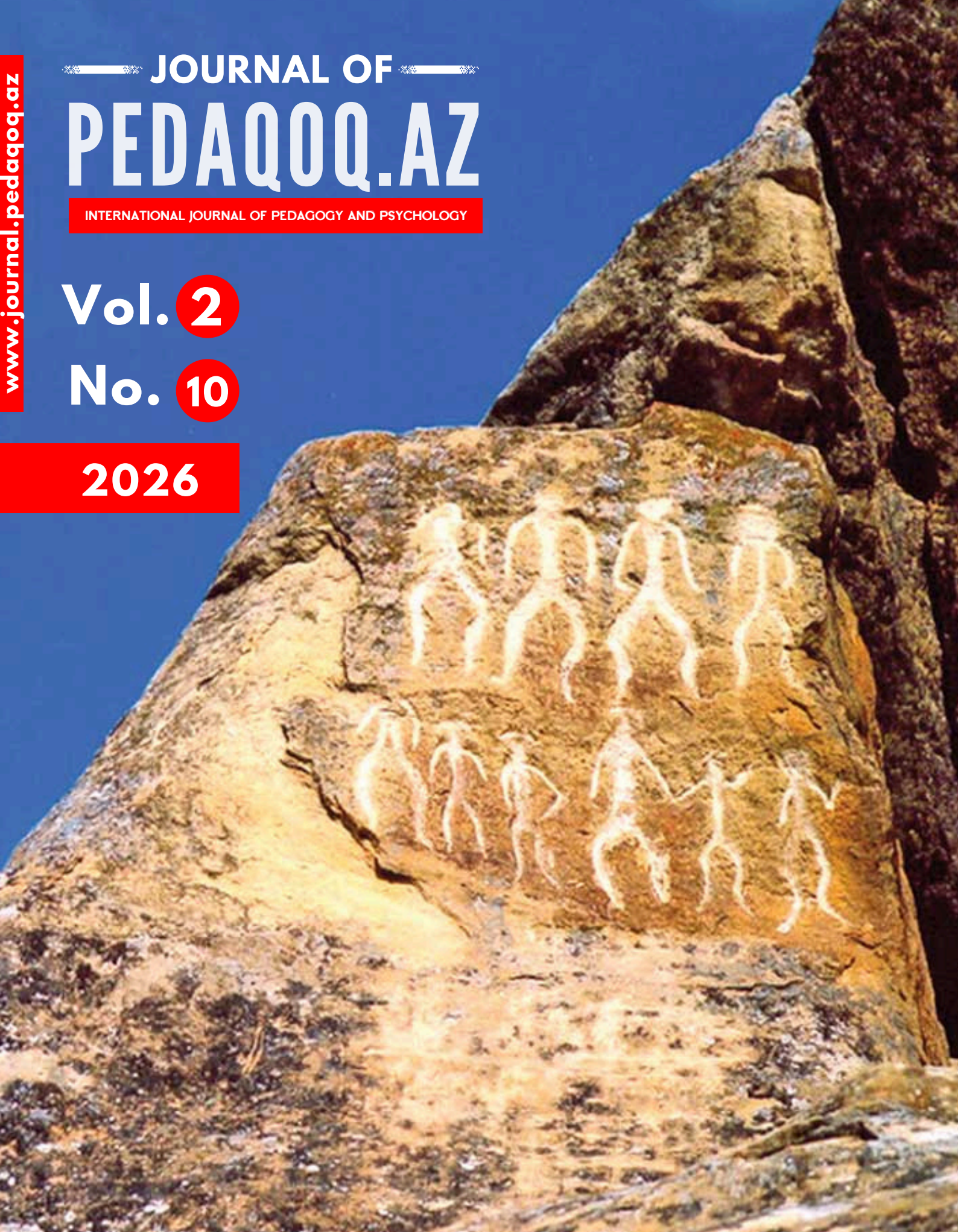
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JOURNAL OF PEDAQOQ.AZ

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PEDAGOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Vol. 2
No. 10
2026



www.journal.pedaqoq.az
PEDAQOQ.AZ
ISSN 3080-3543

JOURNAL OF PEDAQOQ.AZ

Web: journal.pedaqoq.az
E-ISSN: 3080-3543 (Online)
E-mail: journal.pedaqoq.az@gmail.com

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JOURNAL OF PEDAQOQ.AZ

Vol. 2, No. 10, 2026,
e-ISSN 3080-3543 (Online)
https://journal.pedaqoq.az

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JOURNAL OF PEDAQOQ.AZ | **WEB**: journal.pedaqoq.az | **E-ISSN:** 3080-3543 | **VOL. 2, NO. 10 (2026)**

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MARYAM ZEYNALOVA. **MOTIVATIONAL MEASURES TO SUPPORT STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN AZERBAIJANI HIGHER EDUCATION (pp. 4-11)**

PEDAGOGY

MOTIVATIONAL MEASURES TO SUPPORT STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN AZERBAIJANI HIGHER EDUCATION

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Keywords: student motivation, higher education, Azerbaijan, academic engagement, mentoring, educational management

Abstract. Student motivation is a pedagogical concern because university learning requires sustained effort, independent work, and the ability to continue after difficulty. A motivational event may attract attention for a short period, but lasting engagement requires opportunities to understand the purpose of learning, experience progress, and receive useful support. Universities therefore need to connect organised motivational activities with the everyday conditions of teaching and assessment.

Introduction

In Azerbaijan, this issue can be considered within the broader aims of educational development. The State Strategy for the Development of Education emphasises competence-based learning, the relationship between higher education and research, and preparation relevant to social and economic needs [President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2013]. These priorities provide a rationale for motivational measures that connect academic work with meaningful participation and professional development. The strategy itself does not establish the effectiveness of any particular intervention.

This article examines how Azerbaijani higher education institutions could organise motivational measures to support student engagement. It uses a focused conceptual analysis of three Azerbaijani, one Turkish, and two Russian sources. The discussion brings together classroom practice, mentoring, research participation, career activities, and institutional coordination. No survey or experiment was conducted in Azerbaijani universities. The proposed measures are therefore recommendations for adaptation and evaluation rather than findings about their existing prevalence or measured impact.

Main part Motivation concerns both the strength of students' effort and their reasons for learning. Interest in a subject, commitment to a professional goal, and fear of disapproval may all encourage participation, but they represent different experiences. Gordeeva and Sychev found differences between university students' motivational profiles in relation to curiosity, perceived academic control, and achievement. Their results also showed that persistence alone did not distinguish all profiles [Gordeeva & Sychev, 2017]. Consequently, visible effort should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of personal interest or well-being.

Turkish research similarly suggests that students should not be treated as a motivationally uniform group. Korkmazer's study examined academic motivation among students in health-related programmes at Muş Alparslan University and reported differences associated with sociodemographic characteristics [Korkmazer, 2020]. This evidence cannot describe Azerbaijani students directly. It supports assessing local needs before choosing measures rather than assuming that one activity will be equally suitable for everyone.

A practical distinction is needed between low interest and restricted participation. A student may value a programme but encounter financial pressure, employment commitments, inaccessible materials, or uncertainty about expectations. Treating every absence or incomplete task as a motivational failure can obscure

the support required. Initial consultation should therefore explore the student's goals and learning conditions before an intervention is selected.

The most immediate setting for motivation is the learning task itself. Students should understand what they are expected to learn and why the activity is relevant. In Azerbaijani pedagogical literature, Rüstəmova discusses active teaching methods through independent learning, purposeful questioning, and the teacher's organisation of learning [Rüstəmova, 2016]. Although the discussion concerns school education, it offers a relevant principle for universities: participation should serve a clear learning purpose.

Lecturers can apply this principle by offering a limited choice of topics, cases, or presentation formats while maintaining common learning outcomes. For example, educational management students might investigate attendance, student feedback, or communication within a hypothetical faculty. The choice should allow personal relevance without making assessment standards unequal. A short explanation of the selected topic can help students connect their interests with the course requirements.

Feedback should identify what has been achieved, what requires improvement, and what the student can do next. Sadıqova examines motivation and self-confidence in education and warns against public punishment that can undermine learners' confidence [Sadıqova, 2021]. Her discussion focuses on school learners; it should not be treated as a university intervention study. Nevertheless, respectful correction and attention to progress are appropriate principles to consider in higher education.

University assessment can reflect these principles through clear criteria, examples of successful work, and opportunities to revise selected assignments. Recognition should refer to identifiable achievement rather than general praise. Comments about improvement in reasoning or use of evidence provide a more informative basis for further effort than labels about a student's personality. Appropriate academic standards remain necessary, but students should be able to understand how to meet them.

Mentoring can connect individual goals with available academic support.

A lecturer or trained peer mentor may help a student identify an immediate difficulty, select a manageable next step, and review progress. The relationship should provide guidance without taking over responsibility for learning. Peer mentors also need clear boundaries and a referral route when a problem requires professional assistance.

Gordeeva and Sychev's study of students during emergency online learning distinguished autonomy-supportive self-motivation from a controlling approach based on internal pressure. The strategies showed different relationships with academic motivation and subjective well-being. The authors explicitly acknowledge that the cross-sectional design does not establish causal direction [Gordeeva & Sychev, 2021]. This evidence supports considering the quality of self-regulation rather than encouraging students to work through self-criticism alone.

A proposed mentoring session could ask students to state a meaningful goal, divide it into feasible actions, anticipate a barrier, and decide when to review progress. After a weak assignment, the discussion might focus on planning an outline and seeking feedback before the next submission. This turns encouragement into a practical action. Such a session is an illustration of a possible measure, not a programme whose effectiveness has been established by this article. Mentoring should remain accessible to students who do not regularly attend public events. Short appointments, small-group meetings, and written guidance can provide different routes to support. Participation should not depend solely on a lecturer identifying the most confident students. Confidential handling of personal concerns is necessary to maintain trust and prevent requests for help from becoming a source of embarrassment.

Research participation can make academic learning more meaningful when students undertake a manageable investigation and receive supervision. A faculty might organise a research workshop followed by a small project, a consultation, and a student presentation. The motivational purpose is to let students experience inquiry and understand how knowledge is produced. The activity should not be reduced to collecting participation certificates.

Career activities can connect learning with possible professional roles. Alumni meetings, workplace discussions, and project presentations become more useful when students prepare questions beforehand and complete a follow-up task. Educational management students, for example, could analyse a school leader's account of a management problem and relate it to a concept studied in class. Universities should present different career pathways without promising employment that they cannot guarantee.

Recognition may include acknowledgement of academic improvement, constructive teamwork, research initiative, or contribution to a student community. Selection criteria should be published and applied consistently. If only final grades are recognised, valuable progress by students starting from different levels may remain invisible. Equally, participation awards should not substitute for evidence of learning. Academic distinctions and acknowledgements of contribution serve different purposes and should be explained accordingly.

Material support and public recognition also require separate reasoning. A student experiencing financial difficulty may need access to assistance rather than another competitive award. Public ranking should be used cautiously because it can make comparison more visible than development. The proposed approach is to recognise specific contributions while preserving fair access to learning opportunities and confidential support.

Motivational measures should form a connected plan rather than an unrelated calendar of events. A department could begin with a brief needs assessment, identify a priority, and coordinate a small number of activities with lecturers, student representatives, and support services. An academic adviser might coordinate mentoring, while a course lecturer links a research activity to an assignment. Responsibilities and follow-up arrangements should be clear.

A proposed semester sequence could begin with orientation and discussion of learning goals. A research or career activity could follow, accompanied by preparation

within a course. Later mentoring meetings would review students' progress, while an end-of-semester discussion would examine what helped and what barriers remained. This sequence illustrates coordination; it is not presented as a description of practice across Azerbaijani universities.

Evaluation should distinguish attendance, experience, and learning-related change. Attendance indicates reach but cannot establish improved motivation. Short anonymous feedback can show whether students found an activity relevant. Completion of subsequent learning tasks, willingness to seek feedback, and students' explanations of their goals can provide additional information. These indicators require careful interpretation because workload, assessment difficulty, and access to resources may also affect participation.

Where questionnaires developed elsewhere are considered, translation and local suitability should be examined before use. Scores should not become labels or grounds for penalties. A small pilot with feedback from participants can help identify unclear questions and practical barriers. Comparison across time or groups may strengthen evaluation, but differences should not automatically be attributed to the motivational measure. This article's selective literature base and absence of local empirical data limit the conclusions that can be drawn about effectiveness.

Conclusions

Motivational measures in Azerbaijani higher education should connect organised activities with meaningful teaching, understandable assessment, and accessible support. Events may initiate interest, but their educational value depends on what students can do afterwards. Mentoring, research projects, career discussions, and recognition are more coherent when they lead to an achievable next step and an opportunity to review progress. The analysis supports attention to differences in students' goals and circumstances.

A supportive approach should combine choice with clear expectations and recognise progress without relying exclusively on comparison. The Azerbaijani sources provide educational and policy context, while Turkish and Russian research offers perspectives that require local interpretation. None of these sources justifies assuming a uniform effect across institutions.

The practical recommendation is to plan a limited, coordinated set of measures and evaluate both access and educational relevance. Further research in Azerbaijani universities should examine students' experiences and subsequent learning behaviour. Until such evidence is available, the measures discussed here should be treated as proposals for careful implementation rather than established solutions to low motivation.

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PSYCHOLOGY

HORROR FILMS AND THE FEARS CHILDREN CARRY BEYOND THE SCREEN

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Keywords: horror films, childhood fear, emotional development, sleep, media literacy, parental mediation

Abstract. A frightening film ends at a particular moment, but a child's emotional response may continue afterwards. An ordinary sound, a dark room, or a familiar object can recall a scene that appeared only briefly on screen. This difference between the duration of viewing and the duration of fear makes horror films relevant to child psychology. The important question is not simply whether children become frightened, but how they interpret that fear and whether it interferes with daily life.

Introduction

The effects should not be described as identical for all children. A temporary fright response is not equivalent to a psychological disorder. Age, individual sensitivity, previous experience, and viewing conditions require consideration. This article offers a focused analysis of five selected sources, including two Russian publications, to examine fear, sleep, developmental differences, and adult support. It presents no original participant data and does not estimate how frequently horror viewing causes difficulties in children.

Main part. 1. From a fictional threat to a real emotional response

Horror combines images, sound, uncertainty, and anticipation to suggest danger. Knowing that a story is fictional does not necessarily prevent an emotional response. Martin's review describes developmental differences in reactions to frightening material and substantial variation in enjoyment and sensitivity [Martin, 2019]. Older viewers' enjoyment of horror should therefore not be treated as evidence that the same material is suitable for younger children. A child may understand that an actor is pretending while remaining unsettled by the image. Adults who respond only by repeating that the event was unreal may overlook this distinction. The child may need help identifying what was frightening and recovering a sense of safety. This interpretation directs attention to the child's experience rather than judging the response as irrational or immature.

2. Developmental differences and the meaning of content

Age suitability concerns more than the presence of explicit violence. A threatening face, separation from a caregiver, or an unresolved ending may be emotionally demanding. Smirnova and Sokolova propose age-sensitive evaluation of animation through emotional, cognitive, ethical, and character-related criteria [Smirnova & Sokolova, 2014]. Their framework is not an experiment on horror films, but it explains why a child-oriented visual style alone cannot establish suitability.

Development should also be considered alongside individual differences. Two children of the same age may interpret a scene differently because of personal experience or the meaning attached to its characters. An age classification offers guidance rather than a guarantee about an individual reaction. Adults should consider the actual content and remain responsive to discomfort, including withdrawal or requests to stop.

Murzina and Ozhogova's pilot study of 52 fourth-grade pupils included interviews in which children connected fears of mysterious threats with frightening online material and horror films [Murzina & Ozhogova, 2024]. These accounts are relevant to understanding children's interpretations. However, the study did not

isolate film exposure experimentally and cannot establish that horror films caused the measured anxiety.

3. Fear after viewing and difficulties with sleep

Research on enduring fright reactions provides evidence that distress can outlast exposure. Harrison and Cantor examined retrospective accounts from young adults describing frightening media experiences. Reported reactions included disturbances in sleep and avoidance of situations associated with the material [Harrison & Cantor, 1999]. Retrospective memories cannot establish population prevalence or confirm a clinical diagnosis, but they identify experiences that require attention beyond the viewing session.

Sleep research adds a related perspective. Garrison and colleagues analysed media diaries and sleep information for children aged three to five. Evening media use and daytime violent content were associated with increased sleep problems [Garrison et al., 2011]. These were observational baseline data, and violent media content was not identical to the horror genre. The findings nevertheless show why timing and content should be examined separately rather than reducing the issue to total screen time.

A reasonable assessment would ask what was viewed, when the difficulty began, and whether other changes occurred. Trouble settling at bedtime after a frightening scene may suggest a connection, but school stress, illness, or changes in family routines may also contribute. Adults should avoid assuming either that the film explains every difficulty or that fictional content cannot matter.

4. Adult responses and psychological support

The practical priority is to respond without ridicule or pressure. Children should be able to stop watching and explain their discomfort without having to prove courage. For younger children, calm presence and familiar activities may be more understandable than a lengthy explanation. Older children may benefit from discussing how sound, editing, acting, and visual effects create an impression of threat. The explanation should match the child's understanding and willingness to talk.

Co-viewing creates an opportunity to notice reactions, but it does not make

unsuitable content harmless. In Garrison and colleagues' analysis, adult co-use did not remove the observed associations between media characteristics and sleep problems [Garrison et al., 2011]. Adult presence is therefore best understood as an opportunity for guidance, not a substitute for content selection.

Parents can review material beforehand, use available content information, and avoid frightening viewing near bedtime. A predictable, calm transition to sleep is a practical precaution. Teachers and psychologists can discuss fictional storytelling and emotional vocabulary through age-appropriate examples. Showing disturbing scenes to demonstrate their possible effects would contradict that purpose. Persistent distress or substantial interference with sleep, school participation, or ordinary activities warrants consultation with an appropriately qualified professional.

5. Limits of interpretation and future research

The available evidence brings together different ages, media formats, and methods. A study of animation, an interview about anxiety, and a retrospective account do not answer the same research question. Their contributions should remain distinct. Fear, anxiety, aggression, and diagnosed disorders should not be treated as interchangeable outcomes. The selected sources do not justify a claim that horror viewing inevitably produces lasting psychological damage. Further research could follow children's responses over time using naturally occurring viewing, parent reports, and age-appropriate interviews. It should consider previous anxiety, family circumstances, and exposure to other frightening material. Ethical designs should avoid deliberately exposing children to distressing content merely to measure harm. Cultural interpretations also require attention before findings are transferred between settings.

Conclusions

Horror films can become part of children's emotional experience after viewing has ended. The research considered here identifies enduring fright reports,

associations with sleep difficulties, and the importance of developmental interpretation. It also shows why these findings cannot be converted into a universal prediction about every child or every film. Age-sensitive selection, permission to stop, respectful discussion, and careful observation offer a reasonable basis for adult guidance. The central task is neither to dismiss fear because the story is fictional nor to interpret every fright response as a disorder. It is to recognise distress proportionately and provide support when it persists.

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THE ROLE OF INTERACTIVE INSTRUCTION IN DEVELOPING FUTURE TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCIES

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Keywords: interactive instruction, pedagogical competencies, teacher education, microteaching, formative assessment, reflective practice

Abstract. The purpose of this article is to clarify how interactive instruction can be organised to support future teachers' planning, communication, assessment, and reflection. The research question concerns the conditions under which interactive activities create opportunities to practise these competencies. The article develops a five-stage implementation model based on a conceptual analysis of selected Azerbaijani and international sources. It presents no original experimental data, and its recommendations should be understood as methodological proposals rather than demonstrated effects.

Introduction

Teacher education requires a close relationship between theoretical knowledge and practical judgment. Future teachers must understand educational principles and apply them when planning lessons, responding to learners, and assessing progress. Knowing a method does not necessarily mean being able to use it appropriately. University instruction should therefore provide opportunities to explain pedagogical choices, examine alternatives, and revise decisions in response to evidence. Interactive

instruction can support this process when communication is organised around a meaningful learning problem. Its value cannot be determined simply by counting discussions or group activities. Students may participate actively without examining the reasons behind their decisions. In Azerbaijani pedagogical literature, Rüstəmova discusses active teaching methods in relation to learners' interest, independent learning, and the teacher's professional actions [Rüstəmova, 2016]. This perspective makes the organisation of interaction an important methodological issue.

Main part. The analysis draws on six sources selected for their relevance to teacher knowledge, cognitive engagement, professional practice, and assessment. The sources were compared to identify principles that could guide methodology seminars. This is a focused conceptual discussion, not a systematic literature review. Findings and recommendations concerning school teaching are considered for their relevance to teacher preparation without assuming that the two contexts are equivalent.

Shulman's concept of pedagogical content knowledge emphasises the transformation of subject knowledge into representations that learners can understand [Shulman, 1986]. For future teachers, this means that choosing an explanation requires attention to both the content and learners' likely difficulties. An interactive seminar can make these choices visible by requiring candidates to justify why a particular example or question is appropriate.

The ICAP framework distinguishes passive, active, constructive, and interactive engagement. Its interactive mode involves participants building on one another's contributions [Chi & Wylie, 2014]. Accordingly, group membership alone is not sufficient. A productive task should require candidates to compare explanations, address disagreement, and reconsider an initial response. The instructor remains responsible for correcting misconceptions and providing conceptual guidance when discussion alone does not resolve a difficulty.

Planning competence involves connecting an intended learning outcome with suitable activities and evidence of achievement. Candidates should explain what

learners will be able to demonstrate, how a task supports that outcome, and how understanding will be checked. A lesson plan becomes professionally meaningful when these relationships are justified rather than recorded as separate formal requirements.

An interactive planning task may provide a learning objective, examples of learners' previous answers, and a practical constraint. Each candidate prepares a short individual plan before comparing alternatives in a group. The group identifies the strengths and limitations of the plans and produces a justified version. Individual preparation helps prevent agreement from concealing gaps in understanding.

For example, if the objective requires learners to compare two explanations, a task asking only for definitions is insufficient. Candidates should identify this mismatch and propose evidence that would reveal comparison. They should also anticipate vocabulary difficulties, differences in preparation, and limited time. The initial plan, revised plan, and explanation of changes together provide more useful evidence than the final document alone. However, a successful group product does not establish that every member can plan independently.

Pedagogical communication includes listening and responding to learners' reasoning. A confident presentation may still be ineffective if the teacher overlooks a misunderstanding. Role play can address this problem by introducing plausible but unexpected answers. One candidate acts as the teacher, while peers express uncertainty, request clarification, or offer an alternative explanation. The candidate must decide how to respond while maintaining the learning objective.

Observers should record specific exchanges rather than general impressions. They may note the question asked, the learner's answer, and the subsequent teaching action. Discussion can then examine whether the response clarified understanding or merely repeated information. Useful criteria include the quality of questioning, attention to the answer, respectful handling of disagreement, and the appropriateness of the next step. Collaboration among candidates also requires individual accountability. Responsibilities for facilitating discussion, recording arguments, and

presenting decisions can rotate across sessions. Each participant should explain the group's choice and identify an alternative that was considered. Written preparation and paired discussion can support those who need more time to formulate a response. Quiet participation should not automatically be interpreted as weak understanding, just as frequent speaking should not automatically be treated as competence.

Assessment competence begins with understanding what learners already know. Veysova and Məcidova explain diagnostic assessment as a basis for purposeful planning and discuss ways of identifying learners' initial preparation [Veysova & Məcidova, 2009]. In teacher education, this principle can be applied by asking candidates to interpret sample responses before designing an activity. The assessment should help determine what support is needed rather than simply classify learners.

Formative assessment continues this process during instruction. Evidence becomes formative when it informs a subsequent teaching or learning decision [Black & Wiliam, 2009]. Candidates can compare several answers to the same question and decide whether each indicates a conceptual error, incomplete reasoning, or insufficient evidence. Where an interpretation is uncertain, a follow-up question may be more appropriate than an immediate judgment.

Peer feedback should be tied to shared criteria. Instead of stating that a plan is successful, a candidate can identify whether its final task checks the intended skill and suggest a specific improvement. The recipient should explain how the comment informed revision. Before assessing one another's work, candidates can examine a common example to clarify the criteria. A later individual task is needed to distinguish independent assessment competence from performance achieved with substantial peer or instructor support.

Microteaching provides a manageable setting for rehearsing a short teaching episode. Grossman and colleagues distinguish representations, decomposition, and approximations of professional practice [Grossman et al., 2009]. These concepts support making teaching visible, separating it into elements for analysis, and practising it under simplified conditions. Such rehearsal cannot fully reproduce the

demands of a real classroom.

A candidate may prepare a brief explanation followed by two questions. Observers focus on a limited number of criteria, such as whether the questions reveal learners' reasoning and whether the answers influence the explanation. Restricting the focus helps keep feedback specific and usable. Reflection then addresses what was intended, what occurred, what evidence supports the interpretation, and what alternative action is possible.

The candidate revises the episode and rehearses it again. Improvement should not be assumed merely because the second presentation is smoother. Introducing a different learner response can help examine whether the candidate understands the reason for the change. Where video is used, consent, restricted access, and an agreed retention period are necessary. Written observation notes remain a suitable alternative. The central purpose is evidence-based reconsideration of teaching, not the use of recording technology itself.

The proposed model connects the four competence areas through a sequence of preparation, action, and revision. Its duration should depend on candidates' prior knowledge, the subject, and the selected professional focus. It is intended for adaptation rather than uniform application across all courses.

The first stage presents a realistic pedagogical problem. The instructor supplies a learning objective, relevant information about learners, and a practical constraint. The second stage combines individual preparation with group comparison. Candidates record their initial decisions, examine alternatives, and justify a shared proposal. This record makes the contribution of interaction easier to examine.

The third stage involves simulation or microteaching. Candidates enact the selected part of the plan while peers provide plausible responses. The fourth stage uses criterion-based observation and feedback. Observers distinguish what happened from their interpretation, and the instructor checks conceptual accuracy. The fifth stage requires a revised plan or another rehearsal accompanied by an explanation of the changes. A new task should subsequently examine whether the principle can be

applied independently.

Consider a hypothetical seminar on helping school learners distinguish fact from opinion. Candidates prepare a question and a short task. During rehearsal, a peer argues that a statement must be factual because it contains a number. The candidate must choose whether to ask for justification, offer a counterexample, or explain the distinction directly. Feedback examines what the response reveals about understanding. A revised task might compare two statements containing numbers, only one of which is verifiable. This example illustrates the sequence; it does not report an observed intervention or measured improvement.

The model requires a learning environment where uncertainty and mistakes can be discussed without personal criticism. Tasks should be sufficiently demanding to require reasoning but manageable with the knowledge candidates possess. Brief explanations and worked examples may be necessary before rehearsal. Interactive methods should complement appropriate direct instruction rather than replace it automatically.

Four provisional observation criteria correspond to the selected competencies: coherence among objectives, tasks, and assessment for planning; responsive questioning and listening for communication; interpretation and use of evidence for assessment; and justified revision for reflection. These criteria should be explained through examples before use. They are not validated measurement instruments, and a single observation cannot establish stable professional competence.

In larger cohorts, parallel small-group rehearsals and rotating roles can distribute practice opportunities. The instructor can review selected episodes in depth while candidates document feedback and revision. Digital tools may assist shared planning, but accessible paper-based alternatives should remain available. Connections with supervised school placement are needed because successful rehearsal does not necessarily transfer to sustained classroom teaching.

The principal limitation of the article is the absence of empirical testing. Future studies could compare initial and final performance on equivalent tasks, use

independent assessors, and examine agreement between their judgments. Delayed assessment and school-placement observations could investigate transfer. Confidence and satisfaction may provide supplementary information, but they should not substitute for evidence of professional performance. Any investigation should distinguish voluntary research participation from compulsory course assessment.

Conclusions

Interactive instruction provides a methodological opportunity to connect educational theory with professional decision-making. Its potential depends on the quality of the task, the reasoning required, and the use of evidence during feedback and revision. Discussion, role play, and group work should therefore be organised around specific competencies rather than treated as indicators of quality in themselves.

The proposed five-stage model links a pedagogical problem with individual preparation, collaborative comparison, rehearsal, observation, and justified revision. It connects planning, communication, assessment, and reflection and clarifies how these competencies can be practised and observed. Azerbaijani contributions concerning active learning and diagnostic assessment complement the international theoretical perspectives used in the analysis.

The model is a theoretical proposal, not an experimentally confirmed programme. Its practical use should involve accessible participation, individual accountability, instructor guidance, and opportunities to apply learning to a different task.

Further research is required to establish the reliability of the criteria and determine whether the proposed activities support lasting improvements in classroom practice.

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION THROUGH EQUITABLE TEACHING AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

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Keywords: inclusive education, educational equity, learner participation, inclusive pedagogy, universal design for learning, formative assessment

Abstract. This article examines how inclusive education can transform classroom access into meaningful participation and learning. Drawing on a conceptual synthesis of six academic and institutional publications, it explores accessible teaching, Universal Design for Learning, formative assessment, and individual support. The analysis argues that inclusion requires flexible learning opportunities that preserve intellectual challenge, strengthen learner agency, and address barriers to participation. Practical priorities include purposeful lesson planning, transparent assessment, and shared institutional responsibility for monitoring learning and progress. The proposed approaches require contextual adaptation and further empirical evaluation.

Introduction

Inclusive education is a question of how educational institutions organise learning for people whose needs, experiences, and opportunities differ. Admission to an ordinary classroom does not establish whether a learner understands the lesson, contributes to discussion, or receives appropriate support. Educational exclusion can

persist within shared spaces when materials are inaccessible, expectations are unnecessarily restrictive, or some learners consistently remain outside the intellectual work of the class.

The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report situates inclusion within a broad response to exclusion associated with disability, poverty, language, migration, and other circumstances [UNESCO, 2020]. This perspective requires educators to examine how educational arrangements interact with individual differences. For example, difficulty following a lesson may arise from unfamiliar instructional language, an inaccessible resource, or insufficient explanation. Identifying these differences matters because an unsuitable response can reinforce the difficulty it seeks to address. This article examines the pedagogical conditions through which access becomes meaningful participation and learning. It presents a conceptual synthesis of six selected academic and institutional publications, comparing their implications for classroom design, assessment, and institutional responsibility.

The sources represent different forms of evidence and are not treated as equally conclusive. The central argument is that inclusive education depends on aligning shared educational purposes with flexible routes to learning and accountable individual support.

Main part. A useful analytical distinction concerns integration and inclusion. Integration may enable a learner to enter an existing setting while leaving its usual expectations largely intact. Inclusion requires examining whether those expectations unnecessarily restrict participation. Equal treatment is insufficient when identical materials or response conditions create unequal opportunities. Equity therefore

requires justified differences in support while maintaining serious expectations for each learner's development.

Florian and Black-Hawkins examined inclusive practice through observations and interviews involving 11 teachers in two Scottish primary schools. Their analysis identified approaches that extended ordinary learning opportunities rather than routinely separating provision for particular learners [Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011]. This qualitative study offers insight into pedagogical reasoning; its small contextual sample does not establish a universally effective intervention.

The distinction has practical consequences. A learner who receives unrelated, simplified work throughout a shared lesson may be present without accessing its central ideas. Conversely, insisting that everyone complete exactly the same task can ignore substantial support needs. An inclusive decision should consider the intended learning, the barrier encountered, and the educational value of the proposed adjustment. Shared participation can coexist with individual goals, provided that their relationship is explicit and periodically reviewed.

Universal Design for Learning provides a framework for anticipating variability through multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression [CAST, 2024]. Its pedagogical value lies in encouraging teachers to consider access during planning. However, providing several formats is not sufficient by itself. The formats must clarify the subject, remain usable, and help learners work towards a defined objective.

Consider a lesson in which learners explain how pollution affects an ecosystem. The teacher can introduce essential vocabulary, provide a clearly labelled diagram, and model the relationship between a cause and its consequences. Learners may initially organise their explanation through speech, writing, or supported communication. All

should engage with the causal relationship rather than receive an unrelated activity because their communication differs. These examples are proposed applications of the framework, not findings from an evaluated intervention.

Planning should distinguish a learning objective from the means used to reach it. If scientific reasoning is the objective, handwriting speed may introduce an irrelevant obstacle. If written argument is the objective, an oral explanation can support preparation but cannot provide complete evidence of writing competence. This distinction prevents flexibility from obscuring what has actually been learned. It also permits demanding tasks to remain accessible through temporary scaffolding.

Universal design does not remove the need for specialist support. A learner may require an assistive device, explicit instruction, or an individual communication system. Such provision should be connected to classroom activity and reviewed for its usefulness. Additional assistance becomes educationally questionable when it routinely removes opportunities to think independently or interact directly with peers.

Participation has an intellectual and a relational dimension. A learner may complete assigned work yet have little influence over discussion or group decisions. Similarly, friendly peer relationships do not demonstrate access to demanding subject content. Teachers therefore need to observe whose ideas are considered, who receives useful feedback, and whether assistance enables an increasingly independent contribution.

Group work illustrates this difficulty. Assigning a learner only to distribute materials may make the activity appear inclusive while excluding that learner from reasoning. A more purposeful arrangement combines preparation time, accessible instructions, and rotating roles that involve explaining or evaluating ideas. Peer assistance should support communication and understanding without allowing one

participant to undertake another's learning. Group membership should change when educational purposes change.

Learner agency also requires opportunities to express preferences and report difficulties. A private conversation, an accessible questionnaire, or supported communication may reveal barriers that adults overlook. Teachers should explain how this information influences decisions. Consultation becomes superficial when learners repeatedly describe the same obstacle without seeing any response. At the same time, learners should not have to disclose a diagnosis publicly to receive an accessible resource.

Belonging should be examined alongside independence. Continuous adult supervision can protect access in one respect while limiting spontaneous peer interaction in another. Support arrangements therefore need review with the learner: what assistance remains necessary, when can it be reduced, and what would allow participation with less dependence? The appropriate answer may vary across activities and over time.

Black and Wiliam place formative assessment within a pedagogical process in which evidence of learning informs subsequent action [Black & Wiliam, 2009]. For inclusive teaching, the crucial issue is how a teacher interprets an incomplete or incorrect response. The response may indicate a conceptual misunderstanding, but it may also reflect inaccessible instructions or difficulty expressing knowledge. These explanations require different instructional decisions.

In the ecosystem lesson, a learner might correctly sequence illustrated causes and consequences but struggle to write an explanation. The teacher could investigate whether the difficulty concerns scientific reasoning, vocabulary, or sentence construction. Feedback should then identify a manageable next step and provide an

opportunity to apply it. Repeating the same inaccessible written test would offer little additional diagnostic information.

Assessment adjustments also require transparency. An accommodation changes access or response conditions while preserving the intended learning demand. A modification changes that demand or the expected outcome. Both may be educationally appropriate, but they support different interpretations of achievement. A school should document what was assessed and which support was available, rather than treating all completed tasks as equivalent evidence.

Common criteria and individual progress provide complementary information. Shared criteria indicate the quality of demonstrated learning; comparison with earlier work shows development over time. Neither should erase the other. Reporting only personal improvement may conceal unresolved curriculum gaps, while reporting only distance from a common standard may overlook important gains and provide little guidance for further teaching.

Ainscow relates inclusive development to collaborative inquiry and the use of evidence within educational institutions [Ainscow, 2020]. This perspective places responsibility beyond the individual classroom. Leaders need to provide planning time, accessible resources, and coordination between teachers and specialists. Professional development should allow staff to examine actual tasks and learner responses rather than depend exclusively on general presentations about positive attitudes.

Evidence also requires cautious interpretation. Dalgaard and colleagues identified 94 eligible studies comparing inclusive and segregated settings; only 15 were retained for quantitative synthesis because of methodological concerns. Average effects on the analysed academic and psychosocial outcomes were small and not

statistically significant, and substantial uncertainty remained [Dalgaard et al., 2022]. These findings do not demonstrate that classroom organisation is irrelevant. They show why placement alone cannot be assumed to produce consistent benefits and why claims about effectiveness require attention to provision and research quality. A practical institutional review should therefore combine attendance and access information with work samples, observations of participation, and learner accounts. If a school introduces accessible homework instructions, it can examine whether learners understand tasks, complete them more independently, and improve the relevant knowledge. An increase in submission rates is useful evidence, but cannot alone establish improved learning. Class averages should also be checked for patterns that conceal persistent exclusion among particular learners.

Families can help interpret difficulties, while responsibility for accessible teaching remains with the institution. Agreements should specify the barrier, intended improvement, responsible staff, and review date. This conceptual synthesis offers a basis for inquiry; its proposed applications require empirical evaluation of learning, participation, and unintended consequences.

Conclusions

Inclusive education requires a coherent relationship between educational purposes, accessible teaching, individual support, and evidence of learning. Its quality cannot be inferred from placement, task completion, or positive intentions alone. The analysis suggests that educators should examine whether learners engage with worthwhile content, make recognised contributions, and receive support that strengthens their agency.

Three practical priorities follow. Planning should anticipate barriers while preserving the intended intellectual challenge. Assessment should distinguish difficulties with access from difficulties with the target knowledge or skill. Institutional review should connect learner perspectives with evidence of participation and progress, assigning clear responsibility for improvement.

These priorities provide a reasoned framework for practice rather than a universally validated model. Their implementation requires adaptation to educational context and continuing evaluation of who benefits, under which conditions, and with what remaining barriers.

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Web: www.journal.pedaqoq.az
E-ISSN: 3080-3543 (Online)
E-mail: journal.pedaqoq.az@gmail.com