

Tutor Support in the Ungraded School of the North

Apoyo de tutores en la escuela sin graduación del Norte

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Summary

The study is aimed at providing scientific substantiation of the relevance of the tutors' activities and at describing the educational experimental program implemented at the Department of Primary Education of the North-Eastern Federal University concerning primary education and tutoring in the general ungraded and nomadic schools of the North. Research methods include: study and analysis of scientific literary sources, including those considering the problems of education in Yakutia; analysis of the tutor support organization for school education in the North; and simulation of a tutor support model in a nomadic school. Teacher training experience was obtained in introducing a new combined profile in the bachelor's program "Primary Education and Tutoring in the General Ungraded and Nomadic Schools of the North". The article describes a model for the formation of ethno-educational competence in primary school teachers, ethno-pedagogization of the educational process and the national civic identity as a condition for the successful implementation of the tasks of the new standard for primary school, and deals with the content and stages of the formation of bachelors' ethno-educational competencies in future primary school teachers as exemplified by Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University.

Keywords: Ungraded School; Individualization; Training Model; Vocational Training; Tutor.

Resumen

El estudio tiene por objeto fundamentar científicamente la pertinencia de las actividades de los tutores y describir el programa experimental educativo aplicado en el Departamento de Enseñanza Primaria de la Universidad Federal del Nordeste en relación con la enseñanza primaria y la tutoría en las escuelas generales no graduadas y nómadas del Norte. Los métodos de investigación incluyen: el estudio y análisis de las fuentes literarias científicas, incluidas las que examinan los problemas de la educación en Yakutia; el análisis de la organización de apoyo a los tutores para la educación escolar en el Norte; y la simulación de un modelo de apoyo a los tutores en una escuela nómada. Se obtuvo experiencia en la formación de maestros al introducir un nuevo perfil combinado en el programa de licenciatura "Educación primaria y tutoría en las escuelas generales no graduadas y nómadas del Norte". En el artículo se describe un modelo para la formación de competencias etnoeducativas en maestros de escuela primaria, la etnopedagogía del proceso educativo y la identidad cívica nacional como condición para la ejecución satisfactoria de las tareas de la nueva norma para la escuela primaria, y se abordan el contenido y las etapas de la formación de competencias etnoeducativas de los bachilleres en los futuros maestros de escuela primaria, como lo ejemplifica la Universidad Federal Nororiental de Ammosov.

Palabra clave: Escuela no graduada; individualización; modelo de formación; formación profesional; tutor.

Introduction

The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is one of the northern regions, a significant part of which are the territories of the circumpolar Arctic region. Undoubtedly, to ensure the quality of life in rough northern environments and, above all, to ensure the quality education for children aimed at obtaining sufficient educational potential and developing the abilities and talents of the younger generation is an important condition for the Russian Federation in settling the northern territories. These factors will contribute to the growth of innovative development of the Russian society.

Currently, modern trends in the development of education are associated with innovation. The implementation of the ideas of the new-generation Federal State Educational

Standard (FSES) (n.d.) presupposes a change in the paradigm of education: from knowledge values, education should be transformed to humanistic values, to the priority of the development of an integral person, to the “personality culture” and “personal qualities” of each pupil.

In the context of the implementation of the FSES for primary general (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2009), basic (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2010) and secondary general education (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2012), the task is to enhance the efficiency and quality of teaching in the ungraded schools. The main reasons that impede their activity are still poor facilities and resources, staff turnover, incomplete academic workload, lack of favorable living conditions, remoteness from cultural centers, etc. In our opinion, the introduction of tutor support in rural ungraded and nomadic schools of the North is becoming one of the optimal conditions for the qualitative improvement of their activities. In particular, the individualization of the learning and educational process, aimed at students’ personal development, ensures its effectiveness in the context of low occupancy of the class and different age groups in extracurricular activities. We believe that the prospects of education in the absence of subject teachers are assigned to the tutor as the organizer of an individual educational trajectory with regard to the current state and development of computer technologies and the possibilities of distance education.

Literature Review

Sociologists view rural teachers as “a socially professional community uniting school teachers of different educational levels (primary, incomplete secondary), with different specialization of their basic education and different periods of their professional activity in rural areas” (Sillaste, 2003). The educational process of such schools is characterized by a large proportion of learners’ independent work, conducting lessons on the same topic with students of several classes, and the lack of high-quality natural educational situations (Bayborodova, 2013; Suvorova, 2006).

An ungraded school is defined in *The Russian Pedagogical Encyclopedia* (Panov, 1993) as follows: “as ungraded school is a school without parallel classes, with small school enrollment”. Shcherbakova (2012) analyzed the appearance and semantic development of the term “ungraded school”, the scholar revealed that until the early 1970’s the term “ungraded” was applied only to a primary school, where students of two, three, or four classes were combined into one class – a set if there were less than fifteen students together. One teacher worked with a class set. In the 1970s the concept of the ungraded school started to include incomplete secondary schools and secondary schools with low classroom attendance. Attempts have been made to differentiate between the names of such schools and classes that form them: “small schools (classes)” (Zaikin et al., 2008), “schools (classes) with low classroom occupancy rate” (Suvorova, 2006), “small-numbered schools (classes)” (Rogachev, 1993).

Guryanova (2016) believes that an ungraded rural school is a general educational institution that has one or two classes in parallel, functioning to ensure access to general education for citizens regardless of their place of residence. Such pedagogization is possible in case there is a comprehensive school in the rural community as the driving center of this process. It should be noted that a small ungraded school performs significant socio- and cultural-forming functions in a village, being at the same time the center of the cultural, sports, and social life of the village residents (Alexandrova, 2014).

Considering the global trends and prospects for the preservation of ungraded schools, we examined the publications of researchers from the USA, Finland, Norway, Canada, Iceland that also deal with the content and quality of work of rural ungraded schools.

Kovach (2010), a Canadian scholar, and a representative of the first nations of Canada, develops transgressive pedagogy, believing that education should serve as a way to create mutually beneficial coexistence of peoples, with complete respect and understanding. While addressing indigenous researchers, Smith (2005) indicated that these approaches would make it possible to determine what is specific and necessary, which is relevant and important for the indigenous population in understanding themselves and their place in the world, and would also enable to overcome the framework of Western generally accepted epistemology, which in some way or another serves the interests of European scientific thinking and differs from the traditional indigenous worldview and perception of the environment.

According to Karlberg-Granlund (2011), 513 schools were closed or enlarged in Finland from 2005 to 2009, emphasizing at the same time that working in a small Finnish rural school requires the maximum manifestation of all competencies from the teacher and allows for more professional satisfaction from full communication with children and their parents, and from the opportunity to observe their personal contribution to the development of children in the long term. Consequently, the role of rural Finnish schools in developing the country's educational potential should be highly appreciated by the state and government.

Also noting the policy of reducing rural ungraded schools that took place in the history of Australian education, Halsey (2011) wrote about the increasing role of the rural school in the context of the coming demographic growth in Australia until 2050, and the food security of the country that was actualized in connection with this growth, and the need to strengthen the positions of the rural school. The author emphasized the importance of revising state educational policies for rural schools, which make up 45% of all Australian schools.

Aðalsteinsdóttir (2008) investigated the same issues about the importance of rural ungraded school for Iceland, where this type of school was also prevalent. The author described in detail the advantages of a rural school with respect to the implementation of an individual and personality-oriented approach, the close interaction of a rural teacher with a rural community, and the need for special training of teachers to work in rural schools with different age classes.

The experience of English teachers in organizing tutor education deserves close attention. Cawelti (1995) noted that tutoring adapted the learning process to the needs of students. It was concluded that systematic tutor support with direct feedback is effective in teaching students to cope with emerging difficulties (Marzano et al., 2001; Fueyo & Bushell, 1998; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 1999; Mathews et al., 2008).

Thus, the study of domestic and foreign experience allows us to conclude that currently there is a long-felt need to develop conceptual foundations of ethnocultural education in the framework of multidisciplinary teacher training for the ungraded and nomadic schools of the North. Modernization of the activities of rural ungraded schools on the basis of variable models of the socio-cultural educational complex, implementing innovative technologies of teaching and upbringing in the conditions of mixed-aged classes, aimed at preserving the ethnocultural traditions of the peoples of the North-East of Russia, contributes to a better application of the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standard (n.d.) for general education by students, providing conditions for all-round development student personality in rural society.

Tutor historically is a special pedagogical position; this person ensures the development of individual educational programs for students, and accompanies the process of individual education at school, university, in the system of additional and lifelong learning (Sergeeva et al., 2020). The tutoring phenomenon is closely related to the history of European universities in the 12th century and originates from Great Britain. It took shape around the 14th century in the classical English universities: Oxford and Cambridge.

Tutor's activities are understood in Russian pedagogical practice as a qualified accompaniment of cognitive interest, assistance in the formation of research thinking, reflective experience, and advisory work within the framework of the child's individual educational trajectory. At the present stage, nomadic schools and remote rural ungraded schools are provided with satellite Internet and are able to work remotely. In the context of the unification of rural organizations into a single socio-cultural complex, the possibilities of introducing a new staff unit such as a tutor are expanding, since in this case a teacher-coordinator is needed to direct the resources and efforts of the school in the interests of the individual development of each child in the rural school (Nikolaeva, 2016).

The development of educational programs and project activities are carried out on the basis of an individual educational trajectory. Tutor should know well the age-related psychological characteristics of primary school children. Barakhsanova et al. (2018) and Vlasova et al. (2018) underlined that the teacher should take into account the age-related patterns of personality development, and master the technologies of personal developmental interaction with students, create conditions for satisfying students' individual educational needs, especially in a pandemic, through the use of distance learning technology.

The younger adolescence (12-15 years) is characterized by a period of mastering the norms of social behavior, the formation of ego identity, the birth of individual self-awareness (Elkonin, 2001). As psychologists note, middle school age is the most favorable life period for the formation of those psychological qualities and behavior patterns, which are necessary for the motivations and needs of personality development and formation of independent behavior (Kovaleva, 2010).

The older adolescence (15-17 years) is characterized by such significant qualitative new mental formation as self-determination, a choice of a life path, and a choice of an occupation. Self-determination as a new formation in the personality of a senior student is based on the formed cognitive activity and independent behavior.

Thus, tutor support is a step-by-step systematic continuous activity to develop students' personal qualities in accordance with their age-specific developmental characteristics. The objectives of tutor support vary at each age stage of student development and can be represented in the following structure (Table 1).

Table 1.
Tutor Support in School

| Stages | Age Periods | Objectives of Tutor Support |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Primary school age (6-12 years) | Providing conditions for the identification, implementation and recognition of individual cognitive interests by younger schoolchildren |
| 2 | Younger adolescence (12-15 years) | Creating conditions for an adolescent's development of competencies, abilities and skills to independently plan educational and life paths. |
| 3 | Older adolescence (15-17 years) | Creating conditions for a school leaver's professional self-determination |

Thus, tutor support is built on the individualization of education, which implies planning the content of education with regard to the learners' educational needs (Kovaleva et al., 2012).

Methodology and Methods

The paper presents the experience of introducing a new combined profile in the bachelor degree course "Primary Education and Tutoring in the Ungraded and Nomadic School of the North". A model for forming professional competence of future primary school teachers and tutors of the Department of Primary Education, Teacher Training Institute, Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University was considered on the basis of a universal modular educational program developed with regard to the prevailing ethnocultural and ethno-educational theory and practice of national and regional education of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

To verify the model implementation, the authors used a set of theoretical and empirical methods commonly applied in theoretical and practical research: studying and analyzing scientific literary sources, in particular those concerning the problems of the education in Yakutia, etc.; analyzing the arrangement of tutor support for school education in the North; designing a tutor support model in a nomadic school; and providing pedagogical experience in introducing a new combined profile in the bachelor degree course indicated above.

It should be noted that tutor support for children's socialization requires knowledge of ethno-educational traditions and their place in the spiritual culture of the people, and ethno-psychological peculiarities of children of the indigenous minorities of the North (Marfusulova, 2019; Kozhurova, 2015). The future teachers need to know about the tutor's role in the educational process and ethnic aspects of child's socialization for their effective work. Also, the tutor should know the subject of ethno-education of the peoples of the North, the typology of cultures: historical, ethnic, and national. Proceeding from the above, ethno-educational and ethno-psychological training of future teachers is an essential part of education, necessary for readiness to implement the tasks of the ethnocultural orientation of education.

Results

In turn, the tutor's activities in the North-East of Russia cannot be carried out without taking into account the regional characteristics of the education system. The small number of students in rural schools in the North is a socio-economic pattern, conditioned by the specific climatic and national-regional characteristics of the historical development of indigenous peoples (Shergina & Neustroev, 2018). Therefore, the occupation of a tutor in a remote northern ungraded or nomadic school, where there is no real opportunity to have a full staff of teachers in all subjects, is of particular importance. In this connection, one-two specialists often work in such schools: in particular, in the nomadic school, and from eight to eleven teachers in the general school; they combine the functions of a head, subject teachers and an educator (a school counsellor). Nevertheless, precisely these schools remain the guarantor of preserving a village itself or a settlement, the traditional rural lifestyle of the indigenous peoples of the North as a whole (Neustroev et al., 2016). In these conditions, it is extremely relevant to train multi-skilled teachers who own tutorial technologies for managing the school and organizing qualitatively educational process with students; for developing curricula, maintaining school legal documentation and financial statements. An analysis of the experience of teachers working in ungraded and nomadic schools allows for conclusion that at present they possess these competencies insufficiently (Neustroev et al., 2017).

The tutor support model in the nomadic school has its own characteristics; however, all the main content-related components are preserved. The specifics of the teacher-tutor's work in the nomadic schools of the North combines the knowledge and consideration of the ethno-

educational and ethno-psychological characteristics of the organization of the learners' educational process (Neustroev et al., 2019).

Ethno-pedagogization is a natural, efficient use of integration, popular traditions of upbringing as a whole in the educational process. Ethno-education is a special look at the upbringing of a representative of a particular ethnic group by folk means (Berezhnova et al., 2013). The modern teacher of the rural ungraded and nomadic school of the North needs knowledge, skills and abilities in the traditional ethnocultural specificity of the education system.

Ethno-psychological knowledge includes knowledge in the field of ethnocultural characteristics of representatives of different nations, their psychological characteristics and interethnic relations.

Knowledge of the learners' ethnocultural characteristics and their manifestations will allow the teacher-tutor to create favorable conditions for the development of tutor's personal qualities.

Let us consider the model of the tutor support for primary school students in a stationary nomadic school, based on the model of tutor support technology by Kovaleva (2010) (Table 2). As noted, in a stationary nomadic school, students go to a reindeer herd for a certain time and study in ethnocultural subjects and basic subjects with a national-regional component. Consequently, the students' cognitive interest develops in ethnocultural subjects: the world around us, the culture of the peoples of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), and others provided for by the curriculum of the educational institution.

Table 2.

Tutor Support in the Primary Stationary Nomadic School of the North

Objective: Providing conditions for the identification, implementation and understanding of individual cognitive interests by younger students

Principles: differentiation and individualization; continuity; flexibility; openness.

Content: identification and fixation of the younger students' cognitive interest; identification of individual problems associated with cognitive interest (diagnostic and motivational stage); assistance in identifying the necessary selection tests (designing stage); teaching younger students how to work with cognitive interest; providing recommendations on how to obtain the necessary information (designing and implementing stage); organization of the result presentation by students (implementing stage); joint analysis of the methods and resources used during the work; organization of reflection by students about their activities (analytical stage).

Content of tutor support stages:

1. Diagnostic and motivational stage. At this stage, carried out directly in school, the cognitive interests of younger students are identified and recorded. As a result, younger students should be aware of their goals, interests and plans.
 2. Designing stage. At this stage that is also carried out at school information on a topic of interest is collected and analyzed, and a map of interest is drawn up. In the conditions of a nomadic school this stage is the main one for the formation of cognitive interests in the tutees. At this stage, educational resources are identified where one can
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find information on a topic of interest. A plan for the project implementation is drawn up, the place of the study and the general characteristics of the place of the project implementation are determined, as well as the project resources, all materials are prepared for the project implementation

3. Implementing stage. This stage takes place directly in the reindeer herd location.
4. Implementing and analytical stage. At this stage younger schoolchildren present their interests to other children and adults and participate in the discussion. The preparation and presentation of cognitive interest as the most important link includes writing a basic outline plan and supportive notes by younger students, as well as speaking in front of an audience that the child himself has chosen. At this stage, it is important to emphasize the importance of tutorial assistance in the creation of the presentation, the choice of the presentation form, reflecting not only the characteristics of the cognitive interest, but also the younger student's personality.

After the project presentation, it is obligatory to analyze the tutee's work. It can be an objective analysis by an "expert", a specialist in the given topic. After the reviewer's speech, a collective discussion is also obligatory: younger schoolchildren think over new things that they have learned during the presentations, note the most interesting moments and episodes, and the speakers' findings. Analysis of the presentation is followed by the stage of determining plans for the future, comprising determination of the prospects for the cognitive interest development; definition of the topic (content-related perspectives); and determination of terms (time perspectives).

This model of tutor support is also possible in network and summer nomadic schools. The organization of tutoring in such schools can be aimed at developing interest not only in the national culture, native language and traditional economic management, but also in basic subjects such as mathematics, Russian, literary reading, etc.

Discussion

As mentioned above, the field of professional activities of a graduate from a new combined bachelor's program "Primary Education and Tutoring in the General Ungraded (Nomadic) School of the North" is characterized by the provision of an integral teacher training process, in which the teacher combines the teaching, upbringing and developing of a younger student with tutor activities in specific conditions of an ungraded (nomadic) school. The area of occupational tasks of the future teacher is expanded as follows: teaching basic subjects from 1 to 4 grades as a teacher in the field of general primary education and accompanying the educational activities of learners in a secondary ungraded (nomadic) school, i.e. tutor activity. The specificity of professional activities involves teaching and tutor support for students of the general ungraded (nomadic) school who live in the remote northern territories.

The above bachelor's training program assumes a modularized curriculum, reflecting continuity in the formation of the bachelor's competencies through the introduced disciplines of the basic and variable parts (cross-curricular modules). The curriculum contains 28 modules that are built in a logical and sequential chain studied by the students at their discretion. During a 5-year period, ethno-educational and ethno-psychological training of future teachers is carried out in structural and contextual modules: "Languages of the Peoples of the North", "Methods for Teaching Languages of the Peoples of the North", "Ethno-educational and Ethno-psychological Peculiarities of Children Upbringing", "Functioning of Languages and Cultures in a Multiethnic

Environment”, “Tutor’s Psychological and Pedagogical Support for Children’s Education”, “Providing Child’s Socialization by a Teacher-Tutor in an Ethnic and Multicultural Environment in an Ungraded School of the North”.

The module “Languages of the Peoples of the North” provides for the study of the following languages: Yakut, Even and Evenk. The objectives of mastering the disciplines are to prepare students for professional activities in primary school; to form a sufficient volume of linguistic knowledge and skills in the languages of the peoples of the North in students; to expand the students’ scientific outlook, to develop their language thinking; and to provide the necessary theoretical basis for further self-education and professional development. Language is one of the main components of the ethnic culture of the people, as noted above, the basis of the anthropological characteristics of the ethnos. Knowledge of the language ensures acceptance, understanding and recognition of the value of ethno-cultural diversity of ethnic groups. On this premise, the study of this module involves solving of tasks for the formation of ethnocultural competencies in future teachers for schools of the North (Bugaeva & Sokorutova, 2019). The bachelors’ ability to teach the native languages of the peoples of the North will provide their comprehensive preparation for work in the remote northern territories. The mastery of the “Methods for Teaching Languages of the Peoples of the North” determines the knowledge of the theoretical foundations of this discipline, the ability to determine their tasks, principles and effective teaching methods. The module “Ethno-educational and Ethno-psychological Peculiarities of Children Upbringing” actualizes the ethno-cultural orientation of the educational process, including ethno-educational and ethno-psychological training of future teachers for schools in the North. The module “Functioning of Languages and Cultures in a Multiethnic Environment” is included in the curriculum to form the foundations of professional activities in the context of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic education. The module comprises the following disciplines: Traditional Culture of the Peoples of the North, Comparative Analysis in Language Education, Interethnic Communication in a Multi-Ethnic Environment. The content of these disciplines meets the peculiarities and needs of the interaction of ethnocultural and multicultural education in the formation of teacher-tutor’s competencies, taking into account the specifics of the activities in the general ungraded and nomadic school of the North. The module “Providing Child’s Socialization by a Teacher-Tutor in an Ethnic and Multicultural Environment in an Ungraded School of the North” ensures formation of students’ general understanding of the factors and conditions that affect the process of child’s socialization in current conditions; and helps them find the ways to improve the process of child’s socialization in the traditional culture of the people of the North. The students’ competencies, formed as a result of mastering this module, are determined by the ability to solve the problems of upbringing and spiritual and moral development of the learners’ personality, and by the ability to provide educational support for the processes of socialization and professional self-determination of learners, preparing them for a conscious choice of profession.

Conclusions

The content and forms of multidisciplinary tutor training for bachelor teachers in the general ungraded and nomadic schools of the North are defined in the variable basic professional educational program of higher education developed by the authors for students pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Pedagogical Education (44.03.05), in the combined profile “Primary Education and Tutoring in the General Ungraded and Nomadic School of the North”. The specifics of the professional activities of bachelor, with regard to the profiles of their training, lies in the following: the primary school teacher is a widely erudite educator in the field of primary general education, who teaches all the basic subjects from grades 1 to 4, and provides tutor support for the learners’ educational activities in the general ungraded and nomadic schools, which expands the scope of teachers’ professional tasks.

Training of future teachers who have the ability to solve professional and educational problems from a culturological perspective, who are competent in ethnocultural education is one

of the most important tasks of modern higher education. An analysis of this bachelor's program reveals the degree of theoretical and practical development of the model for training primary school teachers and teachers-tutors in the aspect of the ethnocultural competence approach in higher education. The future teachers' readiness to apply the knowledge of the theoretical foundations and technologies of natural science education in practice is one of the objectives of the program for training bachelors in this profile. Students should understand the importance of ecology in the modern world, adhere to and promote the basic principles of environmental protection in extreme conditions of the North in the process of mastering educational material. The content and basic structural units of work programs for environmental disciplines were developed basing on this approach. Natural science education forms a nature-friendly worldview aimed at comprehension by people as a part of nature, their culture and orientation in the natural world, as a full-fledged personality, which is especially characteristic of a bearer of authentic Arctic culture and an educator of ethnic nature conservation traditions of the peoples of the North among contemporary learners of a rural school.

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