

**THE VARIETY OF THE FORMS OF ORGANIZATION
OF EDUCATION IN UKRAINIAN SMALL-SIZED SCHOOL**

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**РІЗНОМАНІТНІСТЬ ФОРМ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ НАВЧАННЯ
В УМОВАХ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ МАЛОЧИСЕЛЬНОЇ ШКОЛИ**

У статті на прикладі України розкрито форми організації навчання учнів в умовах малочисельної початкової школи сільської місцевості. Названо чинники, що впливають на зменшення кількості учнів у школах сільської місцевості: демографічна ситуація, зовнішня та внутрішня трудова міграція

людей. Розкрито поняття «малочисельна школа», названо її позитивні сторони і недоліки. Охарактеризовано основні типи малочисельних початкових шкіл сільської місцевості: малочисельна початкова школа I ступеня, навчально-виховний комплекс «початкова школа-дитячий садок», заклад освіти «школа-родина».

Наведено й охарактеризовано форми навчання, які можна використовувати в різних типах малочисельних початкових шкіл: урок у малочисельній початковій школі, урок у з'єднаному класі (класі-комплекті), індивідуальна форма навчання. Особливістю уроку в малочисельній початковій школі є наявність можливостей для здійснення індивідуалізації навчання, а характерними особливостями для уроку в з'єднаному класі (класі-комплекті) – наявність на кожному занятті самотійної роботи, обмежені можливості для використання наочності, мультимедійних засобів навчання, окремих методів. Наведено види робіт, які доцільно використовувати в класі-комплекті на етапі «самотійна робота» (тренувальні вправи, виконання завдань за схемою, інструкцією, пам'яткою, алгоритмічним приписом, тестових завдань, різні види мовного розбору, мовчазне читання тексту з різними видами завдань та інші) та «роботи з учителем» (використовувати пояснення нового матеріалу, перевірку знань, умінь і навичок учнів, різні види читання тексту, виконання усних вправ, обчислень, фронтальне повторення навчального матеріалу та інші).

Описано особливості організації занять з учнями малочисельних шкіл сільської місцевості за індивідуальною формою навчання. Навчання таких учнів організовується за індивідуальним навчальним планом, який складається на основі типового навчального плану. За індивідуальною формою навчання з учителем можуть займатися від одного до п'яти учнів як одного, так і різних класів. Залежно від тривалості заняття та кількості учнів потрібно вибрати форми роботи: пояснення вчителя, виконання тренувальних вправ, різні види роботи над твором та інші. У таких умовах для вчителя є можливість здійснювати індивідуальний підхід до учнів. Форми організації навчальних занять у закладі «школа-родина» залежить від кількості класів та учнів у них. Це може бути звичайний урок з малою кількістю учнів, урок у класі-комплекті чи заняття за індивідуальною формою навчання.

Ключові слова: малочисельна школа; початкова школа-дитячий садок; школа-родина; урок у класі-комплекті; індивідуальна форма навчання.

THE VARIETY OF THE FORMS OF ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION IN UKRAINIAN SMALL-SIZED SCHOOL

The article uses Ukraine as a case study to demonstrate various forms of organization of studies at small-sized rural schools. It mentions factors that affect shrinking of number of pupils in rural schools: demographics, external and internal labour migration. It elaborates on the notion of a «small-sized school» and names its positive features and drawbacks. It characterises the major types of small-

sized junior schools in rural areas: a small-sized school of the 1st grade, an educational complex «junior school-kindergarten», educational establishment «family school».

The article mentions and characterises forms of education that could be used in different types of small-sized junior schools: a lesson at a small-sized school, a lesson in a joint grade (grade set), an individual form of studying. The existence of possibilities for individualized studying is a peculiarity of a lesson in a small-sized junior school. The characteristic peculiarities of a lesson in a joint grade (grade set) are the individual work, limited opportunities for the use of illustrative material, multimedia tools of studying, separate methods in every grade. Types of work are mentioned that are advisable to use in a grade set at the stage of «individual work» (practice exercises, fulfilling tasks according to a scheme, instruction, a memo, algorithmic prescription, test tasks, different kinds of language parsing, silent reading of a text, with different kinds of tasks etc.) and «work with a teacher» (using the explanation of new material, checking students' knowledge, skills and abilities, different kinds of reading the text, doing oral exercises, calculations, repetition of educational material etc.).

The peculiarities of organization of lessons with pupils of small rural schools with an individual form of studying are described. The teaching for such students is organized based on an individual curriculum, which is based on a typical curriculum. One to five students of one or different grades may be engaged under the individual form of studying with a teacher. Depending on the duration of lessons and the number of students the following forms of work are to be chosen: teacher's explanation, doing practice exercises, different types of work on essays and so on. In such circumstances a teacher has an opportunity to create an individual approach to students. The forms of organization of studying process at a «family school» establishment depends on the number of grades and pupils in these grades. It may be a simple lesson with few pupils, a lesson in a grade set or an individual lesson.

Key words: small-sized school; junior school-kindergarten; family school; lesson in a class-set; individual form of studying.

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Introduction

The problem of a small size of most schools in rural areas is characteristic for most foreign countries. Therefore, the problem of educational process organization in such schools, choice of forms of learning is relevant and debatable. Let us demonstrate the main ways of solving this issue on the example of Ukraine. Over the last two decades in Ukraine we witness the tendency of shrinking a number of pupils in schools. In 1991–92 academic year schools admitted 7.102 million new pu-

pils, in 2016–17 academic year – 3.846 million new pupils, so the number of new pupils shrank by 3.256 million children. The shrinking of the number of pupils is particularly obvious in rural areas («Serednia osvita v Ukraini», 2017), which causes an increase in a number of small-sized schools.

Different factors affect shrinking of number of pupils in a rural school:

- demographic situation, particularly the birth rate decline;
- external migration of Ukrainians abroad caused by the openness of borders, wide possibilities in the labour market, search for a better life;
- internal labour migration – the exodus of young people from the periphery to large cities and centres, strong incentives for which being the availability of jobs and higher wages.

A small-sized school – is a school with grades that have a small number of pupils (up to 15–20 pupils), a school that might not have some grades (because there are no children of a certain age). The required normative size of grades in the country is 30 pupils. A junior school (1–4 grades), a middle school (5–9 grades) and a high school (10–11 grades) could be small-sized schools. In particular, in 2015–16 there were 372 junior schools in Ukraine with up to 10 pupils in each school (*Natsionalna dopovid*, 2016).

Small-sized schools have both advantages and drawbacks. The advantage is that a teacher has an opportunity to better study the individual peculiarities of pupils, conditions of their lives which gives a possibility to provide individualized approach to every pupil (Raimondi & Vergolini, 2019). However, at a small-sized school there arises hyper-guardianship and hyper-control over the activities of pupils by a teacher, the decrease of motivation for studying; absence of competition among pupils is also characteristic of such a school, limited circle of communication of pupils, monotony of the situation (Mir, Radliff, & Flora, 2018).

An analysis of the recent research. The problem of the organization of the educational process in small junior school was studied by contemporary national scholars: N. Kasiarum (Kasiarum, Korol, & Kuzminskyi, 2006) – organization of a lesson in a small rural school, V. Meleshko (2014) – individualization of educational activities during a lesson in a small junior school, O. Savchenko (2012) – organization of a lesson in a grade set, L. Prokopiv (2017) – modernization of a small school in the countryside and others. The above research overall dwells upon the peculiarities of conducting a lesson in a grade set in small rural schools. However, the organization of educational process according to the individual form of studying and also in educational complexes «junior school-kindergarten», «family school» have not been studied well.

The aim of this article is to characterize different forms of organization of studying process in various types of junior small-sized schools. Before dwelling upon this issue, let us first characterize different types of junior small-sized schools.

Types of junior small-sized schools. Junior small-sized schools differ by these indicators: a) by location (a suburban junior school, junior schools far from cities);

b) by geographical peculiarities (mountainous schools, a school in the steppe, a junior school in rural areas); c) by ethnic composition; d) innovational (a junior school-kindergarten, a family school); e) author schools. The most widespread types of junior small-sized schools in Ukraine are small-sized schools of the 1st grade, an educational complex «junior school-kindergarten», comprehensive educational establishment «family school» («Polozhennia pro indyvidualnu formu navchannia», 2019). Let us characterize these types of schools.

A small-sized junior school – is a school having separate grades of small size (from 5 to 10–12 pupils), joint grades (grade sets) or a teacher is teaching individual pupils according to an individual curriculum. The other type of a junior school – is an *educational complex «junior school-kindergarten»* that ensures the realization of a right of citizens to gain pre-school and junior school education. This educational establishment consists of two stages: pre-school and school. The educational process at the pre-school stage is done on the basis of a program of development, upbringing and education of children of a pre-school educational establishment and at a school – on the basis of an educational program for a junior school. The results of scientific research (Kuz, 2000; Manzhelii & Vashak, 2017) have shown that an educational complex «junior school-kindergarten» integrates upbringing possibilities in a small village (the pre-school system, the school, parents, villagers) and becomes its educational, cultural, spiritual centre; facilitates the widening of possibilities of a children's collective, enriches relations, communication, activities between children; successfully solves the problem of continuity between pre-school and school subsystems.

A *«family school»* is a comprehensive educational establishment with a small number of pupils that is created in a rural area to provide high quality educational services to pupils of a junior school that is located in the area with difficult demographic situation («Prymirne polozhennia», 2006). The goal of a «family school» is to create possibilities close to those in a family, the use of positive potential of people's calendar and family pedagogics in raising pupils. The educational establishment «family school» gives an opportunity to establish a new model of education, that is different from the classroom model and which ensures the individualization of educational process, gives opportunity to create conditions for the development of skills of every single person, fosters the formation of communication skills and mutual help. A «family school» can be municipal-owned or privately owned and as a rule it functions on the premises of an educational establishment. In the case of absence of the building it may function in a rented place. The number of pupils in the «family school» educational establishment should not exceed 16 people, and be not less than two people, and have not more than 4 pupils in each age category. The organization of educational process in a «family school» as a rule is conducted by one teacher who works with pupils of different age groups. The size of teaching load of the teacher shall not exceed 36 hours per week. The «family school» teacher performs the duties of the principal of an educational establishment. The self-governing body of the

«family school» is general assembly of parents who are called upon when needed but not less than once per semester. The aforementioned types of small-sized junior schools are the most widespread in Ukraine.

Alternative forms of education. Apart from classroom system of education, alternative forms of educations are actively tested in foreign small-sized schools (Baiborodova, Butik, Leoneva, & Maslennikov, 2005; Suvorova, 1995). Let us discuss various forms of education that, in our opinion, would be good to use in the types of small-sized junior schools characterized above.

A lesson in a small-sized junior school. In a small-sized *junior* school, if a teacher works with a separate grade a lesson can be used as a form of study with its inherent structural elements: checking homework, actualization of sensual experience and background knowledge of pupils, motivation of pupils' educational activity, the announcement of the topic, goals and objectives of a lesson, perception and initial comprehension of new material by pupils, comprehension of objective connections and relationships in the new material, generalization and systematization of knowledge, summary of a lesson, homework assignment. Such a lesson has its peculiarities. Since the size of such a grade is small, a teacher has to take into account the level of a child's readiness to study, make extensive use of opportunities for individualization of teaching: provide assistance to the backward pupils in doing exercises, solving tasks, in forming reading and writing skills; work with stronger students on solving more complex tasks. The experience of teaching in small schools in Poland is worth our attention (Prokopiv, 2017).

A lesson in a grade set. At a small-sized junior school with joint grades (grade sets) a teacher conducts a lesson in a grade set. A joint grade (grade set) is a group of children of different ages that study according to a pre-determined curriculum and a schedule. Such a group may include children with special needs. Grade sets are created in comprehensive educational establishments located in villages when a grade has fewer than five children. In separate cases (to cut costs and keep personnel fully employed and when there are not enough classrooms etc.), grade sets may be created when a grade has more than five children. The duration of a lesson in a grade set is: 1st grade – 35 minutes, 2nd to 4th grades – 40 minutes. The duration of a lesson in a grade set may vary upon approval of respective educational regulators. If a grade set includes first grade pupils then it is reasonable to conduct shorter lessons.

The peculiarities of such a lesson is the following:

- 1) shorter duration of a lesson (30 minutes);
- 2) the first 1 or 2 lessons a teacher works with the 1st grade, while pupils of the second (second and third) grade come to the second (third) lesson;
- 3) teacher conducts the 3rd to 5th lessons with two (three) grades together;
- 4) after the fourth (fifth) lesson first graders' lessons end and a teacher conducts lessons with pupils of the second (second and third) grades;
- 5) a recess between lessons is 10 minutes.

Let us look at a fragment of such a schedule for a grade set of first and third grades

№	Duration of a lesson (min)	Monday	
		1 st grade	3 rd grade
1.	30	Literacy (reading)	–
2.	30	Maths	–
3.	40	Arts	Maths
4.	40	Health Basics	Literary Reading
5.	30	–	Foreign Language
6.	30	–	Natural Science
7.	30	–	Art

A lesson at a grade set is a lesson with several grades that is conducted by one teacher in one classroom. In most cases it is the lesson a teacher conducts simultaneously with two grades, while in school practice sometimes a grade set comprises three or four grades. Independent work is an integral part of the lesson in a grade set. A lesson in a grade set is characterised with a rotating combination of independent work of pupils and work under the guidance of a teacher: «independent work» – «work with the teacher». The number of switches of «independent work» – «work with the teacher» depends on: 1) the topic of a lesson in each grade; 2) the number of grades in a grade set; 3) the content of the courses joined in a lesson; 4) the level of formation of pupils' skills of independent work (Savchenko, 2012).

Depending on a number of grades in a grade set the number of such rotations could be different: if a grade set includes two grades, then the number of switches could be 5 to 6, if it includes three-four grades – then the number of switches could be 3 to 4. The practice of a teacher's work in grade sets suggests that for the «work with the teacher» stage of classroom work it is prudent to use the following types of work: explanation of new material through a narration and a conversation; checking (full or selective) the knowledge, skills and abilities of pupils; doing some preparatory exercises; reading texts aloud; oral composition of a story based on story pictures; selective reading; doing oral exercises, calculations; general repetition of reference knowledge and other.

The following types of activities could be used for the «independent work» stage: revision of educational material with a textbook; doing practice exercises, exercises for retaining educational material; doing tasks by a scheme, an instruction, algorithmic prescription; doing practice tasks; doing tasks on cards; doing tasks in a pre-printed copybook; doing various types of linguistic analysis; compiling the plan of what has been read; giving titles to parts of a text; silent reading with certain tasks, etc.

The peculiarities of a grade set include limited possibilities for the use of illustrative material, natural objects, slides and videos, multimedia tools of education. They can be used either during a single-themed lesson or during extra-curricular

activities. The use of teaching methods requires some changes in a grade set (Chepil, 2019). For example, conducting a didactic game in one of the grades could distract pupils of another grade. During a single-themed schedule (math joined with math and a language class with a language class etc.) one needs to use possibilities to conduct single-themed lessons, that is lessons consisting of the same subjects with the same topic. For example, during lessons of health basics at the second and third grade the topic «Social Component of Health» is taught, but in the third grade the content of the material is wider. Or at the Ukrainian language lessons in third or fourth grades there is a summary lesson dedicated to the topic «the Verb» (Onyshkiv, 2013).

Individual form of studying. According to the normative document «Regulations on the individual form of education in comprehensive educational institutions, 2016», the pupils who live in the countryside and where there are less than five pupils in a grade have a right for individual studying. Teaching of such pupils is organized according to an individualized plan approved by the local educational management body. An individual curriculum is based upon typical curriculum with the mandatory use of an invariant component. The norm of the weekly load for one junior school pupil for the organization of his/her individual studies is 5 hours per week, that is 5 lessons of 35 minutes each (for first graders) or of 40 minutes each (for 2nd to 4th graders). An individual curriculum is drafted depending on a number of students that study under the individual form and on the grade that they study in. Calculations are done depending on the duration of a lesson in each grade and the number of academic hours. For example, in the 1st grade the duration of a lesson is 35 minutes. If one pupil is studying under the individual form, then in order to study all grades of the invariant component of the curriculum 175 minutes (35 minutes times 5) are needed, while at the 2nd to 4th grades – 200 minutes (40 minutes times 5). Time for each subject in an individual curriculum is calculated depending on a number of hours in a typical curriculum.

While at an ordinary grade, for instance, the 2nd grade, according to a typical curriculum for studying mandatory courses there are 23 hours per week, for lessons with two pupils on individual form of studying there are only 10 hours (5 hours times 2). That is why the time to study subjects and courses of the invariant (mandatory) part of the curriculum has to be decreased, equally distributing it among them. For example, if at an ordinary grade there are 4 hours a week designated to study math, then to organize lessons under the individual form there are only 2 lessons of 40 minutes each or 4 lessons of 20 minutes a week. It is advisable to have 10–15-minute breaks between classes (between classes with a duration of 10–15 minutes one may organize 5-minute breaks, and after each pair of such classes – 10–15-minute breaks). One, two, three or four pupils from one or different grades could work with a teacher according to an individual form of studying. Let us look at the cases when a teacher works with pupils of the same grade.

1. If a teacher works with one pupil, the duration of such lessons is 10–15 minutes. There is very little time for the work with a pupil, that is why one needs to choose

forms of work accordingly, in particular: checking pupils' knowledge and skills; teacher's explanation; doing practice exercises; giving homework, etc. The level of attainment of a pupil has to be taken into account during the process of organization of educational work. For work with a backward pupil it is advisable to use schemes, examples for doing tasks, hints and other types of aid, didactic material, and for brighter pupils one may use creative tasks, tasks for quick-wittedness, didactic material, work for a deeper understanding of the learning material.

2. A teacher works with two pupils of the same grade (age). The work can be organized the same way as with one pupil, but with a longer lesson duration (20 minutes).

3. A teacher works with three pupils of the same grade (age). The duration of lessons increases (20 to 25 minutes). In this case there is a possibility to allocate more time during lessons to the following types of work: different ways of re-reading; different types of work on a written story; practice exercises, etc.

4. A teacher works with four pupils of the same grade (age). The duration of lessons is the same as with the work with an entire grade (40 minutes), but there are fewer lessons. The methodology for organizing educational work with pupils during a lesson is similar to that of a lesson in a grade with a small number of pupils.

5. If a teacher instructs 3 to 4 pupils of different grades under the individual form, he/she needs to use the same forms of work as in the work with one, two or three pupils of the same grade, and lessons of such academic disciplines as arts, handicraft, gym is advisable to join and conduct with all pupils (just like a lesson in a grade set). Such unification increases lesson duration (to 30–40 minutes) and it gives a teacher an opportunity to allocate more time for practice exercises, for doing practical tasks (Onyshkiv, 2013).

There is a different option for lessons with pupils according to the individual form of studying. When using a 40-minute lesson, then during a 5-day academic week a teacher will have 2 to 3 lessons daily (if he/she works individually with 2 to 3 pupils). In such a case, some disciplines could be put on the schedule once every two weeks. To organize lessons in a «family school» a teacher may use such forms as a lesson in a small-sized junior school (if all pupils are of the same age), a lesson at a grade set or work with pupils under the individual form of studying.

Conclusions

Thus, we have examined and characterized the forms of organization of teaching at small-sized junior schools in rural areas as a lesson in a small-sized school, a lesson at a grade set, individual form of studying which will help a teacher (depending on the type of a junior school and size of grades) choose an optimal form of organization of teaching pupils.

Prospects for further research. The study of the use of various types of work with students in the course of educational activities in a small junior school has prospect for further research.

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