

Methodology for Developing the Artistic Thinking of Primary School Students Through the Use of Children's Folklore

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the development of primary school students' artistic thinking through the systematic and methodologically grounded use of children's folklore in the educational process. The relevance of the study is determined by the need to develop young learners' ability to perceive artistic images, construct imaginative representations, express aesthetic attitudes, and interpret artistic content independently. The study analyzes the pedagogical potential of various genres of children's folklore, including fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, tongue twisters, counting rhymes, folk songs, and lullabies. A methodological approach is proposed that combines the reading and interpretation of folklore texts with discussion, role-play, character creation, story continuation, retelling, visual activities, and creative tasks. Such an organization of learning activities can contribute to the integrated development of students' imaginative thinking, imagination, speech activity, aesthetic awareness, and creative potential. Particular attention is given to the interdisciplinary integration of folklore materials, which makes it possible to connect literary reading, language education, visual arts, music, and other subjects with national and cultural content. The article also emphasizes the importance of selecting folklore materials according to learners' age characteristics, cognitive abilities, and individual creative potential. The use of interactive and activity-based methods creates favorable conditions for students' active participation and artistic self-expression. In this context, children's folklore can function not only as a means of cultural transmission but also as a pedagogical resource for enriching learning experiences, stimulating imagination, strengthening creative thinking, and developing students' meaningful relationship with artistic and cultural values.

Keywords: Children's folklore, artistic thinking, primary education, fairy tale, riddle, proverb, creativity, methodology.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, one of the important pedagogical tasks in the primary education system is not only to develop students' knowledge and skills but also to foster their creative, imaginative, and independent thinking abilities. In particular, developing artistic thinking among young school-age children expands their ability to perceive the surrounding environment through images, understand meaningful relationships between events and phenomena, express aesthetic attitudes, and draw creative conclusions. From this perspective, children's folklore, as an important

component of national culture and folk pedagogy, possesses significant educational and didactic potential in the primary education process.

Children's folklore encompasses a variety of artistic forms that have been transmitted orally from generation to generation and adapted to children's age characteristics, interests, and psychological needs. Fairy tales, riddles, proverbs, tongue twisters, counting rhymes, children's songs, lullabies, and other folklore genres help enrich students' imagination, bring artistic images to life,

anticipate the development of events, and understand artistic content. Through such materials, students become not merely recipients of ready-made information but active participants who imagine, evaluate, and creatively reinterpret the content independently.

Another important aspect of using folklore samples in primary school lessons is that it creates opportunities for students to become naturally acquainted with national values, traditions, the spiritual experience of the people, and aesthetic perspectives. The images, symbolic expressions, folk idioms, and life situations presented in folklore texts contribute not only to the development of children's artistic perception but also to the formation of their moral perspectives. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider children's folklore in primary education not merely as supplementary educational material, but as a methodological tool for developing students' artistic thinking.

The main purpose of this study is to identify the content, forms, and pedagogical potential of a methodology for developing primary school students' artistic thinking through the effective use of children's folklore. Particular attention is paid to selecting folklore genres according to students' age and psychological characteristics, integrating them into lesson content, and combining them with creative tasks [1-4].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of children's folklore in primary education represents an important research area situated at the intersection of pedagogy, literary studies, and folk pedagogy. An analysis of the literature on this subject demonstrates that folklore materials serve not only as a means of developing students' reading and communicative competencies but also possess methodological potential for developing imaginative perception, creative activity, aesthetic attitudes, and independent thinking.

Ollaberganova and Niyazmetova, who studied the role of Uzbek children's folklore in the educational process, analyzed various pedagogical aspects of using folklore samples in primary education. The authors focused on the principles of teaching children's folklore, methodological requirements, and opportunities for incorporating folklore materials into mother-tongue and reading lessons. Their research identifies the methodological potential of working with folklore and its use as one of the factors contributing

to educational effectiveness. This approach provides an important theoretical basis for the present study, supporting the need to incorporate folklore materials into lesson content not simply as supplementary material but as a developmental pedagogical resource.

Shayzakov's research examines the experimental potential of using children's and fairy-tale folklore texts in the development of reading competencies. The study describes folklore as an educational material with a long-standing pedagogical tradition in primary education and emphasizes the importance of analytical, information-search, and creative activities when working with folklore texts. The author also emphasizes the need to organize students as active subjects who develop their own attitudes toward textual content rather than simply accepting ready-made interpretations. This perspective is directly related to the "independent interpretation" and "creative thinking" criteria used in the present study.

Karpenko and Yurchenko's research is also significant from the perspective of the artistic and aesthetic potential of children's folklore. The authors demonstrate that the use of folk games contributes to the development of children's artistic and creative competence. Their research highlights the pedagogical potential of activities such as perception of folk art, value-based attitudes toward art, independence, role-playing, and dramatization. These findings indicate the importance of expanding the use of folklore materials beyond textual activities by incorporating role-play, dramatization, and creative tasks.

Scientific and methodological sources devoted to Uzbek children's literature and folklore further expand the theoretical foundations of the present study. Research on children's literature emphasizes the importance of imagery, simple plots, clearly defined character traits, and folk-oriented expressions in young learners' perception of literary works. From this perspective, fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, counting rhymes, and children's songs can be considered artistic materials that correspond to the age characteristics of primary school students.

The literature review also reveals another important aspect: a significant proportion of existing studies has focused on the potential of folklore for developing reading competencies, moral and ethical education, the acquisition of national values, and artistic-creative competence. Shayzakov's research primarily focuses on reading and textual analysis, while Ollaberganova and Niyazmetova

examine the methodology of teaching folklore in primary education. Karpenko and Yurchenko, in turn, focus on the formation of artistic and creative competence through folk games.

At the same time, the analysis of these studies indicates the need for a separate investigation of an integrated methodological model for developing primary school students' artistic thinking through children's folklore. In particular, there remains a need to examine imaginative representation, understanding of artistic images, creative thinking, independent interpretation, aesthetic response, and artistic expression within a unified methodological framework.

In this regard, the present study develops existing scientific and methodological approaches by integrating children's folklore with creative tasks, problem-based questions, image creation, retelling, role-play, story continuation, and independent interpretation aimed specifically at developing students' artistic thinking. Such an approach makes it possible to implement the educational, moral, and aesthetic potential of folklore within a unified pedagogical system.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological framework of the study was based on an integration of learner-centered, activity-based, competency-based, and cultural approaches. The common purpose of these approaches was to consider the student as an active subject of the educational process and to develop their individual creative potential. Artistic thinking was regarded as a complex psychological and pedagogical phenomenon whose development was examined through interconnected processes such as perception of images, imagination, comparison, interpretation of content, independent expression of ideas, and creation of original products.

The study employed theoretical analysis, pedagogical

observation, interviews, comparison, diagnostic tasks, creative exercises, and pedagogical experimentation. Initially, the role of children's folklore in primary education and its potential for developing artistic thinking were analyzed from a scientific and pedagogical perspective. At the same time, criteria for selecting folklore materials were established by taking into account the age characteristics of primary school students. These criteria included the simplicity of the content, comprehensibility of the images, educational orientation, national and cultural content, and the potential to encourage students' creative activity.

During pedagogical observation, students' activity while listening to and reading folklore materials, their ability to visualize images, provide independent answers to questions, interpret the development of events, and express their ideas through artistic means were observed. Interviews were used to identify students' attitudes toward fairy tales, riddles, proverbs, and other folklore genres. Creative tasks required students to change the ending of a fairy tale, describe a character, create a new image, formulate a riddle, connect the meaning of a proverb with a real-life situation, and create a short dramatic scene involving folklore characters.

The main principle of the methodological experiment was to transform folklore materials from objects of simple memorization or reproduction into instruments of students' independent artistic activity. For this purpose, creative activities such as "Imagine the Character," "Continue the Fairy Tale," "Write a Letter to the Character," "Solve and Create a Riddle," and "Create an Event Based on a Proverb" were proposed. The assessment was based on such criteria as imaginative representation, independent interpretation, creative thinking, aesthetic response, and artistic expression. This methodological approach serves to integrate the potential of children's folklore with contemporary didactic requirements in primary education [5,6].

Changes in primary school students' artistic thinking indicators before and after the experimental study

Table 1.

Artistic thinking indicators	Before the experiment, %	After the experiment, %	Increase, percentage points
Imaginative representation	56.4	78.6	+22.2

Understanding of artistic images	58.7	81.3	+22.6
Creative thinking	52.9	76.8	+23.9
Independent interpretation	54.6	79.2	+24.6
Aesthetic response	61.2	83.5	+22.3
Artistic expression skills	50.8	74.7	+23.9

Table 1 presents the comparative results of the development of primary school students' artistic thinking before and after the implementation of the proposed methodology based on children's folklore. The data demonstrate positive changes across all six indicators.

The imaginative representation indicator increased from 56.4% to 78.6%, showing a 22.2-percentage-point increase. This suggests that the use of fairy tales, riddles, children's songs, and other folklore materials contributed to students' ability to visualize artistic events and characters and reconstruct them mentally.

The understanding of artistic images indicator increased from 58.7% to 81.3%, representing a 22.6-percentage-point increase. This change indicates that students became more capable of understanding characters' characteristics, actions, and relationships within folklore texts.

The creative thinking indicator increased from 52.9% to 76.8%. The 23.9-percentage-point increase can be associated with creative activities such as continuing fairy tales, creating alternative plots, developing new characters, and generating original ideas based on folklore content.

The greatest increase was observed in independent interpretation, which rose from 54.6% to 79.2%, representing a 24.6-percentage-point increase. This result indicates that students became more capable of expressing their own opinions, interpreting artistic content independently, and drawing personal conclusions.

The aesthetic response indicator increased from 61.2% to 83.5%, a 22.3-percentage-point increase. This demonstrates the development of students' ability to recognize and respond to aesthetic and moral values such as beauty, kindness, friendship, diligence, and humanity

reflected in folklore.

Finally, artistic expression skills increased from 50.8% to 74.7%, representing a 23.9-percentage-point increase. This suggests that students improved their ability to express ideas and imagination through storytelling, creative writing, dialogue, drawing, dramatization, and other artistic activities.

Overall, the comparative results demonstrate positive dynamics across all indicators. The findings suggest that the systematic integration of children's folklore with creative and interactive learning activities can provide favorable conditions for developing primary school students' artistic thinking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study demonstrated that the systematic and purposeful use of children's folklore can serve as an effective pedagogical resource for developing artistic thinking among primary school students. During the experiment, particular attention was paid to adapting folklore materials to students' age characteristics, interests, and cognitive abilities. The use of fairy tales, riddles, proverbs, tongue twisters, counting rhymes, children's songs, and other folklore genres increased students' classroom activity and expanded their capacity to perceive and creatively process artistic images.

The analysis of the experimental results was based on several important criteria of artistic thinking: imaginative representation, understanding of artistic images, creative thinking, independent interpretation, aesthetic response, and artistic expression. The results demonstrated positive changes across all criteria. In particular, the indicator of imaginative representation increased from 56.4% at the beginning of the experiment to 78.6% at its conclusion.

This change indicates that the imagery, symbolism, and rich plots characteristic of folklore works can stimulate students' imaginative activity. Tasks involving the description of fairy-tale characters, prediction of the development of events, and creation of visual images based on texts contributed to this process.

The indicator of understanding artistic images also increased from 58.7% to 81.3%. This change can be explained by the development of students' ability to analyze the behavior of folklore characters, identify their character traits, and understand the semantic function of artistic images. For example, comparing positive and negative characteristics of fairy-tale characters, analyzing their decisions in particular situations, and explaining how students themselves might behave in similar circumstances stimulated their artistic analysis skills [7].

One of the most significant findings was the increase in the creative thinking indicator from 52.9% to 76.8%. This result suggests that creative tasks based on folklore materials positively influenced students' independent thinking. Activities such as "Continue the Fairy Tale," "Give the Character a New Feature," "Think of a Different Ending," and "Create a Riddle" encouraged students to formulate their own ideas instead of merely accepting predetermined answers.

A 24.6-percentage-point increase was observed in the independent interpretation criterion. During the experiment, students were encouraged not simply to retell the content of folklore works but also to express their own opinions about events, characters, and ideas. As a result, students increasingly demonstrated the ability to develop personal attitudes toward artistic texts, examine events from the perspective of cause and effect, and formulate independent conclusions.

The indicator of aesthetic response increased from 61.2% to 83.5%, demonstrating the educational and aesthetic potential of folklore. Folklore works express ideas about goodness, diligence, friendship, justice, compassion, and humanity through artistic images. Understanding these meanings enables students to approach literary works not only from a content-based perspective but also through an aesthetic and value-oriented perspective.

The increase in artistic expression skills from 50.8% to 74.7% further demonstrates the practical significance of the methodology. Students were given opportunities to

express their ideas through oral storytelling, dialogue, short dramatic performances, drawings, creative texts, and other forms of activity. This process revealed a close relationship between students' verbal activity and artistic thinking.

Overall, the results demonstrate that the effectiveness of using children's folklore depends not only on the content of the folklore text but also on the methodological purpose and form of activity through which it is introduced. If teachers limit the use of folklore to reading and reproduction, its developmental potential may remain restricted. In contrast, combining texts with problem-based questions, creative tasks, role-playing, comparison, image creation, and independent interpretation strengthens students' active thinking processes [8,9].

The discussion indicates that the use of children's folklore in primary education can be organized through three interconnected directions. First, students should be supported in understanding the content of folklore texts. Second, they should be guided toward independently interpreting artistic images and ideas. Third, they should be given opportunities to create new creative products based on the acquired content. This sequence creates conditions for artistic thinking to develop from basic perception toward independent creative activity.

At the same time, several pedagogical conditions should be observed when implementing the methodology. Folklore materials should be selected according to students' age, while the length and complexity of the texts should also be considered. It is important to preserve the national and cultural content of folklore, take individual differences into account, and provide students with sufficient freedom in creative tasks. The teacher's role should not be to impose a predetermined artistic interpretation, but rather to guide students toward independent thinking and the creation of their own interpretations.

In general, the findings demonstrate that children's folklore has considerable pedagogical potential for developing imaginative perception, creative thinking, independent interpretation, aesthetic response, and artistic expression among primary school students. The positive dynamics identified in the study provide a basis for considering the proposed methodological approach applicable to the educational process. Therefore, purposeful integration of children's folklore into primary education can contribute not only to the development of

students' artistic thinking but also to their understanding [10].
and creative appropriation of national and cultural heritage

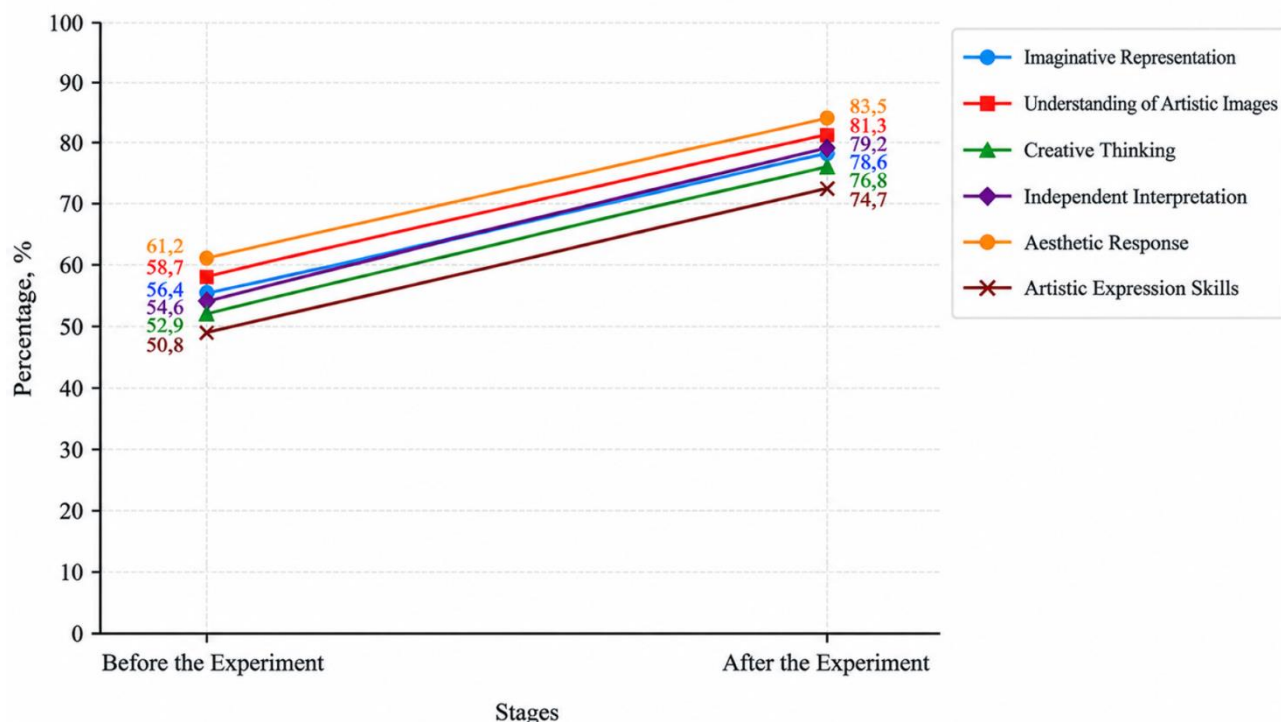


Figure 1. Dynamics of primary school students' artistic thinking indicators during the experimental study

Figure 1 presents a comparative analysis of the results obtained before and after the implementation of the methodology aimed at developing primary school students' artistic thinking. The diagram demonstrates positive changes across all indicators by the end of the experimental period. This indicates that the purposeful and systematic use of children's folklore contributed to the activation of students' artistic and perceptual activity.

In particular, the imaginative representation indicator increased from 56.4% to 78.6%. This increase indicates that students' ability to imagine events and characters presented in folklore works, recreate them mentally, and perceive artistic content through images was strengthened.

The understanding of artistic images indicator increased from 58.7% to 81.3%. This result demonstrates that students developed a deeper understanding of the characters' personalities, behaviors, and relationships presented in fairy tales and other folklore genres.

Creative thinking increased from 52.9% to 76.8%. In this process, tasks aimed at continuing fairy tales, creating new plots, assigning alternative characteristics to characters, and developing independent ideas based on folklore content played an important methodological role.

The most pronounced increase was observed in the independent interpretation indicator, which increased from 54.6% to 79.2%. This demonstrates the development of students' ability to express personal opinions about literary texts, explain the actions of characters, and formulate independent conclusions rather than simply reproducing predetermined content.

The aesthetic response indicator increased from 61.2% to 83.5%, representing one of the highest final results. The artistic representation of such values as goodness, beauty, friendship, diligence, and humanity reflected in folklore contributed to enriching students' aesthetic perspectives.

Similarly, artistic expression skills increased from 50.8%

to 74.7%. This indicates that students' opportunities to express their imagination and ideas through oral storytelling, creative writing, dialogue, drawing, dramatization, and other forms of activity were expanded.

Overall, the upward direction of all lines in the diagram demonstrates a positive developmental trend across the examined areas. The results indicate that children's folklore should be incorporated into the educational process not merely as supplementary material, but as a methodological resource for developing students' imaginative representation, creative thinking, independent interpretation, and aesthetic perception. In this regard, integrating folklore materials with creative tasks, discussion, role-playing, retelling, and image-creation activities emerges as an important factor enhancing the developmental effectiveness of the methodology.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study demonstrate that the purposeful, systematic, and methodologically grounded use of children's folklore constitutes an effective pedagogical resource for developing artistic thinking among primary school students. The characteristics of folklore genres, including imagery, concise content, folk-oriented expression, and educational orientation, were found to correspond well with the age and psychological characteristics of young school-age learners.

The study established that integrating fairy tales, riddles, proverbs, tongue twisters, counting rhymes, children's songs, and other folklore materials with creative tasks contributes to the development of students' imaginative representation, understanding of artistic images, creative thinking, independent interpretation, aesthetic response, and artistic expression skills. In particular, connecting the content of folklore texts with students' independent creative activities, rather than limiting the learning process to reading and retelling, creates favorable conditions for the active development of artistic thinking.

The positive dynamics observed across all major criteria in the experimental results demonstrate the practical significance of the proposed methodological approach. The increased activity of students in expressing independent opinions, interpreting artistic images, imagining the development of events, and creating new creative content expands the possibilities for the effective pedagogical use of folklore materials.

Based on the study, several pedagogical conditions for using children's folklore in primary education were identified. These include selecting folklore materials according to students' age characteristics, considering their semantic and artistic potential, gradually increasing the complexity of creative tasks, employing interactive methods, and paying attention to students' individual creative abilities. Furthermore, integrating folklore materials with native language education, reading literacy, visual arts, music, and other subjects can contribute to the comprehensive development of students' artistic thinking.

Thus, the methodology based on the use of children's folklore enriches the process of developing artistic thinking among primary school students, increases their creative activity, and expands their opportunities to perceive national and cultural values through artistic forms. In the future, it would be appropriate to further develop this methodological approach across different age groups, educational formats, and subject areas, as well as to examine its effectiveness through broader pedagogical experimental studies.

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