

## **The Involvement of Students in Ukrainian Podunavija`s National Traditions by the Means of Folk Choreography**

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**Abstract:** The article emphasizes the revival of folk traditions of the Ukrainian Podunavija, focuses on the significant role of folk choreography in this process. The role of folk dance for the national education of youth is revealed, and their respect for folk traditions and customs is implanted. The author highlights the problematic aspects of teaching folk dance and suggests ways to solve them. It is emphasized that the means of folk choreography form the national consciousness and respect for Ukrainian national traditions and customs.

**Keywords:** national education; national consciousness; traditions; customs of the Ukrainian people; folk dance; folk choreography; Ukrainian dance

The state policy of Ukraine concerning the development of art is one of the priority directions proclaiming the preservation of national culture as a means of forming national and universal values. In today's conditions of globalization and leveling the features of national culture, there is an urgent need to preserve and develop the achievements of the Ukrainian people. Therefore, an important part of the revival of traditions is the problem of self-identification, awareness of the uniqueness and the originality of the spiritual achievements of one's ethnic group.

The Ukrainian Danubian is full of many national traditions and colors, because about 48 nationalities live on its territory. However, modern conditions for the development of society require the increased attention precisely to the revival of Ukrainian national traditions. We believe that Choreography - one of the most influential means for the implementation of certain tasks.

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Ukraine is rich in its traditions and customs. A variety of calendar and ceremonial holidays come to us from the ancient times. Thus, according to Ukrainian traditions, four cycles of the year were singled out. The most vivid holiday from the winter cycle is the Holy Evening. The spring cycle for our ancestors was very special one, because the 1<sup>st</sup> of March was considered as the beginning of the New Year until the 1700. With the advent of spring there was an awakening of nature, people began to work on the ground. Summer cycle is a caring for crops and livestock, but here there were not only domestic holidays, but also such holiday as Ivan Kupala. The autumn cycle of holidays closed the circle of calendar and ritual holidays by harvesting, returning cattle from summer grasslands. There were also family traditions such as weddings, maternity, funeral, and so on.

These customs, traditions, rites came to our generation in the form of folk art such as fairy tales, music, songs, dances.

**Topicality.** Unfortunately, today in Ukraine more and more choreographic schools make popular only modern dance, that is why folk choreographic art loses its prevalence every year both in the system of extracurricular education and among the spectators.

This is clear, because in the Internet (video blogs, video courses and dance lessons), and on television (projects “Everybody is dancing”, “Dances with the stars”) they make popular only modern directions in choreography. From their childhood boys dream of dancing hip-hop, jazz-funk, and girls dream of dancing twerk, pole sport, cheerleading.

There is a decrease in the number of folk festivals, due to the lack of demand for spectators and financial support from the state and the transfer of folk groups to a commercial basis, which leads to their further reduction.

Therefore, the choreographer faces an important educational task - the development of the national identity of students, their natural entry into the spiritual world, the traditions and customs of their people, the culture of the nation. It is possible to realize this by spreading cultural and national values, familiarizing with the traditions of the native people. After all, the choreographer not only teaches motor skills, but also actively participates in the socialization of youth, in particular, the acquaintance of students with the wealth of spiritual culture of the native people, their ethnic mentality, customs and traditions.

The confirmation of the folk choreography importance in the upbringing of the younger generation is found in the works of many researchers. Thus, the scientific and methodological aspects of the use of Ukrainian dance folklore in working with children are reflected in the works of V. Verhovinets, A. Gumenyuk, V. Zhayvoronok, T. Naumenko, T. Povaliy, and others. However, many aspects of folk choreography remain insufficiently solved.

These aspects helped to make the choice of our article's topic ("Involving students in national traditions by the means of folk choreography") and proved its relevance.

**The purpose of the article:** to open the possibility of folk choreography for the dissemination of Ukrainian traditions among young people.

To achieve the goal, the following tasks were set:

- to reveal the connection of the motor specificity of Ukrainian folk dance with the traditions of our people;
- to highlight the drawbacks of modern teaching of folk dances in the prism of familiarizing students with folk traditions;
- to find ways to improve choreographic education in order to attract students to national traditions.

After all, we assume that, with proper teaching of folk dances, schoolchildren not only acquire motor activity, but through direct participation in dance, they join the traditions of the Ukrainian people.

**Presenting main material.** Ukrainian choreographic art is a powerful factor in the humanization of society, the development of spirituality and morality, the revival of national traditions. In particular, V. Verkhovynets, a prominent Ukrainian folklorist, ethnographer and choreographer, in the book "The Theory of Ukrainian Folk Dance", spoke very sincerely about the Ukrainian folk dance: "Our ballet, if it was destined to be born ever, should be folk, peculiar, and so it will become when its wealth of folk dance enters with its picturesque figures and a wide, unrestricted imagination of thoughts, and when it is absorbed in the spirit of fun dance songs full of vigor, energy, vigor, and a relaxed sincere entertainment of real people's life" (Verkhovynets, 1990, p. 11).

Folk dance is in a leading place among the cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people. Dance forms and dance movements reveal the peculiarities of our people character, reflecting the phenomena taken directly from their life and traditions. The manifestation of traditions in virtuosic choreographic technology gives Ukrainian dance a peculiar, incomparable colour.

Ukrainian culture is rich in bright folk dances: hopak, bootleg, cossack, etc. The dance accompanies youth festivities (street, vechornytsi, spring and kupala merry-go-rounds), as well as an obligatory element of the wedding (Zhayvoronok, 2006, p. 590).

Ukrainian Hopak is the most famous all over the world. It reflects the heroism of the struggle, national traditions, cultural and artistic values of the Ukrainian people. Its origins date back to Zaporozhye Sich. Hopak's movements were a kind of improvisation of the battle. Dancers interact with each other, trying to feel the partner, reveal the idea, adjust to it (Kamina, 2013, p. 75).

Sometimes the dance was performed with weapons: sabers, pistols, rifles or spears. Such a dance provided young people with a fight and gave the elder ones the opportunity to decide whether a young boy was ready for a real battle in the campaign.

According to the beliefs of our ancestors, the birds brought the spring on their wings. Wishing to accelerate their arrivals, they were carrying around the villages "larks" baked with dough. The girls gathered in circles, singing songs and dancing, let fly outpastry larks. In the spring, Ukrainian songs hayivky were very popular. Each hayivka is performed as a dramatic scene in which the playful motifs of the spring renewal of nature and love are heard. Their performance is related to ritual actions, reflecting labor processes.

On the Day of Kupala the girls drove round dance around their own ring, singing Kupala songs. Then they ran across all directions, the guys caught them and carried them to the fire, then they put girls in a circle around the center, walked in the direction of sun and sang Kupala round-dance songs.

Autumn harvesting was not without dance ritual events. The customs of the autumn cycle were also aimed at family life: the wedding began from Pokrov, and here the choreographic art of our ancestors began with round dances (which from ancient times were associated with the worship of the Sun).

Consequently, folk dance reflectstraditions, reminds us of our past, and creates the future, because one who does not remember the past has no future. And it is here that choreographers have to revive national traditions, to instill in their pupils a respect for the past of our people, through dance moves to carry this property to the present.

However, while studying the practice of choreographic schools andcollectives, we identified a number of problematic issues:

- teachers-choreographers do not have enough experience to familiarize children with Ukrainian dance folklore;
- in the process of teaching children, theyusepartially simplified, regulated in motor actionsrepertoire which was not attractive to modern youth;
- the majority of teachers pass children a general idea of Ukrainian dance, the awareness of their children is associated with musical and motor characteristics, not focusing children on the content, plot, drawings, figures, this is due to the lack of training of choreographers themselves on the regional peculiarities of Ukrainian folk dance;
- during classes the preference is given to the training process, the theoretical and cognitive material is almost not used.

This attitude to teaching folk dance diminishes the role of national cultural achievements, does not at all contribute to the national identification of Ukrainian youth and requires a more effective approach.

According to O. Martenko, the formation of national consciousness through familiarization with the peculiarities of the Ukrainian choreographic culture can be effectively implemented under the following conditions: the use of the pedagogical potential of Ukrainian folk choreography, taking into account its cognitive, developmental and educational possibilities; motivation of children's activities, development of interest and needs in knowledge of the dance culture of their people; the use of dance repertoire of different genres, subjects based on the plot-game and figurative principles, taking into account its regionality, accessibility and compliance with the sexual characteristics of children; dominant attitude to studying the dance repertoire of their region; creating an entertaining-gaming atmosphere during training, changing reproductive and productive activities; stimulation of the activity and independence of children, creation of the environment and a system of relations that promote the realization of their creative potential; taking into account the age-old peculiarities of children in determining the content of the work on familiarizing children with national peculiarities of Ukrainian choreography; Implementation of an individual-orientated and differentiated approach to the learning process (targeting the level of awareness of children in one or another topic, their physical and psychological readiness for choreographic activity, abilities, interests and personal qualities); the use of diverse music that is accessible for children to perceive and comprehend; active involvement of children in the traditions and ceremonies of the Ukrainian people; development of their artistic and creative abilities; It is expedient to alternate various types of choreographic classes (integrated, thematic, cognitive, educational and creative); raising interest in dance activities, cultural achievements of the Ukrainian people, and respect for the folk sources of their region (Martynenko, 2014, no. 14).

We agree with the author's opinion, in which she offers a comprehensive approach to choreography, but it is impossible to do everything right now. It is necessary to systematize steps in order to develop Ukrainian choreography gradually. Ukrainian folk dance must be revived and has to transmit all depth, color, sincerity of the Ukrainian spirit through itself. After all, folk dance carries its ritual, transmits the customs and traditions of our ancestors. It is impossible not only to study it, it needs to be understood and felt, then it will be pouring from the soul, preserving and conveying all beauty, strength and faith, and further develop our national dignity.

So, we believe that first of all:

- folk dance groups should receive state support for their development, the state must finance their activities;

- state establishments of culture and arts should organize special seminars, trainings, courses on which choreographers should be able to increase their competence, and not only in acquiring skills, but also theoretical ones - from acquiring knowledge about the history of folk dance, its regional specificity, ritual and customs that are manifested in folk dance, etc.;

- choreographers, teachers should more contribute to the formation of the national identity of students, to educate national dignity, respect for themselves as the Ukrainians and to their past.

In choreography classes, a variety of tools should be used to engage students in folk traditions, for example, the study of dance may be preceded by:

- theoretical lecture on dance history;

- games, decree, reproduction of historical or practical actions, highlighting the dance;

- showing video with this dance.

We believe that this approach will provide students with more interest in folk dances, expand their understanding of the origin of folk dances, and generally promote national education of schoolchildren.

*Conclusions and perspectives of further research.* The theme of national culture, preservation of our traditions today is very relevant for the Ukrainian Podunavija and Ukraine as a whole. And it is through the people that it is best conveyed in the art of dance, penetrating deeply into its national consciousness, uniting such diverse eastern, western, northern and southern, but certainly, Ukrainian regions. Whatever the dance we were considering: whether the Hopak, Polissya Polka, Slobzhansky Crater, Podilsky Cossack, or the Hutsulka from the Ukrainian Carpathians - in each of them there is a rich Ukrainian tradition.

The article uncovered the potential of Ukrainian dance for the national education of young people, its familiarization with folk traditions and customs, but also the "weak" places of our contemporary folk choreographic education were discovered. Ukraine has been proclaiming itself to be independent and, without proper education of the national consciousness of the younger generation, unfortunately, it will never become such.

Art always formed the ideology, mood, tastes of any society, and today the education of patriotism of young Ukrainians, the formation of a single ethnic belonging in them through folk dance is a priority task of development of our choreography.

We identified only the most necessary steps for this, however, further folk dance, its historical and ritual origins, as well as its role in shaping national identity and the national identification of the younger generation, require further research.

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