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## THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF FOLKLORE EXAMPLES ON CHILDREN'S AESTHETIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

*The Azerbaijani populace has evolved based on elevated aesthetic principles grounded in its national lineage and historical origins. Aesthetic principles have held paramount significance for our society, with aesthetics being a pivotal facet sought after among all values. The examples of children's folklore have been crafted, taking into consideration both the concept, content, and structure, as well as the developmental characteristics and cognitive levels of juveniles. Children commence their acquisition of the native tongue through maternal lullabies. The approaches to nurturing, guiding, and educating children encapsulate crucial themes inherent within our nation's rich oral traditions. Children's folklore brims with materials that cater to their diverse developmental stages and needs in a meaningful manner. The perpetuation and transmission of folklore exemplars have been driven by the imperative to guide and safeguard educational influences. Historically, folklore exemplars have served as instrumental tools in the upbringing of our younger generation and continue to address contemporary educational exigencies. The aesthetic cultivation of the burgeoning generation is approached with a commitment to aesthetic standards, afforded significance across the entirety of life's domains. Finding ways to develop children's literary and creative abilities is a real and pressing problem of our time. In the context of this problem, paying special attention to primary school age is important because true renewal of the spiritual life of our society will be possible only if the education, upbringing and development of children is carried out from the very first days of the child's stay at school. One of the possible ways to develop the literary and creative abilities of children is the way to revive the folk pedagogical principles of aesthetic education, according to which the child was involved in active creative activity from an early age.*

**Key words:** *School-age period, folklore examples, aesthetic development, children's creativity, education, upbringing.*

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## ПОТЕНЦІАЛ ВПЛИВУ ФОЛЬКЛОРНИХ ЗРАЗКІВ НА ЕСТЕТИЧНО-ТВОРЧИЙ РОЗВИТОК ДІТЕЙ

*Азербайджанське населення розвивалося на основі високих естетичних принципів, заснованих на національній приналежності та історичному походженні. Естетичні принципи мають першорядне значення для нашого суспільства, причому естетика є ключовим аспектом серед усіх цінностей. Зразки дитячого фольклору розроблено з урахуванням як концепції, змісту та структури, так і особливостей розвитку та когнітивного рівня неповнолітніх. Засвоєння рідної мови діти починають із материнських колискових пісень. Підходи до виховання, керівництва та навчання дітей охоплюють ключові теми, притаманні багатим усним традиціям нашої нації. Дитячий фольклор наповнений матеріалами, які змістовно задовольняють їхні різноманітні етапи розвитку та потреби. Увічнення та передача фольклорних зразків були зумовлені імперативом направляти та охороняти освітні впливи. Історично фольклорні зразки слугували інструментом у вихованні нашого молодого покоління та продовжують вирішувати сучасні освітні потреби. До естетичної культивування підростаючого покоління підходять із дотриманням естетичних стандартів, які мають значення в усіх сферах життя. Пошук шляхів розвитку літературно-творчих здібностей дітей – реальна й актуальна проблема сучасності. У контексті цієї проблеми важливою є приділення особливої уваги молодшому шкільному віку, адже справжнє оновлення духовного життя нашого суспільства стане можливим лише за умови, що навчання, виховання та розвиток дітей здійснюватиметься з перших днів життя дитини й залишаться в школі. Одним із можливих шляхів розвитку літературно-творчих здібностей дітей є шлях відродження народних педагогічних засад естетичного виховання, згідно з якими дитина з раннього віку залучалася до активної творчої діяльності.*

**Ключові слова:** *шкільний період, фольклорні зразки, естетичний розвиток, дитяча творчість, навчання, виховання.*

**Relevance of the Issue.** During the school-age phase, the notions embodied within folklore examples hold considerable sway over the aesthetic and creative maturation of children. Failure to judiciously harness this formative period may pose challenges in rectifying misconceptions ingrained in children later in life. Despite various investigations into the potential impact of folklore exemplars on the aesthetic and creative development of children, the purposes and objectives in this realm remain largely nebulous and unresolved. Our research endeavors to elucidate and explore avenues to address this lacuna.

**Degree of Problem Elaboration.** It is worth mentioning that Azerbaijani scholars have delved into the examination of the utilization of ethno-pedagogical materials, the role of folk wisdom in children's education, as well as the genre system and poetics of children's folklore. Azerbaijani pedagogical luminaries such as A. Ağayev (Ağayev Ə., 2005), I. Aliyev (Əliyev İ., 2008: 2009), E. Sh. Hashimov (Həşimov Ə. Ş., 1984), Y. Ş. Kərimov (Kərimov Y. Ş., 2009), R. Gafarlı (Qafarlı R., 2013), among others, have made substantive contributions to this domain. Thus, there exists an imperative to comprehensively investigate the potential impacts of juvenile folklore exemplars – encompassing lullabies, aphorisms, enigmas, folk tales, rejoinders, and folk games – on the aesthetic and creative development of children and to delineate pathways to address them.

**Purpose and Objectives.** The purpose is to scrutinize the effects of folklore exemplars on the aesthetic and creative advancement of children during the school-age phase and to ascertain efficacious strategies to facilitate it. To realize this overarching objective, the following tasks have been delineated:

- Scrutiny of pedagogical and methodological literature pertinent to the subject matter;
- Incorporation of folklore exemplars (lullabies, aphorisms, enigmas, folk tales, rejoinders, folk games) in the aesthetic and creative development of school-age children;
- Identification of optimal modalities for the aesthetic and creative progression of school-age children through the utilization of folklore exemplars.

**Methodology.** Research was conducted, adhering to the principle of complexity in addressing the posed problems and maintaining a systematic approach. Furthermore, observation, interviews, along with the application of contemporary pedagogical methodologies and tools, were employed. Theoretical and methodological frameworks, akin to those advanced in the works of Azerbaijani scholars pertaining to juvenile folklore exemplars, were central and leveraged.

**Main section.** The Azerbaijani people have been shaped with a profound appreciation for aesthetic values, rooted in its national heritage and historical lineage. Aesthetic ideals hold a position of prominence within our society, being regarded as paramount among all societal values, with the populace perennially seeking aesthetic perfection across various domains. Thus, the ethos of aesthetics permeates the fabric of upbringing, constituting an integral facet thereof. Beyond serving as venerable specimens of our oral folk tradition, folklore significantly influences the holistic development and imaginative faculties of children. Notably, the majority of our rich repository of folklore is crafted specifically for the edification of children. Commencing with the nurturing tones of maternal lullabies, children embark upon their journey of linguistic acquisition. The methods and ethos surrounding child-rearing, pedagogical methodologies, and the dissemination of knowledge represent pivotal aspects of our cultural heritage, encapsulated within the realm of children's folklore. Within this domain, children's folklore caters to their multifaceted developmental needs across all life stages (Karimov, 2009:164).

Children's folklore exemplars are meticulously crafted, taking into consideration not only thematic and narrative elements but also the nuanced cognitive capacities and developmental milestones of young individuals. Consequently, children's folklore epitomizes a corpus of works uniquely tailored to their demographic, characterized by its alignment with their cognitive aptitudes and reflection of their internal, psychosocial landscape. Moreover, children's folklore is enriched through a dual trajectory: the contributions of *adult* creators, comprising lullabies, aphorisms, folk tales, riddles, and similar offerings, and the *creative endeavors of children* themselves, encompassing pastimes such as spinning tops, skipping games, jesting rituals, and playful melodies.

*Lullabies* represent a mother's first communication with her child, even before the child is able to speak. In lullabies, mothers cherish their children, expressing their boundless love, best wishes for their future, and prayers.

Dağların lalasına,  
Gözlərin qarasına,  
Analar qurban olsun,  
Öz körpə balasına.  
(To the cradle of mountains,  
To the depths of your eyes,  
Mothers sacrifice themselves,  
For their precious child.)

If lullabies exhibit a pacifying nature in children and are sung with the intention of inducing sleep,

*ditties*, conversely, are used to cherish the child and show affection while the child's is awake. While both share similarities in theme and objective, ditties, in contrast to lullabies, tend to possess a more rhythmic structure and serve an entertaining role for the child.

Balama qurban sərçələr, Balama qurban dayçalar,

Balam nə vaxt dirçələr?! Balam nə vaxt əl çalar?!

(Sparrows are sacrificed to my baby,

Birds are sacrificed to my baby,

When will my baby grow wings?!

When will my baby extend a hand?!)

The populace has historically employed *riddles* as a medium to transmit their knowledge to children. Riddles play a pivotal role in cultivating the cognitive faculties and linguistic proficiency of children, broadening their conceptualizations of the surrounding milieu, and augmenting their powers of observation. Concurrently, riddles engender linguistic fluency and lexical enrichment in children. Moreover, riddles afford extensive avenues for the cultivation of cognitive abilities and aptitudes, including comparative analysis, juxtaposition, and correlation.

In essence, when a child engages with a riddle, they are compelled to juxtapose and evaluate the signs or symbols embedded within it against those of familiar objects or events in their cognitive repertoire. This process entails verification of congruity, discernment, and establishment of connections. Consequently, riddles serve as a catalyst for honing children's cognitive acumen, refining their ratiocinative faculties, disseminating knowledge across diverse domains of life, broadening their cognitive horizons, and enriching their understanding of phenomena.

Indeed, riddles pervade the entire spectrum of human existence, from infancy to senescence.

There are numerous riddles related to nature and natural phenomena. Let us consider some of these riddles: "Three of them shower upon us, Three of them form a paradise garden, Three of them gather and bring, Three of them scatter and disperse" (seasons), "A man has four houses: one is green, one is red, one is yellow, one is white" (seasons), and so on.

However, merely providing concepts about time is not sufficient, and it is further enriched in other riddles: the year is not just comprised of seasons. Seasons correspond to months, months to weeks, weeks to days, and days are further divided into day and night. For instance, riddles like "My father has seven sons, and they are all the same age" and "What bird is it that has one side white, one side black?" provide information about the days of the week and day and night.

Riddles related to the plant world include: "You cannot hold the tree, you cannot satisfy from its bark"

(rose), "They bloom not roses, they are not white, they are not snow, but they resemble wool" (cotton), "When it rains, it grows green, it bathes, it dresses in summer, it undresses in winter" (tree), "My father sits and peels in the kitchen, whoever undresses him will lose an eye" (onion), "I have a hen, it lays eggs underground" (potato), and so on.

Riddles related to animals include: "It purrs when you stroke its back, it curls up when you scratch it" (cat), "Its name adorns the mountains, it wanders with a tree on its head" (deer), "It opens its mouth, it spreads poison, everyone sees it and runs away" (snake), and so on.

Riddles related to birds include: "It flies in the garden every morning, it gives us news of summer" (blackbird), "Its head is black, its tail is white, it stands in the morning, it makes noise" (rooster), and so on.

Riddles pertaining to insects: "Ascending above the hand, Beyond the reach of the comb, I espied something, The knees above its waist" (depicting the beetle), "Within this forest, a rose-filled domain, With six edges, it is adorned, A thousand sons of a single man, All engaged in the same profession" (describing the bee), and so forth.

Riddles associated with household items: "Within our abode resides a bride, She cleanses the floor with her tresses" (depicting the broom), "Within our dwelling dwells a man, Extending a hand to all who arrive" (referring to the door handle), "It moves away, it moves aside, Only a span's width does it traverse" (describing the door), "Neither within the home, nor in the desert, nor in the sky, nor on the ground" (alluding to the window), and so forth.

Riddles have played a significantly important role in the formation and development of human thought. Riddles constitute a particular aspect of folk pedagogy that holds great importance in the development of aesthetic taste as well as intellectual education.

*Fairy tales* present children with a vast, mysterious realm. Within this context, fairy tales play a pivotal role in fostering the cognitive, linguistic, and lexical development of children, while also enhancing their understanding and imaginative grasp of the world around them. It is imperative to meticulously curate folk tales that align with the developmental stage of school-age children. The narrative framework of these tales is contingent upon the child's age. Following the reading of a tale, it is prudent to pose one or two questions aimed at gauging comprehension. Elucidation of obscure terminology and expressions is deferred until after the tale's reading. In smaller group settings, the educator concludes the narration, while in larger groups, the educator may facilitate engagement through inquiry and discourse. This methodical

approach to storytelling not only stimulates the cognitive and affective faculties of children but also aids in the delineation of their individual perspectives on the narrative content.

Among children's fairy tales, those dedicated to animals, birds, and plants are more prevalent. Stories such as "Ayı və milçək", "Tülkü, tülkü, tünbəki", "Şəngülüm, Şüngülüm, Məngülüm", "Tülkü və ilan", "Dovşan", "Ac qurd", "Qurd", "Hiyləgər keçi", "Aslan və dovşan", "Cik-cik xanım", "Qarı və pişik", "Nazikbənazik-Tazikbətazik", "Tülkünün hekayəsi", "Pıspısa xanım və Siçan Solub bəy", "Xoruz və padşah", "Şah Xoruz" ("The Bear and the Fox", "The Fox and the Crane", "Shengulum, Shungulum, Mengulum", "The Fox and the Deer", "The Hare", "The Hungry Wolf", "The Wolf", "The Cunning Goat", "The Lion and the Wolf", "Mrs. Chirp-Chirp", "The Hare and the Cat", "Nazik the Polite-Nazik the Naughty", "The Tale of the Fox", "Mrs. Squeak and Mr. Mouse", "The Mouse and the King", "King Mouse") etc., recount events that captivate the interest of children.

In the development of aesthetic education among school-age children, plays, songs, nursery rhymes, and dances also play a significant role (Gafarlı, 2013: 226). For example:

Əkil-Bəkil quş idi,  
Ağaca qonmuş idi.  
Getdim onu tutmağa,  
O məni tutmuş idi.  
Meydana salmış idi,  
Dövrəyə dalmış idi,  
Çardağın ağacları,  
Meydanın ağacları,  
Dən gətirir quşları  
Harayladım quşları,  
Qanadı sınımışları... (Düzgülər)

\*\*\*\*

Bir, iki – Bizimki.  
Üç, dörd – Qapını ört.  
Beş, altı – Daş altı.  
Yeddi, səkkiz – Firəngiz.  
Doqquz, on – Qırmızı don. (Sanamalar)

\*\*\*\*

Ay arıq oğlan,  
Çəpərdən boylan.  
Qoy qızlar görsün,  
Dərdinnən ölsün. (Dolamalar)

**Tongue twisters as a significant tool of intellectual education.** The love and affection of young children towards the beauties of nature have been a significant consideration for society, with folk literature playing the most crucial role in this regard. The creation of *tongue twisters* as an essential tool

of intellectual education aims not only to aid in the development of attention and speech, but also to facilitate proper pronunciation of difficult words in the language, through frequent repetition and practice. Moreover, their purpose extends to eliminating linguistic errors, enhancing focus, and enriching the vocabulary. Tongue twisters involve the use of words that do not match each other or are difficult to pronounce. For instance, "Qırx küp, qırxının da qulpu qırıq küp", "Bazarda nə ucuz? – Mis ucuz, duz ucuz, küncüt ucuz" ("Forty cubes, forty's top broken cube", or "What's cheapest at the market? – Mis is cheap, salt is cheap, walnut is cheap"). If children have not mastered the ability to pronounce words correctly and fluently, they will inevitably stumble and falter when attempting to say any of these. Since repeating similar words challenges the speaker, it often results in humorous outcomes. Thus, to avoid finding themselves in such situations, children repeat these tongue twisters multiple times, comprehend their own mistakes, correct them, and ultimately enhance their ability to articulate words accurately.

From tongue twisters to word games, a wide range of linguistic diversions are employed. In recent times, a word-finding game based on the final sound of a word, such as city, village, river, sea, person, bird, animal, mountain, etc., has become popular among children. For example, one child mentions the name of a city: "Sheki". The next child must then provide the name of another city beginning with the letter "i" to match the final sound of the previous word: "İmişli". According to this rule, all children continue to name cities: Irkutsk, Kiev, Volgograd, Dushanbe, Damascus, Qori, and so on. Anyone who fails to find a suitable word is considered defeated and must undertake a task according to the winner's request.

In the upbringing of children, folk culture has always emphasized the importance of games alongside other educational tools. Folk games have been of particular interest since ancient times, reflecting various aspects of community life and entertainment. These games are rich and diverse in terms of themes, content, creation methods, and forms. Folk games play a significant role in shaping moral values and virtues in children, fostering collective traits, developing concepts of good and evil, distinguishing between right and wrong, forming characteristic behavioral traits, and cultivating qualities such as friendship, companionship, and responsibility. Moreover, they contribute significantly to the development of children's speech skills.

Games also contribute to the aesthetic upbringing of children. When folk games are organized properly

and children are guided correctly, they provide deep enjoyment for them. Understanding the beauty of movements in games and deriving pleasure from them primarily affects the development of aesthetic education in children. Examples of folk games include: “Dəsmalı aldı qaç”, “Usta şagird”, “Yoldaş səni kim apardı”, “Pula-pula”, “Qələndər, ay qələndər”, “Papaq aldı qaç”, “Bənövşə”, “Şənlik”, “Əl üstə kimin əli” (“Take off the towel and run”, “Master and apprentice”, “Who brought you here, comrade”, “Hopscotch”, “Ring around the rosy”, “Take off the hat and run”, “Violet”, “Fun”, “Whose hand is on top”) and so on.

**Conclusion.** Thus, the aforementioned illustrations once again affirm the substantial reservoir of rich material within folklore for cultivating children's aesthetic education, thereby underscoring its profound

pedagogical significance. The enduring presence and transmission of folklore exemplars to the present day serve the purpose of directing and safeguarding the pedagogical influence. Historically, folklore exemplars have served as a conduit for nurturing the younger generations, and contemporary pedagogical concepts reflected in folklore narratives continue to resonate with current educational imperatives. The aesthetic cultivation of successive generations has been approached through an aesthetic lens across various life domains, underscoring its pervasive importance. In addition to educational institutions, families should meticulously select and impart folklore narratives tailored to the age and cognitive development of children, imparting insights into the revered moral virtues and critiqued negative attributes endorsed by the cultural ethos.

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