

REVIEW

of **Natalya Bidyuk,**

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Head of the Department of Foreign Language Education and Intercultural
Communication, Khmelnytskyi National University,
of the **thesis “The Development of Cooperation and Academic Exchanges
between
Ukrainian and Chinese Universities (the Beginning of the 21st Century)”**
written by **Wang Yixuan**
submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the specialty 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences

1. The topicality of the performed work and its connection with the relevant plans of the branches of science

The processes of globalisation have significantly accelerated the development of science, technology, and the internationalisation of higher education, fostering international educational collaboration and academic mobility. These developments enhance research and development outcomes, broaden professional opportunities, and expand the horizons of academic and cultural exchange. Changes and innovations originating in one country often have a substantial impact on other societies, underscoring the transformative potential of academic cooperation and exchanges. Such collaborations can reshape international relations, strengthen inter-state partnerships, and contribute to the advancement of social, economic, and educational systems.

Simultaneously, the competitive landscape is intensifying, both in the global labour market and among higher education institutions, where competition for highly skilled professionals and talented youth is particularly pronounced. In recent years, Ukrainian universities have increasingly engaged in international cooperation with higher education institutions from various countries. This collaboration has facilitated integration into the global educational and cultural community, enhanced national scientific capacity, and supported the development of students' skills and competencies. Collectively, these efforts have improved the competitiveness of Ukraine's higher education system. The Belt and Road Initiative, aimed at bolstering China's economic integration and global competitiveness, has fostered academic cooperation between Ukraine and China. While these two nations exhibit significant social, political, cultural, and spiritual differences, such diversity can serve as a foundation for enriching educational perspectives, generating innovative ideas and teaching methods, and developing new strategies and projects. However, these differences may also present challenges and obstacles to establishing seamless academic partnerships.

Thus, Wang Yixuan has proposed a reevaluation of approaches to fostering cooperation and academic exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese universities. These approaches include the development of future joint educational initiatives and

academic projects, enhancement of curricula, acceleration of scientific progress, and advancement of internationalisation and academic collaboration processes.

The topic of Wang Yixuan's thesis *The Development of Cooperation and Academic Exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese Universities (the Beginning of the 21st Century)* corresponds to the topic of scientific work *Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Personal and Professional Development of a Modern Specialist in the Conditions of Integration into the International Educational Space* carried out at the Department of Pedagogics and Innovative Education at Lviv Polytechnic National University (number of state registration 0121U113179). The topic of this thesis was approved (Minutes N 6/22 dated 01.02.2022) at the meetings of the Academic Council of the Institute of Jurisprudence, Psychology and Innovative Education of Lviv Polytechnic National University.

2. The most significant scientific results contained in the thesis

Evaluating the most significant achievements of the qualification research work under consideration, we would first like to highlight those that hold substantial importance for the advancement of pedagogical theory and methodology. Specifically, the content and scientific interpretation of key concepts have been clarified, the theoretical foundations for fostering cooperation and academic exchanges have been substantiated, and their distinctive features have been identified in the context of collaboration between Ukrainian and Chinese universities. Furthermore, the proposed recommendations for enhancing future educational and scientific cooperation, as well as academic exchanges between these countries, represent a noteworthy contribution to the development of higher education in Ukraine and the international scientific and educational activities of universities.

3. New facts obtained in the thesis

The novelty of the theoretical results presented by the researcher lies in the fact that: *for the first time*, a comprehensive analysis of the development and implementation of cooperation and academic exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese universities at the beginning of the 21st century *has been carried out*. The implementation of Ukrainian-Chinese cooperation and academic exchanges in universities *has been characterised* by comparing various disciplines in different fields of knowledge, as well as fundamental and applied research. The author *has also suggested* different ways to improve cooperation and academic exchanges in universities of Ukraine and China, among which the focus is on: creating various types of intermediary institutions involving scholars, diplomats and NGOs; building networking education between universities in different countries and regions; expanding long-term cooperation in the educational, cultural and social spheres; increasing the level and quality of teaching through new approaches to managing international activities in higher education institutions; improving educational programmes and services to attract talented young people inside and outside the country. *It has been clarified* the content of concepts "international education", "international educational exchange", "cultural diversity", "academic collaboration and research", "interdisciplinary cooperation", and "globalization of education". The scientific comprehension of the concepts used in research papers on the

internationalisation of higher education, academic cooperation development and academic exchanges in universities *has been improved*.

The thesis statements on the development of academic cooperation and exchanges between universities according to modern theories of higher education internationalization *gained further development*.

The materials presented in the publications of Chinese scholars on the problem of academic cooperation as well as innovative ideas and approaches used in the process of academic exchanges in a modern learning environment have been introduced into scientific discourse.

4. The degree of validity of the scientific statements, conclusions and recommendations formulated in the thesis

The novelty and reliability of the conclusions are ensured through the use of theoretical and empirical methods, the analysis of a sufficient number of scientific sources (273 references), legislative and regulatory documents, and the effective implementation of the research materials and results into the learning process of higher education institutions in Ukraine. The thesis has been conducted at an appropriate scientific level. It clearly justifies the choice of the research topic, defines its object, subject, aim, and objectives, and the content of the abstract highlights the essential aspects and key provisions of the thesis. The main scientific statements and results of the research have been widely presented at scientific and practical international conferences and are fully covered in Wang Yixuan's scientific publications.

5. Significance for science and practice of the author's obtained results

The practical and theoretical significance of the research results lies in the fact that the main findings of the thesis are used and can be further implemented in higher education institutions of Ukraine, especially when teaching courses for PhD students ("Actual Problems of Theory and History of Pedagogical Science" and "Internationalisation of Education: Directions, Trends, "Perspectives") and master's ones ("Comparative Pedagogy"). This is confirmed by the documents on the implementation of the main findings, conclusions and results of the research in Ukrainian universities, namely Vinnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University, Stepan Gzhytskyi National University of Veterinary Medicine and Biotechnologies of Lviv, Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, and Lviv Polytechnic National University.

6. Recommendations for the use of the results and conclusions of the thesis

The author's suggestions and determined ways to foster cooperation and academic exchanges between Ukraine and China can be used by university authorities in order to improve the international activity management process. The results of the thesis can also be useful for scholars who study the issues of academic mobility and internationalisation of higher education. The practical results obtained can be used by Ukrainian researchers for conducting further comparative pedagogical studies.

7. Assessment of the content of the thesis and its completeness

Wang Yixuan's thesis is a complete academic paper with a clear structure and sequence content of scientific statements, which correspond to the purpose and logical solution of the research objectives. The work consists of two abstracts in English and Ukrainian languages, a list of the author's publications, an introduction, three chapters, conclusions to the chapters, general conclusions, a list of references, and appendices. The content of the work, which is additionally visualised with figures and appendices, clear conclusions and generalisations demonstrates the high degree of validity of the scientific findings and the quality of the research.

The first chapter, *Cooperation and Academic Exchanges of University Teachers and Students as a Scientific and Pedagogical Problem*, highlights the content of international education and the globalisation of education concepts in the context of previous scientific research. The concept of international educational exchanges, an inevitable trend in the evolving educational landscape, has been thoroughly analyzed, with the significance of interdisciplinary cooperation firmly established. The study emphasizes the theoretical foundations of cooperation and academic exchanges between Ukraine and China, highlighting their pivotal role in fostering academic development, innovation, and global collaboration. Additionally, the researcher offers a detailed account of the research methods employed in conducting a comprehensive analysis of academic cooperation and exchanges between teachers and students from both countries, incorporating insights from scientific research across pedagogy, educational policy, philosophy, sociology, and history.

The second chapter, *Peculiarities of Cooperation and Academic Exchanges Development in the Discourse of Ukrainian-Chinese Experience*, substantiates the socio-economic and cultural aspects of academic exchanges and cooperation between universities in Ukraine and China; it also highlights the legal framework for such academic cooperation. The researcher examines the framework agreement on educational cooperation and other legal documents that establish a clear legal foundation for the scope, procedures, and effective implementation of educational cooperation and exchange programmes between Ukraine and China. In this chapter, she concludes that both countries are consistently updating and refining their educational cooperation and academic exchanges in accordance with their respective laws and regulations.

The third chapter, *The Implementation of Cooperation and Academic Exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese Universities*, explores the specifics of organizing educational exchange programmes for university faculty and students. It analyzes five methods of structuring educational exchange programmes between universities and colleges in both countries. Additionally, the chapter outlines the scope and key features of scientific cooperation and exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese universities. The author offers recommendations for enhancing academic cooperation, emphasizing the importance of promoting national educational collaboration, fostering academic exchanges, and encouraging mutual learning between civilizations.

In the general conclusions, Wang Yixuan effectively presents the results obtained, confirming that the objectives set at the beginning of the research were successfully achieved.

Wang Yixuan's thesis is the result of independent research and does not contain elements of plagiarism or borrowed content. The ideas, results, and texts from other authors are appropriately cited with references to the corresponding sources. The thesis is characterized by content coherence, complies with the formatting requirements, and follows the conventions of the scientific style.

8. Discussion points, recommendations and comments on the content of the thesis

In general, while highly appreciating the scientific and practical significance of the results obtained, there are still several points for discussion and suggestions regarding the content of the work:

1. Justifying the theoretical basis for the development of cooperation and academic exchanges, the author should consider the works of foreign researchers, analyzing both the advantages and disadvantages of fostering cooperation between China and other countries.

2. In our opinion, the results of the research in Section 2.2 would be better presented in the form of a summarized table to enhance the understanding of the legal basis for the development of cooperation and academic exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese universities.

3. It would be interesting to learn about expanding the practice of dual supervision of diploma projects and dissertations, as well as implementing network-based scientific and educational programs conducted simultaneously with a partner institution.

4. The third chapter presents the peculiarities of the organization of educational exchange programs for university teachers and students, distinguishing and characterizing the scope and main features of scientific cooperation and exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese universities. However, in our opinion, *the Short-term Exchange Program for Experts and Scholars to Ukraine* (p. 128) requires more detailed characterization, considering the need to facilitate the academic (scientific) mobility and international cooperation of Ukrainian experts and scholars.

5. The theoretical and practical value of the study would be significantly enhanced if the author designed a model for developing cooperation and academic exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese universities.

9. Completeness coverage of results in publications

The main statements and results of the thesis are sufficiently fully presented in 11 publications of the author (including 9 single publications): 2 chapters in collective monographs, 4 articles in journals included in the list of specialized scientific publications of Ukraine, 5 papers certifying the approbation of the thesis materials at international scientific and practical conferences.

10. Conclusion

Wang Yixuan's thesis on the topic "The Development of Cooperation and Academic Exchanges between Ukrainian and Chinese Universities (the beginning of the 21st century)" demonstrates a comprehensive analysis of the academic cooperation and exchange between Ukrainian and Chinese universities, highlighting its theoretical foundations, legal frameworks, and practical implementation. The reviewed thesis is an independent and complete academic paper. It has solved a number of scientific problems and obtained the findings containing scientific novelty, theoretical and practical value for pedagogical science and practice.

We affirm that the thesis deserves a positive assessment and meets the requirements of the Order On Approval of Requirements for Thesis Formatting (as amended) No. 40 of 12 January 2017 by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and the Procedure for Awarding the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Cancellation of the Decision of a One-time Specialised Academic Council of a Higher Education Institution or Research Institution to Award the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 44 of 12 January 2022). Its author Yixuan Wang deserves the award of the scientific degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty 011 Educational, pedagogical sciences, field of knowledge 01 Education/Pedagogy.

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The signature of Natalya BIDYUK certifies:

Vice-Rector for Scientific Work,
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