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## THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN THE ADAPTATION OF STUDENTS WITH INCREASED EDUCATIONAL VULNERABILITY: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

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*Transition in the educational process creates adaptive pressure for learners with different linguistic and socio-cultural experience. Changes in the academic space may restrict participation and intensify learners' emotional tension. Especially in the role of a newcomer, academic expectations may significantly differ from previously established models. These discrepancies may thereby hinder engagement and the manifestation of an active position on the part of the individual. When interacting with a mixed group of learners, pedagogical flexibility and professional skills are particularly necessary, which contribute to the disclosure of strengths and the manifestation of personal positions without judgement and suppression. Supportive interaction reduces the level of uncertainty and generates trust towards the teacher. A context-sensitive learning environment strengthens the stability of academic interaction. Environmentally adaptive structures allow the alignment of individual needs with contextual requirements. Thus, structured support mechanisms minimise barriers associated with adaptation. Thoughtfully designed and pre-coordinated educational practices increase the stability of academic presence in changing learning conditions.*

*The aim of the study consists in the theoretical analysis of contemporary pedagogical approaches in educational adaptation for vulnerable groups of learners.*



**Research methodology.** *Within the framework of this study, a comparative theoretical analysis is applied, aimed at identifying conceptual differences and points of intersection of the pedagogical approaches under consideration.*

**Conclusion.** *Sustained academic participation under conditions of educational transition requires pedagogically mediated alignment between contextual variability and learner-specific capacities. Responsively structured instructional environments support stable involvement across linguistically and socio-culturally diverse cohorts. Systemic configuration of support practices enhances continuity of participation trajectories within dynamically evolving institutional ecosystems.*

**Key words:** *Trauma-informed approach, Culturally responsive approach, Ecological approach, newcomers, adaptation, educational transformation.*

## **РОЛЬ ВИКЛАДАЧА В АДАПТАЦІЇ УЧНІВ З ПІДВИЩЕНОЮ ОСВІТНЬОЮ ВРАЗЛИВІСТЮ: ТЕОРЕТИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ**

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*Перехід в освітньому процесі створює адаптивний тиск для учнів з різним мовним та соціокультурним досвідом. Зміни в академічному просторі можуть обмежувати участь та посилювати емоційне напруження учнів. Особливо в ролі новачка академічні очікування можуть суттєво відрізнятися від раніше встановлених моделей. Ці невідповідності можуть тим самим перешкоджати залученню та вияву активної позиції з боку індивіда. Під час взаємодії зі змішаною групою учнів особливо необхідна педагогічна гнучкість та професійні навички, які сприяють розкриттю сильних сторін і вияву особистісних позицій без осуду та пригнічення. Підтримувальна взаємодія знижує рівень невизначеності та формує довіру до педагога. Контекстно-чутливе навчальне середовище зміцнює стабільність академічної взаємодії. Адаптивні до середовища структури дозволяють узгоджувати індивідуальні потреби з контекстуальними вимогами. Таким чином, структуровані механізми підтримки мінімізують бар'єри, пов'язані з адаптаці-*

*сю. Продумано розроблені та заздалегідь скоординовані освітні практики підвищують стабільність академічної присутності в змінюваних умовах навчання.*

**Мета дослідження** полягає у теоретичному аналізі сучасних педагогічних підходів в освітній адаптації для уразливих груп учнів.

**Методологія дослідження.** У межах цього дослідження застосовується порівняльний теоретичний аналіз, спрямований на виявлення концептуальних відмінностей і точок перетину педагогічних підходів, що розглядаються.

**Висновки.** Стійка академічна участь в умовах освітнього переходу потребує педагогічно опосередкованого узгодження між контекстуальною варіативністю та індивідуально специфічними можливостями учнів. Відповідно структуровані навчальні середовища підтримують стабільне залучення в межах мовно- та соціокультурно різноманітних когорт. Системна конфігурація практик підтримки посилює безперервність траєкторій участі в динамічно еволюційних інституційних екосистемах.

**Ключові слова:** травма-інформований підхід, культурно-орієнтований підхід, екологічний підхід, новачки, адаптація, освітня трансформація.

**Introduction.** The transformation of the conditions of educational activity requires the development of adaptive flexibility within a changing educational context. Learners who have migration experience or have encountered the necessity to change habitual conditions require special attention when immersing themselves in new learning activity [7; 10; 21; 1]. The changed educational environment presupposes the mastery of new learning styles, communicative practices, and compliance with certain requirements [20]. However, this process may cause emotional tension and academic difficulties, which contribute to the limitation of opportunities for full inclusion.

Educational practice established learning norms, language, and academic activity may significantly differ from the previous experience of the individual [24]. The conditions presented at the initial stage lay the fundamental foundation for engagement in learning activity, the manifestation of an active position, and the possibility of constructing a successful further perspective. However, the formation of the individual as an independent and sustainable participant of a new academic community may be a difficult stage. Certain obstacles also cannot be excluded, which may cause adaptive load and limited social integration arising as a result of changes in learning conditions [13; 19]. Undoubtedly,

self-realisation and the strengthening of personal positions within the academic space are necessary for each individual. Support from educational institutions and teachers is important, especially for overcoming adaptation thresholds, reducing the risks of burnout, emotional instability, and the provocation of feelings of isolation.

During this transformation period, pedagogical competence serves as an important component capable of uniting variable groups of learners into a single integrated mechanism. Depending on accompanying variables, professional flexibility is manifested in the creation of adaptation strategies that consider the diversity of learners' needs and characteristics [11; 3]. This allows a transition to the consideration of conceptual approaches that emphasise learners' experience and the characteristics of educational interaction.

Within the trauma-informed approach, learning is considered as a process that requires the creation of an emotionally safe environment and consideration of factors capable of increasing or decreasing learners' adaptive load [15; 3]. In turn, the culturally responsive approach emphasises the significance of socio-cultural and linguistic experience as a learning resource, shifting the focus from deficit-based interpretations to the recognition of already formed knowledge and practices of learners [33; 11]. The ecologically oriented approach is precisely focused on the balance of the connection between the individual and the learning environment [29; 31]. In this context, conceptually harmoniously interconnected elements acquire a more variable and contextually conditioned character [29]. Such a combination allows vulnerable groups of learners to be considered not from the position of deficit but through the prism of their potential [22; 8].

Undoubtedly, each teacher attempts to select optimal levers of influence for connection, engagement, and involvement in the learning process [22]. However, the combination of mechanisms forming sustainable inclusion of variable groups of learners may constitute a difficult stage. Despite the diversity of theoretical approaches, the issue of their coordinated application to ensure

sustainable academic inclusion of learners within a changing educational environment remains insufficiently studied. Pedagogical guidelines constructed around these criteria may provide clarity to stage-by-stage practical actions that contribute to smooth integration.

### **Research results.**

#### *Trauma-informed approach.*

Learners who have undergone a migration pathway, an abrupt change, or forced relocation measures are characterised by increased sensitivity to new educational conditions. The awareness of educational institutions and the professional training of staff contribute to smoother adaptation and a reduction of stress among newcomers.

The trauma-informed approach in pedagogy presupposes a pre-prepared, adaptively secure environment for different groups of learners [15]. This approach has a key direction in the form of a structured academic course, which is oriented towards diverse learners taking into account their needs, including clear requirements, the establishment of explicit feedback, and flexibility of interactions [25]. For learners who are in a situation of educational change, such forms of organisation of learning are especially important that do not intensify their sense of uncertainty, do not indicate differences in experience, and do not provoke a sense of withdrawal and alienation [1; 3]. Within the context of this approach, deficits are not considered; rather, an ecologically supportive environment, trust-based relationships, and the opportunity to move at an individual pace while selecting a trajectory for successful self-realisation within the educational environment are created.

Pedagogical competence consists in maintaining such conditions at the level of real practice and not only at the level of declared principles [28]. Thus, for sustainable academic inclusion, it is necessary to construct the educational process considering the diversity of learners' experience, employing support and practice-oriented methods which contribute to the disclosure of strengths and motivate towards cognition [12]. This approach acts not as a combination of separate techniques,

but as a principle of organising educational interaction that determines the character of the learning environment and the professional decisions of the teacher. Its implementation presupposes a shift of emphasis from control and standardisation towards maintaining predictability, structuring, and accessibility of the learning process [3; 16]. Under conditions of educational transitions, this approach makes it possible to minimise additional stress factors while positively influencing learners' involvement and the sustainability of participation. Thus, the teacher avoids deficit-based interpretations of learning difficulties and contributes to the identification of learners' strengths, which is considered as one of the key factors of sustainable academic presence [29]. Consequently, the use of the trauma-informed approach in pedagogy acquires applied significance, providing a link between the professional competence of the teacher and the creation of conditions for consistent and supported educational participation of sensitive groups of learners.

*Culturally responsive approach.*

The culturally responsive approach in pedagogy is aimed at organising an educational interaction in which the cultural, linguistic, and life experience of learners constitutes a significant resource in the formation of a multicultural learning community [33]. In this context, pedagogical activity is not constrained in the use of methodological techniques but presupposes a broader range of opportunities for teachers. The professional position lies in the acceptance of the individual's experience, possessing already formed knowledge, certain skills, and practices [33; 11]. Moreover, orientation should be focused on the direction and disclosure of academic potential. Such support is especially necessary for entry into a new educational environment. In such situations, the quality of inclusion is largely determined by the extent to which academic requirements intersect with previous experience and do not reduce the perception of educational resources to a deficit [5; 2]. Pedagogical practices built on the principles of cultural responsiveness contribute to active engagement, especially

when educational practice intersects with the real context of learners' lives [5]. When working with vulnerable groups of learners, it is necessary to build strategically oriented methods, to avoid deficit-based interpretations and sensitive themes that may provoke a negative effect [27].

The relevance of culturally responsive pedagogy is manifested in work with learners for whom integration is associated not only with the mastery of new academic norms but also with the necessity of forming a sense of belonging to the learning community [33; 14]. In such a context, it is not formal adjustment to rules that becomes essential, but the pedagogical capacity for organising the educational process. It is in this that the depth of this approach is manifested. When the emphasis shifts from presumed limitations towards the optimisation of resources through which the strengthening of academic trust, internal resilience, and subject position becomes possible, a favourable interconnection occurs [15].

Within contemporary pedagogical theory, the culturally responsive approach is considered as a mechanism for the redistribution of educational opportunities in favour of learners. This concept moves beyond the standardised model of learning and intersects with the principles of inclusive pedagogy oriented towards considering the diversity of educational trajectories [9]. In this case, pedagogical practice is aimed not only at adapting the content but also at transforming the forms of educational interaction in order to minimise institutional barriers to participation. For learners with different socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds, this allows access to educational resources without the loss of personal identity [18]. The practical implementation of this approach presupposes the contextualisation of learning tasks, variability of assessment forms, and the use of collaborative learning strategies [14]. Such an organisation of the educational environment demonstrates a positive influence on the academic resilience of learners who are at risk of social or educational marginalisation [26]. Thus, culturally responsive pedagogy acquires the significance of an instrument of supportive didactics aimed at expanding

educational participation through the recognition of learners' experience.

*Ecological approach.*

Difficulties of inclusion are formed not only at the initial stage, but may also cumulatively be reflected at various levels at the intersection of academic requirements, life circumstances, and the availability of supporting resources [23; 32]. The ecological approach considers the adaptation of the learner not as an isolated process, but as a result of the free interaction of the individual with the educational environment and the full acceptance of his or her academic and life experience [4]. This approach is a connecting mechanism that contributes to the organisation of the educational process with the character of interpersonal relations and the possibility of participation of auxiliary contexts influencing the stability of academic presence [6; 23]. In turn, the pedagogical task consists in the creation of such an ecosystem of interaction where the learning space becomes a harmonious connecting and inseparable link with the individual [30]. It should also be noted that the changed context influences the participation of all learners, and timely formed working methods contribute to the reduction of the risks of academic burnout and misunderstandings [4; 6].

On the basis of professional competence, the teacher constructs ecologically flexible conditions capable of accommodating, engaging, and retaining the academic activity of the learner [17]. However, the vulnerable group is more susceptible to changes and may be unstable without appropriate support and balanced conditions. In this context, the teacher becomes a connecting link capable of uniting all elements for favourable entry and the manifestation of an active position [31]. The ecological approach acts not as a descriptive metaphor of the environment, but as an analytical framework allowing educational participation to be considered as a systemically conditioned process. This approach adapts forms of interaction, maintaining academic standards and ensuring the variability of participation pathways [6]. Within such a logic, the learning environment functions as an integrated space contributing to the

formation of sustainable academic presence and the active position of learners [30; 32; 17].

To systematise the theoretical perspectives discussed above, a comparative synthesis of pedagogical approaches was undertaken. The (Table 1) summarises the functional characteristics of trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and ecological frameworks within the educational process. It reflects their respective influence on learning conditions, pedagogical effects, and associated participation risks. The comparative representation enables the identification of context-sensitive mechanisms supporting sustainable academic inclusion of learners in changing educational environments.

Table 1 – Comparative characteristics of pedagogical approaches and their implications for vulnerable learners

<b>Pedagogical approach</b>	<b>Influence on the educational process</b>	<b>Pedagogical effects</b>	<b>Potential risks</b>
<b>Trauma-informed approach</b>	Creates an emotionally safe, predictable, and structured learning environment; reduces stress and minimises adaptive load; strengthens learners' stability during transitional periods.	Enables the teacher to regulate the pace and format of interaction appropriately; decreases the likelihood of learning related conflicts; supports more consistent attendance and sustained engagement.	Increased learner anxiety; heightened withdrawal; fragmentation of the learning process; risk of emotional burnout for both teachers and learners.
<b>Culturally responsive approach</b>	Draws upon learners' cultural,	Facilitates communication; reduces learning	Social distance between teacher and learner;

	linguistic, and lived experience as an educational resource; broadens access to learning practices; fosters a sense of belonging within the learning community.	barriers; strengthens learners' trust; increases initiative and participation; prevents deficit-based interpretations.	reduced engagement; risk of marginalisation; misunderstandings arising from divergent cultural expectations.
<b>Ecological approach</b>	Conceptualises learning as an interaction between the learner and a multi-layered educational environment; enhances the resilience of academic participation; aligns individual experience with the learning context.	Provides tools for fine-tuning the educational environment (scheduling, activity formats, inclusion of external contexts); increases the teacher's capacity to sustain learners' motivation and attention in changing conditions.	Mismatch between environmental demands and learners' capacities; increased academic stress; fragmented participation; reduced stability of academic trajectories and systemic connections.

The comparative overview illustrates variation in the functional orientation of the examined pedagogical approaches in relation to participatory stability. Distinct patterns emerge in how learning conditions are structured to mediate environmental demands and individual responsiveness. The data indicate differentiated modes of instructional regulation across adaptive contexts, reflecting alternative pathways for sustaining learner

participation. This multidimensional comparison elucidates context-dependent variations in pedagogical mechanisms across diverse educational environments.

**Conclusion.** According to the theoretical analysis presented, it was identified that vulnerable learners require broad and multidimensional pedagogical solutions. Each of the examined approaches reveals distinct mechanisms that stimulate participation and reduce the stress associated with entering a changing educational environment. Trauma-informed pedagogy ensures emotionally stable engagement. Culturally responsive teaching transforms learners' prior experience into an educational resource, expanding their access to academic practices. The ecological model emphasises the systemic nature of adaptation and the importance of balanced interaction across multiple contextual levels.

The comparative analysis also demonstrated that the approaches do not contradict one another but rather complement each other, particularly within the context of a diverse and variable society. The integration of these approaches enhances the stability of academic participation and reduces the risks associated with educational transitions. However, a crucial element is the professional competence of the teacher, which contributes to creating a supportive environment that ensures sustained inclusion.

The study highlights the need for coordinated pedagogical strategies that move beyond deficit-based interpretations. Such strategies strengthen learners' autonomy, increase their resilience, and broaden opportunities for meaningful participation.

**Future research.** The theoretical synthesis presented in this work establishes a foundation for further research aimed at developing comprehensive models of educational support for learners with heightened vulnerability.

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