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## Process of adaptation of first-year students to study at university as pedagogical phenomenon: structure and characteristics

### Процесс адаптации студентов младших курсов к обучению в вузе как педагогическое явление: структура и характеристики

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#### Abstract

The article is devoted to the study and analysis of the process of adaptation of first-year students to studying at a university as a pedagogical phenomenon. In the process of developing the personality of a future specialist, a significant role is played by the initial stage of studying at a university. Its complexity lies in restructuring the whole system of value-cognitive orientation of the student's personality, developing new methods of cognitive activity and forming certain types of interpersonal relationships. The main characteristic of this stage is the process of students' adaptation to university education. The aim of the paper is to develop scientific ideas about the nature, structure, and characteristics of students' adaptation to the educational process in a university. The article considers scientific works on the problem under study, reveals different approaches of researches to adaptation. Based on the analysis of scientific literature and experience, the author defines the terms "adaptation", "the process of adaptation", "adaptedness". The comparative analysis of the terms "adjustment" and "adaptation", "imitation" and "adaptation", "socialization" and "adaptation" is carried out. Special attention is also given to the significant role of education for the process of adaptation and socialization. The structure of the process of students' adaptation to studying at a university including types, phases, and forms of adaptation is thoroughly investigated and described in the article. Based on the results of students' recitation the paper presents the list of the most common difficulties in the process of adaptation of first-year students in order of their significance.

**Key Words:** adaptation, adaptedness, first-year students, university education.

#### Аннотация

Статья посвящена изучению и анализу процесса адаптации студентов первого курса к обучению в вузе как педагогическому феномену. В процессе развития личности будущего специалиста значительную роль играет начальный этап обучения в вузе. Его сложность заключается в перестройке всей системы ценностно-познавательной ориентации личности студента, разработке новых методов познавательной деятельности и формировании определенных типов межличностных отношений. Основной характеристикой этого этапа является процесс адаптации студентов к обучению в вузе. Цель статьи заключается в развитии научных представлений о сущности, структуре и особенностях адаптации студентов к учебному процессу в вузе. В статье рассматриваются научные труды по изучаемой проблеме, раскрываются различные подходы к исследованию адаптации. На основе анализа научной литературы и опыта автор уточняет такие понятия как «адаптация», «процесс адаптации», «адаптивность». Проведен сравнительный анализ понятий «приспособление» и «адаптация», «имитация» и «адаптация», «социализация» и «адаптация». Особое внимание также уделяется важной роли обучения в процессе адаптации и социализации. Структура процесса адаптации студентов к обучению в университете, включая типы, фазы и формы адаптации, подробно изучена и описана в статье. Представлен список наиболее распространенных трудностей в процессе адаптации первокурсников в порядке их значимости.

**Ключевые слова:** адаптация, адаптивность, студенты первого курса, высшее образование.

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## Introduction

At the present stage of the development of Russian society, characterized by the accumulation of new knowledge in various fields of science, the improvement of production processes and the rapid informatization of society, an important role is given to higher education. It is no secret that the dynamism of the development of modern society puts a person in conditions when it is necessary not only to adapt to society but also to orient oneself, make decisions, realizing one's inner potential in the surrounding reality (Gushchina, 2002).

In the process of developing the personality of a future specialist, a special role is played by the initial stage of study at a university. Its complexity lies in the restructuring of the entire system of value-cognitive orientation of the student's personality, the development of new methods of cognitive activity and the formation of certain types and forms of interpersonal relationships. The main characteristic of this stage is the process of adapting students to university education. Effective adaptation in many respects determines the motivation, orientation, and nature of the educational activities of students in advanced courses, psychological comfort, moral satisfaction with oneself and study at the university.

Practical experience at the university shows that not all students can quickly, successfully and independently join the educational process and, therefore, cope with the elements of novelty, get rid of negative perception of reality and feel the internal motivation for professional growth. That is why the problem of adaptation is considered by the author as urgent, requiring comprehensive study and analysis.

Among a great number of problems in higher education, a set of issues related to the difficulties of the first year of study is particularly distinguished.

## Theoretical framework

The problem of students' adaptation to educational activities at the university has been developed at different times and in various aspects: sociological, psychological, physiological, and pedagogical. In Russian science, the problem of students' adaptation was developed, first of all, within the studies of social adaptation (I.A. Miloslavova (1973), P.A. Prosetskiy (1980), N.E. Shafazhinskaya (1981)). From the standpoint of age-related features, it

was reflected in the works of M.I. Dyachenko, L.A. Kandybovich (1993), I.A. Zimnyaya (1989). Some issues concerning the structure of adaptation are revealed in the works of R.R. Biebrich (1990), L.K. Grishanov, V.D. Tsurcan (1990). In psychological and pedagogical research, there is a clear tendency to develop effective ways of successful adaptation of students to university education through the study of factors of its effectiveness (M.B. Aristides (1988), V.V. Lagerev (1991), L.N. Zhmyrikov (1989)), the influence of the nature of pedagogical communication between the teacher and the study group (A.D. Erdineev (1992), A.A. Temerbekova (2005)), the content of the main psychological mechanisms of students' adaptation (M.S. Yanitsky (1995), G.A. Gushchina (2002), N.G. Ershova (1998)).

## Methodology

In the given article modern methodology of scientific research, including a set of theoretical and empiric research methods, is used. For the successful completion of the research, analysis and synthesis of the ideas and the results of pedagogical, sociological and psychological research on the studied problem were employed. The main theoretical research methods were retrospective analysis, review of the literature and comparative analysis of the views of famous Russian scientists-teachers on the problem. Different resources were used, such as scientific and popular articles, Internet resources, dictionaries. The study and analysis of scientific sources and methodological literature made it possible to summarize ideas on different approaches to defining the terms "adaptation", "the process of adaptation", "adaptedness". The comparative analysis of the terms "adjustment" and "adaptation", "imitation" and "adaptation", "socialization" and "adaptation" was carried out to reveal the similarities and differences of these terms and thus to specify and define more exactly the process of adaptation of first-year students to studying at a university. The methods of observation, questioning, statistical calculations were used in studying the reasons or factors that impede the process of adaptation of first-year students. All of them, when solving a scientific problem, were employed as a whole with regard to the theme, aim, and focus of the research.

## Results and discussion

Since the problem of adaptation is considered at various levels, the concept of “adaptation” does not have a single definition.

The term "adaptation" itself (from the Latin. adapto - adapt) first appeared in physiology and was used initially in the biological sciences. It was introduced into scientific use by the German physiologist G. Aubert to characterize the phenomenon of adaptation of sensitive organs (hearing and eyesight) to the effects of relevant stimuli. In biology, the French zoologist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, the founder of the organism-centric theory of evolution, began to develop the adaptation problem. He tried to explain the emergence of certain types of living creatures and their evolution precisely by adaptive changes in individual organisms. Subsequently, in the natural sciences, adaptation was understood as the whole “...totality of the reactions of a living system supporting its integrity and functional stability under changing environmental conditions” (The Russian Pedagogical Encyclopedia, 1993, 10).

Therefore, within the natural sciences, two types of adaptation can be distinguished: biological and physiological. Biological adaptation is defined as the morphophysiological adaptation of animals and plants to specific conditions of existence in the external environment. Physiological adaptation is understood as a set of physiological reactions that underlie the body's adaptation to changes in environmental conditions.

In Russian Encyclopedic Dictionary, adaptation is interpreted as 1) adaptation of the body and body functions, its organs and cells to environmental conditions; 2) the process of development of the device itself (Russian Encyclopedic Dictionary, 2003, 21).

In the pedagogical encyclopedic dictionary, adaptation is understood as “adaptation of the organism to the conditions of existence. There are biological, physiological and socio-psychological adaptations. Socio-psychological adaptation is the adaptation of the individual to the social environment (Pedagogical Encyclopedic Dictionary, 2003, 11-12).

In this paper, the terms “adjustment” and “adaptation” are used as synonyms. However, the author is familiar with the point of view of T. Shibutani, a representative of the interactionist direction in social psychology, who believes that

“adjustment” refers to how the body adapts to the requirements of specific situations, and “adaptation” refers to more stable solutions. This is a well-organized way to deal with typical problems, a technique that crystallizes through a series of devices” (Shibutani, 1999, 81).

In the given article the term “adaptation” is considered as a phenomenon of adaptation of living organisms to environmental conditions (in the broad sense) and as a process in which a person actively interacts with the environment (in the narrow sense) (P.A. Prosetskiy, B. M. Petrov, V.A. Semichenko, N.E. Shafazhinskaya (1982)). In the first case, adaptation is considered as the phenomenon of adaptation of an organism at the plant or animal level to new environmental conditions (Brief Dictionary of Foreign Words, 1978, 5), the essence of the adaptation process changes with respect to a person: for a person, adaptation will be successful only if he interacts with the environment, creatively organizes his behavior and activities in new conditions.

According to scientists (M.V. Sidorova (1998), G.A. Gushchina (2002), E.Yu. Orekhova (2007)) the activity of human interaction with the environment and, therefore, the success of adaptation is determined by the following factors:

1. training processes (experience in solving identical situations);
2. functional state of the body (health);
3. mental state of the individual (positive emotions, motivation of actions, level of self-awareness and self-regulation, etc.);
4. moral state of the individual (the presence and reproduction of social norms, attitudes, values, etc.) (Sidorova, 1998; Gushchina, 2002).

In this study, adaptation as a pedagogical phenomenon is viewed as a process of adapting to new environmental conditions, in which a person actively interacts with the environment and creatively organizes his lifestyle, behavior, and activities. When considering adaptation as an active and creative process of adaptation, it is necessary, in the opinion of the author, to correlate adaptation and imitation.

In the history of pedagogical thought, imitation was studied by many famous scientists and representatives of various schools of thought. So, in the middle of the XIX century the law of universal and omnipotent repetition of Gabriel Tarde on imitation was widespread (Tarde, 2012). Tarde, according to researcher A.I. Kochetov argued that history is a repetition, and society is

an association for social imitation (Kochetov, 1971, 81).

According to psychologists, imitation, as well as adaptation, is one of the forms of development of an individual, which is also based on the ability of a living system to adapt to environmental conditions, to a way of life (Bozhovich, 1968).

An interesting work by Karl Gross, dedicated to the spiritual development of a child, in which the author, defines one of the imitation traits - attraction to the attractive. Unfortunately, Gross, like Tarde, understands imitation as repetition and thus does not avoid a general shortcoming - one-sidedness, when considering the essence, types, and forms of imitation. In the process of imitation, the individual reproduces the ideal, connecting himself with it, but at the same time, he remains himself, significantly different from the object of imitation. A. I. Kochetov in his work "The Child as a Subject of Education" indicates the main feature of imitation - a high saturation of the individual's actions with consciousness, independence, and activity (Kochetov, 1971, 81). Therefore, imitation is a process of adaptation to the external environment through the assimilation of another's experience and its conscious creative use in one's experience. In this, in our opinion, is the meaning of imitation. Having examined the concepts of "adaptation" and "imitation," it can be concluded that, firstly, adaptation, like imitation, is a process of adaptation to the surrounding reality; secondly, adaptation, like imitation, is characterized by a creative approach that ensures the activity of the individual.

In this research adaptation is defined as a process of adaptation of an individual to the external environment, thus, it is especially important for this study to consider adaptation in the social aspect.

The concept of "social adaptation" in Russia has been widely used since the mid-60-es of the XX century. E.A. Klimov (1967), I.A. Miloslavova (1973), D.A. Andreeva (1973) studied this problem theoretically. In their works, the authors emphasize that the process of simple adaptation is replaced in most cases by active regulating the process of interaction with the environment. D.A. Andreeva defines adaptation as the process of developing, as far as possible, the optimal mode of purposeful functioning of a person, i.e., bringing it under the specific conditions of time and place to a state where all energy, all physical and spiritual forces of a person are directed and spent on fulfilling its main tasks (Andreeva,

1973). E.A. Klimov (1967), L.N. Zhmyrikov (1989), A.P. Kormilitsyn (1997) consider adaptation in a sociological understanding as a familiarization of a person with certain types of activity that occurs in a given social environment. Adaptation is nothing but the assimilation by a person of the social experience of society as a whole and of the environment to which it belongs. I.A. Aliverdieva (1982) understands adaptation as a person's ability to adapt to various environmental requirements (both social and physical), without a sense of internal discomfort and without conflict with the environment.

According to V.E. Kadochkina (1980), in the concept of social adaptation, two sides can be distinguished. As a living organism, a person in new climatic conditions performs work that requires certain physical effort or speed, duration. He must get used to these conditions, i.e. functional changes occur in the body, ensuring its effective work in new conditions. In this sense, adaptation in humans and animals has much in common, but there is also a fundamental difference: a man is a personality who has certain orientation, social experience, individual characteristics, and various opportunities to influence actively the natural and social environment. As M.V. Yakovleva (2000) rightly notes, a person is not only an object that changes himself under the influence of new living conditions but also a subject who consciously enters into complex relationships with members of a new team, actively, individually, peculiarly mastering new types and forms of work. Thus, a person not only adapts but also modifies what affects him.

In other words, human adaptation has a two-sided character: on the one hand, it includes changes in the physiological and social functions necessary to satisfy the requirements of the environment; on the other hand, the environment itself changes to meet the requirements of the body. A.N. Leontiev (1977) defined the concept of adaptation of people to the conditions of the social environment as follows: "when we talk about the social environment in which a person lives, then we put in this concept a different meaning than that which it has in biology. A person not only adapts to the nature surrounding him but, unlike animals, mediates, regulates and controls this process with his activity" (Leontiev, 1977, 309). Thus, human adaptation is not an adaptive process in the biological meaning of this term (Satosyan, 1973). Human adaptation to the conditions of existence is much more complicated, deeper, it has greater flexibility,

ingenuity. A person, according to M.V. Yakovleva (2000), is characterized by an exceptional ability to vary his behavior with changing conditions. In addition, with the help of consciousness, a person purposefully controls and regulates the process of his adaptation to social reality. A person cannot rely on instinctive adaptation, but must consciously seek his own path in the world, experience it emotionally, and generate his own environment. Moreover, each person who has his own type of nervous system, unique life experience, is characterized by individual adaptive mechanisms, his own assessments of this situation, his own type of adaptation.

I.A. Miloslavova (1973) draws attention to changes in the personality structure in the process of social adaptation and cites the theory of “cognitive dissonance” by the American sociologist Festinger, who believes that there is a certain balance between the new information and previous ideas. The correspondence between a social signal and previous ideas about the subject causes the perceiver to have “psychological comfort” or “cognitive consonance”, which brings out a large number of positive emotions in the mood and maintains a general balanced tone of mood and attitude. But, if a person receives information from outside that does not correspond to his views, beliefs, and attitudes, then a preponderance of negative emotions in the mood is created that violates his internal balance. This causes a feeling of insecurity, dissatisfaction with oneself, i.e. a state of “psychological discomfort” or “cognitive dissonance”. A person has a need for adaptation aimed at eliminating the conflict, the inconsistency of internal motives and the external situation. As a generalization of the foregoing, let us cite the point of view according to which social adaptation is not just an adaptation of an individual to new conditions that does not affect internal properties, his personality characteristics, but a complex contradictory process that includes a moment of activity on the part of the personality and

accompanied by certain shifts in its structure (Miloslavova, 1973).

I.A. Zimnyaya (1989) defines adaptation as an active, purposeful, transformative process and emphasizes that, firstly, the process of human adaptation is carried out on the basis of consciousness and self-awareness as factors in which a person understands the objective world and his own being. Secondly, the environment itself in which adaptation is carried out is often the result of a person’s labor activity. Thirdly, a person does not just passively perceive the results of adaptation; he is able to change them systematically and purposefully in accordance with the social conditions of his life. Thus, the complexity of studying social adaptation is due to the fact that two structurally complex systems interact in this process - personality and environment. The social environment creates a person, as well as a person, creates a social environment.

To understand the essence of the process of social adaptation, the question of the interrelation between the concepts of “adaptation” and “socialization” is important. Theoretical analysis of literary sources allowed to distinguish two approaches in the study of the concepts under study. Proponents of the first approach consider adaptation as part of socialization (D.A. Andreeva (1973), I.S. Kon (1979). Adaptation denotes adjustment of a person to a new subject activity for him, and socialization is defined as the individual's assimilation of social experience of a specific system of knowledge, norms, and values that allows him to function as a freeman (Kon, 1979). In the studies of O.I. Zotova (1979), I.K. Kryazheva (1979), on the contrary, it is concluded that socialization of a personality-driven mainly by influence of social environment, is an essential prerequisite for the adaptation of the individual in society and a specific group.

The approaches to defining the essence of the adaptation process are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

Researchers	The concept of the adaptation process	Defining the essence of the adaptation process
D.A. Andreeva	Adaptation is the process of developing, as far as possible, the optimal mode of purposeful functioning of the personality, i.e. bringing it in the specific conditions of time and place to a state where all energy, all physical and spiritual forces of a person are addressed and spent on the fulfillment of its basic tasks.	The process of developing the optimal mode of purposeful functioning of the personality.
T. Shibutani	Adaptation is a well-organized way of dealing with typical problems, a technique that is crystallized through a series of adjustments.	A well-organized way of dealing with typical problems.
I.A. Zimnyaya	Adaptation is an active, focused, transformative and conscious process of adjustment.	A transformative and conscious process of adjustment of an individual to the environment.
I.A. Aliverdieva	Adaptation is a person's ability to adjust to various environmental requirements (both social and physical), without a sense of internal discomfort and without conflict with the environment.	A person's ability to adjust to various environmental requirements.
I.A. Miloslavova	Adaptation is a complex contradictory process, including a moment of activity on the part of the personality and accompanied by certain shifts in its structure.	The process of personality transformation in the course of its active adaptation.
I.S. Kon	Adaptation is adjusting a person to a new subject activity for him.	Adjustment a person to a new subject activity.
P.A. Prosetskiy	Adaptation is a process in which a person actively interacts with the environment. For a person, this active interaction can be successful only with a creative approach to the organization of his behavior and activities in new conditions.	Creative and active process of human interactions with the environment.

The table shows that the essence of the adaptation process includes developing, training and educational aspects and is based on the principles of integrity and purposefulness, is creative and transformative in nature. Indeed, at first sight, these concepts are difficult to distinguish, almost synonymous. For example, what has been said regarding socialization is that, on the one hand, it is the assimilation of the individual's social experience by entering the social environment, the system of social connections; and on the other hand, the process of reproducing a system of social connections by

an individual due to his active activity, active inclusion in the social environment, can be attributed to adaptation, since both the assimilation of social experience and the reproduction of a system of social connections by an individual are present in the process of adaptation. But this does not provide a basis for their identification. This study considers adaptation as a process of active and creative adaptation of an individual to the conditions of social environment, which is part of the general process of socialization.

Studying the content of socialization and the process of adaptation, it was revealed that education is essential for the adaptation of a person and his socialization. In the Russian pedagogical encyclopedia, education is understood as “social, purposeful creation of conditions (material, spiritual, organizational) for human development. Education can be considered both in a broad social and in a narrow sense. In a broad social sense, education is treated as an impact of society on the personality as a whole and is identified with socialization. At the same time, socialization is regarded as a social phenomenon occurring under the spontaneous impact of factors of social being on a person, and education is seen as a process of the influence of socially controlled circumstances and specially created conditions on a person. In social pedagogy, education is not identified but viewed as the socialization of a child’s personality (Mudrik, 1997). In the narrow sense, upbringing is a purposeful activity, aimed to form a system of personality traits, views and beliefs in children or adolescents through education and organization of the life of the fostered. The main way to get education is training. Education is a purposefully organized process of mastering knowledge, skills, and abilities under the guidance of specially trained people (teachers, masters, etc.).

A comparative analysis of the concepts of “socialization” and “upbringing” shows that they influence an individual with the same goal - the full realization of himself in society and thereby constitute the essence of personality formation. Education in a broad sense as a meaningful and purposeful process contributes to the process of human adaptation in society and creates the conditions for its quick and painless adaptation. Education in the narrow sense promotes, in the author’s opinion, the optimal adaptation of students to educational activities at the university, so the purpose of education is not only the acquisition of knowledge, skills but also the formation of the personality of a future specialist. In this study, the process of students' adaptation is considered as a pedagogical phenomenon to the educational process at the university. The process of adaptation to training and education at the university is a manifestation of adaptation as a general, a universal phenomenon and as a process aimed at maintaining relative constancy and stability between the individual and the social environment.

Let’s consider the approaches to determining the essence of the process of adaptation to the university.

According to V.N. Kruglikov (1996), adaptation is the process of student’s adjustment to the conditions of the physical and social learning environment without a sense of internal discomfort and without conflict with it.

L.K. Grishanov and V.D. Tsurcan (1990) noted that adaptation in a university is connected with the inclusion of students, yesterday's school graduates, in new living conditions that go beyond their usual way of life. The concept of "adaptation" is of a specific nature and means, first of all, the adjustment of a personality, personality traits, and qualities to the specific conditions of the university. At the same time, the continuous nature of the adaptation process and its oscillation are noted, since even within one day there is a switch to the most diverse areas: activity, communication, self-awareness. Based on this, L.K. Grishanov, V.D. Tsurcan believe that student’s adaptation should be understood as the process of bringing the basic parameters of his social and personal characteristics into line, in a state of dynamic equilibrium with the new conditions of the university environment through active adaptation and the willful implementation of the acquired norms and values in a specific situation. The authors emphasize the strong-willed and informed nature of this process. In the absence of these conditions, it is not adaptation, but an external adaptation leading to conformal behavior, to false adaptation. This point of view is supported by I.A. Miloslavova (1973), O.I. Zotova and I.K. Kryazheva (1979), who also note that the essence of the adaptation process is to achieve compliance between the subject of activity and the conditions of the adaptation environment.

V.V. Lagerev (1991) defines adaptation as an intensive and dynamic, multilateral and complex process of life activity, during which an individual, on the basis of appropriate adaptive reactions, develops sustainable skills to satisfy the requirements that are imposed on him during training and education in high school. All this leads to the further development of the individual’s self-awareness, the appearance of significant changes in his behavior, attitudes, motivation. Particularly important for our research is the author’s position that the adaptation process is fundamentally individual in nature. The latter determines its intensity, severity, depth of impact on the individual.

According to I.V. Shiryaeva (1980), first-year university courses are very important for students, since here they adapt to a new unusual

atmosphere of the institution, to new conditions of study. The concept of "adaptation" researcher I.V. Shiryayeva connects with overcoming certain difficulties, the effort of the individual to develop a method of behavior that is productive in the new conditions. Based on this, adaptation is considered by the scientist as a change in the student's personality, consisting in the formation of such new styles of communication, cognition and educational activity that ensure the achievement of the goals of the pedagogical system - the university.

According to the definition of N.E. Shafazhinskaya (1981), adaptation to university education is understood as the inclusion of a person in a new social environment, as a result of active interaction when he changes his usual stereotypes and forms new stereotypes of activity in order to achieve maximum success and subjective satisfaction. This is achieved, according to the author, due to the complex internal work, which is aimed at orienting in the new conditions and involves the analysis, synthesis, and processing of new information. The main result of adaptation, according to N.E. Shafazhinskaya is the development of an optimal mode of activity, defined as a system of techniques, methods, skills, etc. formed during adaptation for organizing and successfully completing mental and practical work.

This approach is shared by I.A. Zimnyaya (1989) and A.Ts. Erdineev (1992), who describe the nature of the adaptation process as active, purposeful, mainly controlled by consciousness, rebuilding the subject of activity.

Thus, the analysis of the literature allowed to conclude that in pedagogy different authors consider the essence of the adaptation process from the point of view of various approaches, which have been grouped depending on the value that the researchers put into the concept of the "adaptation" process as follows:

- a) adaptation is considered as a focused process in which the student adapts to new learning conditions (V.N. Kruglikov, L.K. Grishanov, V.D. Tsurcan);
- b) adaptation is used to indicate the relationship of equilibrium (relative harmony), which is established between the personality of the student and the university environment (I.A. Miloslavova, O.I. Zotova, I.K. Kryazheva);

- c) adaptation is understood as the result of this process (V.V. Lagarev, I.V. Shiryayeva, M.V. Deleu).

Based on the foregoing, in determining the essence of the adaptation process, the author of the article thinks that the main actors of the adaptation process (subjects of adaptation) are students who are included in the conditions of a new activity for them in the totality of their age, biological, mental, gender characteristics, interests, stereotypes, social status, behavioral experience and the level of formation of personality qualities, with their past experience, and a university teacher, contributing to the activation process of students' adaptation. In the process of adaptation, it is important for the student to correlate his individual psychological, personal and ethnic characteristics with the character, norms, and requirements of the new social environment and to realize the real possibilities in performing certain tasks that he needs to solve in the conditions of a new activity for him. The teacher's task is to help students overcome the "adaptation barrier".

An "adaptation barrier" is understood by the author as the reaction of the body to adverse external influences, characterized by the gradual adaptation of the individual to a number of new features of phenomena and processes. Scientists distinguish various phases or stages of the adaptation process.

M.S. Yanitsky (1995) distinguishes three phases of the process of adaptation:

- 1) destruction of the old program of maintaining homeostasis (which is understood by the researcher as the constancy of a number of indicators of the internal environment of the body, which is a necessary condition for the life of any biological system). In this case, a rather difficult situation arises when the old program is no longer functioning and the new one has not yet been created or is incomplete;
- 2) formation of a new program for the deployment of regulatory mechanisms, the beginning of the construction of a new structure of homeostatic regulation. When the search for the optimal program ends, the last phase of the adaptation process begins;
- 3) stable adaptation, characterized by stabilization of adaptation indicators, including performance indicators,



which are set at a new, more optimal level.

G.A. Gushchina (2002) considers the following phases of adaptation:

- 1 phase of primary decompensation;
- 2 phase of partial compensation;
- 3 phase of full compensation.

The considered phases of the process of adaptation, in our opinion, are synonymous and can be regarded as interchangeable. G.A. Gushchina (2002) points out the fact that in many cases three phases of adaptation proceed in parallel, partially overlapping each other. However, this distinguishing allows to understand the dynamics of adaptation better, to facilitate this process for students as much as possible.

According to B.V. Bokut (1989), the difficulties experienced by first-year students in connection with the transition to new forms and methods of academic work are caused not by subjective reasons, but quite natural. Their scientific explanation is based on the physiological doctrine of higher nervous activity, and, in particular, on the ideas about the dynamic stereotype of I.P. Pavlov, who explained that countless stimuli (both external and internal) entering the cerebral hemispheres, cause certain processes in the latter (Pavlov, 2014). These processes occurring at different points of the brain cortex meet, collide and interact, and must, in the end, be systematized, balanced. As a result, a dynamic stereotype is developed, which is a system of conditioned reflexes fixed in nervous activity (link). Being formed, such a stereotype is extremely important for the success of educational activities. By causing the automation of acquired training abilities and skills, it contributes to the best adjustment of the body to the work that is being done, greatly facilitates it and makes it more productive.

Taking into consideration the features of developing a dynamic stereotype, it is much easier to form a solid system of knowledge and skills than to rebuild an existing one. Under these conditions, the establishment of a new dynamic stereotype requires, according to I.P. Pavlov, to a large extent, not the development of new as the restructuring of the already existing stereotypes of educational work. Based on the foregoing, the author of this study considers the adaptation process to be objective, since it is based on specific patterns related to the development of a dynamic stereotype, as a result of which all

students are included in the process, regardless of the initial characteristics, personality traits, character, life experience, interests, and aspirations.

According to the researcher E.Yu. Orekhova (2007), the adaptation process is an overall process of adaptation of students to the university, which indicates the requirement of consistency, complexity, and differentiation in its study. First of all, this refers to the structuring of the adaptation process by its components. The requirement of the integrity of the studied process also involves taking into account factors that have a significant impact on its course. Adaptation is a dynamic process that is subject to constant changes under the influence of objective and subjective factors. At the same time, adaptation is fundamentally individual in nature. The latter determines its intensity, severity, depth of impact on the student's personality.

The main specifics of adaptation in the university, according to V.E. Kadochkina (1980), is preparing for the independent creative activity of a young specialist.

In this study, the process of adaptation to educational activities at a university is considered as an objective, dynamic, overall and creative process of establishing a correspondence between existing and required levels of training, communication styles, and modes of activity in the new conditions of study at a university. The optimal process of adaptation is due to the interconnection of the main components, together constituting the structure of adaptation to study at a university.

The structure (from lat. *Structura* - structure, location, order) is usually understood as "a set of stable connections of an object, ensuring its integrity and identity to itself, that is, the preservation of the basic properties under various external and internal changes" (Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1983, 567). The Encyclopedic Dictionary gives the following definition of "structure" - "a set of stable connections of an object, ensuring its integrity and identity to itself, i.e. preservation of basic properties under various external and internal changes" (The Russian Encyclopedic Dictionary, 2003, 357).

The problem of determining the structure of the adaptation process was interesting to many scientists since only a clear presentation of it makes it possible to determine the effective ways and conditions for the effective adaptation of

each student in new conditions of study at the university. The need to highlight the adaptation structure, according to M.V. Yakovleva (2000), is also dictated by the need to create among students and teachers an idea of the integrity of the adaptation process, interconnection and interdependence of the components under consideration.

As mentioned above, the problem of determining the structure of adaptation has been developed sufficiently theoretically and practically.

According to the point of view of S.A. Gaponova (1994), the structure of the adaptation process is a complex of adaptive reactions of students to new situations for them:

- 1) organization of the educational process;
- 2) forms of academic work;
- 3) educational and methodological requirements;
- 4) conditions for independent work;
- 5) methods of work with educational and reference books;
- 6) ways to control independent work;
- 7) educational requirements and activities;
- 8) relationships in the study group;
- 9) rights, duties, and responsibilities.

L.K. Grishanov and V.D. Tsurcan (1990), based on the most important areas of personality formation, determine the structure of the students' adaptation process as:

- 1) new attitude to the profession;
- 2) development of new training standards, grades, methods, and techniques of independent work and other requirements; adaptation to a new type of teaching staff, its customs, and traditions;
- 3) training in new types of scientific activity, students' scientific research NIRS and educational and research work of students;
- 4) adaptation to new living conditions in student dormitories, new models of "student" culture, new forms of using free time. The listed elements, as the authors note, are closely interrelated.

I.V. Shiryeva (1980) connects the structure of the adaptation process with overcoming certain difficulties, with an individual's effort to develop a mode of behavior that is productive in the new conditions. The scientist considers that a new organization of control, associated with a large amount of independent work, requiring a new, more

rational organization of mental work is the main difficulty for first-year students.

V.V. Lagerev (1991) considers the following main components of the adaptation process: socio-psychological, psychological and activity component.

The socio-psychological component reflects a change in the social role of the student, the circle and content of his communication, the adjustment of needs and value systems, the further formation of the worldview and social attitudes, the development of consciousness, self-awareness and self-esteem; the need for more flexible regulation of his behavior, the emergence of a need for self-esteem in the emerging team and the desire to actively influence its life; the assimilation of traditions and norms prevailing in the university, as well as meeting the nature of the chosen profession.

The psychological component reflects the restructuring of the student's thinking and speech in relation to the conditions of vocational training; a sharp increase in the role of the functions of attention, memory, visual perception; testing and training the will, increasing emotional stress; realization of inclinations and abilities; fixing specific character traits.

The activity component reflects the adaptation of students to new psychophysiological loads, the rhythm of life, methods and forms of work arising from the goals and objectives of training, the inevitability of familiarization with intense educational work for the acquisition of knowledge, skills; necessary manifestations of life position and civic qualities. It is in an activity that includes, first of all, the student's academic work, all personality traits, its characteristic features, for example, industriousness, patience, perseverance (Lagerev, 1990).

The forms of the adaptation process are considered in the study of G.A. Gushchina (2002). The author identifies three forms of social adaptation: disadaptation, passive and active adaptation, which, in author's opinion, also reflect the nature of adaptation to educational activities at the university and living conditions.

1. Disadaptation is characterized by the non-differentiation of goals and activities of a person, narrowing of his circle of communication and problems to be solved, rejection of the norms and values of the new social environment, and sometimes opposition to them.

2. Passive adaptation assumes that an individual accepts norms and values on the principle of "I am like everyone else", but does not seek to change anything, even if he has such an opportunity. With passive adaptation, the individual sets himself a number of simple goals and performs uncomplicated activities. However, the circle of communication and the volume of tasks to be solved are greater than during disadaptation.
3. Active adaptation, above all, contributes to successful socialization in general. The individual not only accepts the norms and values of the new social environment but on their basis does his activities and relations with people.

A.G. Moroz (1973), based on the concept of the famous teacher A.V. Mudrik, who studies the socialization of personality, writes about three forms of adaptation of first-year students to the conditions of an educational institution:

1. Formal adaptation, concerning the student's cognitive and informational adaptation to the new environment, to the structure of the university, to the content of education in it, to its requirements, to its duties.
2. Public adaptation, relating to the process of internal integration (unification) of groups of first-year students and the integration of these groups with the student environment as a whole;
3. Didactic adaptation, concerning the mastery of former schoolchildren by new forms and methods of educational work.

Researchers P.A. Prosetkiy, B.M. Petrov, V.A. Semichenko, N.E. Shafazhinskaya (1982), L.G. Egorova (1978) distinguish the following types of adaptation:

1. training;
2. professional,
3. personal;
4. cognitive.

Researcher V.N. Kruglikov (1996) singles out two types of adaptation:

1. professional adaptation is adaptation to the nature, content, conditions, and organization of the educational process, the development of independence skills in educational and scientific work;
2. socio-psychological adaptation is student's adaptation to the study group,

the relationship with it, the development of a social style of behavior.

In her dissertation research M.V. Sidorova (1998) considers the following types of adaptation:

1. Service adaptation is bringing individual and group behavior of those who have entered the university in accordance with the requirements of the preparation of a competent specialist, the system of social and professional norms of educational and service activities and its main values.
2. Socio-psychological adaptation involves positive restructuring of the psyche of the individual, the value orientation and the internal position of his personality under the influence of objective factors and pedagogical conditions of the target organization of the educational, cognitive and communicative environment of this educational institution.
3. Professional adaptation includes pedagogical familiarization of a person with a chosen profession on the basis of the development of positive motivation for professional activity.
4. Educational adaptation of the personality involves the active entry and adaptation of the personality to the new system of organization of cognitive activity and new forms of pedagogical control over the results of university education.

Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that the content of the adaptation process can be structured from the standpoint of type systematics. Based on the generally accepted understanding of "type" as part of the whole, preserving its basic properties and having its own distinctive features, we will consider types of adaptation, taking as a basis the approach to considering types of adaptation proposed by V. Aschepkov (1998). He believed that when organizing the adaptation process, the following types of adaptation should be taken into account:

- 1) social;
- 2) individual – psychological;
- 3) didactic;
- 4) professional;
- 5) economic,
- 6) household.

The content of social and economic types of adaptation is determined by the statement that student age is the period of the most active formation of moral and aesthetic feelings, the formation and stabilization of character. The beginning of "economic activity" is connected with this period, it means integration of a person in independent production activity, the beginning of a work biography and the creation of his own family. Young people have the right and participate in the management of state and public affairs, are elected to government bodies. In student years, more independence gradually comes to a person, and with it responsibility for his actions, a more serious attitude to life, he has a desire to establish stable relationships with people, meaningful communication.

The importance of individual - psychological and didactic types is explained by the fact that at this age there is a greater desire for conscious activity, its selectivity, initiative and creative solution of professional tasks, to achieve more distant goals that can have a clearly pronounced individual character. The most important feature of adolescence is a person's awareness of his individuality, uniqueness in the formation of self-consciousness and the formation of the self-image (Zimnyaya, 1989). "Self-image", by I.S. Kon (1979) is a social attitude, the attitude of a person to himself, including three interconnected components: cognitive, emotional and behavioral. The formation of self-awareness actualizes the manifestation of the most important and often conflicting needs of adolescence - in communication, solitude, in achievements, etc. The need for achievement, if it does not find its satisfaction in the student's main educational activity, is naturally shifted to other areas of life - sports, business, social activities or hobbies. But, according to S.D. Smirnov (1995), a person must definitely find for himself the sphere of successful self-affirmation, since the student's favorable position in the environment contributes to the normal development of his personality and, accordingly, the formation of positive motives for educational activities. The success of any activity depends on emotional well-being. According to psychologists (B.G. Ananyev (1989), M.I. Dyachenko (1993), I.S. Kon (1979)), students' emotional sphere comes to a certain balanced state after their rapid development in the teenage period. But often there can be observed some abstract dissatisfaction with oneself and other people, maximalism, the desire for the quickest manifestation of oneself in difficult life situations, without a sufficiently deep assessment of the likely consequences of committed acts,

egocentrism. Young people are very sensitive at this age, proud along with the prevailing self-confidence in their capabilities, which often manifests itself in swagger, negligence, and negativity. With inadequate pedagogical influence, such states can cause destructive tendencies in behavior, but when the energy of such an emotional state is turned over to solve a complex and significant task for a student, this can become an incentive for constructive and fruitful work.

Let's consider each type separately.

Social adaptation includes gaining and preserving a certain social status of a student in a new group, the assimilation of new social norms, customs, traditions, requirements of the group, awareness of their rights and obligations, participation in the public life of the faculty, institute.

Didactic adaptation is associated with the fragile old stereotypes of activity, the formation of new knowledge, skills, habits of adequate behavior, the mobilization of will and energy based on the mastery of students by new forms and methods of educational work, ways of independent work, fundamentally different from school, introducing new types of scientific activities.

Distinguishing individual-psychological adaptation is due to the fact that it is a complex, long, and sometimes acute and painful process due to significant intensification in the field of mental activity. The increased requirements that are imposed on students lead to emotional stress in the regulatory mechanisms of the central nervous system and various body functions, which are caused by the individual psychological characteristics of the individual.

Professional adaptation is associated with the pedagogical introduction of students to their chosen profession on the basis of the formation of positive educational motives and personal qualities of a future specialist (activity, creativity, independence, responsibility, etc.).

Economic adaptation means creating your own family, independence at the disposal of financial resources (scholarship, extra income).

Household adaptation is adaptation to new living conditions in student dormitories, new forms of using free time, lack of parental control.

Researcher E.Yu. Orekhova (2007) singles out more type of adaptation – ethnic adaptation.

Ethnic adaptation is associated with the adaptation of ethnic minority students living in the Russian Federation and characterized by ethnic-differentiating attributes: language, values, and norms, historical memory, ideas about their native land, national character, etc.

The considered types of students' adaptation to study at the university are not isolated, they are interconnected. The objective basis of this relationship is that they describe the adaptation process as a single one, built on the relationship between a student and a university teacher. In this regard, it is necessary to clarify the author's position regarding the leading interactions in the system of relations: student - higher school. The author shares the point of view of M.B. Aristides, who writes that three approaches can be distinguished: adaptive, active and personal-active, the last of which, according to M.B. Aristides, is a mediator of the implementation of equal intersubjective relations in an overall pedagogical process.

The adaptive approach is characterized by a one-way connection between the subject and the object (S - O), the student and the subject of acquisition. The student, in this case, is viewed through the prism of relations to acquired knowledge, is assessed according to the level of professional training, cognitive abilities, i.e. as a knowledge and skills holder. Proponents of this approach defined the personality as an adaptive being and understood the essence of adaptation as the adaptive acceptance by the subject of the values, norms, and requirements of the social environment, which, in essence, denies the active principle in the personality. They interpreted adaptation difficulties as difficulties of intellectual non-compliance with the requirements of higher education and indicated a recipe for overcoming them - through the achievement of subject-disciplinary competence, i.e. mastering new information. Thus, the problem of adaptation in the context of the subject-object approach remained unsolvable, because the difficulties of adaptation acted as an indicator of the student's organically inherent ability or inability to understand and master the objective content of knowledge.

Proponents of the activity approach attribute the difficulties of adaptation to the unpreparedness of students for the new requirements presented by the tasks of mastering scientific knowledge. The authors saw the main way for students to get rid of these difficulties in special training to learn, to study scientific knowledge, to read and

create scientific texts regardless of their subject content. It was a way of transmitting "academic skills" or a generalizing educational skills that acted as "metacognitive actions." Their mastery served as a guarantee of successfully overcoming the adaptation period. The primary goals of adaptation period were to create academic competence, develop the ability to learn, understood as a result of mastering generalized educational activities. This position, which assumes the active role of a student and a teacher at the initial stage of study at the university, to a certain extent made it possible to overcome the one-sidedness of the representations of the adaptive approach. It is significant that the activity approach recognizes the role of not only the educational and cognitive activity of the student but also the teacher's activity that transforms knowledge for students into a system of methods of action and tasks. The nature of the difficulties of adaptation is seen in the nature of the teacher's organization of students' orientation in the system of disciplinary knowledge and orientation in "knowledge of knowledge" associated with educational skills.

And, finally, the author identifies a personal-activity approach, within the framework of which the center of difficulties of adaptation is not only in the student himself. The meaning of this approach is to restructure the positions of the personality of the teacher and student, highlighting as the leading subject-object-subject relations, where the object of acquisition serves as a mediator of the implementation of equal intersubject relations (Aristides, 1988).

In this study, the author favors a personal-activity approach, since the attitude towards students, regardless of their nationality, should be subjective and, to identify and overcome difficulties and contradictions that occur in the process of adaptation, it is advisable for teachers to use a differentiated approach in educational process.

Thus, on the basis of the formulated concepts, essence and content of the adaptation process of students to the university in this study the process of adaptation of first-year students to study at a university is defined as an objective, dynamic, overall and creative process of establishing a correspondence between existing and required training levels, communication styles, modes of activity in the new conditions of study at the university. The structure of the adaptation process is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.**

Components	Content
Types	social didactic
	individual-psychological
	professional household economic ethnic
	primary decompensation phase
Phases	partial compensation phase
	compensation phase disadaptation
Forms	passive active

According to the presented scheme, the structure of students' adaptation process is a combination of such components as types, phases, and forms of the adaptation process. The types of the adaptation process indicate the main difficulties of the adaptation process for students, which is confirmed in the studies of the adaptation process by A.A. Bodalev (1971), V. Bashirova (1975), B.C. Viktorova (1975), P.A. Prosetskiy (1982), N.E. Shafazhinskaya (1982), V.A. Melnikov (1999), M.V. Yakovleva (2000), G.A. Gushchina (2002), E.Yu. Orekhova (2007). Among the main reasons or factors that impede the process of adaptation of first-year students, the following are highlighted:

1. Lack of ability to work independently and rationally distribute time.
2. Weak school preparation, difference of school and university methods.
3. A stereotypical attitude to the chosen profession has a significant impact on the adaptation of freshmen, formed as a result of information accumulated by a school graduate before entering a university, psychological and practical preparation of a person for the conditions of his upcoming life, study, work. Too much training load.
4. Insufficient attention to the specifics of the university, separation of theoretical courses from professional practice, insufficient professional training of students.
5. Some individual psychological characteristics of a person: distraction, mental depression, inability to mobilize

one's will, inability to establish contacts and proper relationships with teachers and fellow students.

6. Other reasons: poor health, extraneous hobbies, lack of interest in the chosen specialty, undemanding teachers, lack of monitoring students, difficulties with literature, frequent skipping classes, etc.

To assist first-year students in overcoming the difficulties successfully is one of the main tasks of the teaching staff of the university.

The more successfully the adaptation process proceeds, the faster students overcome constraint in relation to teachers, since a change in a student's position is associated with a change in the leadership role of the teacher. This leads to closer mutual contacts, activates the cognitive activity of students, aimed at mastering general scientific and special knowledge.

As a result of successful adaptation to the educational process of the university, students will acquire:

1. knowledge of the difficulties of the adaptation period and how to overcome them actively;
2. the desire for an active form of adaptation;
3. skills in rational organization of mental activity;
4. a clear idea of the content of vocational training in a concrete university;
5. a creative approach attitude;

6. the system of work on vocational education and self-education of professionally significant personality traits;
7. the ability to focus on promising areas of the scientific and technological process;
8. understanding of their own professional significance;
9. a positive attitude towards the chosen specialty;
10. the ability to make a bold and right choice in the conditions of exponential growth of information;
11. tolerance.

All of the above knowledge, abilities, skills, and qualities make up the essence of the concept of "adaptedness". In this study, adaptedness is understood as a quality of the student's personality, which contributes to the successful acquisition of knowledge, skills, educational skills for organizing mental activity, a rational collective and personal mode of work, leisure and life, systematic work on vocational education and self-education of significant personality traits, contributes to the best adaptation of the body to the work done, greatly facilitates it and makes it more productive. In other words, adaptedness is a state of an individual's activity, a characteristic of correspondence between goals and the achieved results of human activity. Non-adaptation indicates a contradictory relationship between a person's intentions and his actions, motivation for action and its results. The mismatch between the goal and the result of activity (non-adaptation) has a negative and positive form. In the first case, a person achieves less than he wanted (i.e., the goal is not achieved), and then he continues his activities to achieve the desired result. In the second case, a person achieves more than what he aspired to (the result exceeds the goal), and then the contradiction stimulates activity that is excessive in relation to the task.

According to the research, the following characteristics of students' adaptation process to the educational activities of the university are revealed: objectivity, dynamism, integrity, creativity, and controllability. Adaptedness is the sixth characteristic of the adaptation process, as it is the result of its successful completion. The formation of students' adaptedness is universal in nature since knowledge of the nature of difficulties and knowledge of the algorithms for overcoming them can be used by students, then specialists, both during study at a university and after graduation as well. Thus, the main

characteristics of adaptedness are activity, universality, creativity, and awareness.

Adaptation of students will be carried out more efficiently and more purposefully if the process of students entering the educational process of the university is differentiated, that is, their individual psychological characteristics, personal qualities, readiness for learning, achieved at school, of course, ethnic features of small ethnic groups are taken into consideration. Accordingly, a differentiated approach is the seventh characteristic of the adaptation process.

### Conclusions

The analysis of the scientific literature on students' adaptation to training and education at a university made it possible to define adaptation as a necessary, objective, dynamic, overall and creative process of actively establishing a correspondence between current and required levels of training, communication styles, and the mode of activity in the new conditions of study at a university.

The essence students' adaptation to training and education at a university is not only in the direct transfer of knowledge, skills to students by teachers but also in the development of the personality of each student, enrichment of his social experience. Education will be successful provided a differentiated approach to the creation of pedagogical conditions that helps to reveal the individuality of each student.

In this study, the structure of adaptation process includes the following types of adaptation:

1. Social adaptation includes gaining and preserving a certain social status of a student in a new group, the recognition of his rights and responsibilities, participation in the public life of the faculty, university.
2. Ethnic adaptation includes knowledge about the culture of interethnic interaction and the formation of tolerance (respect for another culture).
3. Didactic adaptation is associated with the organization of the educational process at the university (students mastering new knowledge, skills, forms and methods of educational work, methods of independent work, fundamentally different from school, new types of cognitive and scientific activities).

4. Individual - psychological adaptation is responsible for the regulatory mechanisms of the central nervous system and various body functions, which are caused by the individual psychological characteristics of the individual.
5. Professional adaptation is associated with the formation of positive educational motives and personal qualities of a future specialist (activity, creativity, independence, responsibility, etc.).
6. Household adaptation is associated with adaptation to new living conditions in student dormitories, new forms of using free time, lack of parents' control.
7. Economic adaptation reflects autonomy in money management, creation of one's own family.

In the framework of the study, the following characteristics of the process of adaptation to the educational activities of the university were revealed: objectivity, dynamism, integrity, creativity, controllability, and adaptedness.

The main characteristic of the adaptation process is adaptability. Adaptedness is formed in students in the process of adaptation to new social environment, didactic training system, living conditions and acts as a quality of students' personality. It shows the degree of mental stability of the individual, which contributes to the successful acquisition of knowledge, training abilities, skills, ways of organizing mental activity, a rational collective and personal mode of work, leisure and life, a system of work for professional education and self-education of professionally significant personality traits. All this helps the organism to adapt better to its activities, greatly facilitates it and makes it more productive. The main characteristics of adaptedness as a personality trait of students are activity, universality, creativity and information awareness.

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