structure, with each area accessible only to those who require access to it, and with this being monitored and confirmed regularly. Again, given the fact that this is a resource primarily for the benefit of under 18-year-olds, this is a crucial practice.

Finally, the site aligns perfectly with the digital practices of the schools it serves, with other commonly used school platforms such as Teams, and with Ulster University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at De Montfort University (DMU CI) was established in 2013 through a collaboration between De Montfort University and the University of Science and Technology Beijing (USTB). Leveraging the university's academic resources, DMU CI engages in Chinese language teaching and Sino-British cultural exchange, offering language instruction, cultural programs, and primary education partnerships to schools in Leicester and its surrounding areas.

In the field of primary and secondary Chinese language education, the Confucius Institute maintains close collaboration with multiple local schools and has gradually developed a practice-oriented approach centered on curriculum standardization and the construction of digital teaching resources, aiming to enhance instructional continuity and quality.

The project team operates under principles of Sino-British collaboration and complementary expertise, with clearly defined roles: Zhang Yi (Chinese Director of DMU CI and Associate Professor at USTB) oversees the overall planning, coordinates resources, and manages strategic engagement with Chinese and British partners. Justine Jackson (Zhao Siting, Chief Practitioner of the Mandarin Teaching Hub in Leicester, Modern Foreign Languages Lead at Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy) leads the classroom application of digital resources, evaluates teaching effectiveness, and oversees school-based adaptation. Dan Xiaohong (Chinese teacher, Associate Professor, USTB) provides cutting-edge academic support and assists in assessing and analyzing teaching outcomes. Li Jiaying (Chinese language teacher at Sacred Heart) works closely with Justine Jackson on curriculum design, development of core digital teaching resources, and pedagogical support.

Smart Mandarin Teaching through Digital Empowerment—A Sustainable Approach in Cross-cultural Primary Education in Leicester

Confucius Institute at De Montfort University, UK

■ Case Background

The Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy in Leicester, UK, is one of the teaching sites under the Confucius Institute at De Montfort University (DMU CI). It stands out as one of the few primary schools in the region where all students learn Chinese. Among the approximately 240 students across eight classes in Grades 3–6, about 75% are English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners, reflecting the diverse and multicultural characteristics typical of primary schools in the UK. The school's Chinese curriculum is based on the *YCT Standard Course* and aligns with the UK's national curriculum for languages, ensuring systematic learning while meeting local educational objectives.

DMU CI assigns one or two Chinese language teachers to the school every year. However, due to the high mobility of teachers, challenges such as weak curriculum continuity, low

resource utilization, and unstable teaching quality often arise. To address these issues at Sacred Heart, this case integrates digitalization and localization to further enhance teaching quality and student learning outcomes. Additionally, it establishes a "Mandarin Teaching Hub" as a resource-sharing platform for Chinese language teaching in primary and secondary schools across Leicester, promoting collaboration among teachers and greater consistency in teaching standards across the region.

In the future, this mechanism will extend to more primary schools in Leicester and surrounding areas, gradually forming a regional network for Chinese language education. This will promote the standardization and sustainable development of Chinese language teaching in UK primary schools.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

Guided by the principles of "standards-led, digitally empowered, locally integrated, and sustainable development," the project centers on the YCT curriculum framework while aligning with the UK national curriculum for languages, establishing a systematic and platform-based teaching support mechanism empowered by digital technologies.

In terms of design philosophy, DMU CI adopts an integrated "resources—classroom—assessment" approach and proposes a three-in-one innovation pathway:

- Systematic resource development as the foundation to promote standardized classroom instruction;
- Inter-school collaboration as the lever for validating the model and supporting regional dissemination;
- Evaluation and feedback mechanisms to ensure continuous optimization of resources and teaching practices.

These three components are mutually reinforcing, ultimately forming the Leicester Mandarin Teaching Hub, a long-term, digitally enabled teaching support platform led by the Confucius Institute with participation from regional schools.

In the specific design, the project emphasizes the unification of resource structures, ease of classroom application, and support for multilingual learners. Digital resources are not merely collections of materials but serve as a sustainable "curriculum engine," enabling teachers from diverse backgrounds to deliver instruction more conveniently under the same standards.

2 Implementation Process

The project was implemented in three sequential phases, gradually translating resource development into regional dissemination:

2.1 Phase 1: Resource Development and Classroom Application

To address scattered teaching materials and discontinuous curriculum, the Confucius Institute, in collaboration with Sacred Heart teachers, systematically developed a digital teaching resource repository based on the Year 1 YCT annual teaching plan. The resources cover 38 teaching weeks and 12 units, including 80 core vocabulary items, 38 extended vocabulary items, 10 grammar points, and 9 communicative functions. Each lesson is divided into 30-minute modules, accompanied by teaching plans, PPT slides, vocabulary cards, exercises, cultural materials, and activity guides, enabling teachers to use them directly in class. Classroom instruction incorporates multimedia presentations, animated micro-lessons, and interactive tasks. Student learning is tracked through electronic learning logs to ensure continuity and efficiency.

At the instructional implementation level, a micro-learning architecture was adopted, combining short animation-based inputs with task-oriented activities to suit the attention span of primary learners. The platform also provided tools to monitor learning progress, supporting both formative and summative assessments.

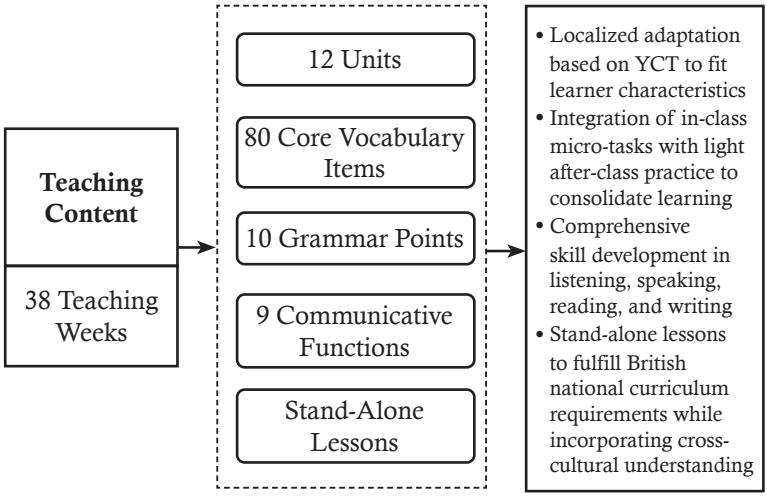


Figure 1 Framework of the Digital Teaching Resource Repository

2.2 Phase 2: Inter-school Collaboration with Pilot Implementation

Following stable implementation at Sacred Heart, the Confucius Institute expanded the model through the Mandarin Teaching Hub platform, initiating a pilot with Little Bowden Primary School. Teachers at both schools accessed the unified resources via shared links, participated in lesson observations, and provided feedback. The pilot demonstrated that the resource system adapts well to different school contexts, effectively mitigating the impact of individual teacher differences on teaching quality and providing a basis for cross-school replication and regional promotion.

2.3 Phase 3: Evaluation Mechanisms and Continuous Optimization

To enhance the stability of teaching quality, the project established a diversified evaluation system based on YCT standards, including classroom observation, oral assessments, periodic tests, and cultural tasks, forming a closed-loop mechanism of "teaching—assessment—feedback—improvement." The Confucius Institute regularly organized the teacher team to summarize experiences and, in combination with feedback from partner schools, continuously optimized resource content

and instructional design, ensuring the standardization and sustainability of the curriculum.

Through this implementation process, the project achieved teaching resource sharing, efficient classroom operation, and smooth teacher transitions, exploring a new digital model for primary Chinese language teaching that can be replicated across Leicester and potentially in broader contexts.

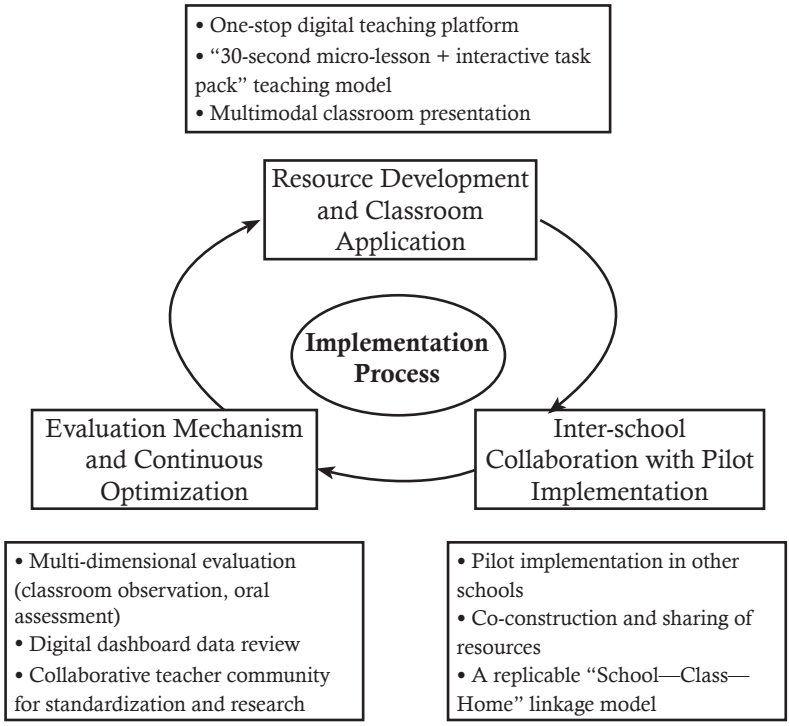


Figure 2 Three Phases of Case Implementation

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

Since its implementation, DMU CI has leveraged the Mandarin Teaching Hub to achieve overall improvements in teaching quality, resource efficiency, and regional collaboration. By utilizing digital learning tracking tools, the Confucius Institute can monitor student progress across schools, accurately identify the needs of different schools and student groups, and provide extension learning support for

advanced students while ensuring the quality of foundational instruction.

In terms of reducing teacher workload, the platform carefully reviews and curates all teaching resources, including only high-quality materials suitable for use across multiple schools. This significantly decreases repetitive lesson preparation time, enhances classroom engagement, and achieves the dual goal of "reducing workload while increasing efficiency." Teaching practice indicates that this model is highly inclusive in multicultural classroom settings, supporting both EAL learners and students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Sacred Heart, the first urban primary school in Leicester to participate in the YCT examination, achieved a pass rate of 89.29% on its first attempt, attracting local media attention. The pilot application at Little Bowden Primary School also received positive feedback from teachers.

In terms of innovation, the case establishes a comprehensive digital platform covering lesson preparation, classroom implementation, learning tracking, and teacher handover. The integration of the resource repository with instructional support functions ensures seamless alignment with the YCT framework while also proactively aligning with the UK national curriculum. This approach promotes the transformation of Chinese language teaching from short-term projects to a sustainable, regularized mechanism. The involvement of experienced local teachers in maintaining and operating the platform further enhances its local adaptability and potential for scalable, long-term implementation.

■ Case Experience Summary

This case study demonstrates that the coordinated advancement of digitalization and localization provides an effective approach to addressing key challenges in Chinese language teaching in UK primary schools, including high teacher mobility, weak curriculum continuity, and low resource utilization. Starting from Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy, DMU CI has gradually expanded a single-

school pilot into the Leicester Mandarin Teaching Hub, thereby validating the model's scalability and sustainability at a regional level.

Three practical lessons with broad applicability emerged from implementation:

- Curriculum-centered design: By relying on the established YCT framework and aligning with the UK national curriculum, the project constructs structurally unified and quality-controlled digital teaching resources, effectively preventing resource fragmentation.
- Platform-based continuity: The hub ensures instructional continuity, mitigating the impact of teacher turnover through resource sharing and learning progress tracking.
- Local teacher engagement: Experienced local teachers play a pivotal role in platform maintenance and teaching handover, enhancing both the local adaptability of the model and school buy-in.

Results indicate that this model not only improves teaching quality and learning outcomes but also effectively reduces teacher workload while providing stable support for EAL and SEND learners. Pilot implementation at schools such as Little Bowden Primary School demonstrates its feasibility for cross-school replication. The Mandarin Teaching Hub thus functions not only as a resource platform but also as a sustainable operational mechanism, serving as a foundation for coordinated development among regional schools.

Looking ahead, DMU CI plans to further enhance the digital resource system, explore data-driven personalized instruction and AI-assisted oral training, and gradually expand to more primary schools. This initiative aims to foster a regional network for Chinese language education, offering a replicable and sustainable model for the standardization, digitalization, and long-term development of Chinese language teaching in UK primary schools.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute for Business, London (CIBL), co-founded by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and Tsinghua University, is dedicated to providing high-quality Chinese education programs centered on business Chinese, intercultural communication, and understanding of China's business society for working professionals, business managers, and university students in the UK. Leveraging LSE's academic strengths in social sciences and international affairs, CIBL features a unique curriculum that integrates "language, business, and culture." The programs cater to a diverse range of professional backgrounds with clear learning objectives, offering a teaching environment that closely aligns with real-world business scenarios. Against the backdrop of digital transformation, CIBL has actively explored blended and digital teaching models, continuously promoting the professionalization and sustainable development of international Chinese language education.

This case study was led by Dr. Xiang Hua, UK Director of CIBL, who served as the Principal Investigator and provided overall strategic coordination for the case design, implementation direction, and quality assurance. The core case team included Pan Fang, CIBL Institute Manager, who was primarily responsible for the specific execution work, including overall project coordination, learning platform construction and management, teaching staff support, and digital resource integration. The project adopted a clear division of labor: the Director focused on strategic and pedagogical vision, the management team ensured operational efficiency, and the teaching team handled content creation, such as producing short grammar videos, digitizing materials, and designing engaging learning activities. This close collaboration provided a strong foundation for the smooth delivery of the digital teaching initiative.

Assisting Chinese Language Teaching with the Moodle Platform and Video Production

Confucius Institute for Business, London, UK

Case Background

The Confucius Institute for Business, London (CIBL), co-founded by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and Tsinghua University, has long been committed to providing high-quality business Chinese and intercultural communication courses for working professionals and corporate executives in the UK. However, influenced by the characteristics of the student cohort and the technological environment, several key issues have gradually emerged in the teaching process:

First, most learners are full-time employees with fragmented schedules, making it difficult for them to fully participate in in-person classes. Consequently, there is a strong demand for after-class review and self-study support. Second, students exhibit significant disparities in language proficiency, and traditional classrooms struggle to meet the personalized needs of different learning paces and focus areas. Third, with the rapid development of digital technology, online teaching has become the norm, creating an urgent need for a stable and efficient teaching platform

to ensure instructional quality and classroom interaction.

In response to these challenges, CIBL systematically introduced the Moodle online teaching platform and combined it with grammar-focused short video resources developed by the teaching faculty. Through multidimensional innovation in technology, content, and teaching methods, the initiative aims to build a sustainable, highly interactive, blended new model for business Chinese instruction, addressing the real-world difficulties of "inconsistent schedules, hard-to-absorb content, and difficult-to-maintain interaction."

■ Case Development Plan

1 Case Objectives

The core objectives of this project are as follows:

- To establish a digital teaching platform integrating teaching resource management, interactive learning, and assessment feedback, thereby enhancing course quality and teaching efficiency;
- To meet students' personalized and flexible learning needs through fragmented, digital content such as short grammar and vocabulary videos;
- To explore practical pathways for applying blended learning models in high-end business Chinese teaching, serving students from diverse backgrounds;
- To elevate the international Chinese language teaching standards of the Confucius Institute in the context of digital transformation and achieve sustainable development in education.

2 Implementation Process

The implementation of this project went through four stages.

2.1 Teaching Platform Development and Content Integration

In the initial phase, the teaching management team selected Moodle as the core teaching platform and conducted comprehensive system configuration, including webpage structure design and course

categorization setup. Subsequently, existing teaching resources were systematically digitized, including syllabi, PPT courseware, audio and video recordings of classes, reference materials, and exercises. These resources were then uploaded to the platform synchronously to ensure a complete and traceable curriculum system.

2.2 Short Video Production and Technical Integration

To further address common learning difficulties such as frequently tested grammar points and easily confused vocabulary, the faculty team, drawing on years of teaching experience, independently designed and filmed a series of 2–5-minute teaching videos. These videos focus on specific grammatical structures and common expressions in business contexts. Through editing, subtitling, and example-based explanations, the videos form easy-to-learn and easy-to-remember content modules, which are embedded into Moodle course pages for students to review repeatedly and learn on demand.

2.3 Teaching Activity Design and Teacher–Student Interaction

Functional modules such as "Announcements," "Online Quizzes," and "Assignment Submission" are available on the platform. Teachers regularly post content to guide student learning and create personalized one-on-one tutoring materials tailored to students' individual backgrounds.

2.4 Management Mechanism and Assessment Methods

Course platforms are managed by the respective instructors, while a dedicated senior project manager oversees the maintenance and updates of all course platforms. The assessment of students' learning outcomes covers not only their in-class performance but also the instructors' use and design of the Moodle platform, ensuring a cohesive learning experience for students both inside and outside the classroom, online and offline.

Through the above implementation steps, the project has achieved the integration of standardization, systematization, and personalization in the teaching process, exploring a replicable and scalable digital model for international Chinese language education.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

Since its implementation, this case has been fully rolled out in the premium executive business Chinese courses at CIBL and has gradually been extended to other general Chinese courses and short-term cultural programs. The combination of the Moodle platform and grammar short videos has significantly improved teaching quality, learning experience, and management efficiency. The specific outcomes are reflected in the following aspects:

1 Positive Effects on Learner Development

The flexible application of the platform and videos has made learning more personalized and adaptable, breaking the time and space constraints of traditional teaching. Data shows that during the 2023–2024 academic year, 85% of students in CIBL's executive courses continued to use Moodle after class to review course materials and supplement their learning. The grammar short videos were viewed over 3,200 times in total, with an average of about 40 views per student, resulting in a marked increase in learning engagement and initiative.

Students generally reported that using short videos for pre-class preview and post-class review helped them grasp grammar more systematically and clearly and use business expressions more accurately. Meanwhile, online quizzes and interactive discussions on the Moodle platform allowed them to consolidate knowledge during fragmented time, thereby implementing the teaching concept of the "flipped classroom."

2 Promotion of Educational Resource Development

Through this project, CIBL has initially established a well-structured and content-rich online Chinese language teaching resource library. To date, 8 courses and over 300 courseware items and teaching documents have been uploaded, and nearly 50 short videos on grammar and vocabulary have been produced and launched, covering common expressions from HSK Level 3 to intermediate and advanced business Chinese. The platform resources have

gradually formed a systematic framework, laying a foundation for subsequent course development and promotion.

3 Promotion of Cross-Cultural Exchange

The introduction of digital tools has made teaching more visual and interactive, better meeting the needs of non-traditional language learners such as local British entrepreneurs and business professionals. Cultural extension links, case studies, and videos of international business exchanges embedded in the courses encourage students to gain a deeper understanding of Chinese culture and business etiquette beyond language learning, thereby enhancing their cross-cultural communication competence.

In addition, the short videos, with their concise language and vivid style, have also been recommended for promotion in other cultural projects on the LSE campus, further enhancing the Confucius Institute's impact in the local community.

4 Enhancement of Institutional Governance Capacity

Beyond teaching, the Moodle platform has also been used for tracking course progress, formulating teaching plans, and conducting management assessments, thereby improving administrative efficiency and teaching research transparency. The project has enhanced the digital literacy of Confucius Institute teachers and their awareness of resource sharing, optimized the collaboration mechanism of the teaching team, and formed a sound development model.

Overall, this case has not only brought practical effects at the teaching level but also provided a positive example for the digital governance and international communication capacity building of Confucius Institutes.

■ Case Experience Summary

This case, based on the practice of CIBL, focuses on the in-depth application of the Moodle platform in Chinese language teaching and the supportive role of grammar short videos in teaching. It fully demonstrates how digital technology can

effectively empower international Chinese language education. Practice has shown that the integration of digital platforms and multimedia resources has not only effectively improved teaching efficiency and student satisfaction, but also played a significant role in promoting educational resource development, cross-cultural exchange, and teaching team collaboration.

However, some challenges also emerged during the implementation of this project. For instance, teachers still require further professional training in digital content design and video production, and differences in the digital literacy levels of some students have affected their user experience. Therefore, based on the experience gained so far, the Confucius Institute plans to expand and deepen the project in the following aspects in the next phase:

- Content Upgrade and Sustainable Development: Continue to enrich resource types by expanding into listening and speaking training, on-site cultural classes, etc.; optimize the Moodle course structure and introduce an AI-based speech recognition assessment system.
- Teacher Digital Competency Training: Organize regular teacher workshops to enhance teachers' abilities in digital instructional design and production.
- International Resource Sharing Platform: Explore joint development and sharing with other Confucius Institutes to facilitate cross-institutional exchange of high-quality digital resources.
- Systematization of Learning Analytics: Introduce a data analysis module to accurately track learning progress and outcomes, further improving the level of personalized teaching.

Through continuous optimization and innovation, CIBL aims to develop this project into a model case for the digital development of international Chinese language education and continuously promote the improvement of teaching quality and impact of Confucius Institutes.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools (CISS) in the UK was officially established in June 2012. It was jointly established by the University of Strathclyde, Scotland's National Centre for Languages, the Tianjin Municipal Education Commission, and Tianjin Normal University.

CISS has 46 Confucius Classroom hubs across 21 local authorities in Scotland, including 22 secondary school hubs, 20 primary school hubs, and 4 specialist hubs. In recognition of its outstanding achievements in Chinese language education and China–UK cultural exchange, CISS was awarded the titles of "Confucius Institute of the Year" in 2014 and "Model Confucius Institute" in 2017.

CISS is committed to providing students and local communities in Scotland with opportunities to learn Chinese, helping them develop language knowledge, skills and cultural understanding. Through its network of Confucius Classroom hubs, it offers high-quality, progressive language learning experiences that promote cultural understanding and personal development. At the same time, CISS serves as a platform for educational and cultural exchange between China and the UK, fostering academic collaboration and mutual learning.

During the implementation of the case, the Confucius Institute maintained a clear division of responsibilities and close collaboration among its staff. Ms Fhiona Mackay is the UK Director of CISS. She advises the Scottish Government on language policy and provides strategic leadership to all the Confucius Classroom hubs in Scotland and works in close partnership with other institutions. Mrs Wendy Green is the General Manager of CISS, mainly responsible for project planning and the supervision of daily teaching activities, ensuring that Chinese language programmes delivered by the Confucius Institute align with local language education policies. Ms Karen Liddle is the Professional Development Officer of CISS with focus on secondary schools. She is responsible for teacher training for the VET programme and works closely with Confucius Classroom staff to provide guidance and support. Mrs Susan Lawson is the Professional Development Officer of CISS with focus on primary schools. With extensive experience in primary education, she works alongside Karen to deliver professional learning programme and has developed the CISS Mandarin Framework.

Bridging Time and Space: Innovative Practice in the "Virtual Exchange Teachers" Programme

Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools, UK

Case Background

Prior to 2020, the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools (CISS), UK, sent a large number of Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs) to local primary and secondary schools each year, who were vital for Chinese language teaching in Scotland's schools. During the pandemic, Chinese teachers were temporarily unable to travel to Scotland for in-person teaching. The key question was: how could the normal continuation of Chinese language teaching in Scottish schools be maintained under a severe shortage of teachers?

The answer was the Virtual Exchange Teachers (VET) programme. Since Chinese teachers could not travel to Scotland in person, they were instead connected with Scottish students online.

In January 2020, CISS and Southwest Jiaotong University (SWJTU) signed a strategic co-operation agreement, which quickly led to the establishment of the Virtual Exchange Teachers programme. In the initial stage, CISS developed a set of eight

beginners' online Chinese lessons, which were delivered by postgraduate students majoring in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (TCSOL) at SWJTU.

To ensure effective teaching, the project team focused on three key aspects: professional learning and training for the VET teachers; developing engaging teaching resources that would captivate students' attention and commitment; enhancing teachers' online teaching skills. After the launch of the programme, CISS actively addressed various challenges and successfully completed the task, with outcomes far exceeding expectations. The online course has since evolved from a short-term temporary project into one of the most popular programmes currently offered by the Confucius Institute.

■ Case Development Plan

In the early stage of the programme, the team faced many challenges while exploring a new model of online teaching. On the one hand, teachers needed to quickly adapt to new ways of working and become familiar with online learning tools and methods. On the other hand, the first blocks of online lessons were beset with technical difficulties, further complicated by the 7–8-hour time difference between China and the UK. However, CISS and colleagues from SWJTU persisted, adapting and updating their teaching strategies, and eventually developed an efficient workflow that enabled the delivery of high-quality and highly interactive online language lessons to young learners.

CISS partnered with SWJTU to select and train cohorts of around 50 postgraduate students annually as Virtual Exchange Teachers. This not only provides Chinese language teaching support for schools in Scotland, but also offers Chinese students a valuable opportunity to gain insight into the Scottish education system and practise remote teaching.

CISS staff design and deliver a tailored one-week induction training for new

VETs, including sessions on the Scottish education system, school life in primary and secondary schools in Scotland, the contents and delivery of the online courses, as well as communication and safeguarding. This ensures that VETs feel confident for their teaching duties: they develop a clear understanding of the Scottish education system and the teaching approaches suited to local students. During the subsequent eight-week teaching period, the teachers also continue to receive in-service training provided by CISS, enabling them to further enhance their pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills.

The opportunity to participate in the VET programme was initially offered only to schools within local authorities with a Confucius Classroom, in order to fill the gap left by the absence of Chinese teachers. Every class participating in the programme is assigned two virtual teachers, who work collaboratively to deliver one live class per week over an eight-week period. The two teachers gradually develop a good working relationship with the Scottish teachers and students, and become familiar with the class during the teaching process. As this familiarity grows, students' interest in learning Chinese also gradually increases.

Once online lessons begin, VETs take part in regular ongoing professional learning, with sessions on subjects such as formative assessment, sharing learning intentions and success criteria, microteaching, developing writing skills, and analysing learners' needs. During the 2023–24 session, CISS also created a Professional Learning programme for more experienced VETs, including more advanced topics such as student behaviour management and classroom organisation, successful approaches to digital and online learning and addressing common classroom challenges.

VET lessons are designed for beginner learners of Chinese aged 8–14 within the Broad General Education stage of the Scottish curriculum, and are most popular with classes in the final three years of primary school. Originally, the course was designed for complete beginners, taking them through some basic greetings, introducing tones and characters using numbers, and giving learners the chance to start talking in Mandarin about themselves, their families and the things they like, all in eight 45-minute lessons.

Classroom teachers in Scotland are encouraged to participate in the lessons, learning basic Mandarin alongside their students. In addition, CISS provides supplementary learning materials as resources beyond the weekly live lessons, helping students practise and consolidate what they have learned in class.

In addition to working with schools, VETs also provided HSK preparation courses for students preparing to apply for the Scholarship Programme at Tianjin Normal University and planning to study in China, as well as Chinese language courses for local teachers in Scotland. In addition, VETs developed online resources for the "Beyond the Panda" courses delivered by the science-themed Confucius Classroom at the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland. Since their launch in 2021, these courses have been incredibly popular, with more than 22,000 participants engaging. Furthermore, on 20 April 2023, to mark the return of the giant pandas Tian Tian and Yang Guang from Edinburgh Zoo to Chengdu, CISS organised a live online event for UN Chinese Language Day titled "An Adventure with Pandas," which attracted more than 5,000 students to participate online.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

VETs have now taught over 3,000 lessons, reaching over 300 classes in more than 200 schools across 15 local authorities in Scotland. At the beginning of the programme, CISS offered only an eight-week introductory course. Many classes enjoyed their VET experience so much that they wanted to take the next step in their learning journey, so CISS developed a Level 2 follow-on course and subsequently a Level 3 course.

All courses were designed and developed by CISS staff based on CISS's Mandarin Learning Framework and the Experiences and Outcomes of the Scottish Curriculum, while also taking into account the needs and characteristics of Scottish learners. The courses aim to develop students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Mandarin in a fun, interactive, and flexible way. They also help

learners master the basic elements of Chinese characters and understand their origins and structures.

For many students, this is the hook to spark their interest and curiosity in a language that is so vastly different from European languages. In addition, getting to know their VETs and finding out about their personal perspective on Chinese culture adds a real-life dimension to language learning, which motivates students to explore the language further.

The VET programme enables students across Scotland—whether in large cities or small rural communities—to learn about Chinese language and culture. Chinese is no longer an elite subject available only in a few schools in major cities. Even students living in the most remote areas of Scotland can access the same learning opportunities and high-quality experience. The programme also enables schools to integrate Mandarin into their curriculum and has become a key means of delivering Scotland's languages policy.

Since 2023, 25 postgraduate students from Southwest Jiaotong University who participated in the VET programme have successfully applied to become volunteer teachers at CISS, extending their online teaching experience to in-person Chinese language classrooms in Scotland. Their experience in the programme has provided a solid foundation for their subsequent classroom teaching in Scotland.

■ Case Experience Summary

The success of the Virtual Exchange Teachers programme demonstrates that through close communication and efficient implementation, partnerships between educational institutions across the world can cultivate significant benefits for all participants.

From a Scottish perspective, children and young people in school are getting the chance to interact and learn with teachers from the other side of the world, giving more real meaning to language learning and fostering understanding of cultures beyond their own.

From Chinese universities' point of view, students not only learn international

language teaching theories and methods, but also have the opportunity to communicate directly with learners on the other side of the world in practice, transforming theoretical knowledge into real teaching ability.

Looking ahead, CISS plans to further expand the coverage of the VET programme. A range of courses at different levels have already been developed to support students' continued progression in Chinese learning. The VET programme has successfully extended Chinese language teaching beyond schools with Confucius Classrooms, enabling many students who previously had no access to Chinese language and culture to benefit from this opportunity.

The success of this collaboration has also strengthened the confidence of the University of Strathclyde and SWJTU in developing new joint initiatives. The two institutions are now working on the development of a joint master's degree called "Language Teaching in International Contexts." Postgraduate students from Chinese universities may earn part of the credits for this degree through participation in the VET programme. The establishment of this degree will play an important role in cultivating the next generation of international Chinese language teachers.

Overview of the CI

The Amman TAG-Confucius Institute in Jordan (TAG-CI) was established in September 2008 and is the world's first Confucius Institute jointly constructed by a university and an enterprise. The Chinese partner is Shenyang Normal University, and the local partner is TAG. Global. Based in Jordan and serving the surrounding region, the Confucius Institute has long been committed to providing high-quality Chinese language education and cultural exchange services to the local community. The annual student enrollment exceeds 550. Each year, TAG-CI organizes over 40 cultural events, reaching more than 70,000 participants in total, thereby establishing a strong local brand presence. The curriculum system is diverse, covering comprehensive Chinese courses, HSK preparation courses, and integrated programs such as "Chinese + Business" and "Chinese + Tourism," catering to different needs of local people.

TAG-CI has also achieved notable academic research outcomes, hosting two projects under the Center for Language Education and Cooperation of the Ministry of Education of China, developing the localized Chinese textbook *Business Chinese Training Course*, and publishing three translated works. TAG-CI has won over 50 awards in various contests. In line with the trend of digitalized education, TAG-CI leverages TAG.Global's digital resources to actively explore blended online and in-person teaching models. It has formed distinctive features in digital teaching resource development,

digitalized Chinese instruction, and cultural promotion through new media, gradually establishing a regionally recognized practice model for international Chinese language education.

The case leader is Professor Yang Songfang, currently serving as the Chinese Director of TAG-CI. She is fully responsible for case planning, program design, and organizational implementation, overseeing the teaching reform process, coordinating resources from both China and Jordan, and promoting the implementation and promotion of the case. The case team includes Mamoun Abu Al-Sebaa (Local Director of TAG-CI), who supports case design and implementation and is responsible for local coordination and cultural adaptation; and Guan Xia, Zhou Tong, Zang Xiaonan, and Sheng Guannan (core teaching staff), who undertake AI-enabled teaching practice, classroom implementation, development of teaching resources, and teaching evaluation and feedback collection, playing a key role in the advancement and continuous optimization of the case.

The team has a clear division of responsibilities and close collaboration, forming a working mechanism characterized by China–Jordan coordination, integration of teaching and technology, and the combination of practice with reflection, providing strong support for the successful implementation and promotion of the case.

Digital Empowerment and AI-Enhanced Teaching: Innovative Practices and Localization Exploration in Chinese Language Education

Amman TAG-Confucius Institute, Jordan

■ Case Background

In recent years, with the deepening of the Belt and Road Initiative, exchanges and cooperation between China and Jordan in the fields of economy, trade, education, and culture have continued to deepen, leading to a growing demand for Chinese language learning in Jordan. However, the Amman TAG-Confucius Institute (TAG-CI) in Jordan also faces a series of practical challenges in its teaching practice: (1) the content of textbooks is often disconnected from students' daily lives, reducing classroom appeal; (2) teachers experience heavy lesson-preparation workloads with limited access to quality resources; (3) instructional approaches lack diversity, making it difficult to continuously stimulate students' learning interest; and (4) there are certain barriers to cross-cultural understanding in the teaching process.

Against this background, TAG-CI has proactively promoted

digital and intelligent transformation, proposing the working concept of "digital empowerment and AI-enhanced teaching." The Confucius Institute is committed to integrating digital technologies, represented by artificial intelligence, into the entire process of Chinese language education, aiming to promote the high-quality and sustainable development of Chinese language education.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

1.1 Working Principles

This case is guided by the core concept of "digital empowerment and intelligent teaching," adhering to the principles of goal-oriented instruction, teacher leadership, local cultural adaptation, and sustainable development. It aims to establish a systematic application framework for international Chinese language education empowered by digital technologies and artificial intelligence.

1.2 Design Approach

TAG-CI does not regard AI as a substitute for teachers, but rather as an intelligent support system to enhance teaching efficiency, optimize instructional design, and enrich teaching methods. By integrating AI into key stages such as lesson preparation, classroom implementation, after-class extension, resource development, cultural communication, and teaching feedback, the project establishes a digital application system covering the entire teaching process.

1.3 Implementation Pathway

By fully leveraging the advantages of digital technologies and AI, TAG-CI has developed an integrated "five-in-one" digital teaching system centered on: smart platform development; teaching resource development and localization; classroom teaching innovation and multimodal integration;

after-class learning extension and intelligent learning support; innovative cultural communication and digital promotion. This system enables end-to-end innovative applications from teachers to students across the entire learning process.

1.4 Considerations

Throughout the implementation of the case, the Confucius Institute emphasizes the principle of teacher leadership. Emphasis is consistently placed on teachers' review of the linguistic accuracy and cultural appropriateness of AI-generated content. Students are guided to use AI tools appropriately and avoid excessive reliance on technology.

2 Implementation Process

2.1 Team Formation

The project team is led by the Chinese Director, who serves as the overall coordinator, overseeing the top-level design and comprehensive implementation of the digital teaching reform. The Local Director and core Chinese teaching staff serve as key members, responsible for analyzing teaching needs, designing courses, and implementing classroom practices. At the same time, the team introduced IT experts from Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Global (TAG.Global) to provide professional support for the project's digital technology applications, forming a collaborative, multi-stakeholder working mechanism.

2.2 Smart Platform Development

Relying on the "TAG Digital Training" online teaching platform independently developed by TAG.Global, TAG-CI has integrated live teaching, course playback, and interactive exercises, providing teachers and students with an efficient, convenient, and open digital learning environment. This platform overcomes the constraints of time and space, expands the reach of Chinese language education, and offers solid support for the digitalization and intelligent development of TAG-CI's teaching.

2.3 Teaching Resource Development and Localization

In terms of teaching resource development, TAG-CI utilized tools such

as ChatGPT, DeepSeek, WPS, DeepL, Doubao, and Tencent Yuanbao to generate personalized exercises and reading materials. The Confucius Institute also independently developed and produced a series of video courses, including HSK Level 3 Courses, Business Chinese Training Courses, Creative Ink Painting Experience, and Ink Aroma Classroom: Learning Seal Script Calligraphy, which were uploaded to the Global Confucius Institute Portal of the Chinese International Education Foundation (ci.cn), facilitating the sharing of high-quality resources.

For localization, the teachers moderately adapted textbook content with the support of AI tools to better align with Jordanian social and cultural contexts. For example, "Christmas" was replaced with "Eid al-Fitr," making the teaching content more relevant to students' daily lives. This approach not only enhanced the sense of familiarity but also fostered emotional resonance.

2.4 Classroom Teaching Innovation and Multimodal Integration

In classroom teaching, the teachers leveraged ChatGPT to generate clearly structured lesson plan frameworks, used DeepSeek to optimize grammar explanations, and created visually rich teaching PPTs with WPS. Doubao was used to generate image materials, while tools such as CapCut were used to produce short teaching videos. AI technologies were also applied to automatic vocabulary classification and the design of interactive exercises, significantly improving lesson preparation efficiency. These intelligent tools and platforms together formed a multimodal teaching support system and significantly enhanced classroom engagement and student participation.

2.5 After-Class Extension and Intelligent Learning Support

In the after-class phase, AI continued to play a supportive role. The teachers used AI to generate supplementary exercises and extracurricular reading materials. For example, a story titled "Xiaoming's Week in

Beijing" was created based on HSK Level 1 vocabulary, helping students to consolidate language knowledge through contextual reading. The teachers also employed AI for homework grading and learning data analysis, enabling intelligent and personalized instructional feedback. Students used tools such as DeepL to comprehend texts and explore extended reading, gradually developing autonomous learning abilities.

2.6 Cultural Communication and Digital Innovation

TAG-CI actively explored the application of AI in cultural communication, integrating it into activities such as video production, promotional content writing, and social media short video promotion. For example, tools including ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Doubao, and CapCut were comprehensively used to produce the background video for the 2025 "Chinese Bridge" speech competition. WPS was employed to create a "Four Treasures of the Study" PPT, which was then converted into a short video and posted via TAG-CI's Facebook account.

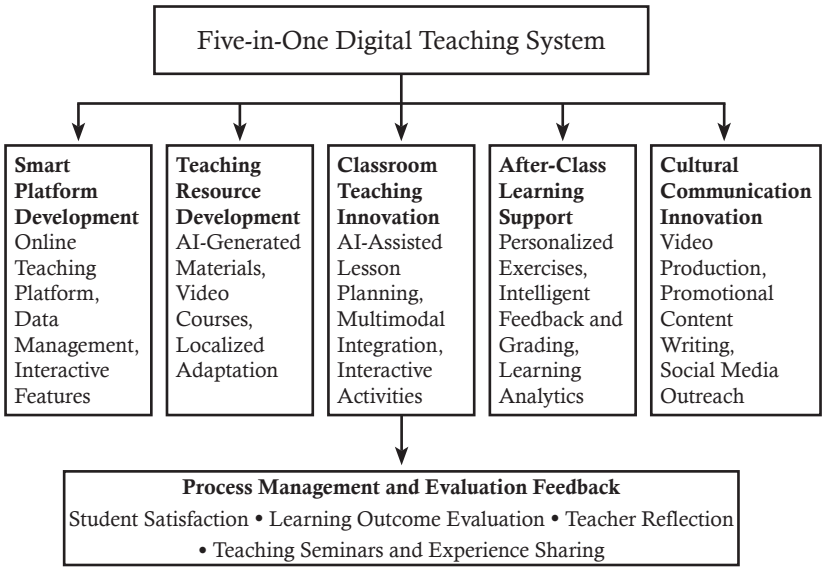
Practices have shown that the introduction of AI technologies significantly enhanced the visual impact and communicative effectiveness of cultural activities, enabling Chinese culture to reach local communities in digital form and providing support for a dual empowerment of Chinese language teaching and cultural promotion.

2.7 Process Management and Feedback Evaluation

During implementation, TAG-CI continuously optimized AI application models through teaching seminars and experience-sharing sessions, gradually establishing a collective evaluation mechanism. Feedback data were collected through student satisfaction surveys, interviews, and learning outcome assessments, providing data support for the continuous improvement of teaching.

In the initial stage of the project implementation, some teachers lacked a clear understanding of the functional positioning of different AI tools. In response, TAG-CI guided teachers to gradually clarify the functional features and appropriate application scenarios of various AI tools through

self-directed learning, collective discussions, and demonstration classes. At the same time, some students showed a relatively high level of dependence on AI tools in the early stage. To address this issue, the teachers established clear guidelines for AI use and guided students to view AI as an "assistive tool" rather than a "substitutive tool," thereby strengthening students' awareness of their role as active learners.



Framework of the Five-in-One Digital Teaching System

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Implementation Outcomes

At the student level, learning interest and engagement have increased significantly. Survey results show that 97% of students believed AI-supported classes are "more interesting and easier to understand." Some students began to proactively use AI tools to support reading and writing, gradually forming a learning ecosystem characterized by teacher–student co-creation and integration of in-class and extracurricular learning. Notably, in the Jordan

Finals of the 2025 "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students, three students from TAG-CI won first place, second place, and fourth place, respectively, fully demonstrating the positive results of digitalized teaching.

At the teacher level, the introduction of AI has effectively reduced teachers' workload in lesson preparation and classroom instruction, significantly improving overall efficiency. Based on teaching practice feedback, lesson preparation efficiency increased by more than 30%, while instructional design became more creative and better targeted. At the same time, teachers' understanding of digital teaching philosophy has deepened, and their ability to apply digital technologies and AI tools has improved significantly.

At the educational resource level, a collection of shareable video courses and digital teaching materials has been developed, enriching the global Confucius Institute digital resource repository and providing valuable, replicable experience for international Chinese language education.

At the cultural communication level, localized instructional content and AI-produced cultural short videos have helped enhance communication outcomes and raise the profile of TAG-CI.

2 Key Highlights and Innovations

First, by leveraging the self-developed digital platform of TAG.Global, the accessibility and coverage of Chinese language instruction have been significantly enhanced; second, AI technologies have been integrated to empower the entire teaching process of Chinese language education; third, a strong localization-oriented approach has been maintained to strengthen cultural adaptation; and fourth, the coordinated advancement of teaching and cultural communication has enhanced the communication effectiveness of the Chinese language.

Case Experience Summary

This case has generated a number of experiences with broad applicability and strong potential for replication and promotion during its implementation.

First, a problem-oriented and teaching-centered approach was consistently upheld. The application of AI was always driven by concrete instructional needs and aligned with pedagogical objectives rather than technology for its own sake, enabling the deep integration between teaching and technology.

Second, the leading role and professional oversight of teachers were emphasized. Teachers played a central guiding role in the use of AI, ensuring linguistic accuracy, pedagogical standards, and cultural appropriateness, while balancing innovation with academic standards.

Third, the co-development and sharing of resources were actively promoted. Through the development of the digital platform and video-based courses, high-quality teaching resources were accumulated and made available for cross-regional promotion and multi-scenario application, enhancing instructional efficiency and impact.

Fourth, innovation in classroom teaching and multimodal integration were advanced. With AI-generated lesson plan frameworks, PPTs, interactive exercises, and multimedia materials, teachers were able to design more creative and targeted lesson plans, increasing student engagement and learning effectiveness.

Fifth, localized integration was strengthened. By using AI to culturally reconstruct teaching materials, instructional content was made more relevant to students' real-life experiences and cognitive habits, thereby increasing students' interest in learning, strengthening their sense of cultural identity, and supporting more sustained learning.

Sixth, cultural communication and digital outreach were expanded. AI was employed to produce instructional videos, promotional short videos, and social media content, enabling Chinese language and culture to be integrated into local society in digital forms and achieving two-way empowerment between teaching and

cultural promotion.

Seventh, the development of sustainable mechanisms was prioritized. A systematic framework was developed for AI-based teaching workshops, intelligent assessment systems, and teacher capacity-building pathways, forming a replicable and scalable model of digital teaching practice that provides strong support for the sustainable development of international Chinese language education.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute of the University of Costa Rica was established in 2008 through a partnership between the University of Costa Rica and Renmin University of China. It is the first Confucius Institute in Central America and currently the only one in Costa Rica. Its mission is to promote local Chinese language teaching, introduce Chinese culture, and strengthen academic cooperation and cultural exchange between universities in China and Costa Rica. In 2018, the Confucius Institute was awarded the title of "Confucius Institute of the Year." In 2025, the Confucius Institute offered 225 classes with a total enrollment of 2,034 students and organized 148 cultural and academic activities, reaching nearly 60,000 participants.

The case was led by Professor Zhou Guohua, the Local Director of the Confucius Institute. The Chinese Director, the teaching coordinator, all eleven Chinese teachers in post as of September 2025, and one local teacher participated in the case research and the drafting of the application. The Local Director oversaw the overall case application, while the Chinese Director and the teaching coordinator were responsible for reviewing the research content and preparing the application materials. The Chinese teachers and the local teacher were divided into five groups, with each group responsible for drafting a different section of the case.

"Costa Rica, Nihao!": From a Radio Program to Online Livestreaming

Confucius Institute of the University of Costa Rica , Costa Rica

■ Case Background

In 2014, the Confucius Institute of the University of Costa Rica faced two major challenges. First, the traditional offline teaching model had limited reach and struggled to engage people across the country who were interested in learning Chinese and Chinese culture. Second, local understanding of Chinese culture remained largely superficial, with few accessible channels for the public to gain systematic and in-depth knowledge. To address these challenges, the Confucius Institute decided to move learning beyond the campus and build an "on-air bridge" for cultural exchange. It innovatively partnered with Radio Universidad, a nationally influential public university radio station in Costa Rica, to launch the radio program "Costa Rica, Nihao!" In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-studio recording became impossible. The program team therefore shifted to digital social media platforms, including Facebook and YouTube, for online livestream broadcasts. After more than a decade of development, "Costa Rica, Nihao!" has grown into an open, multi-dimensional, and

sustainable platform for intercultural exchange. It has provided people across Costa Rican society with an important window into Chinese culture and offered valuable insights for innovative approaches to the dissemination of international Chinese education in Latin America.

■ Case Development Plan

In 2014, the Confucius Institute collaborated with Radio Universidad to launch the regular radio program "Costa Rica, Nihao!" The program aired once a month and featured a wide range of topics, including themed episodes on traditional Chinese festivals, Chinese cuisine, comparisons between Chinese and Costa Rican cultures, and interviews with artists, poets, and scholars. Broadcast through a nationwide public radio network, the program reached a broad audience. Its storytelling style was designed to be lively, engaging, and closely connected to everyday life, in order to attract potential Chinese language learners from diverse backgrounds.

With the rise and development of digital and social media, the integration of traditional broadcasting and digital platforms has become a key direction explored by major media organizations. In 2020, due to the pandemic, the "Costa Rica, Nihao!" team experimented with new formats and gradually developed a multi-channel communication model combining radio broadcasting, social media, and online interaction.

Currently, the program is broadcast simultaneously on Radio Universidad 96.7 FM and the program's official Facebook Live, while short videos and interactive content are regularly released on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. This shift has enabled the program to move from one-way broadcasting to interactive, multi-directional communication. Moreover, the replay function of these platforms allows audiences to access previous episodes at any time, thereby enabling long-term and sustainable dissemination.

The following section takes one episode of "Costa Rica, Nihao!" as an example to illustrate the program's operational and dissemination model.

On May 30, 2025, "Costa Rica, Nihao!" launched a special episode featuring three guests—faculty members and students from the Department of Spanish, School of Foreign Languages, Renmin University of China. The program focused on the regional cultures of different Chinese cities, covering topics such as the local customs, cuisine, festival traditions, and urban differences of the guests' hometowns, vividly presenting the diversity of Chinese regional cultures. The host, who also served as the cultural coordinator of the Confucius Institute, used Costa Rican culture as a point of reference and engaged the guests in two-way interaction. This approach transformed the program from one-way dissemination into an equal dialogue of cultural exchange. Such a process of "mutual interpretation," achieved through comparisons in language, tone, and content, represents an important pathway for understanding others in intercultural communication.

The episode was recorded entirely in Spanish and broadcast simultaneously on Radio Universidad and YouTube, making full use of the complementary strengths of on-air broadcasting and on-the-ground engagement. Through on-air dissemination, Costa Rican audiences were able to directly experience the cultural charm of different regions of China. Meanwhile, the comment and replay functions on YouTube further extended the space for communication, enabling audiences to continue participating in discussions beyond the live program and creating a space for intercultural interaction across time and distance.

Through the on-site activities of the Confucius Institute, joint recordings involving Chinese and local teachers and students were organized, and the program's content was further extended and deepened through the teaching and community activities. After the broadcast, Confucius Institute teachers organized students in Chinese language classes to watch and discuss interview clips, comparing customs and social differences between China and Costa Rica. Program footage was also screened during cultural festival events, attracting many participants to engage in the interaction and further expanding the program's impact in cultural communication.

The program's content and format clearly reflect distinctive features of intercultural communication. The dialogue between the host and guests was open, equal and natural, combining cultural introductions with the sharing of everyday experiences. Chinese guests shared stories of their hometowns in Spanish, demonstrating their language proficiency while effectively conveying cultural meaning. The host, using Costa Rican culture as a reference point, engaged in comparisons and responses that fostered an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

This shift from "talking about China" to "cultural dialogue" allowed listeners and viewers to appreciate China's diversity and vitality through relaxed interaction, while also narrowing the psychological distance between people of the two countries.

Practice has shown that the collaborative mechanism of on-air broadcasting and on-the-ground engagement has significant advantages in intercultural communication. Radio and online platforms expand the program's reach and visibility, while the Confucius Institute's offline teaching and activities strengthen cultural experience and learning outcomes. Through the integration of online and offline approaches and equal emphasis on dissemination and education, this extension from "on-air communication" to "on-the-ground practice" ensures that intercultural exchange no longer remains at the level of knowledge transmission, but is transformed into a cultural learning process that is perceptible, tangible, and participatory.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

The program "Costa Rica, Nihao!" has achieved notable results in promoting Chinese culture. As of the time of data collection, its YouTube channel has 512 subscribers and has released 74 videos, generating more than 1.72 million impressions, over 158,000 views, and a total watch time of 701 hours. The audience spans multiple countries, including Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Chile, Peru,

Argentina, Ecuador, Guatemala, Ireland, El Salvador, France, and Colombia. At the same time, on Meta platforms (Facebook and Instagram), the program's accounts have 3,381 subscribers, with 3,100 interactions (including comments and shares) and 18,229 views. Among the audience, 80.7% are from Costa Rica, while the remaining 19.3% come from countries such as the United States, China, Mexico, Spain, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Germany, and France.

"Costa Rica, Nihao!" is an innovative example of digital technology empowering Sino-Costa Rican cultural exchange and Chinese language education. It features three main characteristics: model innovation through cross-sector integration to achieve precise audience outreach; content innovation through a "dual-track language partnership" approach that builds a bridge for cultural exchange; and collaborative innovation through platform-based support that promotes coordination between online and offline activities.

By leveraging the combined strengths of traditional broadcasting and online social media, the program has built a dynamic and diverse online platform for sharing Chinese culture that transcends temporal and geographical boundaries. With zero advertising investment and over a decade of continuous effort, it has attracted broad attention in Costa Rica and across Latin America. This case can be summed up in a simple phrase: "Heard digitally, echoed across the ocean."

■ Case Experience Summary

This case distills a replicable framework for intercultural communication, centered on localized narratives, dual-channel integration, online–offline synergy, and sustainable operation.

1 Localized Narratives for Two-Way Dialogue

Using local culture as a reference point and everyday themes such as festivals and cuisine, combined with storytelling, helps foster cultural comparison and empathy. In practice, local scholars, students, and influential community figures can be invited to serve as "cultural bridges," using familiar contexts to lower barriers to understanding.

2 Integration of Traditional and Digital Channels

By combining the credibility of traditional media with the interactivity of social media, a multi-layered communication network is established. Through simultaneous broadcasting, replay, and interactive features, audiences are transformed into active participants, thereby expanding overall reach.

3 Online–Offline Synergy for Deepened Impact

Extending online content into Confucius Institute classroom teaching and community activities helps form a closed loop of "dissemination—discussion—practice." Through institutional collaboration such as partnerships with universities, public institutions, and media organizations, resources can be further integrated and the program's reach enhanced.

4 Light-Asset, Sustainable Operation

By relying on existing public platforms, the program promotes the organic growth of high-quality content, enabling low-cost, long-term operation. This approach is particularly suitable for teams with limited resources.

This framework—rooted in localization, enabled by channel integration, advanced through online–offline synergy, and supported by light-asset operations—can provide useful reference for other Confucius Institutes in building sustainable, participatory, and scalable communication ecosystems.

Overview of the CI

Established in 2015, the Confucius Classroom at T. A. Marryshow Community College (TAMCC) in Grenada was upgraded to the Confucius Institute at TAMCC in July 2022. It is the only institution in Grenada dedicated to Chinese language education and the promotion of Chinese culture. It operates two university-level teaching sites and ten primary and secondary school teaching sites in St. George's, St. Patrick's, and Grenville, with approximately 700 registered students each year.

In addition to basic Chinese language courses and HSK preparation programs, since 2022 the Confucius Institute has organized an annual "Chinese + Vocational Skills" teacher training program in automotive maintenance in China. To date, the program has trained more than 40 skilled professionals, continuously promoting deeper people-to-people exchange and educational cooperation between China and Grenada.

The Confucius Institute has actively promoted innovation in both teaching and communication in light of local conditions, exploring pathways for the deep integration of digital technologies with international Chinese language education. This case was led by Professor Jiang Fan, the then Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute. The team consisted of Chinese language teachers from Ningbo University of Technology and T. A. Marryshow Community College. With clearly defined roles and close collaboration, the team worked efficiently across multiple areas—including content planning, teaching implementation, technical support, and platform operations—providing a solid foundation for the successful implementation of the project.

Sound–Image Integration, Wisdom-Driven Communication—Digital Communication Practices of the Confucius Institute

Confucius Institute at T. A. Marryshow Community College, Grenada

■ Case Background

With the rapid development of digital media, traditional communication models of the Confucius Institute at T. A. Marryshow Community College (TAMCC) in Grenada have become increasingly inadequate in meeting the needs of diverse audiences. The Confucius Institute faces challenges such as sustaining the production of high-quality content, strengthening engagement with local audiences, and achieving coordinated communication across multiple platforms. Therefore, the Confucius Institute urgently needs to explore feasible pathways for digital communication.

This case focuses on exploring new pathways for digital communication and addressing challenges faced by the Confucius Institute in international Chinese language communication, such as limited communication reach and insufficient audience engagement. Against this background, the Confucius Institute at

TAMCC innovatively developed a digital model of "Sound–Image Integration, Wisdom-Driven Communication." Through this approach, the Confucius Institute released 20 bilingual (Chinese–English) promotional videos across various social media platforms, including YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, WeChat Channels, bilibili, and rednote, and used AI technologies to create theme songs for events. It also launched a digital magazine titled *Four Seasons at the Confucius Institute* and actively encouraged its teaching sites to share Confucius Institute events on social media platforms, thereby effectively expanding its communication reach.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

1.1 Working Principles

Guided by the principles of "culture as the foundation, digital technology as the medium, audience-centered engagement, and data-driven decision-making," this project makes full use of digital technologies and new media tools to build an international communication system characterized by multi-platform coordination, collaborative content creation, and sustained operation, thereby promoting the perceptible, participatory, and sustainable global dissemination of Chinese culture.

1.2 Design Approach

The project addresses key limitations of traditional Confucius Institute communication—namely limited communication reach, insufficient audience engagement, and a lack of diversity in formats—by proposing the overarching concept of "Sound–Image Integration, Wisdom-Driven Communication."

By integrating audio, visual, and AI technologies, the project develops digital content that combines cultural depth with emotional resonance. Through differentiated multi-platform strategies, it reaches audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds and age groups more effectively. Furthermore, through the development of branded and serialized content,

the project aims to build a distinctive and scalable "Digital Confucius Institute" brand with long-term potential.

1.3 Implementation Pathway

The overall implementation pathway of the project is structured around four interconnected stages: "Infrastructure Development—Content Creation—Platform Operations—Evaluation and Optimization."

First, it strengthens the digital infrastructure by establishing a digital communication studio, providing technical support for content production.

Second, focusing on cultural themes and teaching practices, it systematically develops multilingual and multi-format digital content.

Third, it implements targeted content distribution and interactive operations tailored to the characteristics of different social media platforms.

Fourth, through data monitoring and feedback mechanisms, it continuously optimizes content structures and communication strategies, thereby forming a positive and sustainable cycle.

1.4 Considerations

Throughout the design and implementation of the project, particular emphasis is placed on the accuracy of cultural expression and its adaptation to local contexts, avoiding a model of one-way dissemination. At the same time, close attention is paid to copyright compliance, content review, and public opinion management to ensure that digital communication remains secure, well-regulated, and sustainable.

2 Implementation Process

The project was iplemented in the following four stages:

2.1 Preparation and Organization

In the initial phase of the project, the Confucius Institute established a digital communication team led by the Chinese Director and

composed of teachers, volunteers, and technical staff, with clearly defined responsibilities for content planning, filming and production, platform operations, and data analysis. At the same time, the Confucius Institute equipped the team with audio-visual equipment, video editing software, and AI-assisted music composition tools, and set up a digital communication studio, thereby laying a solid organizational and technical foundation for subsequent implementation.

2.2 Content Development and Creation

Focusing on themes such as traditional Chinese festivals, achievements in Chinese language teaching, and local cultural exchange activities, the team carried out script planning and content development, producing 20 bilingual (Chinese–English) short videos covering multiple dimensions, including cultural presentation, language learning, and cultural exchange.

At the same time, the project explored the application of AI technologies by creating customized theme songs for events, enabling the deep integration of music, visual media, and cultural content, and enhancing both the artistic appeal and memorability of the productions. In addition, the bilingual digital magazine *Four Seasons at the Confucius Institute* was launched, forming a systematic and branded portfolio of digital cultural products.

2.3 Testing and Platform Operations

Before content release, internal testing and optimization were conducted on video length, subtitle language, visual pacing, and music-video alignment. During the release phase, differentiated distribution strategies were developed in line with the algorithmic mechanisms and user preferences of platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and bilibili, including careful planning of posting schedules, hashtag selection, and audience engagement prompts. At the same time, teaching sites were encouraged to share updates about Confucius Institute activities on local social media platforms, thereby creating a multi-node, interconnected communication network.

2.4 Promotion and Operation

After the project entered its regular operation phase, the team gradually expanded its audience base and enhanced local community engagement through continuous content updates, thematic planning, and audience engagement activities. By leveraging data indicators such as views, likes, comments, and shares, the team conducted ongoing evaluations of communication effectiveness and, based on audience feedback, promptly adjusted content direction and presentation formats, thereby promoting iterative optimization and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the project.

During the implementation process, the team encountered several challenges, such as high pressure to sustain continuous content production, uneven digital skill levels among team members, and the complexity of coordinating management across multiple platforms. In response, the Confucius Institute adopted measures including establishing a regular content planning mechanism, stimulating creative motivation through competitions and project initiatives, and strengthening internal training along with clearer division of labor and collaboration. These measures effectively improved both content quality and overall operational efficiency.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

Since the implementation of this project, the Confucius Institute at TAMCC has achieved notable results in the digitalization of international Chinese language education and cultural communication.

In terms of communication outcomes, the Confucius Institute produced and released 20 bilingual (Chinese–English) videos centered on Chinese language teaching and cultural exchange. These were disseminated simultaneously across

multiple platforms, including YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, WeChat Channels, bilibili, and rednote, generating nearly 200,000 cumulative views and over 5,000 interactions. This multi-platform strategy effectively broke through geographical boundaries and significantly enhanced the impact of cross-cultural communication. The bilingual digital magazine *Four Seasons at the Confucius Institute* has been released on a continuous basis across multiple platforms, gradually developing into a comprehensive digital window that integrates information dissemination, cultural presentation, and the showcasing of achievements.

In terms of educational impact, teachers and students of the Confucius Institute were deeply involved in all stages of content planning, filming, editing, and AI-assisted music creation, leading to notable improvements in digital literacy, cross-cultural expression skills, and awareness of international communication. The resulting outcomes have in turn fed back into teaching practice, significantly increasing students' enthusiasm for learning Chinese and participating in cultural exchange activities.

In terms of innovative highlights, this case features "Sound–Image Integration" as its core approach, combining AI technologies, music creation, and short-video dissemination to build a digital communication closed loop of "content creation—multi-platform operation—data-driven feedback and optimization." This approach has formed a sustainable and replicable new model for digital communication by Confucius Institutes.

■ Case Experience Summary

This case provides a valuable practical pathway for Confucius Institutes worldwide to promote digital communication and advance innovation in international Chinese language education.

First, equal emphasis should be placed on content direction and technological empowerment. With Chinese language teaching and cultural communication as the core, AI technologies, short-video production, and multimedia expression should be introduced in a well-considered manner, avoiding "technology for its own sake"

and ensuring that digital tools consistently serve educational and cultural objectives.

Second, emphasis should be placed on multi-platform coordination and localized expression. Differentiated content strategies should be adopted based on the features of different platforms and their audience profiles, while incorporating local cultural elements to strengthen audience resonance and engagement.

Third, team collaboration and capacity building should be reinforced. Through the joint participation of Chinese and local teachers, students, and technical staff, the project promotes "learning by doing," thereby enhancing the team's digital literacy and international communication capabilities through practice.

Fourth, a data-driven feedback and dynamic optimization mechanism should be established. By continuously analyzing communication data and audience feedback, content direction and dissemination strategies can be adjusted in a timely manner, thereby improving the precision and effectiveness of communication.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at Stellenbosch University in South Africa is the first Confucius Institute established in South Africa. In 2004, the China Research Centre was founded at Stellenbosch University. In 2008, Xiamen University of China and Stellenbosch University signed an agreement to jointly establish the Confucius Institute. In October 2009, the first Board of Directors of the Confucius Institute decided to separate the Confucius Institute from the China Research Centre in order to focus on Chinese language teaching and cultural exchange. It currently oversees two Confucius Classrooms and thirty teaching sites.

This case was coordinated and implemented by the Confucius Institute, which established a collaborative mechanism covering overall design, professional guidance, data support, and case writing, thereby ensuring the systematic and standardised nature of both practice and research.

This case was coordinated by Zuo Liugang, a Chinese language teacher at the Stellenbosch High School teaching site of the Confucius Institute at Stellenbosch University. He was responsible for teaching Chinese to five

Grade 9 classes and for the curriculum planning and management of both the "Chinese Language Club" and the "Chinese Culture Club." He led the design of the digital strategy, the establishment of community operation mechanisms, and the planning and publishing of short-video content. He also systematically documented the entire project process and related data, providing empirical evidence for the case study. Zheng Rujuan, Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute, served as the team's supervising expert. She was responsible for reviewing the project proposal, overseeing the research framework, and providing guidance for the application materials to ensure the project's academic rigor and theoretical soundness. The team also included Er Siying and Qian Qian, postgraduate students in international chinese language education at Xiamen University and Chinese teachers at the Confucius Institute. Er Siying was responsible for data collection, organization, and preliminary statistical analysis. Qian Qian was responsible for drafting and revising the Chinese and English case texts.

"Community Operation + Short Videos" Dual-Drive Model: How the Chinese Club at Stellenbosch High School in South Africa Expanded Its Reach

Confucius Institute at Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Case Background

Stellenbosch High School is a century-old secondary school in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Since 2018, it has cooperated with the Confucius Institute at Stellenbosch University to offer Chinese language courses. During this period, the courses were temporarily suspended due to the pandemic. In May 2025, the program resumed; however, it was offered only as an interest-based course in a single grade with one class hour per week, resulting in limited coverage.

In response, the Confucius Institute and the school jointly established an "After-School Chinese Club" as a supplement to classroom teaching. However, given the weak foundation of Chinese learning on campus, initial participation was limited to only six students. The club also faced competition from other student organizations and frequent scheduling conflicts, which

constrained its development.

Against this backdrop, exploring how to achieve innovation and sustainable growth through zero-budget, low-threshold digital tools—amid challenges such as low participation, scheduling conflicts, and limited visibility—became a key issue in opening up new prospects for Chinese language teaching.

■ Case Development Plan

This case centered on digitally empowering Chinese language education and systematically designed a dual-drive practical model of "community operation + short videos." It aimed to address practical challenges faced by the Confucius Institute's Chinese Club, including low participation, limited visibility, and resource constraints. The model followed the implementation principles of "zero budget, high engagement, and broad dissemination." By leveraging lightweight digital tools and integrating online–offline strategies, it established a sustainable and replicable framework that promotes both language learning and cultural communication.

1 Scheme Design

1.1 Working Principles

- User-Centered, Experience-Oriented: Design low-threshold, highly interactive participation mechanisms based on students' interests and digital habits.
- Lightweight Technology, Manageable Costs: Fully leverage free and widely used social media and content-creation platforms, avoiding complex technologies and high financial investment.
- Online–Offline Integration with a Closed Loop: Create immersive cultural experiences through offline activities, while using online operations to expand outreach and maintain relationships, thereby forming a positive and sustainable cycle.
- Data-Driven Continuous Optimization: Monitor community interaction metrics and short-video dissemination performance, using feedback data to

dynamically adjust activity content and operational strategies.

1.2 Design Approach

This case adopts a dual-drive model. The WhatsApp community serves as the organizational hub and relational link, addressing information asymmetry and coordination challenges while enhancing members' sense of belonging and ensuring stable participation. Instagram short videos function as the communication engine and public-facing window, transforming highlights from offline activities into widely shareable digital content. This approach breaks temporal and spatial constraints and expands the reach and impact of the activities. The two components complement each other: the community provides content sources and an initial audience for short videos, while short videos, in turn, attract new members to the community. Together, they form a coordinated growth model characterized by "internal consolidation and external expansion."

1.3 Implementation Pathway

(1) Launch Phase

Clarify the project objectives (to expand participation, enhance visibility, accumulate teaching and cultural resources), select core digital tools (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram, CapCut), and establish an implementation team composed of Confucius Institute Chinese teachers.

(2) Development Phase

Establish basic rules and operational procedures for the WhatsApp community; develop thematic plans and production standards for short-video content.

(3) Operational Phase

Simultaneously advance daily community management, organization and implementation of offline cultural experience activities, and short-video filming and publication.

(4) Evaluation and Iteration Phase

Regularly analyze community engagement, membership growth trends, and video dissemination data. Collect feedback and optimize activity

design and operational strategies accordingly.

1.4 Considerations

(1) Legal Compliance: Strictly comply with local laws and regulations regarding data privacy and minors' online activities. When publishing videos involving students, prior consent must be obtained from the school, parents, and students themselves.

(2) Cultural Accuracy and Positive Guidance: Ensure the cultural accuracy and value orientation of the content, maintaining consistency with the Confucius Institute's brand image.

(3) Balance between Online and Offline Engagement: Maintain a balance between online interaction and offline experiences, avoiding excessive digitalization that may weaken real interpersonal connections and cultural understanding.

2 Implementation Process

2.1 Phase One: Preparation and Launch (May–June 2025)

(1) Organization and Research

A project team was established, led by the case leader, with Chinese and South African members working collaboratively. The team conducted an in-depth analysis of students' extracurricular activity patterns at Stellenbosch High School, their preferred social media platforms, and the main challenges in learning Chinese.

(2) Program Design and Tool Preparation

A dual-drive approach of "community operation + short videos" was confirmed. The team selected WhatsApp to set up the official club group, used Instagram as the official publishing platform, and chose CapCut for video editing.

(3) Pilot Recruitment

An initial cohort of six core members were attracted to join the WhatsApp community group through offline presentations, thereby

establishing a preliminary regular communication mechanism.

2.2 Phase Two: Pilot Operation and Model Validation (July–August 2025)

(1) Systematized Community Management

A standardized process of "activity announcement—online registration—offline implementation—feedback collection" was established within the community, effectively avoiding scheduling conflicts among school activities. Teachers maintained regular, moderate interactions in the community, sharing cultural tips to enhance the stability of member participation.

(2) Streamlined Short Video Production

Cultural experience activities on themes such as calligraphy, tea ceremony, and traditional attire were organized. Dedicated personnel were assigned to film the activities, creating a standardized video production process of "on-site filming—rapid CapCut editing—bilingual subtitle addition—Instagram release." The video style featured a lively rhythm and visual appeal to align with teenagers' aesthetic preferences.

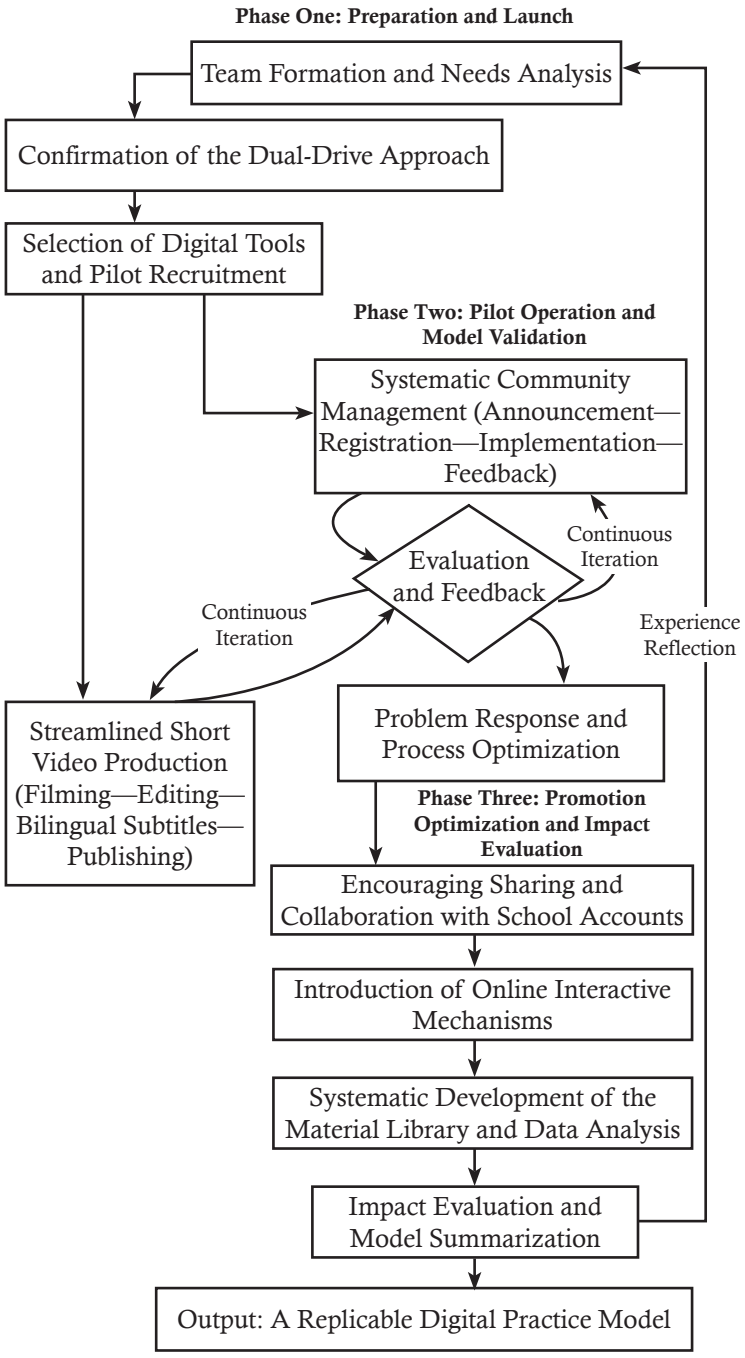
(3) Problem Response and Process Optimization

Early challenges included balancing the quantity and quality of content production. In response, the Confucius Institute incorporated Chinese teachers into the content creation team and provided basic editing training, and built a video material template library to improve efficiency. Additionally, considering that some students had limited internet access, the team controlled video file sizes and provided image-text versions of key content from each episode for secondary dissemination within the community.

2.3 Phase Three: Promotion Optimization and Impact Evaluation (September 2025)

(1) Expansion and Outreach

Community members were encouraged to share short videos on their personal social networks and the team actively engaged with Stellenbosch High School's official social media accounts, achieving multiple reposts and extending its reach beyond the immediate community.



Implementation Flowchart of the "Community Operation + Short Videos" Dual-Drive Model

(2) Mechanism Innovation

Online interactive mechanisms were introduced, such as launching "Best Model" voting and incubating campus "micro-influencers," leveraging social networks for viral dissemination.

(3) Systematic Development

Accumulated video materials were organized by theme to establish a preliminary digital cultural library at the Confucius Institute. Operational data showed that the community membership increased from 6 to 61 members, and video views exceeded 100,000, effectively verifying the feasibility of the model and providing data support for future planning.

Overall, the implementation process follows a closed loop from precise launch, agile piloting, to data-driven optimization. By systematically migrating traditional club activities into a digital ecosystem and innovatively applying social media dissemination strategies, the project achieved significant growth in participation and cultural outreach within a short period. This provides a clear blueprint for the digital implementation of international Chinese language education in resource-constrained environments.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Overall Outcomes and Impact

The implementation of this case achieved remarkable results, with significant quantitative outcomes. Within two months, club membership increased from 6 to 61 students, representing a growth rate of 917%. Eight activities were organized, with an average attendance of 15 participants and a peak attendance of 30. A total of 30 short videos were produced, generating nearly 100,000 cumulative views and over 3,000 likes and shares. The videos were reposted six times by the school's official platforms.

In addition, several qualitative achievements were realized. Information about the club was featured for the first time in the 2025 yearbook of Stellenbosch High School. A diverse collection of cultural activity videos

was accumulated, leading to the establishment of a digital cultural resource library for the Confucius Institute. Related content was also covered by major Chinese media outlets, including China News Service and CCTV.com, generating secondary dissemination and effectively expanding the Confucius Institute's reach.

2 Key Highlights and Innovations

This case centers on digital empowerment and adopts a dual-drive model of "community operation + short videos" to develop a low-cost and scalable pathway for cultural communication.

The key innovative features are as follows:

2.1 Enhancing Engagement through Community Operation

A localized community operation approach was implemented by leveraging WhatsApp, the most popular social media platform in South Africa, to build a standardized activity process. This directly addressed challenges such as information asymmetry and low attendance rates, while significantly strengthening teacher–student interaction and enhancing students' sense of belonging.

2.2 Expanding Reach through Short-Video Production

Offline immersive activities were combined with short-video dissemination, with short videos published on Instagram. With total views exceeding 100,000, the content was reposted multiple times by the school's official accounts, forming a "primary dissemination + secondary dissemination" communication effect and significantly enhancing the visibility of the Chinese Club.

2.3 Driving Traffic through Social Interaction

Through online voting activities, the project cultivated campus "micro-influencers," stimulating social dissemination effects, increasing attention to club activities, and supporting Confucius Institute enrollment promotion through social media traffic.

2.4 An Easily Replicable "Zero-Budget" Model

The project operated without any additional financial investment and established a complete operational and communication model based on free digital tools. The model is simple to implement and has strong potential for promotion across different countries and contexts, providing a replicable practical model for the digital development of international Chinese language education.

■ Case Experience Summary

The core experiences are summarized as follows:

1 Localization with a Student-Centered Approach

Free tools such as WhatsApp and CapCut were selected to lower operational costs and align with local students' digital usage habits, effectively addressing funding constraints. By tailoring content to students' cognitive levels and interests, lightweight and engaging short videos were produced. Chinese language knowledge points and cultural elements were embedded into concise, scenario-based clips, lowering the learning threshold and improving students' acceptance.

2 Community-Based Closed-Loop Operation

At the operational level, a digital service platform was established to implement closed-loop management through online registration, Q&A interaction, and outcome feedback. This approach resolved scheduling conflicts, strengthened teacher–student engagement, enhanced students' sense of belonging, and ensured steady growth in participation.

At the instructional level, offline teaching scenarios were integrated with digital dissemination. Short videos were used as tools for pre-class preparation, post-class review, and extended learning, forming a pedagogical closed loop that reinforced learning effectiveness.

At the communication level, immersive cultural experiences were cultivated offline, while online dissemination through social media platforms

enabled viral spread. This balanced student participation and the reach of activities, fostering a stable learning community.

3 Innovative Communication Model and Systematic Accumulation of Outcomes

Short videos were used to document offline immersive cultural activities. Combined with the cultivation of campus "micro-influencers" and secondary dissemination within the school community, the initiative expanded its reach and achieved over 100,000 cumulative views. Meanwhile, a cultural video resource library was established, laying the foundation for future teaching promotion and model replication.

Looking ahead, the Confucius Institute will continue to optimize and implement this model by improving community operation mechanisms and promoting the localization of video content. It aims to promote cross-school collaboration and promotion across multiple regions in South Africa, enabling low-cost digital tools to serve as an effective pathway for activating Chinese language education and deepening intercultural exchange between China and other countries.

Overview of the CI

Established in 2013, Confucius Institute at Istanbul Okan University (Okan CI) is a partnership between Beijing Language and Culture University and Istanbul Okan University. In 2015, the Confucius Classroom at Okan Private School—the first in Istanbul—was officially inaugurated. Istanbul Okan University is currently the only university in Türkiye offering an undergraduate major in Chinese Translation, with long-term curricular and faculty support provided by Okan CI.

Over more than a decade of development, Okan CI has formed a work pattern centered on Chinese language education, extended through cultural communication, and broadened through exchange and cooperation.

In terms of teaching, in addition to supporting credit courses, Okan CI offers diversified courses to the public, including Basic Chinese, Business Chinese, HSK tutoring, and interest-based Chinese classes. It has established a comprehensive teaching system ranging from basic to advanced levels.

Beyond traditional festivals such as the Spring Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival, Okan CI has established branded programs including the "China–Türkiye Economic and Trade Forum,"

"Chinese Language and Culture Festival," "Photography, Calligraphy, and Essay Competitions," "Okan CI Spring Festival Gala," and "China–Türkiye Food Fair."

Students are encouraged and guided by the Confucius Institute to participate in competitions such as the "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition, poetry recitations, and Chinese singing contests, where they have won awards on multiple occasions. Okan also supports student clubs in publishing magazines, providing a platform for independent practice.

This practice was developed collaboratively by the Okan CI team. Chinese Director Hu Wei oversaw overall planning and coordination across teaching, culture, and communication. Turkish Director Buket Çetinbaş Eryılmaz contributed to activity planning, local resource coordination, and content localization. Teachers from the Confucius Institute, represented by Li Yuanjing, supported instructional assistance, event execution, and daily new media operations.

Despite its lean size, the team operates with a clear division of responsibilities and strong coordination, steadily advancing Ocan CI's digital practices toward systematic development.

Leveraging Digital Platforms to Promote Cultural Exchange Between China and Türkiye

Confucius Institute at Istanbul Okan University, Türkiye

■ Case Background

The global wave of digitalization has created new opportunities while also posing new challenges for international Chinese language education and cultural communication. Chinese learners in Türkiye are geographically dispersed, with considerable differences in language proficiency, learning goals, and participation patterns. Located on the Asian side of Istanbul, Istanbul Okan University is relatively distant from the city center, which limits the reach of in-person courses and cultural events. Meanwhile, remote teaching practices in recent years have made online teaching a sustainable and practical option.

In response to this situation, the Confucius Institute at Istanbul Okan University (Okan CI) has progressively integrated digital tools into its daily operations. It has explored a coordinated development path that combines teaching, culture, and communication. By utilizing platforms such as Zoom, integrating online and offline

resources, and relying on widely used local social media platforms like Instagram, Okan CI has gradually overcome spatial constraints. This approach promotes diversified curricula, enriched cultural programming, and multidimensional communication, thereby expanding outreach and deepening interaction in China–Türkiye cultural exchange.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Guiding Philosophy

The core objective of this initiative is to promote China–Türkiye cultural exchange and enhance the impact of Chinese language education. Based on Okan CI's practical conditions and by leveraging stable, mature digital technologies, the project addresses challenges arising from geographical barriers and dispersed resources, and seeks to establish a coordinated digital framework in which teaching, cultural programming, and communication reinforce one another. Specifically, the Confucius Institute aims to expand the reach of Chinese language education through digital teaching platforms, develop integrated online and offline cultural activities that enhance engagement and interaction, build a multi-platform media matrix to systematically showcase institutional achievements, and foster mutual support among these three components to gradually form a sustainable operational mechanism.

2 Scheme Design

2.1 Teaching: Building a Multi-Tiered Curriculum System

In addition to credit-bearing courses offered to students at Istanbul Okan University and Okan Private School, Okan CI provides online courses for both on-campus and external learners, including Basic Chinese, Business Chinese, and HSK preparation. Interest-oriented Chinese classes are also available for university staff and parents of students.

This structure has gradually formed a tiered and categorized teaching system ranging from beginner to advanced levels. Furthermore, Okan CI organizes hybrid (online–offline) training programs for international Chinese language teachers, supporting the professional development of Türkiye's local Chinese language teaching workforce and promoting greater standardization and systematization of teaching.

2.2 Culture: Enhancing Immersion and Interaction

Okan CI has steadily explored a model of integrated online and offline cultural activities. For example, during the Mid-Autumn Storytelling Event, Chinese and Turkish students narrated myths in each other's languages, accompanied by short videos and interactive quizzes with prizes, enabling remote participants to experience the festive atmosphere.

Okan CI also encourages and guides students to participate in the CI Moments Global Short Video Collection Event, the Online Confucius Institute Spring Festival Gala, and various talent showcase activities. Through digital platforms, students are able to demonstrate their language proficiency and cultural understanding, expanding their channels of expression.

2.3 Communication: Operating a Multi-platform Media Matrix

Okan CI regularly publishes original bilingual content, such as vocabulary cards, festival features, and cultural quizzes, gradually building a stable follower base. Student works are also published from time to time, strengthening engagement. At the same time, Okan CI maintains communication with major media outlets such as Xinhua News Agency and CGTN Türk, providing timely event information and materials to expand its public visibility through broader communication channels.

3 Implementation Process

The project has been implemented along three parallel tracks—teaching, culture, and communication—with continuous refinement and deepening in practice.

3.1 Teaching: From Online Delivery to Layered Optimization

In the initial stage, the priority was ensuring stable and effective online instruction via Zoom. Established courses were delivered online to maintain the continuity of standardized teaching. Based on enrollment data and participant feedback, course types, levels, and frequency were gradually adjusted, with additional HSK preparation and Business Chinese classes introduced. Teaching formats evolved from simple live sessions to a blended model of "live + recorded + online consultation." Currently, the Confucius Institute is exploring the use of classroom data—such as attendance rates and interaction frequency—to make dynamic adjustments to course content. Its focus is gradually shifting from merely "offering courses" to "optimizing the learning experience."

3.2 Culture: From One-Way Broadcasting to Interactive Engagement

In the early phase, cultural events were primarily livestreamed or recorded versions of offline activities. For example, during the Children's Day Tai Chi heritage experience event, nearly 400 teachers and students participated on-site, while more than 100 parents watched via livestream, achieving multi-dimensional coverage across different spaces. As experience accumulated, interactive elements were incorporated into livestreams, such as bilingual storytelling and online Q&A during the Mid-Autumn Festival event, encouraging audiences to shift from passive viewing to active participation.

Students were also encouraged to produce short videos for competitions like "Tourism + Chinese" and global costume showcases, with selected works promoted on social media, turning these platforms into a window for students to showcase their language abilities and creative achievements. During preparation for the Online Spring Festival Gala, teachers provided remote coaching to participating students, turning the preparation process itself into a cross-regional exchange opportunity.

The Confucius Institute is now working toward the series development and branding of key cultural activities, aiming to transform one-time participants into long-term followers.

3.3 Communication: From Broad Posting to Column-Based Operation

Initially centered on Instagram for timely information dissemination, Okan CI gradually developed structured thematic columns such as "Chinese Word of the Week," "Chinese Cities," "Chinese Cuisine," "Bilingual Interpretation of Confucius' Quotations," and "Did You Know?" which maintained a consistent visual identity and clear positioning.

During major festivals, thematic posters and cultural knowledge posts enhanced relevance and timeliness. As operations developed, student highlights and event moments were edited into short promotional videos, and annual digital albums were produced to systematically present the Confucius Institute's yearly achievements. Meanwhile, the Confucius Institute has proactively strengthened regular communication with major media outlets by preparing press releases and related visual materials for major events and inviting media coverage of its distinctive activities, thereby expanding its visibility through broader communication channels.

Through these efforts, Okan CI has gradually formed a digital framework in which the three pillars mutually reinforce one another: Teaching generates authentic content and cases; Culture creates engaging topics and emotional connections; Communication amplifies their reach and attracts new participants, forming a virtuous cycle.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Overall Outcomes

Teaching: Okan CI currently offers more than ten types of online and offline courses, serving over 1,000 participants in the past three years, with satisfaction rates consistently above 90%. For example, the post for the 2025 Summer HSK Preparation Program attracted 2,881 views on Instagram;

a total of 40 students participated in the full-stage training covering HSK Levels 2–5.

Culture: The hybrid model has significantly expanded participation. For example, the 2023 Children's Day Tai Chi heritage event, combining offline teaching with simultaneous livestreaming, reached nearly 400 teachers and students from Okan Private School, while attracting over 100 parents and family members online. Students have won awards in short video competitions such as "Tourism + Chinese." At the 2025 Online Confucius Institute Spring Festival Gala, Okan CI submitted nine programs, two of which were recognized as "Best Performance."

Communication: Okan CI's Instagram account has published over 800 posts and accumulated nearly 2,000 followers, with user engagement exceeding 81%.

2 Distinctive Features and Innovations

Teaching Model: Based on the needs of local learners, Okan CI has developed a flexible curriculum structure integrating "Credit Courses + Public Training + Teacher Development," and combines online workshops with offline practice to support the professional growth of local teachers.

Cultural Experience: A "Three-Circle" model—an offline experiential core, an online participation circle, and a social media interaction circle—enhances the appeal and communication effectiveness of cultural activities, making on-site participants the protagonists of cultural experiences while turning online audiences into participants through the camera lens and interactive segments.

Brand Communication: Through serialized columns, social media platforms have evolved from simple information outlets into interactive community spaces, while mainstream media cooperation extends Okan CI's presence into broader public spheres.

■ Case Experience Summary

The digital practices of Okan CI have been gradually developed through continuous exploration under constraints of resources and geographical conditions.

1 Holistic Planning

Digitalization serves as a tool supporting overall institutional development rather than an isolated technical upgrade. Teaching, culture, and communication are designed in coordination—for example, materials from cultural activities can be incorporated into teaching, while students' outstanding work becomes important content for communication—allowing the three areas to support one another and improve overall effectiveness.

2 Demand-Oriented Implementation

Rather than pursuing technological complexity, the Confucius Institute selects stable and accessible tools suited to the realities of geographically dispersed learners. Online courses are organized with flexible durations and different levels, while cultural activities adopt a hybrid format of offline experience with livestreaming to allow both on-site immersion and remote access. Social media platforms with high local usage are prioritized, with content presented in both Chinese and Turkish to better connect with local audiences.

3 Effective Use of Mature Platforms

The Confucius Institute mainly adopts widely used online platforms and software, focusing on making full use of their existing functions to improve teaching interaction, enhance participation in activities, and increase content accessibility. Lower technical barriers allow teachers, students, and audiences to focus more on the content itself.

4 Openness and Collaboration

Digitalization has expanded opportunities for cooperation with local schools, cultural institutions, and media organizations. Okan CI co-organizes online activities with local partners, participates in online programs organized by the CIEF and the global Confucius Institute network, and maintains regular communication with media outlets to share event

information. These collaborations enrich resources and allow more local people to learn about and participate in the Confucius Institute's courses and cultural activities.

Looking ahead, Okan CI plans to explore smart courses and AI-assisted teaching tools, develop online exhibitions and digital festival programs in partnership with local institutions, and introduce basic data analytics to optimize content delivery and user interaction, further promoting Chinese language education and deepening China–Türkiye people-to-people and cultural exchanges in the digital space.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at the University of Santo Tomas in Chile (hereinafter referred to as the "UST Confucius Institute") was established in 2007 as the first Confucius Institute in Chile, founded through a collaboration between Universidad Santo Tomas in Chile and Anhui University in China. The UST Confucius Institute has been recognized four times as a "Confucius Institute of the Year" and was honored with the title of "Model Confucius Institute" in 2015. The student body of the UST Confucius Institute not only covers all regions of Chile but also includes students from other Latin American countries. As of 2026, the Confucius Institute has cultivated nearly 30,000 Chinese language learners, organized over 2,000 cultural activities, and attracted a cumulative audience of more than 700,000. By facilitating over 20 mutual visits between China and Chile, the UST Confucius Institute has gradually established a platform for promoting language teaching and cultural exchange. It has become one of the important windows for people in Chile and neighboring regions to learn about contemporary Chinese language and culture.

The person in charge of this case is Zhang Yundong, a Chinese teacher at the UST Confucius Institute who was responsible for the overall project design, the production of core digital materials (such as multilingual manuals, facial makeup line drawings, and instructional videos), activity process design, on-site hosting, and the writing of the case summary. Pan Huayun, a teacher at the Confucius Institute, served as a key member of the project team. She was responsible for collecting and organizing relevant background information and assisted with the collection, aggregation, and preliminary organization of various data during on-site activities and in the post-activity phase.

Cultural Semiotics Digitally Empowered: A Practice in Transcultural Perception and Communication of Peking Opera Facial Makeup

Confucius Institute at the University of Santo Tomas, Chile

■ Case Background

With the growing global interest in Chinese culture, overseas students in Chile have become increasingly attracted to traditional Chinese arts. To promote cultural exchange and mutual learning between China and Chile, the Confucius Institute at the University of Santo Tomas in Chile launched a Peking Opera facial makeup cultural experience project for students at the university in June 2025.

However, during the project preparation, the Confucius Institute encountered the following practical challenges:

- First, some materials required for Peking Opera facial mask making are in limited supply in South America, and the high costs associated with cross-border procurement and logistics constrain large-scale implementation of the activity.
- Second, traditional activity formats dominated by one-way

explanations struggle to engage students with no prior background, resulting in certain difficulties in cultural understanding.

- Third, the activity design needs to further enhance interactivity and a sense of participation, so as to encourage students' active involvement and sharing within their communities.

These practical difficulties have limited the depth of the cultural experience and the effectiveness of its dissemination. There is an urgent need to leverage digital innovation to break through the constraints of resources and formats, thereby creating a new pathway for cultural dissemination that is sustainable, immersive, and low-cost.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

1.1 Working Principles

This project is designed following three core principles, aiming to ensure its feasibility, timeliness, and sustainable impact in cross-cultural communication contexts.

(1) Digital Empowerment Principle: Fully leverage low-cost, accessible technological tools such as AI-Generated Content (AIGC), digital media, and social platforms to break through limitations in physical resources and geographical distance, enabling the lightweight production, precise dissemination, and immersive experience of cultural resources.

(2) Participatory Construction Principle: Guided by Constructivist Learning Theory, the project incorporates multi-layered interactive components (e.g., hands-on drawing, game-based competitions, social sharing), encouraging learners to transform from passive receivers into active cultural experiencers, meaning-makers, and secondary communicators of culture.

(3) Transferable Promotion Principle: Adopt modular and standardized design for the activity model, digital resources, and implementation

process to form a clear methodology and resource package. This ensures rapid adaptation to other Chinese cultural themes such as calligraphy, granting the model broad demonstrative value and replicability.

1.2 Design Approach

The overall design follows the framework of "One Core Objective, Dual-Path Breakthroughs, and Three-Dimensional Experience Deepening":

(1) One Core Objective: To break the dependence of traditional cultural activities on physical materials and one-way instruction, creating a new model for Chinese cultural communication that is low-cost, highly interactive, highly experiential, and sustainable.

(2) Dual-Path Breakthroughs: Through the resource path, utilize AI generation (e.g., multilingual handbooks and digital line drawings) and the digital presentation of audiovisual materials to alleviate the shortage of physical materials and language comprehension barriers. Through the participation path, employ a hybrid practice of "offline hands-on + digital creation" alongside gamified social mechanisms to enhance the depth of participation.

(3) Three-Dimensional Experience Deepening: Sequentially construct a progressive experiential framework of "Cognition—Hands-on Practice—Sharing" by establishing a starting point for cultural understanding through audiovisual explanations, deepening practical understanding through manual or digital drawing, and finally leveraging games and social sharing to stimulate emotional resonance and voluntary dissemination.

1.3 Implementation Pathway

This case centers on the "low-cost, high-interaction, cross-time-and-space" concept, deeply integrating digital tools to break through traditional cultural communication barriers and achieve innovative dissemination of Peking Opera facial makeup culture.

(1) AI technology enables borderless cultural experience: Based on

Constructivist Learning Theory, CorelDRAW is used to generate black-and-white line drawings, supporting offline drawing and digital coloring. This alleviates the difficulty of acquiring teaching materials and stimulates participants' enthusiasm for actively constructing knowledge.

(2) AIGC empowers lightweight multilingual content production: AI tools like Doubao are leveraged to quickly generate Chinese-Spanish bilingual Peking Opera facial makeup cultural handbooks, achieving lightweight production and precise delivery of content. This significantly enhancing cross-cultural communication efficiency.

(3) Audiovisual interaction builds immersive perception: Tools like Dreamina, CapCut, and Wancai VR are used to produce Spanish-narrated videos with bilingual Chinese-Spanish subtitles. By presenting information based on dual visual and auditory channels, these videos interpret the connection between facial makeup colors and character personalities through dynamic narration, enhancing participation and strengthening cultural identity.

(4) Gamified social interaction drives communication transformation: DeepSeek is used to design interactive games like "Facial Makeup Character Guessing" and "Color Matching." By integrating game elements into the cultural experience process, supplemented by physical rewards, this approach increases participants' enthusiasm, motivates them to explore cultural connotations autonomously, and fosters a sustainable social dissemination model.

2 Implementation Process

The project adopts an integrated online–offline model and is implemented in the following three phases:

2.1 Pre-activity

Teachers used CorelDRAW to process typical facial makeup images to generate black-and-white line drawings, producing both paper-based and electronic drawing materials. Additionally, Doubao AI was used to generate a PDF of a Chinese-Spanish facial makeup cultural handbook, which was

then color-printed for use in the activity.

2.2 During the Activity

A large TV at the venue played a Spanish-narrated Peking Opera facial makeup video created using Dreamina and CapCut, visually explaining color symbolism and character traits to enhance the attractiveness of the activity.

Participants could choose to color on paper-based line drawings with crayons, or receive electronic line drawings via the Telegram social media app for later creative digital coloring.

Teachers organized interactive games such as "Facial Makeup Character Guessing" and "Color Matching," designed using DeepSeek, and combined them with team competitions and reward mechanisms to stimulate participants' enthusiasm.

2.3 Post-activity

The previously created Spanish promotional handbook was utilized to conduct online lectures.

Evaluation combined formative and summative approaches. During process management, teachers used forms to record participation and performance in real time. The Telegram social media app was used to distribute the facial makeup cultural handbook, initiate group discussion topics, and encourage participants to share their creations. After the activity, participant feedback questionnaires were collected to assess learners' learning outcomes in terms of cultural understanding and emotional identification.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Implementation Outcomes and Impact

This case achieved good dissemination results and positive feedback. The

activity engaged over 300 students. Questionnaire data revealed an 87% accuracy rate in students' understanding of the symbolism behind facial makeup colors, and 92% of participants reported a significantly increased interest in Chinese culture.

The outcomes extended beyond a single cultural experience, demonstrating strong sustainability: several students proactively shared their creations on social media, marking a critical shift from "passive reception" to "active dissemination." The developed digital resource package—containing 8 sets of line drawings, 3 Spanish instructional videos, and 4 game schemes—has been downloaded and reused, effectively reducing the preparation costs for similar activities. The digital paradigm established by this case has been successfully applied and promoted in multiple cultural theme activities at the University of Santo Tomas.

2 Highlights and Features

The core innovation of this case lies in its systematic integration of digital tools under the guiding concept of "low-cost, high-interaction, cross-time-and-space," thereby constructing a new pathway for cultural dissemination. Its main highlights include:

- Resource Innovation: AIGC (e.g., Doubao AI) is utilized to enable the lightweight and real-time production of multilingual cultural content, thereby alleviating the constraints posed by limited teaching resources and language barriers in cross-cultural teaching contexts.
- Experience Innovation: By combining the dual-track practice of "offline hands-on activities + digital creation" with gamified social mechanisms, the project creates a progressive experiential process of "cognition–practice–sharing."
- Model Innovation: Through modular design, integrating the implementation process and resource package into a standardized framework. This transforms a single activity into a standardized solution that can be widely transferred and replicated for themes like calligraphy, demonstrating strong exemplary value and promotion potential.

■ Case Experience Summary

The implementation of this case has accumulated replicable experience of reference value, which can be summarized as "One Framework, Three-Tiered Empowerment, Three-Phase Process."

First, an overall design framework was established centered on digital empowerment, participatory construction, and transferable promotion. This ensures that the project can achieve immersive experiences and sustainable impact even within resource-constrained environments.

Second, systematic optimization was carried out across three tiers during implementation: the Resource, Participation, and Experience Tiers.

- At the Resource Tier, leverage commonly available AI tools to achieve the digital transformation and multilingual generation of cultural symbols, lowering the professional threshold.
- At the Participation Tier, employ a hybrid social design of "online community warm-up, offline hybrid practice, and online result sharing" to significantly extend the dissemination chain.
- At the Experience Tier, follow learning principles to construct a progressive experiential pathway—from audiovisual cognition to hands-on practice, and further to gamified exploration and social dissemination.

Finally, at the management level, adhere to a clear three-phase process: "pre-activity standardized preparation, mid-activity hybrid organization, and post-activity evaluation & outcome consolidation." In the early phase, the focus is on generating reusable and standardized digital resources; in the mid-phase, immersive scenarios that integrate online and offline experiences are created to stimulate independent creativity; in the later phase, through quantitative evaluation and resource package integration, a transformation is achieved from practical outcomes to a transferable and reusable methodology, providing a clear operational path and toolkit for similar cultural activities.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Classroom based on Private Institution Educational Organization of Supplementary Education "Confucius" Oriental Languages & Culture Academy in St. Petersburg, Russia, was jointly established by the academy and Shandong Normal University, and is hereinafter referred to as CCSPB. Dedicated to promoting Chinese language teaching and advancing Sino-Russian cultural exchange, the Confucius Classroom is committed to a standardized and professional approach to educational management, striving to "enable everyone willing to learn Chinese to learn it well."

The Confucius Classroom currently operates four campuses, two affiliated Classrooms, and two additional teaching sites in other cities. Students won national and global awards in Chinese language contests on multiple occasions, including the "Chinese Bridge" series. It has also been honored with titles including the "Confucius Classroom of the Year," "Outstanding HSK Test Center," "Outstanding Educational Institution," and "Excellent Confucius Institute in Media Engagement."

This case was overseen by Yang Cuiyan, Chinese Director of the Confucius Classroom, who was responsible for research, coordination and decision-making. Zhang Xunli, Local Director of the Confucius Classroom, was responsible for project research, coordination, guidance, and decision-making. Lu Tianyin, Director of the Office of Academic Affairs, was responsible for project research, platform management, and data coordination. Cui Lulu, Deputy Director of the Office of Academic Affairs, was responsible for platform application training as well as data monitoring and management. Li Yueying, Head of the Contest Department, was responsible for academic administration and the development of digital teaching resources for contests. Liu Jing, Head of the Publicity Department, was responsible for maintaining data on the Confucius Classroom's publicity platforms. Zhou Wenyu, Head of the Cultural Affairs Department, was responsible for the organization and digital promotion of cultural activities.

Empowered by Digital Intelligence, Synergized for Efficiency: Exploration and Practice of Digital Management at the Confucius Classroom

Confucius Classroom of the Private Institution Educational Organization of Supplementary Education "Confucius" Oriental Languages & Culture Academy in St. Petersburg, Russia

Case Background

In recent years, enthusiasm for learning Chinese among the Russian public has continued to rise. As the Confucius Classroom of the Private Institution Educational Organization of Supplementary Education "Confucius" Oriental Languages & Culture Academy in St. Petersburg expands its scale of operation, it also faces practical challenges arising from increasing management complexity. First, the number of students is large, with approximately 4,000 enrollments annually across both online and offline channels. Second, there is a wide variety of course and class types, with nearly 20 categories offered, including language courses, cultural courses, training programs, and classes of different sizes. Third, the teaching and administrative team is substantial,

consisting of over 60 full-time and part-time teachers and administrative staff, working both online and offline and distributed across five countries and nine regions within Russia. Fourth, teaching locations are geographically dispersed, with four campuses and two affiliated Classrooms in St. Petersburg, along with two additional teaching sites in other cities.

Against this backdrop, conventional management methods prove inadequate in tackling mounting complexities—namely, large and complex student data, inefficient coordination among teaching and administrative staff, insufficient monitoring of teaching quality, and difficulties in cross-border and cross-campus collaboration. In response, there is an urgent need for CCSPB to adopt a digital management system that is adaptable to transnational educational contexts and capable of balancing both efficiency and quality, thus achieving the dual-track synergy of "teacher management" and "student management," and improving both internal management and external service capacity.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

Over the years, CCSPB has consistently adhered to a professional and standardized approach to education, actively adopting emerging educational technologies and digital tools. In the exploration of the digital management platform to achieve the dual-track synergy between "student management" and "team management," the following two operational principles were adopted.

First, management should be intelligent: the platform needed be capable of handling massive and complex educational administrative data, improving management efficiency, recording work processes, and avoiding ambiguous accountability. Second, services should be precise: the platform needed to align with the different dimensions of "student management" and "team

management," provide real-time supervision and support, facilitate timely communication and intervention, and deliver targeted services.

Based on the above principles, the selection of the digital management platform emphasized both platform adaptability and workflow optimization. After comparing and evaluating multiple digital platforms, CCSPB ultimately adopted a design approach of "local adaptation and system complementarity." Specifically, ALFA CRM system, with its high degree of localization, was chosen to manage the entire lifecycle of student administration; DingTalk was adopted to enable cross-campus collaboration among teaching staff and to digitalize administrative processes; ClassIn was utilized to support online teaching and real-time learning progress management. Consequently, the three platforms formed an interlinked digital management ecosystem covering "students—teachers—teaching." Additionally, to avoid information silos, lightweight data connectivity was established among the selected digital systems to achieve partial coordination and interconnection of information management.

2 Implementation Process

The development of this case consisted of the following three stages:

2.1 Needs Analysis and Platform Selection (2018–2021)

In 2018, a digital management team led by the academic administration team was established to research relevant educational and management software in both China and Russia. In 2019, to meet the growing demand for online teaching, CCSPB began exploring and trialing a series of intelligent online teaching management platforms, including LiveCloud, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Yunduo Classroom, and ClassIn. The exploration revealed that most local Russian intelligent management software lacked suitable solutions for the education sector and had relatively low levels of digitization. Meanwhile, Chinese platforms, in spite of their comprehensive functionalities and high cost-effectiveness, fell short in localization—for example, most interfaces were available only in Chinese or English, unable to connect with local communication networks, and

overly dependent on Chinese social platforms like WeChat.

In this context, CCSPB adopted three evaluation criteria—functional completeness, local adaptability, and cost controllability—to guide platform selection. Between 2020 and 2021, the team ultimately selected ALFA CRM system, DingTalk, and ClassIn as the core digital management tools, which formed a preliminary framework for a split-platform management system covering "students—teachers—teaching."

2.2 Pilot Operation and Integration Analysis (2021–2022)

After deciding on the target platforms, a series of pilot operations were carried out in selected classes and among designated teaching teams to identify problems, optimize processes, and further enhance the functional integration of the three chosen digital platforms. Each platform was leveraged according to its comparative strengths, with data complementarity and process linkage established to maximize overall management efficiency.

CCSPB made targeted improvements to the platform in response to problems identified during its practical application. Given DingTalk's limited localization, it was used for teacher recruitment, training, and daily on-duty management. To address weak Russian language support, the local ALFA CRM system was introduced, and the entire student management chain, including enrollment, admissions, attendance, parent–school communication, and grade management, was migrated to this platform. In response to the diverse needs of online teaching, ClassIn was adopted as the online teaching and instructional management platform. Meanwhile, a Chinese–Russian bilingual Digital Platform Operation Guide was compiled to support the broader implementation and application of the digital platforms.

2.3 Comprehensive Promotion and In-Depth Application (2022–present)

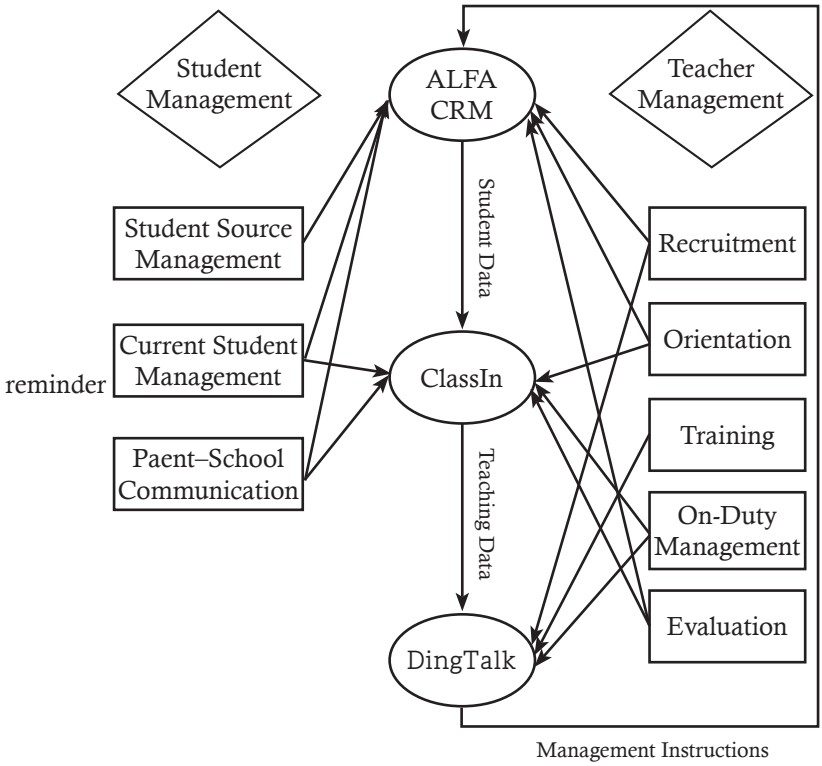
After thorough trials, the digital management team analyzed the

identified issues and made further optimizations to improve key workflows. Comprehensive guidance on digital management applications was provided to both students and teaching staff to ensure the stable operation of the three systems, ultimately forming an intelligent digital management ecosystem of the Confucius Classroom. In addition, the management team holds regular monthly meetings on digital management to continuously collect feedback and iteratively improve the implementation model.

Currently, the Confucius Classroom has established a digital management system supported by three core platforms. DingTalk serves as the internal operational hub, digitizing the entire workflow of teacher recruitment, training, attendance, reimbursement, resource requests, and daily academic communication. ClassIn is employed to build a virtual teaching environment, automatically generate learning progress reports, provide data support for teaching research decisions, offer teaching replays for student review and teaching evaluation, and support part of the daily staff management. Through CRM, student profiles and enrolled-student records are established, enabling full-cycle student management, learning progress tracking, closed-loop parent–school communication, integrated timetable management, standardized handover processes for Chinese teachers, and therefore achieving a "centralized dashboard management" interface for the cross-campus teaching network.

In the process of the promotion and application of the digital management model, CCSPB mainly encountered two challenges. First, teachers' levels of digital literacy varied considerably, which increased the difficulty of unified implementation. Second, the teaching staff was geographically dispersed, and time zone differences affected cross-border collaboration. To address these issues, CCSPB adopted targeted measures. Through tiered training programs and the establishment of a "digital mentor" support mechanism, teachers' overall digital application capabilities were effectively improved. In addition, by introducing DingTalk's asynchronous task flows and automatic reminder

functions, the constraints imposed by time differences on collaborative work were reduced.



Three-Platform "Student–Teacher–Teaching" Management Matrix

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Implementation Outcomes

The adoption of the digital management platform has significantly improved the Confucius Classroom's operational efficiency, teaching quality, and brand visibility.

Firstly, the cost of collaborative work was reduced, and management efficiency was significantly improved. The efficiency of cross-regional team

collaboration increased markedly, and administrative processes largely achieved "paperless," "real-time," and "transparent" operations. As a result, annual operating costs decreased by approximately 15%. Key processes such as student and staff management, resource management, and parent–school collaboration were significantly optimized: Class scheduling time was reduced by 65%; the accuracy of attendance and tuition management reached 98%; the handover time for Chinese teachers was shortened by 50%; and parent–school communication became more precise and efficient.

Secondly, teacher development was continuously strengthened, and teaching quality was steadily enhanced. Systematic online pre-service training shortened the adaptation period for new teachers. Regular online teaching guidance, supervision, and evaluation mechanisms ensured continuous improvement in teaching quality and supported the sustained implementation of cultural activities. According to ClassIn data from 2025, student satisfaction remained above 95%, and the Confucius Classroom received a "2025 Good Place" user rating on Yandex Maps.

Thirdly, talent cultivation yielded outstanding results, and brand visibility continued to expand. Students have won multiple national and global awards in various Chinese language competitions such as the "Chinese Bridge" Competition. Meanwhile, the Confucius Classroom's innovative model and notable achievements in digital operations gained widespread attention and recognition, earning multiple national-level honorary titles and extensive coverage by several international media outlets.

2 Key Features and Innovations

The distinctive innovations of this case are mainly reflected in the following two aspects.

First, system integration innovation: By organically integrating China's online teaching platform ClassIn, intelligent management platform DingTalk, and Russia's local digital management system ALFA CRM, the model balances technological advancement with local adaptability and forms a digital management ecosystem that integrates the strengths of multiple

platforms.

The other innovation is the dual-track digital management model, in which student management (supported by CRM and ClassIn) and team management (supported by DingTalk) operate independently yet are connected through key data points, creating a full-chain digital workflow that covers "enrollment—teaching—service—evaluation," thereby improving the Confucius Classroom's operational efficiency and service quality.

■ Case Experience Summary

After years of exploration and practice in digital management, the Confucius Classroom in St. Petersburg has summarized the following experiences.

First, pragmatic selection outweighs the pursuit of overly comprehensive systems. There is no "perfect system"; rather, an "adaptable combination" of platforms is the most effective solution. The selection of the best digital management platforms should be based on the core scenarios of application, with complementary architectures to ensure full functional coverage. In this process, particular attention should be paid to local adaptability and user habits.

Second, pilot operation along with iterative development is the crucial pathway. Adopting a strategy of "small steps, fast pace, and continuous optimization" helps expose issues and accumulate experience through pilot runs, thereby effectively mitigating risks that may arise during full-scale implementation. User feedback mechanisms facilitate timely reflection, summarization, and problem identification, providing an important basis for iterative optimization of the model.

Third, organizational support drives practical implementation. Establish dedicated task forces, clarify roles and responsibilities, and put in place supporting training and incentive mechanisms, such as the "Digital Teaching Star" award. In addition, regular sharing of digital teaching experiences promotes a shift in users' attitudes toward digital platforms—from "being able to use them," to "being willing

to use them," and ultimately to "using them effectively."

Fourth, key data empowers management decisions. Even if digital platforms are not fully integrated, critical data—such as attendance records and course evaluations—should be leveraged to support refined management, gradually advancing toward teaching and management that are driven by objective, detailed, and reliable administrative data from the platforms.

Fifth, the essence of digitization lies in the optimization of workflows. The purpose of adopting digital platforms is to streamline work processes, thereby enhancing work efficiency and improving service quality through "paperless, standardized, and automated" operations.

This case highlights the positive value of information technology in the teaching and management of international Chinese language education. Through persistent exploration, scientific design, phased implementation, and continuous optimization, the Confucius Classroom has established an agile and efficient digital management system for cross-site and cross-regional management contexts, thereby providing strong support for the high-quality and sustainable development of international Chinese language education.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute in Madrid, Spain, was established in November 2007 by Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and Shanghai International Studies University. It is the first Confucius Institute in Spain. Located in central Madrid, it primarily serves the general public while also reaching university and secondary school students.

In addition to its main campus, the Confucius Institute currently operates two teaching sites at Beatriz Galindo Secondary School and Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. It offers a wide range of courses throughout the year, including Chinese for adults and children, HSK preparation, speaking courses, one-on-one instruction, and summer programs, as well as innovative courses such as "Survival Chinese" and "Chinese Express." Cultural programs include Chinese painting, Chinese dance, and seal carving, forming a distinctive integrated approach of "language + culture." Since autumn 2025, the Confucius Institute has also taken over the Chinese language courses at the China Cultural Center in Madrid, further expanding its educational scale and outreach.

In addition to traditional cultural activities such as workshops, lectures, film screenings, and various exhibitions, as well as regular programs

including “Confucius Institute Day” and the “Chinese Bridge” Competition, the Confucius Institute in Madrid has continuously organized its own signature initiatives, such as the “Reading China” Book Club and the “Conversation Thursday” Chinese Corner. At the same time, it maintains long-term and close cooperation with public institutions including the Eugenio Trías Municipal Public Library, Iván de Vargas Municipal Public Library, and Casa Asia, as well as major cultural events such as the Madrid Book Fair and Getafe Negro.

This project was jointly coordinated by the Chinese and Local Directors of the Confucius Institute in Madrid. The Local Director oversaw overall planning and project coordination, while the Chinese Director supervised teaching and content quality. The administrative team was responsible for process design, platform integration, and operational management, and technical support was provided by a partner company. With clear division of responsibilities and close collaboration, a coordinated mechanism of “management coordination—teaching support—technical support” was established, ensuring the orderly implementation of project design, execution, testing, and promotion.

"One Body, Two Wings": Upgrading the Official Website to Empower a New Digital Management Ecosystem

Confucius Institute in Madrid, Spain

■ Case Background

In recent years, as the number of language courses, HSK exams, and cultural activities has continued to grow, the traditional management model relying heavily on manual communication and offline procedures has increasingly exposed problems such as fragmented processes, low efficiency, imprecise information delivery, and difficulties in data integration. Meanwhile, the official website has long functioned merely as an "information bulletin board," with limited visibility on search engines. Registration and payment require users to switch between multiple platforms, resulting in a heavy administrative workload, high error rates, and an unsatisfactory user experience.

In response to the dual challenges in teaching and management, the Confucius Institute launched a digital management ecosystem project in 2023 centered on a new official website. Through platform integration, process restructuring, and data connectivity,

the project aimed to build a unified hub integrating external communication, course management, user services, and data analysis, thereby optimizing learning experience, improving operational efficiency, and promoting a shift toward digitalized and refined management.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

1.1 Working Principles

Adhering to the principles of "user-centered design, efficiency-oriented operation, data-supported decision-making , and content-driven development," the project serves both learners and administrative staff, balancing external communication with internal management needs, and avoiding the tendency to emphasize display over management or technology over content.

1.2 Design Approach

The overall framework follows a "One Body, Two Wings" model. The "One Body" refers to the official website as a unified digital hub. The "Two Wings" refer to full-chain online business processes (registration, testing, payment, and learning) and data-driven targeted communication and efficient operations. The goal is to upgrade the website from a static information platform into an integrated operational platform combining display, management, services, and data analysis.

1.3 Implementation Pathway

- Reconstruct the website's information architecture and visual identity system to enhance brand recognition.
- Introduce modular tools to integrate registration, payment, testing, and learning processes.
- Establish a mechanism for producing original content to enhance academic and cultural impact.
- Connect data interfaces to enable user behavior tracking and analysis.

1.4 Considerations

- Emphasize data security and privacy protection, and avoid over-reliance on automatically generated content.
- Optimize the backend interface to reduce the learning curve for teachers and administrative staff.

2 Implementation Process

The project was implemented in the following five stages:

2.1 Diagnosis and Planning

A systematic evaluation of the original website identified three major issues: poor SEO performance and low visibility; fragmented registration and payment processes that required cumbersome manual operations; and a lack of data collection and analysis mechanisms. Based on this diagnosis, an overall upgrade plan and technical roadmap were formulated.

2.2 System Architecture and Tool Selection

WordPress was selected as the content management system for its flexibility and ease of maintenance. WooCommerce was introduced to enable an online purchase-style registration process. LearnPress was deployed to build a virtual campus for course management and the distribution of learning resources. QSM and Wappointment were configured to establish a tiered online proficiency testing system.

2.3 Content Development and Visual Redesign

The homepage structure was redesigned to highlight key sections such as language courses, cultural activities, and learning resources. Professional photographers were invited to document real teaching and event scenes, replacing commercial stock images and enhancing visual authenticity. Original content such as course introductions, event reports, interviews, and collaborative projects was consistently published to strengthen the Confucius Institute's academic and cultural positioning and improve search engine rankings.

2.4 Process Integration and Automation

To improve operational efficiency, the Confucius Institute integrated the entire workflow—proficiency testing, course recommendation, registration, payment, confirmation, and class placement—enabling automatic course recommendations and notifications. Smart Coupons was used to automate the management of scholarships and tuition discounts. Functions such as roster export, invoice management, and subscription management were also automated, significantly reducing the cost of manual intervention.

2.5 Testing, Launch, and Promotion

Multiple rounds of testing were conducted on payment stability, proficiency testing workflows, and mobile display. The new website officially launched in late February 2024, with synchronized promotion through the website, social media, and offline activities. Dedicated staff monitored backend data and user feedback to continuously fine-tune and optimize the system.

During the implementation process, the team mainly faced challenges including high technical complexity, heavy content production demands, and a user adaptation period. These were addressed through long-term cooperation with external technical teams, a clear division of responsibilities within the content team with standardized writing workflows, and comprehensive guidance and support for users.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

1 Implementation Outcomes

After implementation, the official website became the central hub for all the Confucius Institute's operations, achieving full online integration of registration, payment, testing, and learning. Administrative efficiency increased by over 50%, and errors in registration and payment were significantly reduced.

According to the Confucius Institute's statistics, active users increased from 22,000 to 72,000, representing a growth of 227%. Google organic search traffic reached 31,000 visits, and 1,050 new newsletter subscribers were added. Language course enrollment also increased by approximately 10% year on year following the website upgrade.

More importantly, users can now quickly find suitable courses through online proficiency tests, which has significantly improved the overall learning experience and user satisfaction.

2 Highlights and Innovations

- A clear "One Body, Two Wings" framework that upgrades the official website from a display window into an operational hub;
- A fully automated closed-loop process from online testing to class placement, minimizing manual intervention;
- A "content-as-brand" strategy, enhancing the Confucius Institute's brand image through original academic and cultural content;
- Data-driven decision-making based on real user behavior data to guide recruitment and promotion strategie;
- Chinese-style visual expression that showcases the charm of Chinese culture through authentic teaching and cultural scenes.

■ Case Experience Summary

1 Start from real pain points and avoid unnecessary technological complexity.

Digital transformation must respond to actual management and teaching needs, avoiding digitalization merely for its own sake.

2 Treat the website as a platform, not a display window.

Only by positioning the website as a core operational hub can its digital potential be fully realized.

3 Balance content develomarkedlypment and technical construction.

High-quality original content is essential for enhancing an institution's visibility and search engine presence.

4 Adhere to a data-driven approach and avoid experience-based decision-making.

Data should guide the optimization of course design and communication strategies, thereby effectively reducing trial-and-error costs.

5 Have replicability and promotional value.

The model does not rely on special resources and is applicable to most Confucius Institutes and other Chinese and international cultural institutions, with good potential for wider adoption.

Overview of the CI

The Confucius Institute at University of Turin was established in 2008, jointly founded by the University of Turin in Italy and East China Normal University (ECNU) in China. The Confucius Institute currently oversees five Confucius Classrooms, offers Chinese language courses at various levels, provides various Chinese language examination services, and organizes a range of signature cultural activities. It has signed a school alliance agreement with the Education Office of the Piedmont Region, aiming to promote the development of Chinese language and culture in local schools. To date, the agreement covers 22 local schools and over 1,400 students.

The case leader is Zhang Tianchi, a Chinese teacher at the Confucius Institute at University of Turin. Team members include Stefania Stafutti, the Italian Director; Dai Lan, the Chinese Director; Zhou Yong, Director of the ECNU Confucius Institute Office; and Qian Weining, Dean of the

School of Data Science and Engineering. The team has a clear division of responsibilities. Technical development is led by Professor Qian Weining's team at ECNU, with teachers Lan Yunshi, Pu Peng, and Wang Chunyang responsible for the R&D and technical problem-solving of core platform functions. Directors Stefania Stafutti and Dai Lan extensively mobilized local Italian teachers to participate in needs surveys and teacher training, and invited experts to review and guide the platform's localization adaptation plans. Zhou Yong coordinated internal and external resources throughout the process, providing strong support for the smooth progress of the project. Zhang Tianchi is responsible for needs research, platform development liaison and the organization and implementation of teacher training and feedback collection.

Innovation and Practice of Digitally-Enabled Italian Chinese Language Teaching: A Case Study of the "Shuishan ChineseEdu" Smart Platform

Confucius Institute at University of Turin, Italy

Case Background

With the deepening application of artificial intelligence technologies, international Chinese language education has embraced new opportunities for digital development. The Confucius Institute at University of Turin in Italy has consistently focused on advancing the optimization and upgrading of teaching and management, while proactively addressing three major challenges. First, there is a shortage of digital-intelligent resources, with insufficient digitization of local textbooks. Second, the level of digitization in teaching processes remains low, existing management platforms are functionally fragmented, and teaching administration still relies heavily on manual operations. Third, there is an underdeveloped personalized learning support system that cannot effectively meet diverse learning needs.

In response, the Italian Director, Prof. Stefania Stafutti, and the

Chinese Director, Dai Lan, designated the project "Digital Intelligence Empowering International Chinese Teaching and Management" as a key priority for the Confucius Institute in 2025. The Confucius Institute Office at ECNU provided full support. With the technical support of the expert team from the School of Data Science and Engineering at ECNU, the Italian localized version of the "Shuishan ChineseEdu" smart platform was developed and has been continuously optimized and upgraded. This platform precisely addresses the pain points in the digital-intelligent teaching and management of the Confucius Institute at University of Turin, fully leveraging ECNU's dual advantages in international Chinese language education and data science, and is committed to achieving a two-way digital upgrade in teaching and academic management.

■ Case Development Plan

1 Scheme Design

This case is built on the principle of collaborative innovation between the university's technical team and the Confucius Institute's management team, constructing a "central kitchen"-style educational resource supply model aimed at achieving both large-scale and personalized international Chinese language teaching through digital means. The platform adopts a "scenario-driven, data-empowered" design approach, centering on the six key aspects of "teaching, learning, assessment, practice, testing, and management" to build a full-chain digital solution covering three user groups: teachers, students, and administrative staff.

The design approach is as follows:

- Technical Support: The School of Data Science and Engineering at ECNU is responsible for platform development, utilizing natural language processing and generative AI technologies.
- Management Collaboration: The management team of the Confucius Institute at University of Turin deeply participates in requirement analysis and process design, ensuring platform functions align closely with actual teaching and

management scenarios.

- Localization Adaptation: The platform integrates Italian local textbooks and teaching management systems, and develops modules such as a teacher workbench, academic management system, and intelligent lesson preparation tools.

The project adopts a five-stage implementation pathway: "Needs Research—Platform Development—Pilot Training—Comprehensive Promotion—Optimization and Upgrade." Throughout each stage, the team pays close attention to key considerations such as data security management, refined user permission configuration, teacher digital capacity building, network environment adaptation, and cultural sensitivity, ensuring stable platform deployment and sustainable operation.

2 Implementation Process

2.1 Needs Research (September–December 2024)

Research on the application of AI among local Italian teachers was conducted to clarify dual teaching and management requirements. Led by the Italian and Chinese Directors of the Confucius Institute at University of Turin, a needs research working group was formed. Questionnaire surveys were conducted among Chinese and Italian teachers at the main Institute and its Confucius Classrooms, systematically identifying various pain points in course teaching and management processes. Based on this, multiple detailed functional points for modules like the intelligent lesson preparation tool and academic management system were defined. Zhang Tianchi actively maintained communication with Lan Yunshi, Pu Peng, and Wang Chunyang from ECNU, in an effort to bridge disciplinary divides and promptly convey local teaching and management realities.

2.2 Platform Development and Testing (January–May 2025)

Teaching support modules and the academic management backend were developed, integrating core functions like intelligent lesson preparation,

course scheduling, and attendance statistics. Development work proceeded in parallel across modules. The teaching support module completed the prototype of the teacher workbench, implementing basic functions such as lesson preparation resource management, teaching task allocation, and teaching progress tracking. It integrated lesson preparation tools such as HSK level-based text rewriting, multimodal exercise generation, and intelligent test assembly. The academic management backend completed core management functions such as class creation, student management, attendance statistics, and grade entry. The platform underwent multiple rounds of testing, during which feedback was collected and bugs were fixed to ensure secure and stable operation.

Zhou Yong, Director of the ECNU Confucius Institute Office; Qian Weining, Dean of the School of Data Science and Engineering; and Dai Lan, Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute at University of Turin, closely monitored the project's progress. They organized multiple cross-departmental coordination meetings, project progress meetings, and technical seminars, closely tracking development progress and alignment with requirements, promptly coordinating resource allocation to ensure the platform's development direction remained highly consistent with frontline teaching and management needs.

2.3 Initial Training (June 2025)

The "AI Empowering Chinese Teaching Intensive Training" was held to train local teachers on platform use and collect feedback for continuous functional optimization. Trainees included frontline Chinese teachers and related professionals from primary schools, secondary schools, and universities across ten regions of Italy. Directors (both Italian and Chinese) from the Confucius Institute at University of Enna "Kore," Italy, and the Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute at Babeș–Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, also participated. The training adopted a format of three days of offline intensive training, one week of online Q&A, and continuous open resource sharing. The content covered modules such

as platform function operation, intelligent lesson preparation practice, homework grading practice, and learning data analysis. Illustrated operation manuals and FAQs were also prepared. During the training, feedback was collected through questionnaires and group discussions, focusing on issues such as interface language switching smoothness, digitization coverage of local textbooks, and device performance. The technical team completed the first round of optimization within two weeks after the training, enhancing AI material generation functions and continuously improving platform features based on teacher feedback.

2.4 Comprehensive Promotion (Starting July 2025)

The platform was promoted and applied across the Confucius Institute's teaching sites and Confucius Classrooms. An administrator permission system was established to ensure standardized backend management, with core teaching administration functions like attendance, homework, and grade management fully moved online.

Effective measures were taken to address key issues during project implementation. First, local teachers, while having positive attitudes toward digital tools, generally had concerns about their ability to adopt them. To address this, the project team implemented tiered training, progressing step by step from basic operations to advanced applications, allowing teachers to build confidence at a comfortable learning pace. Second, to address the potential problem of "localization misfit" during platform adaptation, the project team emphasized the deep involvement of frontline teachers and full-process oversight by an expert group. This ensured that the real scenarios, teaching pain points, and cultural practices from Italian local classrooms were accurately conveyed to the technical team, ensuring that the platform's digital functional modules could truly take root in the local teaching context.

■ Case Outcomes and Highlights

Since its deployment in international Chinese language classrooms in Italy, the "Shuishan ChineseEdu" smart platform has achieved significant results across multiple dimensions. In terms of teaching empowerment, the intelligent lesson preparation tool frees teachers from heavy preparatory work, enabling them to devote more energy to classroom interaction and personalized guidance, shifting the teaching focus from "resource preparation" to "learning outcomes." Regarding the learning experience, personalized learning support based on knowledge graphs and behavioral data analysis enables students to achieve systematic construction even within fragmented learning, significantly enhancing their learning interest and motivation. The deepening of localization integration ensures the platform is deeply adapted to Italian local textbooks and teaching systems, effectively avoiding the "localization misfit" often seen in digital tools.

In terms of management efficiency, the shared development and sharing of lesson preparation resources and the transparent tracking of teaching progress have significantly enhanced collaboration among teachers and process management capabilities. In academic management backend, student learning data are clear at a glance, and attendance and grade statistics are automated, greatly reducing labor costs. The successful practice of this project provides a valuable reference for the digital transformation of Confucius Institutes in other countries and regions. Overall, the platform has been widely praised by teachers and students, helping Chinese language teachers in Italy actively embrace the changes brought by AI and achieve a smooth transition from manual management to digital, systematic management.

■ Case Experience Summary

This case has successfully explored a digital governance path based on the collaborative innovation of a "university technical team + Confucius Institute management team," yielding the following replicable and scalable development experiences.

First, technology development must be needs-oriented: the functional design of international Chinese language smart platforms should be grounded in frontline teaching and management realities to avoid becoming a "technological castle in the air."

Second, localization is key to digitalization: technology platforms must be deeply integrated with local Chinese textbooks, language habits, and management systems.

Third, equal emphasis should be placed on training local Italian teachers and providing domestic technical support: technology adoption must be accompanied by continuous teacher capacity building and cultural guidance.

Fourth, optimize management through data-driven approaches: use visualized learning data to feed back into teaching and management dynamics, enhancing decision-making efficiency.

Fifth, establish a sustainable development mechanism: create a collaborative research and development community for Chinese and Italian teachers to promote continuous content updates and platform iteration.

Through the deep integration of cutting-edge technical support from ECNU's School of Data Science and Engineering and the practical wisdom of the Confucius Institute at University of Turin, the "Shuishan ChineseEdu" smart platform has successfully forged a new model of Confucius Institute digital governance—"Teaching-Management-Assessment"—that aligns with the characteristics and local needs of overseas Chinese language teaching.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