THE ROLE OF FOLKLORE IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE: NEW PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

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Abstract: This article examines in depth, through pedagogical analysis, the role and educational-aesthetic potential of Uzbek folk oral literature (proverbs, fairy tales, and heroic epics) in educating young people in today's era of globalization and the rapid development of digital technologies and social networks. The article substantiates a model for systematically incorporating folk oral literature into the educational process through visual, interactive, and multimedia formats that are easy for today's young people to understand.

Keywords: folk oral literature, national values, modern education, independent thinking, emotional intelligence, ethnopedagogy, life skills, visual education, epic storytelling, personal transformation.

Today's rapidly developing information society, globalization processes, and the expansion of cyberspace are having a direct and powerful influence on the formation of the younger generation's worldview, character, and aesthetic taste. The way young people today receive information and data has changed fundamentally: rather than lengthy, monotonous, and dry texts, they tend to prefer visual, concise, dynamic, and engaging formats. In these complex and contradictory circumstances, Uzbek folk oral literature (folklore) serves as an invaluable resource for awakening a sense of national identity in young people, strengthening their spiritual and moral immunity against alien ideas, and cultivating their appreciation of beauty.

However, in the modern education system and in family upbringing, methods for instilling the richness of folk oral literature in young people's minds still follow outdated patterns. In many cases, they remain limited to dry admonitions, memorization, and didactic coercion. Naturally, this leads to a decline in young people's interest in our national heritage or to indifference toward it. Young people find it difficult to accept ready-made moral formulas and commands such as "this is what you should do; this is what you should not do."

The renowned ethnopedagogy scholar G. N. Volkov rightly emphasized in his fundamental works: "In folk pedagogy, there is no ready-made separate textbook, special teacher, or artificial curriculum—the folk oral tradition itself performs these tasks perfectly. Encoded within it is the inexhaustible spiritual and educational experience of the nation, tested and refined over centuries." Prominent representatives of Uzbek folkloristics, including H. Zarifov, T. Mirzayev, and researchers of later periods, specifically highlighted the immense socio-artistic potential of epics and fairy tales in the upbringing of young people. Likewise, contemporary educational scholars M. Anorov and G. Saidova have studied the formation of young people's spiritual character through folklore. However, what is required today is not simply to praise this vast heritage as a relic of the past, but to transform the ideas it contains into a living, active

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pedagogical tool that teaches young people to address real everyday challenges—making sound decisions, overcoming conflicts and discouragement, and pursuing their goals.

The study employed pedagogical observation, comparative-historical analysis, a systems approach, and methods for connecting examples of folk creativity with individual psychology and the system of modern life skills. The theoretical foundation was the theory of archetypes (forms of the collective unconscious) developed by the renowned psychologist and philosopher C. G. Jung. According to Jung: "Symbolic images in fairy tales and myths are not merely products of imagination; they represent the collective experience of humanity and, through symbols, provide established psychological patterns that show people how to act in life's trials and how to make the right decisions."

Applying this approach to our national context, we re-examined and systematized the plotlines and characters' behavior in proverbs, fairy tales, and epics—not as mere remnants of the past, but as a set of universal "life skills" necessary for young people in today's digital age to find their rightful path in life and successfully overcome internal and external crises.

The genres of Uzbek folk oral literature have distinctive educational and aesthetic functions that contribute to the development of various aspects of human personality. If we move beyond dry didacticism and express them in contemporary language, their impact becomes much broader (Table 1).

Table 1. The role of folklore genres in developing life skills and their pedagogical framework

Genre	Traditional educational function	Inner influence on human psychology	Modern life skills developed
Proverbs	Moral principles; encouraging goodness, discouraging evil, and showing the right path.	A tested and reliable model for making the most optimal and correct decision in conflicting and uncertain situations.	**Independent and critical thinking; proper time management.**
Fairy tales	Distinguishing good from evil; developing children's imagination and reasoning through a magical world.	Not giving up in the face of difficulties; awakening inner strength and willpower without falling into discouragement.	**Emotional regulation (EQ); creative and unconventional problem-solving.**
Epics	Promoting patriotism, loyalty to the people and homeland, courage, heroism, and friendship.	Feeling responsibility toward the people and homeland; spiritual and aesthetic purification (catharsis); renouncing personal interests.	**Leadership; working in harmony with a team; strategic planning.**

Folk proverbs are not merely a collection of beautiful, rhyming words; they are the condensed intellectual and mental experience of a nation, tested and refined over centuries. For example, proverbs

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such as "Measure seven times and cut once" or "A man's work is a brave man's work" are not simply pieces of advice; they cultivate the critical and analytical thinking skills that young people today often lack. They teach young people to verify any external information, avoid making hasty and mistaken decisions, and anticipate consequences. This serves as an inner intellectual shield against various misleading falsehoods on the internet and the ideological manipulation of alien movements. Analysis shows that proverbs activate the mechanism in the human mind for quickly choosing the right strategy in situations of uncertainty.

In his fundamental scholarly works, the renowned folklorist V. Ya. Propp interprets the magical-fairy-tale hero's departure from home, struggle against various giants and evil forces during the journey, and passage through complex trials as the social maturation, strengthening, and inner transformation of the human personality. Bringing this scholarly perspective into contemporary pedagogy, each trial and obstacle in fairy tales can be seen as developing young people's emotional intelligence—that is, the ability to manage their own feelings and understand the emotional states of others. For example, in the fairy tales "Erkenja" and "Ur To'qmoq," even when the main character faces extremely difficult, unexpected, and unjust situations, they do not give in to nervousness or resentment; instead, they calmly employ intelligence, patience, and strategic ingenuity. In contemporary terms, this cultivates resilience in difficult circumstances and the ability to solve problems in unexpected and creative ways. Through its artistic imagery, the fairy tale helps children understand that life's difficulties are not an end in themselves, but a stage of development.

Uzbek folk heroic epics ("Alpomish" and the "Go'ro'g'li" cycle) do not merely depict battles and physical strength. They present, in a fully developed form, the highest spiritual and aesthetic model for young people—the ideal of a national hero. The characters of Alpomish and Go'ro'g'li inspire young people, even during the most complex social crises and periods of fragmentation and disunity, to set aside personal interests, assume great responsibility toward their people and homeland, and unite others around a noble common goal—in other words, to develop genuine leadership qualities. The elevated artistic language, musicality (the art of bards), and aesthetic beauty of these epics create a profound sense of spiritual purification (catharsis) in the hearts of listeners and readers. Teaching these works in lessons not as dry textbook texts, but as examples of working in harmony as a team and acting together toward a shared goal (teamwork), produces positive results in modern pedagogy that are far greater and more lasting than expected.

Folk oral literature is not a museum piece inherited from the past or merely a relic at the margins of a textbook in the education of young people; it is a living and powerful educational system that remains effective today. Under conditions of globalization, the only effective way to preserve our national values and raise young people in a healthy spirit is to adapt the meaning and content of folklore texts to their current life needs, completely abandon dry moralizing, and present these works through modern visual and digital formats (multimedia). Only then will our younger generation acquire both modern knowledge and life skills on a global level and retain its strong national and spiritual foundations.

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