

UKRAINE AND CHINA: EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION AND ACADEMIC EXCHANGES

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Annotation. *The article deals with the issues related to educational cooperation and academic exchanges between China and Ukraine. The purpose of the research is to analyse the fundamentals of the Ukraine – China cooperation in the spheres of education and science. The tasks are: 1) to outline the historiography of the Ukraine – China cooperation; 2) to provide a description of academic mobility programmes intended for both academic staff and students; 3) to introduce challenges faced by Ukrainian teaching staff and students in engaging with academic mobility programmes. The conducted research allowed the authors to come to certain conclusions. Official documents have been defined as the legal basis for cooperation at both national and international levels, which enabled spanning the Ukraine–China cooperation chronologically within these spheres: 1. Establishment of Diplomatic Relations (1992); 2. Early Agreements Supporting Sectoral Cooperation (1992–1995); 3. Expansion into Strategic Cooperation (2001–2013); 4. Intensification of Agreements (2016–2020); 5. Continuity of Cooperation During Geopolitical Shifts (2020 – 2026). The historiographical analysis of the profession-oriented training aimed at would-be Chinese language translators in Ukraine reveals a strong correlation between the stages of the Ukraine – China diplomatic relations and the evolving features of translator and interpreter education at each stage of the*

profession's development. It is illustrated how this development has resulted in substantial transformations in training objectives and curricula, strengthened requirements for professional competences in Sinology and established new admission criteria for the specialties "Secondary Education" (Chinese/English) and "Philology" (Chinese/English; including Translation) within the period from 1992 to the present. A set of interrelated factors that determine the effectiveness of the educational process and the implementation of academic mobility programmes in Ukraine has been specified.

The perspectives of future research are seen in the study of further academic cooperation between China and Ukraine involving the use of innovative methodological tools as well as IT and AI-driven applications in the modern context of Ukraine.

Keywords: Ukraine, China, educational cooperation, academic exchanges, agreements and memoranda, Confucius Institute, academic mobility programmes.

우크라이나와 중국: 교육 협력 및 학술 교류의 구조적 분석

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국문초록. 본 연구는 우크라이나와 중국 간의 교육 협력 및 학술 교류에 관한 다각적인 분석을 목적으로 한다. 양국 간 교육 및 과학 분야 협력의 근간을 체계적으로 규명하기 위해 본 연구는 다음과 같은 세부 과제를 설정하였다. 첫째, 우크라이나와 중국 간 교육

협력의 역사적 전개 과정을 고찰하는 문헌사적 분석을 실시한다. 둘째, 교수진과 학생을 대상으로 하는 학술 모빌리티 프로그램의 현황과 특성을 기술한다. 셋째, 우크라이나 교육 주체들이 학술 교류 과정에서 직면하는 구조적 도전 과제와 한계를 분석한다.

본 연구의 분석 결과, 양국 간 교육 협력은 국가적·국제적 차원의 공식적 문서와 법적 토대 위에서 실질적으로 추진되어 왔음을 확인하였다. 이를 바탕으로 우크라이나와 중국의 교육 협력 단계를 연대기적 흐름에 따라 다섯 시기로 구분하였다: 1) 수교 및 관계 정립기(1992년), 2) 부문별 협력 지원을 위한 초기 협정 체결기(1992~1995년), 3) 전략적 파트너십으로의 협력 확대기(2001~2013년), 4) 협정의 질적 심화 및 가속화기(2016~2020년), 5) 지정학적 변동성 속에서의 협력 지속기(2020~2026년).

특히 우크라이나 내 중국어 번역 전문가 양성을 위한 전문 교육 과정의 역사적 분석은 양국 간 외교 관계의 발전 단계와 번역 교육의 질적 변화 사이에 강력한 상관관계가 존재함을 보여준다. 1992년부터 현재까지의 분석 결과, 외교적 관계의 심화는 교육 목표와 커리큘럼의 근본적인 변혁을 야기했으며, 시놀로지(Sinology, 중국학)에 기반한 전문 역량 강화와 '중등 교육(중국어/영어)' 및 '어문학(중국어/영어 및 번역)' 전공의 새로운 입학 기준 수립으로 이어졌음을 입증하였다. 또한, 우크라이나 내 교육 프로세스의 효율성과 학술 모빌리티 프로그램 이행을 결정짓는 일련의 상호 연관된 요인들을 구체적으로 규명하였다.

결론적으로 본 연구는 급변하는 현대 우크라이나의 맥락 속에서 정보기술(IT)과 인공지능(AI) 기반의 혁신적 방법론을 활용한 향후 양국 간 학술 협력의 발전 방향을 제시한다. 이는 향후 유라시아 교육 공간 내에서 우크라이나와 중국이 구축할 지속 가능한 교류 모델의 이론적·실천적 기초가 될 것이다.

키워드: 우크라이나, 중국, 교육 협력, 학술 교류, 협정 및 양해각서(MOU), 공자학원(Confucius Institute), 학술 모빌리티 프로그램, 중국어 교육, 비교교육학.

Introduction

The current state of Ukraine's scientific and educational spheres reflects its strategic aspiration to integrate into the broader Eurasian academic space, a process that presupposes the assimilation and adaptation of global scholarly experience. International academic collaboration serves as a catalyst for renewing and advancing the field in accordance with contemporary requirements.

Ongoing reforms in Ukraine's higher education system enable the reorientation of value frameworks and the expansion of cross-cultural and academic interactions at both European and Asian levels.

The starting point for the Ukraine – China cooperation dates back to January 4, 1992 when the Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations was signed by the representatives of the governments of the two countries. The People's Republic of China recognized Ukraine's sovereignty (after Ukraine had proclaimed its independence) and established The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ukraine in Kyiv the same year. The Communiqué aimed at deepening economic and strategic ties between China and Ukraine.

Later, in the course of the Chinese President's visit to Ukraine in June 2011, the Joint Declaration on Establishment and Development of Strategic Partnership Relations between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China was signed. The State visit of President of Ukraine in December 2013 was marked with signing the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China, the Joint Declaration on Further Deepening of Strategic Partnership Relations between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China, and the Program of Development of Strategic Partnership Relations between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China for the years 2014-2018 (Embassy of Ukraine in the People's Republic of China, 2022).

The above documents laid the foundation for further multifaceted cooperation including Ukraine's participation in the "One Belt One Road" Initiative (The Silk Road Economic Belt (land-based) and the Maritime Silk Road (sea-based)).

Effective cooperation can be achieved if it also covers the domain of education and science to provide for constructive joint projects and research, exchange of experience, cultural enrichment.

In recent decades, educational cooperation has become one of the most dynamic dimensions of the Ukraine–China relations. Bilateral agreements between higher education institutions have facilitated academic mobility, joint research initiatives, participation in international conferences, and the exchange of students, scholars, and teaching staff. These activities contribute to the transfer of knowledge, the dissemination of innovative educational practices, and the strengthening of intercultural dialogue.

Particular importance has been attached to the promotion of the Chinese language and culture in Ukraine, as well as to the growing interest in Ukrainian studies among Chinese scholars and students. The establishment of educational and cultural centres, the implementation of scholarship programmes, and the development of joint academic projects have created favourable conditions for long-term cooperation between universities and research institutions of both countries.

In the context of globalization and internationalization of higher education, the Ukraine–China academic cooperation serves not only as a mechanism for knowledge exchange but also as an important instrument for fostering mutual understanding, cultural diplomacy, and sustainable development. Consequently, strengthening scientific and educational partnerships remains a significant priority in the bilateral relations between the two countries.

The **relevance** of this research arises from the global scientific, technological, and educational advancements, as well as from the pressing need to align Ukraine's educational and academic landscape with the Eurasian framework, taking into account contemporary demands and achievements. Therefore, the **purpose** of the research is to analyse the fundamentals of the Ukraine – China cooperation in the spheres of education and science. It involves solving the assigned **tasks**:

- 1) to outline the historiography of the Ukraine – China cooperation;
- 2) to provide a description of academic mobility programmes intended for both academic staff and students;
- 3) to introduce challenges faced by Ukrainian teaching staff and students in engaging with academic mobility programmes.

The designated issues are revealed in the sections below.

These **methods** were used: *theoretical analysis* of the literature related to the issue under study to specify its essence; *systematisation method* of perspective vectors of productive basis for further cooperation within globalization processes worldwide.



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2. Legal Basis for the Ukraine – China Cooperation

Official documents are the legal basis for any cooperation both at the domestic and international levels. We can classify spheres of the Ukraine – China cooperation in compliance with the interstate treaties, agreements, memoranda, declarations, etc.

1. Establishment of Diplomatic Relations (1992)

Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations (4 January, 1992) can be considered as the foundational document formally launching bilateral relations between independent Ukraine and the People's Republic of China.

Memorandum of Understanding on Establishing Diplomatic Relations (1992) is a supplementary basis regulating initial diplomatic interaction.

The recognition of Ukraine's Independence by the People's Republic of China dated 27 December, 1991. China officially recognized Ukraine as a sovereign and independent state, paving the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations.

The opening of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ukraine (1992) meant the establishment of the Chinese diplomatic mission in Kyiv which marked the beginning of institutionalized bilateral cooperation.

The opening of the Embassy of Ukraine in the People's Republic of China (1992) provided a permanent diplomatic platform for political dialogue and the development of economic, educational, scientific, and cultural cooperation.

Initial Bilateral Consultations and Cooperation Agreements (1992), as the first rounds of diplomatic consultations, laid the groundwork for future cooperation in trade, science, education, and culture.

2. *Early Agreements Supporting Sectoral Cooperation (1992–1995)*

- Science & Technology

Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (27 April, 1992).

- Trade & Economy

Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation (8 August, 1992).

- Natural Resources & Geology

Agreement on Geological Cooperation (12 September, 1992).

- Investment Protection

Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT): Agreement on Encouragement and Mutual Protection of Investments (signed 1992; clarified in 1993). It establishes principles of investment protection, treatment, and dispute resolution (edit.wti.org).

- Political Declarations (1992–1995)

Joint Communiqués (1992, 1995).

Joint (Kyiv) Declaration (1994).

Declaration on Friendship and Cooperation (1995).

These documents shaped early diplomatic and political coordination.

- Education and Culture

Agreement on Cultural Cooperation (1992–1993) established a framework for cultural exchanges, educational contacts, and cooperation between academic institutions.

Intergovernmental Agreements on Educational Exchanges (early 1990s) created opportunities for student, scholar, and language exchanges, laying the foundation for future academic mobility programmes.

- Consular and Legal Cooperation

Consular Convention between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China (1992) facilitated people-to-people contacts, educational exchanges, and official cooperation.

Agreement on Visa Facilitation for Official Exchanges (early 1990s) supported the development of governmental, academic, and scientific contacts.

- Academic and Scientific Contacts

First Direct Agreements between Ukrainian and Chinese Universities and Research Institutions (1993–1995) initiated cooperation in language studies, engineering, natural sciences, and educational research.

Participation in Bilateral Scientific Delegations and Academic Visits (1992–1995) promoted the exchange of expertise and established networks for future joint research projects.

3. *Expansion into Strategic Cooperation (2001–2013)*

- Strategic Partnership Phase

Joint Declaration on Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation in the 21st Century (21 July, 2001).

Joint (Beijing) Declaration (2002).

Joint Statement on Comprehensive Increase of Relations (2010).

Basic Directions for Cooperation (2010 – 2012).

Joint Declaration on Establishing and Developing Strategic Partnership (2011).

These documents elevated relations to strategic level, strengthening political, economic, and technological cooperation.

- High-Level Framework Agreements (2013)

Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (2013).

Joint Declaration to Further Deepen Strategic Partnership (2013).

Programme on the Development of Strategic Partnership (2014–2018).

These agreements laid out long-term goals for infrastructure, industry, finance, education, and defense-related cooperation.

4. *Intensification of Agreements (2016–2020)*

Over 300 bilateral documents were in force by 2020. The legal basis for cooperation included intergovernmental agreements and memoranda of understanding across trade, education, aviation, agriculture, technology, and regional cooperation. In 2016, additional MoUs and intergovernmental agreements were signed within bilateral commissions.

5. *Continuity of Cooperation During Geopolitical Shifts (2020–2026)*

- Overall Treaty Framework

By 2024, the contractual base included 184 active documents, reflecting stable legal architecture despite geopolitical challenges (uiamp.org).

- Security Context

China's support of the Budapest Memorandum (1994) as a security assurance for Ukraine further contributes to the normative legal framework (uiamp.org).

- Economic and Investment Relations.

The 1992 Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) continues to serve as the foundational legal instrument regulating investment flows between the two states (edit.wti.org).

Although no major new treaties were recorded publicly between 2020 – 2026, existing agreements maintained legal continuity in bilateral cooperation.

3. Academic Exchanges of Academic Staff and Students

The entire period of cooperation between Ukraine and China can be formally divided into 3 stages: 1) 1992 – 2002; 2) 2003 – 2009; 3) 2010 – till the present.



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The first stage may be characterized as a period of “cultural revolution,” during which mutual cultural awareness between Ukrainians and Chinese began to take shape. This phase involved occasional exchanges of artistic ensembles between sister cities, as well as the organization of exhibitions showcasing representative works of Ukrainian and Chinese arts. It lasted for 8 years. By 2000, the number of mutual visits of senior officials of the

two countries had increased, which necessitated the involvement of more Ukrainian specialists-translators of the Chinese language in international activities in the field of culture and art.



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The need for translators became especially acute when the peoples themselves took part in the civilized dialogue. It was decided to organize the Days of Ukrainian Culture in the People's Republic of China. Translators needed to "immerse themselves" in the sphere of Ukrainian and Chinese cultural life, for example, to explore popular dance art (classical ballet, folk dance, modern dance), visual arts (the uniqueness of Ukrainian folk decorative art, photography, traditional oil painting, Chinese graphics and calligraphy), etc.

Negotiations and establishment of any contacts with Chinese partners covered a series of topics:

1. Personal identification (establishing contacts/relationships);
2. General work environment and daily work (job interview, daily administrative activities);
3. Relations with colleagues and clients (meetings, business lunches, communication via the Internet, discussions at the workplace, negotiations, social events);
4. Business travel (travel agency, airport, railway station, on board an airplane/a ship, on a train, in a hotel, in a restaurant, in a bank, at the post office);
5. International conferences, meetings, discussions;



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6. Health and personal safety (at the doctor, in a pharmacy, emergency care, workplace);

7. Contracts and agreements (employment, insurance, provision of services, partnership/cooperation);

8. Company (structure, work results, products, services, staff, policy, advertising);

9. Professional and academic issues (lectures, seminars, workshops, consultations, library, laboratory, resource center, classroom classes).

Given the above, the content of the curricula began to change, primarily in terms of academic topics, namely, greater emphasis was placed on acquainting Ukrainians with contemporary developments in Chinese culture (on the background of the Ukrainian culture). The domestic system of training Sinologists in the period from 1992 to 2002 combined modern European trends and modern-traditional Chinese ones.



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The second stage in the development of Ukrainian–Chinese relations was initiated by the first scientific and practical conference held at the Embassy of Ukraine in China, entitled “High-Tech Development Zones: Concept, Practice and Prospects”. The event facilitated discussions on a wide range of issues concerning bilateral cooperation in the fields of science and technology. Subsequently, collaboration between Ukraine and China in mechanical engineering, space exploration, biotechnology, computer science, and the development of emerging industries acquired a distinctly mutually beneficial character. Within this context, China has become the third largest trading partner of Ukraine. According to assessments of numerous international economists, Ukraine and China possess complementary economic and technological capacities, which creates favourable conditions for the development of bilateral cooperation. Such interaction is expected not only to stimulate

scientific and technological advancement but also to enhance the economic potential of both states. These prospective outcomes have been duly reflected in the content of the educational and qualification characteristics, as well as in the educational and professional programmes intended for would-be sinologists.

Educational programmes at faculties of Chinese philology have been oriented toward the training of highly qualified specialists who fully possess professional and personal qualities that ensure their priority demand and sustainable competitiveness in the Ukrainian-Chinese and international labour market, as well as broad opportunities for self-realization, including in the newest fields of knowledge, the most significant areas of professional activity and life.



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These universal competences were recognized as additional:
a) general scientific, b) instrumental, c) systemic. The professional competences provided for the acquisition of:

- the skills to conduct a qualified analysis, to comment, summarize and generalize the results of scientific research using modern techniques and methodologies, best practices;

- the skills to carry out professional philological expertise, critical evaluation, interpretation, scholarly commentary, and analysis of diverse types of discourse;
- the ability to create, edit, summarize and systematize texts of various styles and genres;



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- the ability to carry out transformations of various text types by modifying their style, genre, and target audience orientation, as well as by converting verbal texts into multimedia formats and printed texts into hypertextual and electronic forms, etc.);
- the ability to plan and deliver public speeches using oratory;
- the skills of consecutive interpreting and translating of texts belonging to different styles from Chinese (and a second foreign language) into Ukrainian and from Ukrainian into Chinese (and a second foreign language);
- the ability and willingness to participate in the development of scientific, cultural, social, pedagogical, creative, advertising, publishing projects;



– the ability to produce scholarly, popular-science, literary-artistic, journalistic, and other publishing outputs, as well as to work with official and historical documentation (Демчук, 2005).



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The establishment of a network of international educational and cultural centres “*Confucius Institute*” by the State Administration of the People’s Republic of China for the Promotion of the Chinese Language and Culture around the World (in Ukraine, in particular) together with foreign educational institutions has provided Ukrainians with the opportunity to get to know the features of the Chinese culture, philosophy, and literature.



The *tasks* of the centres are:

- organizing Chinese language and culture courses;
- holding scientific conferences dedicated to China;
- popularizing the Chinese language and culture through various competitions and events;
- conducting a qualified Chinese language test (HSK);
- preparing and publishing educational literature in Chinese;
- internships for students and teachers in China, consultations on studying in China.



By 2009, 3 such centres had been established in Ukraine – in (Kyiv National Linguistic University), Luhansk (Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University), and Kharkiv (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University). This meant that an additional powerful strategic force appeared in the scientific arena for teaching students the Chinese language and professional training of students – would-be interpreters/translators of Chinese. Accordingly, by the beginning of 2010, the scientific and methodological framework for the training of specialists in Sinology had fully incorporated the necessary prerequisites for the effective implementation of educational and professional programmes in the field of “Translation (Chinese).”



The third stage of diplomatic relations between China and Ukraine can be noted as a “diplomatic boom”. On April 15, 2011, an Agreement on Cooperation was signed between the Ministries of Justice of Ukraine and China which provided for the exchange of experience in legal issues, namely in the areas of justice, execution of criminal penalties, organization of the work of lawyers and notaries, conducting forensic examinations, creating new expert methods and software products, etc.



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The two countries were united by a common set of problems: the need to improve the system of administration and management of the country, the fight against corruption in their own structures, the reduction of the

regulatory function of the state and the influence of the bureaucratic apparatus on decision-making in the country.



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After this event, measures were undertaken to intensify military-technical cooperation between the two states. On August 11, 2011, the Chief of the PLA (People's Liberation Army of China) General Staff Department Chen Bingde, visited Ukraine to familiarize himself with the Ukrainian Navy. He highly praised the developed infrastructure of the Ukrainian military fleet and the fighting spirit of the sailors.



During the visit, the main areas of development of military and military-technical cooperation were identified: in the field of military education and training, military medicine, the development of cooperation between the types of armed forces and branches of the armed forces, the exchange of experience and the reform of the troops. Translators/interpreters needed to master a new industry.

Within the framework of the humanitarian cooperation program between the People's Republic of China and Ukraine, an Agreement on the Exchange of Television Productions was signed, according to which the countries implement a number of joint projects in the fields of television and radio broadcasting. On November 11, 2011, a memorandum of cooperation in the field of television and a memorandum on the exchange of television productions with a major telecommunications provider in Ukraine, the VOLIA Group of Companies, were signed between China Central Television and the National Television Company of Ukraine. Interpretation was gaining popularity. The project engaged highly qualified interpreters who quickly adapted to the demands of the interpretation/translation process. It was necessary to take into account thematic novelty in the training programs. The "spontaneity" of interpretation/translation on this topic was highly appreciated, which, of course, required long-term training.



On November 14, 2011, the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine signed an Agreement on Cooperation between the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine and The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television of China. The parties undertake to contribute to the creation of conditions for the wide and free dissemination of information for the further deepening of knowledge about the life of the peoples of their countries, the establishment and further development of equal and mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of television and radio.



The initiative welcomed the exchange of television and radio broadcasting specialists, their involvement in scientific and practical seminars and conferences, the mobility of journalists and film crews, and institutional support for the exchange and broadcasting of television and radio programs covering political, economic, social, cultural, and sporting affairs. It was important to familiarize the Chinese with the history, culture, and economy of Ukraine. The exchange of audiovisual products began, and joint production of television and radio programs was planned. This meant an increase in the number of Chinese interpreters/translators involved in the above-mentioned field on the Ukrainian side, and Ukrainian interpreters/translators on the Chinese side.



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In 2011, Ukrainian-Chinese cooperation in the field of education gained new impetus. A year earlier, China initiated the creation of a special commission on cooperation in the field of education. Ukraine supported the initiative. The commission was headed by the Vice Minister of Education and later Vice Minister of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China Chen Xiaoya from the Chinese side.



During the first meeting of the commission held in Beijing, a range of measures was delineated, and the number of Chinese students and postgraduates to be enrolled in contract-based study programmes in Ukraine was agreed upon. Conversely, Chinese counterparts invited Ukrainian students, including bachelor's, master's, and doctoral candidates, to undertake their studies in China. It should be noted that Ukrainian students had a chance to study in China on a budget basis (as opposed to foreign students, 99.99% of whom study in Ukraine on a contract basis). Confucius Institutes, as a separate educational and cultural structure, provided an opportunity for students of Chinese language courses to take HSK exams, which are recognized worldwide.

On March 28, 2012, the first meeting of the Ukrainian-Chinese subcommittee on cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the People's Republic of China was held in Sanya (the People's Republic of China), chaired by the First Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Youth and Sports of Ukraine Yevhen Sulima

and the Vice Minister of Education of the People's Republic of China Hao Ping.



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In the course of the subcommittee's work, accomplishments over the preceding two-year period were summarized, and matters related to academic exchanges involving students, postgraduate students, and university teaching staff, along with the education of foreign citizens in Ukraine and China, were discussed extensively.



Cooperation priorities included:

- joint scientific research projects between leading Chinese and Ukrainian universities and the potential application of their results;
- the training of highly qualified specialists through mechanisms such as dual-supervision postgraduate dissertations involving academic staff from both countries;
- the development of cultural cooperation, notably in the study of local history;
- the opening of a Chinese school in Kyiv; the establishment of Ukrainian Language Centres in China and Confucius Institutes in Ukraine;
- the sustained operation of the Ukrainian–Chinese Subcommission on a permanent basis.

The parties agreed on further educational and scientific cooperation in engineering and technology, natural sciences, medicine, humanitarian and public areas. As a result, an Agreement on Cooperation in Education was signed between the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China.

All these events marked a revision of the content of Chinese language translator training. The study of Chinese culture, philosophy, and art attracted more and more attention. The newest scientific, technical, economic, and cultural fields “required” the involvement of highly qualified translators. The boundaries of “special” competence expanded, that is, translators of Chinese were deeply immersed in the specificities of leading fields of science and technology. The demand for interpreting services increased to an unprecedented level. Consecutive interpreting emerged as the most widely used mode of interpreting, followed by simultaneous interpreting (spontaneous, half-spontaneous, reading of a previously translated text).

The ultimate goal of training translators within the framework of training in interpreting for this period is formulated as follows:

- development of perceptual, mnemonic and other abilities necessary for mastering the skills and abilities of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting;
- restructuring of speech and interpretation skills and abilities;
- development of the abilities to perform interpretation operations and actions at a high pace in specific combination, inherent in interpreting;



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- expansion and consolidation of general educational knowledge on a wide range of topics, taking into account the areas of future specialization, mastery in the visual resources of the Chinese language;
- dissemination of theoretical knowledge in the field of simultaneous and consecutive interpreting to provide more purposefulness and awareness of the educational process and improvement of professional knowledge in the course of further practical work;

- continuation of work on the formation of a comprehensive worldview and fostering of high moral qualities.

In connection with the above-mentioned components of the ultimate goal, the content of educational programs and professional competencies was transformed (Козопізію, 2011). The emphasis was placed on the “qualitative contingent” rather than the “quantitative”, although, as already noted, the number of Chinese translators/interpreters in demand has increased significantly. At that stage, a key challenge was the development of assessment criteria for identifying students with the potential to become Chinese translators and interpreters, particularly in the fields of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. This necessity arose from the fact that not all students enrolled in translation programmes at the Faculty of Foreign Languages possessed the aptitude required to meet established interpreting standards. Consequently, the cohort of prospective Chinese translators/interpreters was selected through a rigorous screening process.

A year later, the China – Ukraine cooperation involved another education field – Chinese teacher training. In 2013, a new specialty “Teacher of Chinese” was launched at the platform of the State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” (Odesa, Ukraine). Due to the active work of the Education and Culture Centre “Confucius Institute”, Ukrainian students had an opportunity to master two professions – teacher of Chinese (and English) and translator/interpreter of Chinese (and English).



Qualified native speakers in cooperation with Ukrainian teaching and managerial staff provided practical classes and extracurricular activities for Ukrainian students (education- and culture-related events, language

training in China, concerts, Chinese language contests, career guidance work, exhibitions of authentic works of art, etc.).



The “Teacher of Chinese” specialty entailed the study of teaching methods, psychology, pedagogy, an in-depth, aspect-by-aspect study of Chinese (speaking and writing practice, practical and theoretical phonetics, practical and theoretical grammar, lexicology, stylistics, etc.) as well as work-placed practice at secondary schools.



The State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” is the only university in Ukraine where would-be teachers of Chinese are trained. Other Ukrainian universities provide the specialty “Philology” (translation included). Upon completion of educational programmes in Chinese and Oriental Studies, graduates are eligible for employment in secondary education institutions on condition that they undergo internship or advanced training in teaching methodology, pedagogy and psychology.



The students majoring both in Secondary Education (Chinese/English) and Philology (Chinese/English) have an opportunity to participate in the programmes of academic mobilities – one-semester and one-academic-year studies – without taking any academic leaves. This mode of study presupposes simultaneous pursuit of Ukrainian curricular studies alongside Chinese language training. They take pass-fail credits and examinations on an individual basis (via a cloud-based team collaboration software Microsoft Teams, a dominant Chinese “super app” WeChat, messaging service Telegram, a messaging and VoIP application Viber, etc.).



As for the academic staff, they may join the programme “A Group of Pedagogues” and visit China (Beijing and Harbin, mainly) for getting acquainted with the education system, culture, innovative scientific achievements of China. Ukrainian scholars are invited to China to report

on scientific and practical conferences, seminars, workshops, symposia, etc. Joint online conferences take place as well.

Thus, the steady enhancement of bilateral political trust, accompanied by the growing frequency of high-level interactions, has necessitated a corresponding transformation in approaches to the training of would-be translators/interpreters. Today, friendly relations and comprehensive constructive cooperation between the countries have reached the level of strategic partnership, which is reflected in the educational and methodological base for training would-be sinologists (both translators/interpreters and teachers).

4. Ukraine and China: educational cooperation and academic exchanges

Educational cooperation has become one of the most dynamic areas of the Ukraine-China relations. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, both countries have consistently expanded collaboration in higher education, scientific research, cultural exchange, and academic mobility. Education serves not only as a mechanism for knowledge transfer but also as an important instrument for strengthening mutual understanding and fostering long-term partnerships between nations.

The development of educational cooperation between Ukraine and China reflects broader processes of globalization and internationalization of higher education. As universities increasingly operate within a global academic environment, international partnerships have become essential for enhancing educational quality, promoting innovation, and improving research capacity. In this context, cooperation between Ukrainian and Chinese higher education institutions contributes to the integration of both countries into the global knowledge economy.

One of the key dimensions of bilateral cooperation is the establishment of institutional partnerships between universities. Over the past decades, numerous agreements have been signed between Ukrainian and Chinese higher education institutions, creating opportunities for student exchanges, faculty mobility, joint research projects, and collaborative educational initiatives. These partnerships facilitate the sharing of academic expertise and contribute to the modernization of educational programmes in accordance with international standards.

Academic mobility represents a particularly significant component of the Ukrainian-Chinese educational relations. Student exchange programmes enable participants to gain international experience, improve foreign language proficiency, and develop intercultural competences. Mobility initiatives also contribute to the formation of global perspectives among students and support the development of professional skills required in an increasingly interconnected world. Faculty exchanges further strengthen academic cooperation by promoting the dissemination of innovative teaching methods and research practices.

Scientific cooperation has become another important area of collaboration. Ukrainian and Chinese researchers participate in joint projects across various disciplines, including engineering, information technologies, education, linguistics, environmental studies, medicine, and artificial intelligence. Collaborative research initiatives allow scholars to combine expertise, share resources, and address global challenges through interdisciplinary approaches. Such cooperation contributes not only to academic advancement but also to technological innovation and socioeconomic development.

The promotion of language and cultural studies plays a vital role in strengthening bilateral educational relations. The growing interest in Chinese language education within Ukraine reflects the increasing importance of China in global political, economic, and cultural processes. At the same time, Chinese universities have demonstrated increasing interest in Ukrainian studies, facilitating mutual cultural understanding and supporting intercultural dialogue. Educational institutions therefore function as important platforms for cultural diplomacy and people-to-people communication.

The digital transformation of higher education has further expanded opportunities for cooperation. Online learning platforms, virtual mobility programmes, digital research environments, and advanced communication technologies enable universities to maintain and strengthen international partnerships regardless of geographical distance. These developments became particularly important during periods of global disruption and continue to shape contemporary models of academic collaboration.

Despite considerable progress, several challenges remain. Financial constraints, language barriers, administrative procedures, and geopolitical

uncertainties may limit the scope of cooperation. Nevertheless, both countries continue to recognize the strategic importance of educational and scientific collaboration, leading to the development of new initiatives and partnership mechanisms.

Educational cooperation between Ukraine and China also contributes to the development of long-term people-to-people connections. Through student exchanges, joint educational programmes, academic conferences, and research projects, participants gain valuable intercultural experience and establish professional networks that often continue beyond the duration of formal cooperation. Such interactions strengthen mutual understanding, promote cultural dialogue, and create favorable conditions for future collaboration in education, science, business, and diplomacy, thereby supporting the sustainable development of bilateral relations.

The future of Ukrainian-Chinese educational cooperation is closely connected with further internationalization, digital innovation, and interdisciplinary research. Expanding academic mobility programs, developing joint degree initiatives, strengthening doctoral education, and increasing participation in international research networks will contribute to deeper cooperation between institutions in both countries. As global challenges increasingly require international solutions, educational and scientific collaboration between Ukraine and China is expected to play an increasingly important role in fostering sustainable development, innovation, and intercultural understanding.

5. Challenges of Participating in Academic Mobility Programmes

Academic mobility programmes can be provided in an online format for Ukrainian students and teaching staff residing in Ukraine or abroad, or in an in-person format at Harbin Engineering University or other Chinese partner universities in accordance with duly concluded agreements.

The educational process of the State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” (Odesa, Ukraine) depends directly on the military actions and the circumstances objectively connected with them. It should be noted that there are general military circumstances and particular regional ones.

In addition to security-related concerns, participants of academic mobility programmes may encounter a number of organizational, financial, and administrative challenges. These include difficulties

in obtaining visas and travel permits, limited availability of direct transportation routes, increased travel costs, and uncertainties related to international mobility regulations.

Another challenge is the need to ensure the recognition and transfer of academic credits earned abroad. Differences in educational systems, curricula, and assessment procedures may require additional coordination between partner institutions. Language barriers may also affect the academic and social integration of participants despite the growing availability of English-medium programmes.

The ongoing military situation in Ukraine has further intensified these challenges. Air raid alerts, disruptions to electricity supply and Internet connectivity, as well as the need for temporary relocation may affect students' and academic staff members' ability to participate fully in online and blended mobility activities. At the same time, Ukrainian higher education institutions have demonstrated considerable resilience by adapting educational processes and expanding opportunities for virtual international cooperation.

Despite these challenges, academic mobility remains an important instrument for strengthening international cooperation, promoting intercultural understanding, enhancing professional competencies, and supporting the integration of Ukrainian higher education into the global academic community.



In the view of the above, there is a range of military circumstances that hinder the implementation of the academic mobility programmes alongside the application of innovative technologies in the Southern Region of Ukraine. Let us designate them.

1. *Place of residence.* The majority of students and a number of teachers/university instructors left for the EU countries and the UK when the war started. It means that they cannot participate in classroom activities together with other students during in-person classes. On average, 4% of students' internal migrations and 20% – 30% students' migrations abroad can be fixed at the university level.



2. *Mode of study.* When the war started, all educational institutions transformed to the online format for security purposes. The Ukrainian teaching staff and students had already had an experience to teach/learn online (the COVID-2019 epidemic) by that time. The 2023–2024 academic year was characterized by a mixed-mode learning environment: online classes from the teaching staff residing abroad, offline classes – for those staying in Ukraine. The 2024–2025 academic year can signalize about the transforming to the HyFlex model. The course in the 2025–2026 academic year is delivered primarily in an offline format.

3. *Intensity of air raid attacks/alerts.* Odesa experiences air raid alerts every day. It affects teaching/learning conditions and possibilities, reduces the time intended for teacher-guided learning, increases the time for self-guided work. Only those educational institutions can host students/school children where there are bomb shelters. It needs time and risks getting to bomb shelters when air raid attack is announced. Students'/pupils' inner psychological state worsens, they become nervous, though one can observe some anxiety to have a break. Teachers try to do their best not to interrupt the educational process: they work synchronously and asynchronously, combine traditional teaching tools

with innovative ones, master IT technologies together with students, adapt to new assessment techniques, etc.



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4. *Consequences of air raids.* After airstrikes, students and teaching staff may suffer from lack of electricity, water, any connection with the

outer environment. It means that they have no possibility to join online classes, perform homework assignments in time, utilize IT technologies for teaching/learning purposes.



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5. *Difficulty in maintaining psychological stress resistance.* At the beginning of the military actions in Ukraine, it was observed that secondary school pupils and university students demonstrated more difficulty in restoring their psychological and moral stability after air raids. By summer 2023, they had adopted psychologically to the situation in Ukraine and become aware of what to be done under unsafe conditions.

6. *Lack of financial capacity.* The implementation of innovative ITs/ AI applications at higher school contingents on institution's financial capacity and presence/lack of qualified personnel. Nowadays, both factors are the pivot ones which determine the vector of universities' digitalization, improvement of IT infrastructure, modernization of their networks, automation of document processing, implementation of VR for educational purposes, etc. At the present days, renovation of material technical bases falls under the competence of each educational establishment. Unfortunately, Ukrainian universities cannot spend money on the designated process in full degree.

Moreover, the lack of financial resources affects the acquisition of licensed software, high-performance computer equipment, and access to advanced AI-driven educational platforms.



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Another important aspect to be mentioned is insufficient funding, which hinders the purchase of modern equipment, licensed software, and access to advanced digital tools. It also limits opportunities for training academic staff and implementing innovative educational technologies. As a result, the pace of digital transformation in Ukrainian higher education institutions remains uneven.

Additionally, the lack of financial resources affects the acquisition of licensed software, high-performance computer equipment, alongside the access to advanced AI-driven educational platforms. Limited funding also reduces opportunities for professional development and specialized training of academic staff in the field of digital technologies and artificial intelligence. Consequently, many higher education institutions are forced to rely on international grants, donor support, and cooperation with foreign partners to maintain and further develop their digital educational environment.

7. *AI-awareness.* The development of AI-awareness (for specific purposes) can be correlated with person's financial capacity and learning/working requirements. Competency in AI application makes a person

competitive at the modern labour market. It should be mentioned that those students who have some experience playing games using VR devices demonstrate academic progress while fulfilling profession-related interactive assignments, though not every student of the State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” has an opportunity to buy or rent VR equipment.



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The above given challenges stipulated further assignments within the framework of innovative teaching/learning technologies under military actions in Ukraine. At present, the implementation of academic mobility programmes and innovative technologies in the educational process of Ukrainian establishments of higher education requires much effort and financial support. This is also closely linked to the ongoing military actions in Ukraine and the profound challenges faced by Ukrainians during this time.



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6. Perspectives of Further Cooperation

In order to facilitate constructive cooperation:

1. We can invite PhD students from China to study (part-time / full-time, online learning / contact hours) at the State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” within these educational and scientific programmes:

- B11 “Philology”;
- A1 “Educational Sciences”.

There are possibilities to have two scientific supervisors: one – from a Ukrainian side and another – from a Chinese side.



2. Ukrainian and Chinese scholars may:

- publish the results of their joint research in the scientific journals affiliated with the State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky” (*Scientific Research Issues of South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky; Linguistic Sciences; Scientific Bulletin of South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky; Pedagogical Sciences; Modern Vectors of Science and Education Development in China and Ukraine*, etc.);



- create joint papers for publishing on the WEB of Science and Scopus platforms as well as issue textbooks and monographs.

3. We can launch programmes of academic mobility intended for university and PhD students, university instructors, scholars and researchers.



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Thus, maintaining sustainable academic development, fostering the exchange of experience with international scholars, and contributing to intercultural communication are of considerable importance.

4. Joint Research and Innovation Projects are of prior importance.

Ukrainian and Chinese universities may establish joint research groups and laboratories focusing on linguistics, translation studies, educational sciences, digital pedagogy, artificial intelligence in education, and intercultural communication. Such cooperation may facilitate participation in international grant programmes and the development of innovative educational solutions.

5. Development of Online and Blended Learning Initiatives is under focus of perspective cooperation.

The parties may collaborate in creating online courses, virtual exchange programmes, guest lecture series, and joint educational modules. The use of digital technologies would allow participants to be engaged in academic cooperation regardless of geographical distance or external challenges.

6. Organization of International Academic Events could diversify the format of cooperation.

Regular international conferences, workshops, summer and/or winter schools, as well as scientific seminars may be organized to promote academic dialogue, disseminate research findings, and strengthen institutional partnerships between Ukrainian and Chinese higher education institutions.

7. Promotion of Chinese and Ukrainian Language Studies is sure to accelerate mutual understanding.

Further cooperation may include the development of language training programmes, cultural and educational centres, translation projects, and initiatives aimed at enhancing mutual understanding of the linguistic and cultural heritage of both countries.

8. Implementation of AI-Based Educational Technologies is to provide efficient teaching/learning construct.

Special attention may be paid to the integration of artificial intelligence tools into language teaching, translator training, research activities, and academic administration. Joint projects in this area may contribute to the modernization of educational practices and improve the quality of higher education.

7. Conclusions

The conducted research allowed us to come to these conclusions:

- Official documents constitute the legal foundation for cooperation at both domestic and international levels. Chronologically, the Ukraine – China cooperation encompasses the domains as follows:

1. Establishment of Diplomatic Relations (1992);
2. Early Agreements Supporting Sectoral Cooperation (1992–1995): *Science & Technology, Trade & Economy, Natural Resources & Geology, Investment Protection, Political Declarations*;
3. Expansion into Strategic Cooperation (2001–2013): *Strategic Partnership Phase, High-Level Framework Agreements (2013)*;
4. Intensification of Agreements (2016–2020);
5. Continuity of Cooperation During Geopolitical Shifts (2020 – 2026): *Overall Treaty Framework, Security Context, Economic and Investment Relations*.

- The historiographical analysis of the profession-oriented training of Chinese language translators in Ukraine demonstrates a close correlation between the stages of the Ukraine – China diplomatic relations and the evolving characteristics of translator/interpreter education at each phase of the profession’s development. From 1992 to the present, this evolution has led to significant changes in training goals and curricula, increased demands on professional competences in Sinology, and the introduction of new criteria for selecting candidates for the specialties “Secondary Education” (Chinese/English) and “Philology” (Chinese/English; Translation included).

- The effectiveness of the educational process and the implementation of academic mobility programmes in Ukraine are determined by a set of interrelated factors: (place of students’/teachers’ residence, mode of study, intensity of air raid attacks/alerts, consequences of air raids, difficulty in maintaining psychological stress resistance, lack of financial capacity, students’/teachers’ AI-awareness.

- Ukrainian institutions of higher education cannot provide sustainable use of innovative technologies and their monitoring due to frequent electricity outages, a shortage of qualified teaching staff, and the migration of students abroad.



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Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that the Ukraine–China cooperation in higher education and research possesses considerable potential for further development. The expansion of joint educational programmes, academic mobility initiatives, collaborative research projects, and digital learning environments may contribute to strengthening institutional partnerships and enhancing the international competitiveness of both countries’ higher education systems. Special attention should be paid to the integration of artificial intelligence technologies, virtual exchange formats, and innovative pedagogical approaches that can ensure the continuity and effectiveness of international academic cooperation under challenging circumstances.

Future research may focus on evaluating the effectiveness of virtual mobility programmes, the application of AI-assisted tools in translator and interpreter training, alongside the development of sustainable models of Ukraine–China academic cooperation in the context of ongoing global transformations.

In conclusion, this issue lays the groundwork for the further development of the Ukraine – China cooperation in the academic sphere on the legal basis involving innovative methodological tools, the use of IT and AI-driven applications under modern conditions in Ukraine.

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