



Exchange as a means of effective foreign language learning

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Abstract. The aim of the study was to identify the characteristics of the student exchange method for learning foreign languages, namely English and German, in Ukraine, taking into account its impact on students' language competence. The methodology included such methods as a comparative analysis of the Erasmus+ and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst exchange programmes, as well as an analysis of digital technologies such as Coursera, Khan Academy, EdTech, Tandem, and Speaky to improve the quality of learning and provide additional tools for language immersion, practical exercises, and communication between students and native speakers. It was found that the difference between the Erasmus+ and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst programmes in the study of grammar lies in their approaches to integrating grammatical topics into the learning process. The Erasmus+ programme places greater emphasis on the communicative method, which focuses on using language in real-life situations and allows students to improve grammatical skills through context. Meanwhile, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst programme, although it employs a communicative approach, places more emphasis on the grammar-translation method, which involves a detailed study of grammatical rules and their application through translation and text analysis. The impact of academic mobility on students' adaptability, their ability to quickly master new material, and their capacity to use the language in authentic communicative situations was examined. Exchange,

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as a method of effective foreign language learning, proved successful due to the combination of theoretical knowledge with practical tasks, which contributed to the development of intercultural communication. Students who participated in exchange programmes achieved better test results, overcame language barriers more rapidly, and demonstrated a higher level of academic success, confirming the effectiveness of combining traditional learning with practical experience. The practical significance of this work lies in substantiating student exchange as a method of foreign language acquisition and in developing recommendations for integrating traditional learning with practical tasks and digital technologies to enhance students' language competence

Keywords: educational process; international mobility; cultural exchange; intercultural competence; digital technologies

Introduction

The relevance of studying exchange as a method of foreign language learning stems from the need to enhance teaching approaches that align with the requirements of communicative competence. In particular, proficiency in foreign languages is a key factor in both personal and professional development. Exchange, as a pedagogical method, enables the creation of conditions for the practical application of language skills, thereby facilitating the assimilation of material through real-life communication and interaction with native speakers. Investigating this method is essential for improving the process of foreign language acquisition and enhancing the quality of education in the context of international integration. Furthermore, the study of exchange as a method of foreign language learning in Ukraine is particularly pertinent due to the need to raise the quality of language education amid globalisation and the country's integration into the European educational space. The increasing demand for international student mobility and the necessity of engaging with foreign partners require a high level of foreign language proficiency. Within this context, exchange programmes become crucial for the development of language skills, as they not only enhance linguistic knowledge but also promote cultural exchange – an important factor in developing intercultural competence among Ukrainian students.

The issue of exchange in education has been explored by various scholars, who have analysed its impact on the development of students' linguistic, intercultural, and life skills. One study, for instance, focused on the influence of multicultural exchange on the development of life skills in future English teachers. F. Altınay *et al.* (2024) found that such exchanges contributed not only to the enhancement of language competence but also to the broadening of students' intercultural understanding. K. Cantez & C. Atar (2021) examined the contribution of the Erasmus+ programme to the process of foreign language learning. They concluded that participation in such projects improved students' language abilities and facilitated their adaptation to an authentic linguistic environment. M. Marden & J. Herrington (2020) investigated principles of effective collaboration within a blended learning environment, showing that collaborative practices supported the development of student interaction and improved communicative strategies. S. McGury & R. Klosinski (2024) explored the use of virtual exchange in foreign language instruction, noting that this approach fostered the development of global competencies and interdisciplinary learning. The authenticity and reliability of language exchange applications among adult learners were studied by M. Wardak (2024), who observed that such platforms could serve as

effective learning tools, provided they are utilised appropriately.

In their study, N. Sarnovska & Y. Rybinska (2023) explored the role of foreign languages as a means of preserving and transmitting Ukrainian national cultural values within the context of intercultural communication during wartime. The authors analysed how learning foreign languages and participating in exchange programmes contribute to strengthening cultural identity, fostering intercultural dialogue, and promoting mutual understanding between peoples in conflict situations. Through engagement in exchange programmes, students were able to interact directly with native speakers, which deepens their understanding of cultural differences and facilitates the international transmission of Ukrainian cultural values. Additionally, S. Palamar *et al.* (2023) examined the role of integrating innovative technologies – such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and artificial intelligence (AI) – into the process of foreign language teaching in Ukraine. Their study focused on how these technologies support students in adapting more effectively to the language environment, deepening their knowledge, and increasing their motivation during exchange programmes by providing opportunities for authentic immersion and active communication with native speakers. In particular, the study by L. Svyrydova & O. Ameridze (2023) investigated the role of virtual exchange projects in enhancing the cultural, linguistic, and digital competencies of technical students. The authors highlighted the use of virtual exchanges to foster intercultural communication and digital skills in the educational process without requiring physical student mobility.

The role of Skype exchange in intercultural learning was analysed by C. Mrowa-Hopkin (2022). The researcher found that this form of interaction helped students expand their intercultural understanding and improve language skills through authentic communication.

Skype, as a tool, enables students to engage directly with native speakers, which significantly enhances both lexical proficiency and sociocultural competence. Y. Nabeshima (2024) investigated the teaching of Japanese to students participating in short-term exchange programmes, focusing on its adaptation in accordance with the CEFR. The study determined that structured programmes facilitated more rapid immersion into the language environment. It also highlighted the importance of using authentic materials and situations to help students better navigate the cultural nuances of the Japanese language. S. Okumura (2024) examined the implementation of virtual exchanges and technology in foreign language teaching, concluding that such approaches supported the development of students' intercultural communication skills. Similarly, E. Cutrim Schmid *et al.* (2023) explored how virtual exchanges can integrate a plurilingual perspective into the teaching of English as a foreign language. Their study demonstrated that such exchanges promote the development of students' linguistic autonomy.

Although the aforementioned researchers have examined in detail the impact of language exchange and virtual learning on the development of linguistic and intercultural skills, they have not sufficiently addressed individual differences among students – particularly their cognitive styles and personal factors – which may influence the effectiveness of language exchange. Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess the effectiveness of exchange as a method of foreign language learning, specifically in the context of student interaction during language exchange. The objectives of the study were: to analyse methods of foreign language learning through exchange; to examine the impact of exchange on students' language skills; to investigate the influence of exchange on improving oral communication, the development of linguistic intuition, and the ability to improvise – all of which significantly contribute to raising the level of language proficiency; and

to identify a series of recommendations for improving existing methods.

Materials and Methods

The article analysed the participation of Ukrainian students in exchange programmes, drawing on data from official sources, specifically the INFO media platform (Exchange Programmes: What..., 2023). In particular, statistical data confirming patterns of student exchange in Ukraine – including participant numbers and host countries – were referenced in studies by R. Strutynskyi (2019), as well as reports from the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering (n.d.) and the National University “Yuri Kondratyuk Poltava Polytechnic” (2024). The influence of cultural differences on the effectiveness of language exchange was examined to identify factors that might either hinder or facilitate intercultural communication. Special attention was paid to pragmatic aspects of language use, such as polite expressions, the contextual variability of word meanings, and culturally determined communicative strategies. The relationship between students’ level of language preparation and their ability to quickly integrate into a new linguistic environment was also analysed. A comparative analysis was conducted on English and German language exchange programmes, specifically Erasmus+ and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. Additionally, academic mobility schemes, such as bilateral exchanges and summer language schools, were examined. The comparison of English and German programmes was based on criteria including:

- duration and intensity of study (i.e., number of instructional hours, length of stay abroad, and depth of language immersion);
- teaching methodologies (e.g., communicative method, grammar-translation approach, and blended methods);
- lexical and cultural context (e.g., the nature of teaching materials and emphasis on multiculturalism versus the target culture);

- grammatical content (i.e., principal grammatical topics addressed during the exchange);

- practical application of language (e.g., opportunities for internships, practical sessions, communication with native speakers, and adaptation to the linguistic environment);

- funding and accessibility (e.g., financial support conditions, scholarships, and grant availability).

The advantages and disadvantages of digital technologies were also described, along with their influence on the quality of exchange experiences. Specific tools analysed included Coursera, Khan Academy, EdTech, Tandem, and Speaky, which served as supplementary instruments for language acquisition and communication. As part of the examination of exchange programme features, content analysis of student experiences abroad was conducted. Ukrainian students participated in exchanges in the USA, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Poland, and other countries – each with distinct cultural and linguistic characteristics. Notable differences in approaches to grammar instruction were also identified.

Results

Student exchange provides immersion in a language environment and fosters the development of communication skills and intercultural competence. Participation in international programmes such as Erasmus+, bilateral exchanges, and summer language schools enables students to use the language in real-life contexts, which significantly enhances their linguistic abilities compared to traditional teaching methods. Moreover, integration into the educational process of another country broadens students’ worldviews, helps to overcome language barriers, and contributes to the development of confidence in using the target language. Students who have participated in exchange programmes typically demonstrate a higher level of language proficiency and greater

adaptability to foreign language environments, making this approach an effective tool in foreign language learning. Statistical data support the growing number of students participating in exchanges with various countries. According to a study by R. Strutyński (2019), the number of students involved in exchange programmes has increased steadily by 15% over the past five years, particularly with European countries such as Poland, Germany, and France, as well as with Central Asian countries, notably Kazakhstan. Countries with which Ukraine maintains academic exchange agreements play a key role in creating favourable conditions for student participation in international programmes. As noted in the report of the National University of Water and Environmental Engineering (n.d.), recent years have seen a significant rise in the number of students undertaking internships at European universities and research centres, contributing to the enhancement of their professional qualifications. Similarly, according to data from the National University “Yuri Kondratyuk Poltava Polytechnic” (2024), universities actively support student participation in international scientific conferences and forums, further promoting academic mobility. In the past year alone, the number of such participants increased by 18%.

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv concluded 24 partnership agreements with higher education institutions from 14 countries in 2023, which facilitated active student participation in academic mobility programmes. According to the Rector’s Report for 2023, the university ranked 681–690 among nearly 1,500 universities worldwide in the QS World University Rankings, reflecting its strong international standing (Bugrova, 2023). Ivan Franko National University of Lviv also plays an active role in international exchange. According to the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, it is among the top three universities in terms of the number of applications submitted

for admission, indicating its popularity among prospective students. V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, which ranks 510–520 in the global university rankings, also underscores Ukraine’s growing presence in the international academic landscape.

In particular, within the framework of university programmes, students had the opportunity to communicate with international peers, which encouraged the active use of new language structures and facilitated effective language acquisition. Through language exchange, students expanded their vocabulary and improved their grammatical skills. Direct communication with native speakers required them to respond quickly in conversational situations, select appropriate vocabulary, and construct grammatically correct sentences. Within language tandems, students not only memorised new words but also integrated them immediately into dialogue, which significantly enhanced their language proficiency. Beyond individual lexical items, language exchange supported the acquisition of phraseological units, fixed expressions, colloquialisms, and the contextual meanings of words. For instance, through interaction with native speakers, students encountered idiomatic expressions whose meanings could not be deduced through literal translation. An example is the idiom “break a leg”, which in spoken English is used to wish someone good luck, in contrast to its literal meaning. Such experiences enabled students to navigate linguistic nuances more effectively – an aspect difficult to replicate through textbook-based instruction.

The integration of theoretical knowledge into speech practice occurred naturally. Even with prior theoretical training, students often encountered difficulties in real-life communication due to a lack of practice. Language exchange provided them with the opportunity to apply learned constructions in authentic contexts. For example, after studying conditional

sentences, students could use them in live conversations by constructing phrases such as, “If I were you, I would do it differently”. Communication with native speakers also heightened students’ awareness of grammatical rules, vocabulary usage, and phraseology. Participants in language exchanges observed that some constructions are more prevalent in spoken language, while others are typical of formal contexts. For instance, students noted that in informal English, the contracted form “gonna” frequently replaces “going to”, aiding their adaptation to natural speech (Dooly & Vinagre, 2022). An important aspect of language exchange was the improvement of pronunciation, intonation, and accent. By engaging with native speakers, students were exposed to accurate pronunciation and received feedback that helped them correct phonetic difficulties. In particular, those struggling with the pronunciation of specific sounds benefited from targeted feedback, which gradually improved their phonetic accuracy. Additionally, students learned to distinguish and accurately use subtle differences in word meanings that might otherwise go unnoticed in traditional instruction. For example, the word “smart” may signify “intelligent”, “neat”, or “painful”, depending on the context. Such practice contributed to a more precise understanding of vocabulary and its appropriate usage in different communicative situations (Dooly, 2022).

The ability to accurately convey the meaning of words in context is crucial for both academic and professional communication. Participants in international exchange programmes often encounter situations where it is essential to express their thoughts clearly and precisely in a foreign language. Through language exchange, students not only mastered grammatically correct constructions but also enhanced their skills in using synonyms, intonation, and stylistic devices. During these exchanges, students also encountered linguistic and cultural barriers that complicated the communication

process. Differences in language structures, traditions, and communication styles could lead to misunderstandings. For instance, the directness of speech commonly found in English-speaking countries might appear impolite to Ukrainian students, while native English speakers could interpret Ukrainian politeness as excessive formality. Nevertheless, overcoming such challenges contributed to the development of intercultural communication skills. Students learned to adapt their communicative behaviour to cultural norms, consider non-verbal communication cues, and understand the socio-cultural context of specific expressions. For example, while studying abroad, students often found that their traditional style of communication required adjustment to integrate more effectively into the language environment.

The Erasmus+ programme is one of the most popular among Ukrainian students. According to the National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine, six Ukrainian organisations have become partners in Erasmus Mundus Joint Master’s Programmes, indicating the increasing integration of Ukrainian higher education institutions into the European educational space. This, in turn, enhances the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market. Participation in academic mobility programmes helps improve the quality of education, promotes intercultural communication, and facilitates Ukraine’s integration into the global academic community. The Erasmus+ and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) programmes offered Ukrainian students’ unique opportunities for language immersion, though their approaches to teaching and learning differed somewhat, as reflected in participants’ linguistic outcomes. Erasmus+ focused primarily on English-language instruction and provided a wide range of academic mobility options. A key feature of the programme was its emphasis on the communicative approach to language learning. Lessons were designed around real-life and professional communication scenarios,

which enabled students to acquire practical language skills. Thanks to the interactive format, students could engage directly with native speakers, significantly enhancing their language competence. Moreover, the programme allowed flexibility in the length of study, offering both short-term courses and long-term placements in English-speaking countries. This flexibility promoted both academic and cultural immersion, enabling students to gain not only language proficiency but also a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural context of the host country. In contrast, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst programme was centred on German-language instruction and provided students with a comprehensive introduction to German culture. Language immersion was more intensive, with long-term courses designed to facilitate full integration into Germany's academic and cultural environment. The DAAD placed particular emphasis on grammatical analysis and the advanced study of language structures, allowing students to attain a high level of language proficiency aligned with academic standards. The teaching methodology in DAAD was initially more traditional, favouring the grammar-translation method; however, over time the programme began incorporating communicative techniques to offer a more balanced learning experience. Additionally, the DAAD programme included numerous opportunities for internships and research placements at academic institutions in Germany, enabling students to combine theoretical learning with practical language use in professional settings.

In the Erasmus+ programme, grammar and vocabulary are taught through interactive methods that enable students not only to grasp the theoretical aspects of the language but also to apply them actively in practice. For example, grammatical topics are frequently introduced through communicative activities such as role-playing or group discussions, where students have the opportunity to use grammatical

structures independently in real-life scenarios. The focus is typically on grammatical categories such as verb tenses (e.g., using the present perfect to describe personal experiences), articles (in the context of English), and conditional sentences. Vocabulary is similarly taught through situational tasks: students may explore thematic vocabulary related to “travel” or “work” by engaging in dialogues or delivering presentations, allowing them to integrate new words actively into their speech. In this way, grammar and vocabulary are effectively combined in practical language use, with the emphasis placed on students' ability to apply these elements in authentic communicative contexts.

In the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) programme, grammar is studied in a more detailed and formalised manner, with a strong emphasis on understanding complex language structures. For instance, students frequently engage with advanced grammatical constructions such as the passive voice, second and third conditional forms, and a range of modal verbs (e.g., *sollen*, *dürfen*, *müssen*) within the context of academic and scientific texts. Vocabulary is taught through specialised subject areas, such as terminology related to scientific research or technical language specific to fields like engineering or medicine, thereby enabling students to apply their German skills in professional contexts. Classes often incorporate writing tasks, providing students with opportunities to apply grammatical structures and domain-specific vocabulary in the composition of essays, scientific papers, or reports. Additionally, while residing in Germany, students actively practise grammar and vocabulary in authentic situations – such as participating in seminar discussions on academic topics or attending internship interviews – which fosters deep immersion in the language environment.

An important aspect of both programmes was the cultural context in which students learned languages. Erasmus+ offered the opportunity to become acquainted with a variety

of English-speaking cultures, including those of the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia. This exposure enabled students not only to improve their language proficiency but also to gain insight into the diversity of English-speaking countries, thereby broadening their cultural horizons. In contrast, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) programme focused on German culture and history, giving students the chance to develop a deeper understanding of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland through the study of local traditions, literature, and art. In addition to cultural immersion, both the Erasmus+ and DAAD programmes devoted considerable attention to the study of individual lexical items and grammatical structures. Within the Erasmus+ framework, students learned to use English modal verbs such as “dürfen” (may), “müsse” (must), “können” (can), “sollen” (should), applying them in both academic writing (e.g., “Students must complete the assignment by Friday”) and oral communication (e.g., “Can I ask you a question?”). Similarly, in the DAAD programme, emphasis was placed on German modal verbs such as “dürfen” (may), “müssen” (must), “können” (can), and “sollen” (should). Students were taught to construct sentences such as “Studierende müssen ihre Hausarbeiten bis Montag einreichen” (“Students must submit their term papers by Monday”) and “You are not allowed to speak loudly in the library”, thus applying grammatical knowledge in academic contexts. Language learning in the Erasmus+ and DAAD programmes also differed in terms of integration into everyday life. In Erasmus+, students actively engaged with native speakers not only within academic settings but also through internships and cultural exchange activities, allowing them to deepen their knowledge via informal communication. In contrast, the DAAD programme placed greater emphasis on academic immersion, offering students internships and research opportunities at German academic institutions. This enabled them

to apply acquired knowledge in scientific and professional settings. In terms of financial support, both programmes provided substantial funding for participants. Erasmus+ offered scholarships that covered tuition fees, travel expenses, and accommodation, making the programme accessible to a wide range of students. The DAAD programme also provided various grants and scholarships to ensure that students could study in Germany without financial barriers, covering both living and study-related costs. Despite their differing emphases, both programmes made significant contributions to the development of philological education by enhancing language skills, broadening cultural perspectives, and offering professional development opportunities. Erasmus+ prioritised a communicative approach and integration with diverse English-speaking cultures, whereas the DAAD programme focused on deeper engagement with the German language and culture, with an emphasis on academic study and scientific research.

In addition, the combination of traditional and modern technologies enables the creation of a dynamic learning environment that motivates students to engage independently and interactively. One of the key aspects of successful learning is the use of interactive methods, including discussions, project-based activities, role-playing exercises, and the analysis of real-life cases. Digital technologies play a crucial role in exchange programmes by offering new opportunities for language learning, the acquisition of additional knowledge, and the development of skills applicable during students’ stays in foreign countries. Platforms such as Coursera and Khan Academy provide access to courses across a wide range of disciplines, including languages, science, and business, allowing students to expand their academic and professional knowledge. The primary advantages of these technologies are their accessibility and the flexibility to study according to individual schedules, enabling students to

organise their time effectively and combine academic study with other responsibilities. However, it is important to note that online courses cannot fully substitute in-person language learning, which is best achieved through direct interaction and communication with native speakers. Language exchange applications such as Tandem and Speaky should be considered complementary tools, allowing students to communicate with native speakers via chat, video, or voice calls. For example, an English language learner might enhance their vocabulary by practising words such as resilience in context: “One must develop resilience to overcome challenges”. Similarly, German language learners can focus on complex terms such as “Entscheidungsfreudigkeit” (“decisiveness”) by using them in sentences like: “Man muss Entscheidungsfreudigkeit zeigen, um schnell zu handeln” (“You have to show decisiveness in order to act quickly”). A key benefit of these platforms is the opportunity to engage directly with individuals from around the world, which significantly enhances language proficiency and fosters an understanding of diverse cultural perspectives. These tools serve as a valuable supplement to formal curricula, supporting the development of practical language usage. Nonetheless, some students may encounter challenges in adapting to this learning format due to varying levels of language proficiency among partners or the absence of professional supervision during the learning process. Incorporating diverse forms of learning helps tailor the educational experience to individual student needs and contributes to the development of language competences. The integration of digital platforms and international collaboration opens up new avenues for the practical application of language skills in real communicative situations. Table 1 presents the main forms of work used in the two student exchange programmes, namely Erasmus+ and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. Self-study has played a key role in exchange programmes, as it enables

students to deepen their language and academic skills beyond the core curriculum. Digital technologies such as Moodle and Google Classroom have significantly streamlined the learning process by providing access to lectures, assessments, and other learning materials. Students’ complete assignments online and receive timely feedback from instructors. Applications such as Duolingo and Grammarly have supported language development through interactive exercises and grammar correction tools, both of which are essential for enhancing philological competence. For example, a student learning German might use Duolingo to practise the correct use of the modal verb “dürfen”: “Darf ich hier sitzen?” (“may”: “may I sit here?”). Similarly, an English language learner might work on forming sentences with should: “You should practise every day to improve your fluency”. Synchronous learning platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams offered students opportunities to engage in real-time discussions, collaborate on group projects, and receive individual consultations. Translation tools such as DeepL, Linguee, and Reverso served as additional resources for working with texts, enabling students to quickly locate accurate translations and expand their vocabulary. For instance, a student could use Linguee to find the correct translation of the word sustainability, discovering that the German equivalent is “Nachhaltigkeit” (“Sustainability”). Together, these tools and platforms created optimal conditions for autonomous learning and the improvement of language skills.

Thanks to the integration of interactive methods, international cooperation, and digital technologies, students not only enhanced their knowledge but also developed communication skills in real-life situations. Traditional teaching methods – such as lectures, explanations of new material, textbook reading, and the completion of exercises – continue to form the foundation of education. These methods provide structure to the learning process, support the development of core knowledge, and help maintain ac-

ademic discipline. The acquisition of individual vocabulary items has become a key stage in students' language training. For instance, when learning English, students often use associative memorisation techniques. The word achieve may be associated with its root -chieve, which

resembles chief – a figure often linked with reaching goals. In German, a similar approach is used to memorise the word “Erfolg” (“Success”), which can be broken into “er-” (indicating a result) and “-folg” (resembling the English follow), suggesting a process that leads to success.

Table 1. Analysis of forms of work of students under the Erasmus+ and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst Programmes

Subject	Forms of work	
	Erasmus+	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
Oral and written language practice	Online communication with native speakers, international workshops, participation in student conferences, integration of real communicative tasks, role-playing games, debates	Intensive language courses at German universities, academic writing, working with scientific texts, participation in scientific seminars
Foreign language grammar	Analysis of authentic texts, grammar games, application of grammar in practical communication	Studying grammar through academic articles, comparative analysis of grammatical structures, working with lexicographic databases
Linguistics and regional studies	Online meetings with representatives of other countries, cultural case studies, participation in international cultural days	Attending lectures at German universities, excursions, socio-cultural events, integration of cultural topics into learning tasks
Methodology of teaching foreign languages	Practical exercises with lesson modeling, case analysis, collaboration in international groups, use of EdTech, work in Microsoft Teams	Pedagogical practice in German educational institutions, analysis of didactic materials, application of communicative methods
Phonetics	Articulation simulators, phonetic games, native speaker pronunciation analysis	Working with language corpora, individual phonetics lessons, phonetic analysis of academic speech
Translation	Translation of authentic texts (scientific articles, news, reports), use of online resources (DeepL, Linguee, Reverso), collaborative work on translations in Google Docs, receiving feedback from native speakers	Working with professional CAT tools (SDL Trados, MemoQ), translation of scientific texts, simultaneous and written translation, cooperation with translation agencies

Source: created by the authors

Ukrainian students frequently take part in exchange programmes in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, France, and other European nations. These countries are popular destinations due to their high standards of education, cultural

exchange opportunities, and well-organised academic systems. Each of these countries presents unique characteristics in the teaching of English and German, which are essential for students aiming to advance their language proficiency (Table 2).

Table 2. Comparison of grammar acquisition processes among students participating in exchange programmes

Country	Exchange programme	Grammar teaching methodology	Main features of training	Example
USA	Fulbright	Communicative method, interactive exercises	Emphasis on communication skills, interactive methods	Using role-playing games to practice grammar (present perfect)
Great Britain	Erasmus+, British Council	Traditional approach with grammar exercises	Teaching with an emphasis on grammar details, extensive homework assignments	In-depth study of conditional sentences and articles
Germany	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Erasmus+	Mixed method (using grammar games)	A combination of traditional and modern approaches to learning	Analysis of passive constructions, use of projects in lessons
France	Erasmus+	Inductive method (learning grammar through context)	Intensive courses for developing practical skills	Studying the imperfect through the analysis of literary texts
Poland	Erasmus+	Communicative and grammatical-translation method	Practice in a language environment, a large number of exercises	Moving from theory to practice through seminar discussions

Source: created by the authors

Learning English and German through exchange programmes presents both advantages and disadvantages, depending on the host country, teaching methodology, and the student's objectives. One of the main advantages is immersion in a language environment, which enables students to enhance their listening and speaking skills, as well as to acquire correct pronunciation. Studying English in countries where it is the official language offers students the opportunity to communicate directly with native speakers, significantly increasing the effectiveness of language acquisition. Exchange programmes often combine intensive language courses with practical tasks. For example, in the UK, students may participate in debates, which support the development of argumentation skills and active vocabulary, or in job interview simulations, which aid adaptation to the professional environment. Regarding the German language, learning abroad offers considerable advantages, particularly in gaining a deeper understanding of grammar and syntactic structures. In Germany or Austria, students have opportunities to practise the language in both

academic and professional settings. For instance, interactive methods such as "Sprachtandem" ("Language tandem") may be employed, where students communicate with native speakers, mutually assisting one another in improving language skills. Additionally, many training programmes include Projektarbeit (project work), which fosters the development of both written and oral competence. Despite these advantages, students may encounter challenges, particularly in adapting to a new culture and overcoming the language barrier during the initial stages. These difficulties can be mitigated through communicative teaching methods. For example, role-playing games simulate real-life scenarios such as visiting a shop or conducting business negotiations. Such exercises promote the development of language competence and help students to overcome the fear of communicating in a foreign language.

Another example of an effective combination of traditional and practical methods is project-based activity. Students can engage in joint projects that require them to create presentations, conduct interviews, write articles,

or produce videos in a foreign language. Such tasks contribute not only to the development of language skills but also to the cultivation of teamwork, analytical thinking, and creativity. Furthermore, the integration of digital technologies into the educational process opens up new opportunities for enhancing learning effectiveness. Online platforms, mobile applications, virtual environments, and interactive tasks help make learning more accessible and personalised. Online platforms such as Duolingo, Babbel, Busuu, and Rosetta Stone facilitate foreign language learning through interactive exercises, audio recordings, and games. Virtual environments such as VRChat or Mondly VR enable users to practise speaking with native speakers in realistic scenarios. These programmes also allow students to study the material independently at their own convenience, take tests, complete interactive exercises, and receive instant feedback.

In addition, the use of video lessons and webinars has proven to be beneficial. For example, when learning a foreign language, students can watch videos featuring native speakers, listen to podcasts, and analyse authentic materials such as news reports, interviews, or film excerpts. This supports the development of listening skills, enriches vocabulary, and improves pronunciation. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) also hold significant potential in the educational process. The use of VR simulations enables students to immerse themselves in a virtual English-speaking environment and practise the language in realistic situations – for example, during a tourist trip or while attending a business meeting.

The traditional assessment system is often focused on testing theoretical knowledge through examinations or written assignments. However, this is insufficient for evaluating the actual level of language proficiency. Consequently, new approaches have been proposed that enable a more comprehensive assessment of students' knowledge, taking into account

both theoretical understanding and practical application. One such approach is comprehensive assessment, which combines written tasks, oral responses, tests, and practical projects. For example, instead of a conventional exam, a student may be asked to prepare a presentation in a foreign language, engage in a dialogue with a teacher, or write an analytical text that requires a well-reasoned expression of ideas. A portfolio containing the student's work throughout the course – such as essays, translations, video recordings of oral performances, and creative projects – makes it possible to assess not only the student's proficiency at a given moment, but also the progress in language skill development. It is advisable to incorporate self-assessment and peer assessment following group projects; students can evaluate one another's work, provide constructive feedback, and receive comments in return. This practice fosters the development of critical thinking and accountability for one's own learning outcomes.

The proposed recommendations can be implemented across various educational institutions. In higher education, blended learning can be adopted, whereby theoretical material is delivered through online resources, while practical tasks are completed during in-person sessions. In language schools, the use of role-playing games, communicative methods, and interactive platforms can significantly enhance learning effectiveness. Furthermore, it is essential to involve native speakers in the educational process through video conferences or language exchange programmes. The use of digital technologies is particularly crucial in the context of distance learning. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many educational institutions transitioned to an online format, where interactive platforms played a key role in maintaining the effectiveness of the learning process.

Overall, the findings of the study confirmed that combining traditional teaching methods

with practical activities and digital technologies significantly enhances the effectiveness of the educational process. The proposed assessment approaches enable an objective evaluation of both students' theoretical preparation and practical skills. The integration of modern methodologies – such as the communicative approach, blended learning, gamification, the flipped classroom model, and the use of AI for personalised learning – will contribute to the development of communication skills, increase student motivation, and improve the overall quality of education. Education should meet the demands of society, specifically by producing specialists equipped with soft skills, digital literacy, critical thinking, the ability to learn quickly and adapt to change, as well as a high level of communication and intercultural competence.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrated that exchange programmes are an effective method for learning foreign languages, as they contribute to the development of students' communication skills and language motivation. This aligns with the findings of E. Ene *et al.* (2022), who emphasise that participation in language exchange programmes at higher education institutions enhances not only language proficiency, but also fosters the creation of an international educational environment that broadens students' cultural horizons. Intercultural communicative competence plays a significant role in the language exchange process. This is supported by the work of E. Sielanko-Byford & J. Zielińska (2024), as well as K. Gijzen *et al.* (2024), who highlighted that exchange programmes contribute to the development of intercultural competence and help students navigate more effectively in authentic communicative settings. These findings are consistent with those of M. Orsini-Jones (2023), who noted that virtual exchange can serve as a transformative space in the training of English language

teachers. Specifically, the ViVEXELT programme demonstrated that integrating virtual exchange into the educational process significantly enhances students' communication skills and enables immersion in real-world communicative contexts. This supports the view that interaction with native speakers or other proficient speakers in authentic contexts facilitates quicker and more effective acquisition of language structures. The study also indicates a significant impact of online exchange platforms on the language learning process. In particular, students who participate in virtual language exchanges often exhibit increased motivation and use the foreign language more frequently in their everyday lives. This finding is consistent with the research of I. Gelen & E. Tozluoglu (2021), who evaluated the effectiveness of the online platform Free4Talk and confirmed that digital tools foster favourable conditions for language practice and interaction between native speakers and learners. Participation in international exchange programmes can also promote the development of students' critical thinking skills. This finding is in line with the research of L. Torres Zuñiga & S. Söğüt (2024), who examined how intercultural virtual exchanges can support the application of critical pedagogy in English language teaching. They observed that such exchanges enhance students' understanding of the socio-cultural context of language and help them to develop the ability to analyse and evaluate information critically.

Regarding individual learning styles, the results of the study showed that the effectiveness of language exchange may depend on the personal characteristics of the students. This is consistent with the findings of A. Halim *et al.* (2024), who developed a map of learning styles among students learning English as a foreign language and determined that different teaching methods vary in effectiveness depending on the learner group. In addition, the study confirmed the positive impact of student

exchanges on encouraging language learning, aligning with the findings of S. Heinzmann *et al.* (2024). Their systematic analysis of the effects of language exchange in primary and secondary education demonstrated that such programmes significantly enhance motivation to learn and accelerate the acquisition of language skills. In a globalised world, language competence can no longer be viewed in isolation from intercultural interaction. Digital exchanges, in particular, enable students to learn how to communicate effectively with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Similar conclusions were drawn in the study by A. Potolia & M. Derivry-Plard (2022), which examined how virtual exchanges promote the development of intercultural communication skills and support students in adapting to digital communication settings. The study also underscored the importance of cultural context in the language exchange process. Learning in an authentic environment or engaging in communication with native speakers facilitates quicker adaptation to linguistic nuances and informal speech. This finding is consistent with the research of K. Hossain (2024), who analysed the role of culture in learning English and highlighted that immersion in a cultural environment helps to overcome challenges related to language barriers. Exchanges have a demonstrably positive effect on communication skills. This is supported by the findings of A. Salomão (2022), who observed that students participating in international language programmes use the target language more frequently in everyday life, contributing to improved acquisition. Both virtual and physical language exchanges also influence students' social relationships. This aligns with the results of B. Rienties & I. Rets (2022), who investigated interactions between students from China and Portugal. Their study showed that exchanges facilitate the formation of social bonds between students from different

regions – an outcome of particular significance in the context of international cooperation. These findings suggest that participation in language exchanges aids in overcoming cultural stereotypes and fosters positive attitudes towards individuals from other countries. Another key aspect highlighted by the study is the importance of authenticity in language exchange and the influence of context on learning effectiveness. This corresponds with the conclusions of O. Tătaru & I. Vişan (2023), who analysed the functionality of exchanges in the context of English as a global language. They concluded that the success of language exchange largely depends on the context of language use and the extent to which learners are able to practise the language in a natural environment.

However, the study also identified several challenges associated with implementing language exchange programmes, particularly in a virtual format. For instance, students often reported a lack of synchronous interaction and live communication. This is consistent with the findings of H. Ibrahim (2022), who reviewed project-based learning through digital technologies and emphasised that, although virtual platforms can be effective, they cannot fully replicate the personal experience of direct communication. Another challenge noted was the asynchrony of the learning process, whereby students from different time zones were unable to interact effectively in real time. This finding is supported by the study of K. Kopyński & C. Silvia (2024), who examined the difficulties of teaching foreign languages in asynchronous formats and concluded that such modes can reduce student engagement. In the context of Chinese language instruction, the study revealed that language exchange is particularly effective when it incorporates cultural elements such as the country's traditions, history, and art. This aligns with the findings of H. Luo (2023), who analysed a Chinese-Amer-

ican virtual exchange and demonstrated that successful language learning is facilitated by a deep understanding of cultural context. Similar conclusions were drawn by B. Topaz *et al.* (2023) and N. Mačičková & E. Kováčiková (2024), who recommended the integration of virtual exchanges into English teacher training programmes to enhance methodological competence. This study confirmed that participation in such exchanges increases students' preparedness for spontaneous communication in a foreign language. These findings are consistent with the research of A. Zhou (2023), who found that Chinese students engaged in language exchange exhibited a higher level of readiness for oral communication than those who followed traditional learning methods.

Thus, the results of this study confirmed that exchange is one of the most effective methods for learning a foreign language, as it contributes to overcoming communication barriers and developing language competence, intercultural awareness, and learning motivation. At the same time, as shown by other researchers, the process presents certain challenges, including adaptation to a new environment, the use of digital technologies, and the individual learning styles of students.

Conclusions

The study confirmed the effectiveness of integrating academic mobility programmes into the educational process for students studying a foreign language. As a result of a comparative analysis of the Erasmus+ and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) programmes in relation to grammar learning, it was found that Erasmus+ focuses on the interactive use of language in real-life situations. This includes engaging students in dialogues, discussions, and group projects, which facilitates the acquisition of grammatical structures through communication with native speakers and immersion in cultural contexts. In contrast, the DAAD

programme emphasises the systematic study of grammar using traditional methods, such as the grammar-translation approach, with intensive exercises and translation tasks. This provides a deeper theoretical understanding of grammar. Therefore, the primary distinction lies in the focus of each programme: Erasmus+ prioritises practical application, whereas DAAD prioritises the theoretical study of grammatical rules. This highlights the importance of combining both approaches to achieve optimal results in language learning.

Digital technologies such as Coursera, Khan Academy, EdTech, Tandem, and Speaky have played a significant role in exchange programmes, greatly enhancing the quality of language education. These platforms have provided students with access to interactive courses, online resources, and opportunities for practical communication with native speakers. They also offered valuable tools for independent study and the improvement of language skills, thereby contributing to the development of communicative and cultural competences. Furthermore, these technologies have helped overcome the barriers of distance and time, offering students more opportunities to learn and practise languages in contexts where physical access is limited.

The findings of the study indicate a need to improve foreign language teaching methods in higher education institutions in Ukraine. This can be achieved by actively involving students in international academic exchange programmes, employing modern digital technologies, and integrating communicatively oriented teaching methods. Based on the results obtained, recommendations have been developed for educators to enhance the educational process. In particular, it is proposed to expand the implementation of academic mobility programmes, more actively adopt digital platforms and distance learning methods, and increase the extent to which students are

integrated into real-life language use situations. Future research may include a broader comparison of international academic mobility programmes such as Fulbright, Humboldt, and others. Additionally, it is planned to explore the impact of these programmes on the academic and professional trajectories of participants across different countries.

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Conflict of Interest

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Обмін як спосіб ефективного вивчення іноземної мови

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Анотація. Метою дослідження було з'ясування особливостей методу обміну студентами для вивчення іноземних мов, а саме англійської та німецької, в Україні з урахуванням їх впливу на мовну компетентність студентів. Методологія включала такі методи, як порівняльний аналіз програм обміну Erasmus+ та Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, а також здійснено аналіз цифрових технологій такі, як Coursera, Khan Academy, EdTech, Tandem та Speaky для покращення якості навчання та забезпечення додаткових інструментів для мовного занурення, практичних занять та комунікації між студентами і носіями мов. Було виявлено, що різниця між програмами Erasmus+ та Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst у вивченні граматики полягає в підходах до інтеграції граматичних тем у навчальний процес. З'ясовано, що у програмі Erasmus+ більше уваги приділяється комунікативному методу, що акцентує на використанні мови в реальних ситуаціях та дозволяє студентам покращувати граматичні навички через контекст. Водночас програма Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, хоча й використовує комунікативний підхід, зосереджується більше на граматико-перекладному методі, який передбачає детальне вивчення граматичних правил та їх застосування через переклад та аналіз текстів. Було розглянуто вплив академічної мобільності на адаптивність студентів, їхню здатність швидко освоювати новий матеріал і використовувати мову в реальних комунікативних ситуаціях. Обмін, як спосіб ефективного вивчення іноземної мови, виявився дієвим завдяки поєднанню теоретичних знань із практичними завданнями, що сприяло розвитку міжкультурної комунікації. Студенти, які проходили навчання за обміном, мали кращі результати в тестах, швидше долали мовний бар'єр і демонстрували вищий рівень академічної успішності, що підтверджує ефективність поєднання традиційного навчання з практичним досвідом. Практичне значення роботи полягає в обґрунтуванні студентського обміну, як методу вивчення іноземних мов та розробці рекомендацій щодо поєднання традиційного навчання з практичними завданнями й цифровими технологіями для підвищення рівня мовної компетенції студентів

Ключові слова: освітній процес; міжнародна мобільність; культурний обмін; міжкультурна компетентність; цифрові технології