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TEACHING IN CONDITIONS OF PROLONGED STRESS: FROM SURVIVAL TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The article examines the problem of organizing the educational process under conditions of prolonged stress caused by armed conflict and chronic social instability. The neurophysiological mechanisms of stress impact on the cognitive functions of educational process participants are analyzed. The concept of the teacher's dual burden in crisis conditions is substantiated, along with the necessity of developing self-regulatory competencies as a fundamental condition for effective teaching. Practical approaches to integrating psychological stabilization elements into the learning process are proposed, drawing on Israeli trauma-informed education experience (MAASE and BASIC PH protocols). The concept of continuity restoration is revealed as a key pedagogical task in crisis conditions.

Keywords: prolonged stress; pedagogical activity; trauma-informed approach; self-regulation; stabilization; crisis education; continuity.

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ВИКЛАДАННЯ В УМОВАХ ПРОЛОНГОВАНОГО СТРЕСУ: ВІД ВИЖИВАННЯ ДО ЕФЕКТИВНОГО НАВЧАННЯ

У статті досліджується проблема організації освітнього процесу в умовах пролонгованого стресу, спричиненого збройним конфліктом та хронічною соціальною нестабільністю. Аналізуються нейрофізіологічні механізми впливу стресу на когнітивні функції учасників навчального процесу, що вимагає від педагога розуміння відповідних механізмів. Зокрема наголошується на тому, що навчання стає можливим лише тоді, коли нервова система здатна навчатися.

У статті обґрунтовано концепцію подвійного навантаження педагога у кризових умовах та необхідність формування саморегуляторних компетентностей як базової умови ефективності викладацької діяльності.

Запропоновано практичні підходи до інтеграції елементів психологічної стабілізації в навчальний процес на основі ізраїльського досвіду травмоінформованого навчання. Так, розкрито алгоритм застосування протоколу MAASE для швидкої стабілізації емоційного стану та моделі BASIC Ph, яка дозволяє ідентифікувати індивідуальні ресурси стійкості (когнітивні, емоційні, соціальні, фізіологічні, творчі тощо) і вчителя, і учня.

Розкрито поняття відновлення безперервності як ключового завдання педагога в умовах кризи.

На основі практичних принципів травма-інформованого навчання запропоновано модель переходу від «педагогіки виживання», орієнтованої на мінімальне

збереження функціонування, до «ефективного навчання», що базується на створенні безпечного простору, гнучкості та зміцненні міжособистісних зв'язків. Наведено порівняння традиційної і кризової моделей викладання.

Підкреслюється неминуча трансформація ролі педагога в кризових умовах. Зазначено, що ефективний педагог в умовах кризи – це передусім регулятор стану, носій стабільності та провідник безперервності, і лише після цього – джерело знань.

Ключові слова: пролонгований стрес; педагогічна діяльність; травмоінформований підхід; саморегуляція; стабілізація; освіта в умовах кризи; безперервність.

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Problem statement in general form

The modern educational process in Ukraine increasingly takes place in conditions of prolonged stress – war, uncertainty, losses and chronic tension. In such conditions, the teacher ceases to be only a carrier of knowledge: he becomes simultaneously a conductor of stability, a regulator of the emotional field of the classroom and a carrier of a sense of «normality» for students.

The above requires a rethinking of the approach to teaching: from the transfer of knowledge – to the creation of conditions in which learning becomes possible in general.

The relevance of the study is due to the insufficient development of pedagogical approaches to learning in conditions of armed conflict in the Ukrainian educational space, as well as the need to adapt international experience – in particular Israeli – to domestic realities.

Analysis of recent research or publications

The modern scientific discourse regarding education under prolonged stress demonstrates a transition from emergency response to the formation of systemic resilience at all levels of education. Analysis of international experiences, particularly from Ukraine and Israel, highlights a radical shift in priorities where a «pedagogy of care» and emotional support have become primary instructional goals. For instance, Y. Lavrysh, I. Lytovchenko, V. Lukianenko, and T. Golub analyze the rapid adaptation of Ukrainian educators to the full-scale invasion, emphasizing how emotional support has superseded traditional academic metrics as a primary objective [8].

This shift toward resilience is deeply rooted in the psychological state of the educator. In their study, M. Paller and E. Quirap investigated the positive correlation between an educator's belief in their professional capabilities and their capacity to bounce back from workplace stressors [11]. Furthermore, R. Collie and A. Martin examine the longitudinal trajectory of teacher well-being across a school term, discovering a significant decline in vitality and professional growth as the term progresses. Their modeling reveals that while a strong sense of relatedness with students is vital, those who experience the sharpest drops in these interpersonal bonds suffer the most severe declines in overall well-being [2].

A. Zarytska, O. Shapovalova, D. Puzikov, I. Zubrytskyi, and A. Karnaukhova analyze the critical state of teacher resilience in wartime, revealing that while 70% of educators face high emotional exhaustion, targeted interventions like psychosocial programs significantly reduce anxiety and boost professional confidence. They conclude that building teacher resilience is a systemic necessity that must be formally integrated into national educational policies to ensure long-term stability [16].

Technological and managerial adaptations play an equally pivotal role in maintaining educational continuity. The study by S. Londar, O. Bosenko, and I. Gaiduk analyzes the managerial strategies and digital interventions that have sustained the operational resilience of Ukraine's education system, emphasizing the role of AI-driven analytics and cloud-based platforms. By evaluating these empirical outcomes, their research offers a repository of best practices and scalable contingency frameworks to address structural vulnerabilities within European Union educational infrastructures facing systemic volatility [9].

P. Kowitartawatee and W. Limphaibool empirically demonstrate that integrating Eastern and Western mindfulness perspectives significantly enhances teacher resilience through novelty seeking and production, providing a robust psychological framework to maintain professional purpose despite global crises [5].

However, structural and financial challenges remain significant hurdles. O. Kuklin, N. Azmuk, and I. Dernova conceptualize and assess the resilience of the national higher education system, demonstrating that while the system maintains structural integrity during wartime, current financial resources are insufficient for long-term sustainability. They propose a systematic framework for post-war reform focused on strengthening resilience through three core factors of the educational ecosystem [6]. Similarly, H. Bondarenko surveys the most acute challenges since the 2022 invasion, highlighting a fundamental shift where educational quality has transitioned from a state responsibility to a personal burden for parents and

self-disciplined students. Despite systemic issues such as severe funding shortages and infrastructure disruptions, she emphasizes the heroic persistence of educators and the necessity of international efforts for recovery [1].

Ultimately, the successful transition from survival to effective learning requires a comprehensive approach. International support programs have already demonstrated the effectiveness of fostering «resilience hubs» within schools to ensure learning continuity despite ongoing security threats [14]. This holistic strategy must integrate technological innovation with deep psychological support and the development of resilience among all stakeholders to sustain the educational process in an increasingly volatile world.

The purpose of this article is to systematize existing approaches to organizing the educational process in conditions of prolonged stress and to offer a practical model for the pedagogical community.

Presentation of the main research material with full justification of the obtained scientific results

Stress as a physiological reality of learning

Prolonged stress affects not only the emotional state, but also directly the cognitive functions of participants in the educational process. The key manifestations of this impact include: decreased concentration, deterioration of working memory, weakening of analytical abilities, increased impulsivity or, conversely, inhibition of reactions.

These changes are associated with the activation of the body's survival systems. In a state of threat, the brain goes into the «reaction» mode (fight-flight-freeze), suppressing the functions of the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for planning, critical thinking and assimilation of new material [12; 15]. According to the concept of trauma-informed approach, such reactions are «normal reactions to abnormal circumstances» [4] and not signs of psychopathology, which is fundamentally important for pedagogical practice.

Conclusion: ignoring the physiological mechanisms of stress makes teaching ineffective regardless of the quality of methodological support.

Double load of the teacher

A teacher in crisis conditions is in a fundamentally different position compared to a standard pedagogical situation: he is simultaneously a person who himself experiences stress and a person who supports others. This combination of roles creates a double psychophysiological load.

Among the main consequences of this phenomenon are: emotional exhaustion (burnout), reduced teaching efficiency, as well as secondary traumatic stress – a condition that arises as a result of constant contact with someone else's trauma [3]. Therefore, the key task of a modern teacher is not to «hold on» through willpower, but to systematically master self-regulation skills.

Self-regulation as a basic pedagogical competence

Effective teaching in stressful conditions is impossible without developed self-regulation skills. This is confirmed by both neurobiological research [13] and the practice of working in armed conflict zones.

One of the basic self-regulation tools tested in the practice of Israeli education is the «4 Elements» protocol, which provides for four levels of intervention [10]:

- 1) Air – regulation of breathing as a primary tool for calming the nervous system;
- 2) Water – activation of bodily sensations through contact with temperature stimuli;
- 3) Earth – working with muscle tension through grounding and physical exercises;
- 4) Fire – restoration of energy and directing it into action.

These techniques allow to reduce physiological arousal, restore a sense of control over the body and restore the ability to cognitive activity. It is fundamentally important: self-regulation is not a «pause from work», but a prerequisite for the effectiveness of the work itself.

Integration of stabilization protocols into the educational process

In conditions of crisis, it is not enough to teach only the subject. It is necessary to integrate elements of psychological stabilization directly into the structure of educational activities. Let us consider the main models of such integration.

MAASE Protocol

The protocol of primary emotional support, developed in the system of the Israeli psychological assistance service by Dr. Moshe Farhi, includes the following components: establishing contact, asking guiding questions, organizing activities and restoring the chronological sequence of events [10].

In a pedagogical context, the use of this protocol allows: to reduce students' disorientation at the beginning of the lesson, to restore a sense of control and predictability, and to activate thought processes through structuring experience.

BASIC PH Model

The model, developed by Prof. Mooli Lahad, describes six channels of stress management: Belief (beliefs and values), Affect (emotions), Social

(social support), Imagination (imagination), Cognition (thinking), Physiology (physiology). The acronym BASIC PH defines the main «bridges» between a person and a stressful situation [7].

In the educational process, this model involves the use of different channels of influence: logical-analytical, emotional, interactive – social, channel of imagination – creativity, channel of faith and convictions, and bodily. A teacher who consciously varies the channels of material delivery increases the accessibility of learning for students with different types of stress reactions.

Restoring continuity as a pedagogical task

The key idea of the trauma-informed approach is that stress destroys the sense of «life as a process». Researchers identify several levels of this continuity, the disruption of which is characteristic of crisis conditions:

- cognitive continuity – a stable understanding of the world picture;
 - functional continuity – the preservation of social roles;
 - social continuity – maintaining meaningful connections;
 - emotional continuity – access to one’s own experiences;
 - psychophysiological continuity – a sense of bodily stability
- [10].

The task of a teacher in a crisis is not only to teach, but also to systematically support the student in returning to the state of «I am alive and functioning». This is the basic dimension of trauma-informed learning.

Practical principles of trauma-informed teaching

Based on the analysis of Israeli experience and theoretical material, five key principles of organizing the educational process in stress conditions can be identified:

- normalization: the teacher directly informs students that their reactions are normal («You are fine – this is a normal reaction»);
- legitimization: creating conditions in the learning space where the student can feel and express different emotional states;
- simplicity and structure: short, clear instructions; regular repetition of key points; predictable structure of the lesson;
- activation: engaging students through micro-actions, simple tasks, physical activity – in order to overcome the state of freezing;
- contact: consciously maintaining visual, verbal and emotional contact as a tool for regulating the student’s nervous system.

Transformation of the role of the educator in crisis conditions

The analysis of the considered approaches allows us to record a systemic shift in the understanding of the role of the educator. Table 1

summarizes the key differences between the traditional and crisis models of teaching.

Table 1

Comparative characteristics of teaching models

Traditional model	Crisis model
Knowledge transfer	Creating conditions for learning
Success control	Functioning support
Assessment	Regulation of the state
Provision of information	Stabilization
Subject competence	Regulatory competence

Conclusions and prospects for further research

Teaching in conditions of prolonged stress is not just an adaptation of pedagogical methods, but also a fundamental change in the role of the teacher. The analysis allows us to formulate the following conclusions:

- prolonged stress has a direct neurophysiological impact on all participants in the educational process, which requires the teacher to understand the relevant mechanisms;
- the double load of the teacher in crisis conditions necessitates the priority development of self-regulatory competencies;
- Israeli experience (MAASE, BASIC PH protocols) offers systematic and proven tools for integrating psychological stabilization into the educational process;
- an effective teacher in a crisis is first and foremost a regulator of the state, a carrier of stability and a conductor of continuity, and only then a source of knowledge.

Learning becomes possible only when the nervous system is capable of learning. Therefore, in conditions of stress, we first restore a person – and only then teach.

Future research should focus on the longitudinal monitoring of neurophysiological impacts on learning, alongside the empirical evaluation of cross-cultural adaptations for stabilization protocols like MAASE and BASIC Ph. There is a critical need to develop specialized teacher training curricula that prioritize self-regulatory and trauma-informed competencies over traditional pedagogy to prevent secondary traumatic stress. Additionally, further inquiry should explore the integration of AI-driven tools for real-time emotional monitoring and the role of institutional support systems in sustaining the psychological health of the educational ecosystem during prolonged crises.

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