

ACADEMIC LIFE

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Teaching and learning in the first days and weeks of the war between Russia and Ukraine: A presentation at the TASA Social Sciences Week 2022¹

Social Sciences Week (SSW) was designed as an annual week-long series of events offering insight into the impact of the social sciences on human lives. SSW was started in 2018 by Professor Dan Woodman, the then President of the Australian Sociological Association (TASA). This year, SSW brought together scholars and practitioners in this field from all top-ranked Australian universities and research centres. Participants in the event delivered lectures, webinars and workshops on a wide range of topics such

1 A slightly modified version of this paper (titled «A letter to a soldier», «Fearless Ukrainians», «Sharing is caring», «Kin support», «Safety superheroes» and other examples of online lessons in wartime») was published in Ukrainian in the proceedings of the «Shevchenko Spring 2022: Sociology» conference, which was held online by the Faculty of Sociology of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv on 13 May 2022.

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as organisational resilience, everyday actions for nature, social problems of indigenous communities in Australia, educational challenges, health inequity, energy insecurity, responses of social sciences to climate change, low waste living, migration and multiculturalism, etc. The authors of this article gave an online presentation titled «Learning in a bomb shelter, or how teachers in Ukraine interact with their students in times of war: A series of interviews»; besides, they acquainted the audience with their own creative teaching/learning materials and drawings made by Ukrainian pupils for the «War through the eyes of children» competition. The main points of the presentation are summarised below.

The day after Russian troops invaded our land, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine recommended stopping the educational process in educational institutions of all levels and sending students and educators on a two-week vacation. During that time, parts of Ukraine's territory found themselves under temporary occupation while a number of cities and towns (Mariupol, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Bucha, Irpin, etc.) became the scene of active hostilities. Over 10 million people were forced to flee from their homes, with 3.9 million leaving the country. Most of these people were women and children. According to UNICEF, more than half of Ukrainian children — 4.3 million out of 7.5 — were forced to leave their homes because of the war. As of 28 March 2022, due to hostilities, 144 children were killed and about 220 were injured; 659 educational institutions suffered from bombings and shelling while 74 were completely destroyed [Nazarenko, 2022].

From March 14, the educational process began to resume in the regions where the security situation allowed it. Decisions on where to conduct classes and how to interact with students were made by local governments and educational institutions. Students who had left their homes were able to return to their studies in places of their temporary stay, both in Ukraine and abroad. Provided that they were able to work, educators were permitted to do so from anywhere within or outside the country.

In areas that hosted internally displaced Ukrainians (those who had fled from the war-damaged cities or villages), preschools and secondary schools served as shelters for people in need of temporary housing. These people were accommodated in the dormitories of vocational/technical schools and higher education institutions. Schools and kindergartens collected, sorted and distributed humanitarian aid.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, non-governmental organisations, educational companies, schools, universities, colleges, kindergartens and extra-curricular institutions, as well as concerned citizens, made great efforts to ensure that the educational process was not interrupted. A number of distance learning tools have been implemented; furthermore, both teachers and students, as well as their parents, could receive informational support and psychological help [Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine].

Here are just a few examples of such educational initiatives.

- On 14 March, the «Learning without borders» project for 5–11 grade students, created jointly by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ministry of Culture, supported by Ukrainian TV channels and online platforms, was launched. As part of this project, video lessons are broadcast, with a particular subject scheduled for each day. The project has been implemented according to the

Ukrainian national curriculum for students of all ages, and the recordings of the online lessons are also available.

- Besides, March 14 saw the start of another project, «Kindergarten online», created by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Science. This project offers educational video lessons for children aged 3 to 6.
- As early as the first days of the war, «Vseosvita», a nationwide educational company, published an appeal to teachers («Educators, you have a special gift!»), held a series of webinars from leading Ukrainian educators, methodologists, teacher trainers, psychologists and lawyers; furthermore, this company initiated a drawing competition titled «War through the eyes of children» and offered a series of patriotic instructional materials (classroom posters such as «Our heroes», «Good evening, we are from Ukraine», «Unbreakable people of the bravest country», etc.).
- Distance learning schools («Optima», «Liko Education Online», etc.) provided free access to their educational resources.
- «Yakaboo» bookstore provided free access to books via their mobile application.
- The «All-Ukrainian online school» platform, launched in December 2020, continued to work. This is a resource for distance and blended learning of secondary and high school students. It contains lessons, teaching aids and instructional materials that comply with the national curriculum. The educational content of the platform includes lessons in 18 basic subjects: Ukrainian language and literature, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, world history, mathematics, English, etc. By the end of March, users from more than 130 countries had joined the All-Ukrainian online school.
- The «Smart Osvita» NGO launched the «Informative online meetings for children and teenagers» project. Note that these meetings are conducted by teachers from both Ukraine and other countries such as Canada, Italy, Romania, Portugal, India and Japan. The languages of the event are Ukrainian and English.
- The National Ecological and Naturalistic Centre for Student Youth announced the all-Ukrainian competition of inventive and innovative environmental projects, as well as the online all-Ukrainian olympiad of research initiatives for high school students. The first event took place in May 2022, and the second one was scheduled for June. In addition, there are distance learning courses such as «Mathematics in nature», «Natural sciences», «Lectures for young chemists». The selection round for the Ukrainian team for the final of the «Infomatrix» international computer science project competition was also held.

Moreover, the teachers themselves demonstrate great courage, dedication and creativity. For example, *Liudmyla Tabolina*, Headmistress of School No. 10 in Kharkiv, set up a bomb shelter (for people who lived in houses without basements), a humanitarian aid centre and a canteen in her school. Ms Tabolina also became a volunteer of the Fund of Free and Caring, helping to evacuate people out of the war-torn areas in Slobozhanshchyna (a historical region in the north-eastern part of Ukraine, which includes the city of Kharkiv and its suburbs). Another educator from Kharkiv, *Lidiia Nasonova*, who teaches Ukrainian language and literature, advises foreign teachers

on the adaptation of Ukrainian refugee children and gives a distance learning course in creative writing. *Vladyslav Kachur* from Vinnytsia (English and German teacher) became one of the coordinators of the evacuation centre opened in his school. Mr Kachur drafts requests from the military, orphanages and hospitals, translates these requests into English and sends them to international organisations. He also involves his students in the translation. *Artur Proidakov*, the winner of the Global Teacher Prize Ukraine¹, organised Ukrainian language courses in Kolomyia for internally displaced people. *Oleksandr Chuchaiev*, who teaches history and law in Blahovishchenske, Kirovohrad oblast², gives lectures in the history of Ukraine to his students while serving in the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. He is also planning to deliver a public lecture titled «Ukraine: Beginning of a new life». *Hanna But*, a civic education teacher from Melitopol, made patriotic posters and went out almost every day with her daughter to protest against the Russian occupation in the city's main square. Chemist *Hlib Repich* (Kyiv) recorded videos on how to protect yourself from chemical and nuclear threats and posted these videos on his TikTok page while *Pavlo Viktor* (Odesa) recorded physics lessons and posted them on his YouTube channel [Smolko, 2022].

The creative team of «Unique School» (Kyiv) developed a number of engaging presentations about the structure of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Among other things, students could learn about the Ground Forces, the Air Forces and the Special Operations Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The school also introduced a course called «Safety superheroes: Instructions for children in wartime» [Khizhinska, 2022].

The teachers of the «Green Forest» language school launched a free course titled «Wartime English», music lessons «Make music not war» and a series of conversation clubs. The fees for participation in the clubs are donated to cover the needs of the Ukrainian army.

A number of ideas for online lessons were proposed and implemented by the authors of this material. These include, in particular, a video letter to a soldier from the students of a gymnasium in the village of Bazylivshchyna, the presentation titled «Customs, traditions and good luck charms of my family», two web quests («See, the glory's born again!» and «This is what we must protect»), the «Fearless Ukrainians» flashmob, etc. The participants in this flashmob were supposed to speak briefly in Ukrainian and/or English about the Ukrainians they believed to be courageous and heroic. The list included Taras Shevchenko, Lesia Ukrainka, Ivan Franko, Olena Teliha, Lina Kostenko, Vasyl Stus, Oleksa Tykhyi, Valerii Marchenko, heroes of the Heavenly Hundred, Anti-Terrorist Operation/Joint Forces Operation veterans, medics, volunteers, Territorial Defence fighters, and, of course, the Ukrainian army.

Every educator who teaches children during wartime could certainly share their experience and their story. The presented paper gives only a tiny glimpse. Thus, the

1 This is an annual national award for teachers who promote changes in education. The award celebrates the teacher's achievements both in relation to their students and to society; moreover, it emphasises the importance of being an educator in Ukraine.

2 Oblast (which roughly corresponds to province) is a sub-national entity in Ukraine. Oblast capitals are usually big cities such as Kharkiv, Odesa, Lviv, Dnipro, etc.

task of our further research will be to conduct interviews with school and kindergarten teachers from different regions of Ukraine.

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ОЛЬГА МАКСИМЕНКО, НАТАЛІЯ МАРЧУК, ТЕТЯНА ЗЕМЛЯНА

Викладання та навчання у перші дні й тижні російсько-української війни: виступ на Тижні соціальних наук–2022 Австралійської соціологічної асоціації

24 лютого 2022 року розпочалася повномасштабна наступальна фаза російсько-української війни, яка триває вже понад вісім років. З міркувань безпеки — адже під загрозою опинилися життя кількох мільйонів українців — усі освітні установи (школи, коледжі, інститути, університети, дитячі садки, позашкільні навчальні заклади тощо) довелося тимчасово закрити. Лист Міністерства освіти і науки України з рекомендацією тимчасово припинити освітній процес був опублікований уже на другий день війни. Відновити навчання в школах (щоправда, тільки частково і в дистанційному режимі) стало можливим лише після 14 березня. Звісно, йшлося лише про ті навчальні заклади, які були розташовані в областях/районах, де не велось активних бойових дій, або на території, які не опинилися під окупацією. Утім, значна частина педагогів залишалася на зв'язку з учнями, незважаючи на небезпеку. Нерідко вчителі готувалися до занять і проводили уроки навіть у бомбосховищах, спілкуючись із учнями, які на той час уже могли виїхати за межі України. У порівняно безпечних районах практично всі вчителі й директори шкіл долучалися до волонтерства. Саме про роботу навчальних закладів у перші дні й тижні війни та про зусилля вчителів, спрямовані на забезпечення освітнього процесу в цих екстраординарних умовах, і розповідається в поданій статті. Емпіричним матеріалом до неї слугували фрагменти інтерв'ю з українськими педагогами, опубліковані на освітніх сайтах або взяті особисто. Наведено також приклади онлайн-уроків та позаурочних заходів того часу. Текст статті (разом із власними методичними розробками та малюнками учасників всеукраїнського конкурсу «Війна очима дітей») було використано авторками під час виступу на Тижні соціальних наук, зорганізованому Австралійською соціологічною асоціацією. Захід проходив з 5 до 11 вересня 2022 року включно.

Ключові слова: російсько-українська війна, українські школи, освітній процес, дистанційне навчання, онлайн-уроки, креативні розробки для викладання та навчання

ОЛЬГА МАКСИМЕНКО, НАТАЛЬЯ МАРЧУК, ТАТЬЯНА ЗЕМЛЯНАЯ

Преподавание и обучение в первые дни и недели российско-украинской войны: выступление на Неделе социальных наук — 2022 Австралийской социологической ассоциации

24 февраля 2022 года началась полномасштабная наступательная фаза российско-украинской войны, продолжающейся уже более восьми лет. Из соображений безопасности — ведь под угрозой оказались жизни нескольких миллионов украинцев — все образовательные учреждения (школы, колледжи, институты, университеты, детские сады, внешкольные учебные заведения и т. д.) пришлось временно закрыть. Письмо Министерства образования и науки Украины с рекомендацией приостановить образовательный процесс было опубликовано уже на второй день войны. Возобновить обучение в школах (впрочем, только частично и в дистанционном режиме) стало возможным лишь после 14 марта. Конечно, речь шла только о тех учебных заведениях, которые находились в областях/районах, где не велись активные боевые действия, или на территориях, не оказавшихся под оккупацией. Однако значительная часть педагогов оставалась на связи с учениками, невзирая на опасность. Нередко учителя готовились к занятиям и проводили уроки даже в бомбоубежищах, общаясь с учениками, которые к тому времени уже могли выехать за пределы Украины. В относительно безопасных районах практически все учителя и директора школ присоединились к волонтерству. Именно о работе учебных заведений в первые дни и недели войны и об усилиях учителей, направленных на обеспечение образовательного процесса в этих экстраординарных условиях, и рассказывает в предложенной статье. Эмпирическим материалом к ней послужили фрагменты интервью с украинскими педагогами, опубликованные на образовательных сайтах или взятые лично. Приведены также примеры онлайн-уроков и внеурочных мероприятий того времени. Текст статьи (вместе с собственными методическими разработками и рисунками участников всеукраинского конкурса «Война глазами детей») был использован авторками во время выступления на Неделе социальных наук, организованной Австралийской социологической ассоциацией. Мероприятие проходило с 5 по 11 сентября 2022 года.

Ключевые слова: российско-украинская война, украинские школы, образовательный процесс, дистанционное обучение, онлайн-уроки, креативные разработки для преподавания и обучения

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Teaching and learning in the first days and weeks of the war between Russia and Ukraine: A presentation at the TASA Social Sciences Week 2022

24 February 2022 marked the beginning of the full-scale attacking stage of the Russia–Ukraine war, which has been going on for over eight years. For security reasons — as the lives of several million Ukrainians were at risk — all educational institutions (schools, colleges, institutes, universities, kindergartens, extracurricular classes, etc.) had to be temporarily closed. A letter from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine with a recommendation to temporarily stop the educational process was published on the second day of the war. It became possible to resume the educational process at schools (although just partially and remotely) only after March 14. Clearly, it could be feasible only for those educational institutions that were located in regions/districts where no active hostilities were taking place or in territories that were not occupied. However, a significant number of teachers kept in touch with their students, despite the danger. Teachers were often preparing for classes and having lessons even in bomb shelters, communicating with students who by that time might already have been outside Ukraine. In relatively safe areas, almost all teachers and school principals participated in volunteering activities. This article is centred on the work of educational institutions during the first days and weeks of the war,

as well as on the efforts of teachers aimed at ensuring the educational process under these extraordinary circumstances. Excerpts from interviews with Ukrainian teachers (posted on educational websites or conducted personally) served as sources of empirical data. There are also several examples of online classes and extracurricular activities of that time. The text of the article (together with personal teaching/learning materials and drawings of the participants of the all-Ukrainian competition «War through the eyes of children») was used by the authors during a presentation at the Social Sciences Week hosted by the Australian Sociological Association. The event took place from 5 to 11 September 2022.

Keywords: *Russia–Ukraine war, Ukrainian schools, educational process, distance learning, online lessons, creative teaching/learning materials*