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Title: Building Bridges to achieve harmony and greater prosperity for all.

Abstract:

We must strive to reach out beyond our own limited cultural spheres and learn about others. Education and communication are key to this, and the starting point is within our educational programmes. When teaching our students, we also teach ourselves and increase our own understanding; we need to develop our own knowledge, particularly about cultural differences and concepts. This is challenging when developing pedagogical materials for cross cultural teaching; diversity is always welcome, but it also poses challenges. Students need to be guided to explore different languages and cultures, philosophies, and histories, and by doing so become more aware of their positionality within a global context as well as developing sensitivity about others and the differences. In this way mutual learning leads to a deeper understanding, not only about others but also about ourselves; building bridges and reaching out beyond our own cultures through education, communication, and cooperation, to share knowledge and learning, to overcome cultural barriers and other obstacles, to achieve harmony between civilizations and greater prosperity for all. My paper draws on two decades of experience in Russell Group universities and builds on a decade of extensive networking with digital humanities centres and researchers in China, including running student workshops there which focus on different world views. In addition, I have recently completed a three-year teaching and research contract at a top-ranking Chinese university, part of Project 211, Project 985, and the Double First-Class Construction.