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METHODOLOGY FOR ORGANIZING CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION IN DEVELOPING ACTING SKILLS OF FUTURE FOLKLORE PERFORMERS

Abstract. This article presents a methodology for organizing classroom instruction aimed at developing the acting skills of future folklore performers. It outlines a system of methods developed by the author on this topic, applied for the first time in a pedagogical experiment and evaluation process.

Keywords: folklore, folklore studies, student, pedagogue, actor, art of acting, artistic director of the course, method, methodology, creative session.

Introduction. The development of acting skills among folklore performers during classroom instruction serves not only to enhance the quality of stage performance but also to convey the richness of figurative and emotional expression inherent in oral folk art. In turn, this process fosters respect for national values among the younger generation and creates a foundation for revitalizing spiritual heritage through the stage.

Our national literary heritage—epics, fairy tales, legends, proverbs, anecdotes, and folk dramas—serves both as an ideological and aesthetic foundation and as a source of imagery and stage movement, in the practice of folklore performance. In particular, using these literary sources as a basis in classroom instruction provides opportunities to develop the acting skills of future folklore performers. This contributes to mastering character embodiment, stage speech, the expression of dramatic conflict, improvisation, and the development of stage thinking. Through these approaches, students acquire competencies in stage thinking, character creation, understanding dramatic situations, and in effectively utilizing verbal and physical expressive means.

Main Part. Classroom sessions aimed at developing the acting skills of future folklore performers can be organized in various formats. In particular:

Stage-simulation exercises. Selected excerpts from folklore works are selected for stage adaptation, and students stage them. Throughout the process, each participant works on mastering character embodiment, movement, and expressive speech techniques.

Emotional synchronization exercises. In these sessions, students activate their emotional thinking through exercises that express different states (joy, sorrow, fear, surprise, etc.).

Interactive reflection and analysis. Following a performance or exercise, a process of reflective learning is facilitated through mutual analysis, evaluation, and the exchange of suggestions among students.

Character embodiment through dialogue. During the session, social situations corresponding to folklore plots are created, and students identify their role within the scenario, bringing the character to life through speech and movement.

Classroom sessions based on literary works for the development of acting skills in future folklore performers yield the following theoretical and practical results:

Shape the performers' emotional expressiveness on stage and strengthen the ability to convey feelings through a character.

They comprehensively develop acting skills based on the unity of speech, movement, and emotion.

Through literary characters, they instill in students a sense of loyalty to national ideas and values, and teach them to express these through stage performance.

Through improvisation and analytical activities, they cultivate creative thinking, independent decision-making, and readiness for stage exploration.

By immersing themselves in the imaginative world of Uzbek folk tales, students come to understand the spiritual and aesthetic foundations of national stage culture.

For future folklore performers, acting skills are essential, and training exercises are considered the primary methodological tool for their development. Training is defined as a specially designed, staged, and systematic set of exercises that cultivates the necessary psychophysical readiness in aspiring performers.

Through training exercises, performers develop not only stage expressiveness but also the capacity for deep psychological immersion into folklore texts, thereby emotionally revitalizing national values. In turn, this pedagogical approach brings modernity, interactivity, and professionalism to folklore-pedagogical practice.

The practical significance of training exercises in developing acting skills for future folklore performers is discussed in the educational and methodological literature on theater training by researchers such as J. O. Mahmudov [3], B. S. Sayfullayev [7], M. R. Yusupova [8], F. E. Akhmedov [1], and J. A. Mamatqosimov [4].

The term “training” (from the English “to train” or “to teach”) is defined as the improvement of the human mind and body through regular exercises and progressively increasing demands. These exercises have become an established principle of the profession and represent a fundamental requirement for every aspiring director and actor.

Training exercises should be conducted in specialized creative studios, with all students wearing professional attire. “During the class, the course’s artistic director may assign either group or individual exercises, taking into account the students’ personal characteristics. For example, to develop a student’s imagination, the instructor might have them imagine walking across a wide field when, suddenly, a steep cliff appears ahead—requiring them to respond appropriately to the situation. Alternatively, the instructor might draw a straight line on the floor and ask the student to imagine it as a tightrope in the sky and walk across it, or to jump over a stream—thereby enriching their imaginative capacity” [5, p. 149].

The success of folklore performers on stage depends not solely on oral delivery or knowledge of oral traditions but directly on possessing acting

competencies such as character embodiment, harmony of movement and speech, and emotional conveyance. One of the most effective means of systematically developing such skills is an interactive-methodological approach built on training exercises.

Based on the research results, the following training-based methods and exercises are recommended for developing the acting skills of future folklore performers:

1. Method for Developing Psychophysical Activity

This method focuses on forming coordination between bodily movement, facial expression, emotions, and breath control. Training exercises increase the performer's physical freedom and develop plasticity.

Exercise 1: "Moving Pause" – The student moves in rhythm with music; when the music stops, they freeze in place (psychophysical control).

Exercise 2: "Journey Through the Body" – Each muscle group is activated individually to enhance bodily awareness and control.

2. Method for Shaping Emotional Expression

For future folklore performers, finding the emotional intonation to embody and illuminate a character is crucial. This method uses improvisational exercises to teach deep analysis of a character's emotional state.

Exercise 1: "One Emotion – Five States" – Expressing a single emotion (e.g., fear) in different intensities and contexts (hidden, intense, humorous, indifferent, dramatic).

Exercise 2: "Vocal Depiction" – Using voice to describe an imaginative state based on an instrument's sound or another auditory stimulus.

3. Method for Speech and Vocal Expression

The meaning, rhythm, and tone of folklore texts must be conveyed on stage through accurate intonation, emphasis, and dramatic pauses. Training focuses on voice control, articulation, and expanding vocal range.

Exercise 1: "Intonation Carousel" – Delivering the same sentence in various tones (surprised, admonishing, humorous, mysterious, cold).

Exercise 2: “Dramatic Reading of Proverbs” – Reading proverbs expressively, capturing their meaning on stage (e.g., “Beating your father is bad; fighting for your father is good”).

4. Method for Character Embodiment and Theatrical Plot

This method uses the creation of dramatic situations to prompt students to inhabit their roles fully. Plot-based exercises stimulate internal motivation, role immersion, and creative thinking.

Exercise 1: “Bringing the Plot to Life” – Improvised performance of a scene from a folk tale (e.g., characters from “Zumrad and Qimmat”).

Exercise 2: “Character Duet” – On-stage interaction between two folk characters (e.g., a farmer and an old woman, a young girl and a demon).

5. Method for Reflective Analysis and Group Evaluation

By analyzing the outcomes of training exercises, performers develop metacognitive activity—“watching oneself perform.”

Exercise 1: “Self-Observation” – Reviewing a recorded performance and reflecting: How did I speak? How did I stand? What impact did my character have?

Exercise 2: “Evaluation Circle” – Each participant analyzes another’s performance and offers constructive positive or critical feedback.

These exercises not only develop the acting skills of future folklore performers but also consistently enhance their creative thinking, emotional expression, physical freedom, and ability to inhabit a role. Training-based methods integrate interactivity, reflection, and creative expression. As a result, the stage performance of future folklore performers is elevated not only in content but also in aesthetic and professional quality.

Preparing students to approach their profession with a high level of creativity is a complex process, which, as noted, “depends on the student’s needs, values, emotions, intellect, as well as professional and personal motivation” [6, p. 12]. As researcher D. U. Jarqinov observes, “it is necessary to seek ways and

methods of organizing the educational process so that students can express themselves as a core value within the collective” [2, p. 453].

During the course of the research, a set of creative and interactive methods aimed at developing the acting skills of future folklore performers—methods that proved effective in pedagogical experimental sessions—was developed. Among them:

The “Character Play” Method – An exercise designed to teach students to deeply immerse themselves in the psychology of characters from examples of oral folk art, bringing to life their personalities, emotions, and mannerisms on stage through movement, facial expression, and vocal tone. The instructor prepares a list of characters from a fairy tale, epic poem, or legend (e.g., Go‘ro‘g‘li, Oybarchin, Qaldirg‘och, Tushmurod, Zangibobo). Each student receives one character, either randomly or by choice. The character’s mental state, personality traits, adventures, and distinctive speech patterns are analyzed.

In the performance stage, the student animates the chosen character on stage. Walking style, facial expressions, tone of voice, pace of speech, laughter, crying, expressions of surprise, and similar elements are used to prepare a monologue, dialogue, or active scene for the character. At the conclusion, both the group and the instructor evaluate the character portrayal in terms of the harmony between movement and voice, emotional depth, and degree of immersion. Alternative interpretations are discussed, with prompts such as “How else might this be expressed?” guiding the continuation of the exercise.

The “Living Scenery” Method – A method based on creating the stage environment (weather, nature, setting) through the students’ physical movement. It enriches the aesthetic quality of the stage and fosters coordination of collective movement among actors. The instructor announces a theme (e.g., “Spring Garden,” “Mist at the Foot of the Mountain,” “A Walk in the Rain”). Students are divided into small groups (3–5 participants), and each group selects an environmental element (trees, birds, wind, water, sun, rain).

During the performance stage, group members physically embody the assigned element (e.g., students representing the wind sway rhythmically; those representing water use low, flowing movements to depict a stream). The next group performs a scene in front of this “living décor.” In the final stage, the clarity of each image, the expressiveness of the movements, and the overall stage aesthetics are analyzed.

The “Silent Scene” Method – An acting exercise based on non-verbal expression, aimed at developing students’ skills in conveying meaning through facial expression, body movement, eye contact, pauses, and spatial–physical coordination. This method enables the internal emotional state to be brought into external expression.

The instructor presents a short plot or everyday situation (e.g., “A young man returns from a long journey to see his mother, carrying a gift, but finds her crying as she awaits him”). The student is tasked with expressing the scene without using words—relying solely on facial expressions, body posture, gaze, walking patterns, and gestures.

In the performance stage, the student prepares and enacts the scene, ensuring that facial expressions, stance, pace, carefulness, excitement, and emotional undertones are conveyed entirely through movement. No sounds are made during the performance. At the conclusion, the observing students describe how they interpreted the scene.

The “One Word + Image” Method – An interactive exercise in which students create a complete stage scene based on a single keyword, thereby learning to convey abstract concepts (e.g., honesty, envy, loyalty) through imagery. This method develops not only acting skills but also creative thinking. Each small group is given one word—for example, “loyalty”, “envy”, “selflessness”, or “contentment”. The group discusses how to stage an event around this concept and drafts a short written outline of the plot.

In the performance stage, groups prepare the scene, distribute roles, and enact it. Each scene must contain a distinct dramatic situation, climax, and

resolution, with the key concept revealed through imagery. At the conclusion, each group's work is analyzed: Did the scene have a dramatic resolution? Was the key word effectively revealed? Were the images coherent and impactful? Students then engage in a creative discussion, exchanging views and asking questions.

The "Performance Among the People" Method – A method in which students perform a scene while moving among the audience, establishing direct interaction with spectators. Students are divided into groups of 3–4 people, and each group is given a plot from folklore (e.g., "The Struggle Between Lies and Honesty", "The Bride and Groom's First Meeting", "The Wise Answer of the Poor Man"). Groups develop a script to be performed not on a stage, but within the audience space—in different corners or among the people—engaging directly with spectators, who may also be drawn into the performance.

At the conclusion, a discussion is held based on questions such as: "What impact did the scene have?", "In which moments did the audience participate?", "How were the characters perceived?"

The "Bridge of Time" Method – A method in which a single folk story or fairy tale is performed both in its classical, traditional form and in a modern context (in contemporary language and setting). This approach broadens creative thinking. The instructor selects a work of folklore (e.g., "Zumrad and Qimmat", "The Rich Man and the Beggar", "The Wild Girl"). The first group presents the piece using traditional customs, folk costumes, speech, and values; the second group reinterprets the same plot in today's setting, with modern language, technology, clothing, and social issues.

During the performance stage, both groups present their versions in sequence. Each performance should contain a distinct dramatic resolution, climax, and unique imagery. In the concluding discussion, the groups watch each other's work and analyze it, guided by questions such as: "Which expression was more impactful?", "How was folklore refreshed in the modern context?", "How well were the images adapted?"

Conclusion. In conclusion, interactive methods hold significant pedagogical value in developing the acting skills of folklore performers during classroom sessions. Through such methods, students acquire not only knowledge but also practical skills in expression, artistic thinking, and creative interpretation. When integrated with traditional approaches, interactive methods expand the possibilities for stage movement, character creation, improvisation, and emotional expression. Crucially, these methods ensure the integration of folklore performance and the art of theatre, enabling the vivid expression of national heritage on the modern stage.

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