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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPING  
CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN FUTURE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS****Tanzila Sulaymonova***Basic doctoral student**Jizzakh State Pedagogical University (JSPU)**Jizzakh, Uzbekistan***ABOUT ARTICLE**

**Key words:** Cultural competence, future primary school teacher, spiritual heritage, oral folk art, folklore, national tradition, custom, ritual, educational heritage, ancestral heritage.

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the theoretical-pedagogical foundations and structural components of developing cultural competence in future primary school teachers. Alongside core and professional competencies, the role of cultural competence and its significance in the era of globalization are highlighted in the formation of a teacher's personality. During the research, the rich spiritual heritage of our people—including folklore, national customs, traditions, and rituals, as well as the scientific and educational works of our great ancestors—are established as the primary sources for forming cultural competence. The analysis presented in the article serves to prepare future educators in the spirit of national values and to develop their cross-cultural communication skills.

**Introduction.** In today's era of rapid globalization and intensifying intercultural dialogue, the educational system is tasked with preparing specialists who are not only knowledgeable but also possess a broad worldview, tolerance, and adaptability toward diverse cultures. The role of the teacher is particularly paramount in the primary education stage, where the foundation of an individual's personality is laid. Developing professional competencies in future primary school teachers serves as a basis for preparing the younger generation as individuals who can compete with their peers globally in every field and who remain proactive regarding their own destiny and the fate of others.

First, to address the questions "What is competence?", "From which language did it originate?", and "What does it signify?", we shall examine the definitions provided for this concept. The term "competence" was first introduced by N. Chomsky in 1955 and was interpreted as a "set of activity-oriented knowledge, skills, and abilities" in the process of language use. The "competency-based approach" was identified as a factor demonstrating effectiveness in education.

There are various opinions regarding the concept of competence and its etymological roots, yet they all converge on a single point in expressing its essence. For instance, according to B. Khodjaye: "Competence (a Latin word meaning 'to achieve' or 'to be appropriate') signifies a subject's readiness to effectively organize external and internal resources to set and achieve goals; in other words, it is the individual ability of a subject to solve specific professional problems." [1]

In our modern age, future pedagogical personnel are required to possess cultural competence alongside the "core competencies" that provide a foundation for general development and the "specialized competencies" formed through academic subjects. It is worth noting that while a teacher's core competencies determine their intellectual potential and specialized competencies ensure their instructional techniques, it is only through cultural competence that this knowledge comes to life and reaches the heart of the student. A teacher without cultural competence is merely a technical provider of information; a teacher with cultural competence, however, is a mentor who shapes personality.

Developing cultural competence in future primary school teachers is considered one of the most critical conditions for enhancing their pedagogical mastery while simultaneously educating the younger generation in the spirit of universal human values and national identity.

**Materials and methods.** When discussing the theoretical foundations of cultural competence, it is first necessary to understand the concept in detail, as it is regarded as a cornerstone of pedagogy. The concept of cultural competence first emerged in the fields of sociology and anthropology, and subsequently evolved into a crucial methodological concept within the sphere of pedagogy.

The role of cultural competence in a teacher's activity is considered incomparable. Stability and quality within the educational system are directly linked to the teacher's professional qualifications, including their cultural competence.

Cultural competence is the ability of a pedagogue to operate effectively in diverse cultural environments; that is, the capacity to engage in communication with representatives

of other cultures, to understand and respect their values, and to express one's own cultural values in a constructive manner. [2]

Currently, in educational institutions, a teacher's cultural sensitivity, empathy, and communicative skills manifest as primary factors when working with students from various cultural and social backgrounds. In essence, a teacher's cultural competence exerts a positive influence in the following areas:

- Fostering a culture of tolerance and respect among students;
- Cultivating respect for the national values and rich spiritual heritage of one's own people.
- Creating a constructive and effective classroom environment;
- Preventing cultural stress, misunderstandings, and social conflicts;
- Cultivating a sense of global citizenship.

Given that more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups reside in our country today, teaching children from an early age to respect and preserve their own and others' customs and values is a key part of our educational efforts to maintain harmony and peace. Initially, it must be emphasized that a great responsibility lies with primary school teachers, who provide the first lessons to the younger generation in educational institutions. This, in turn, calls for increased alertness among future primary school teachers currently being educated in the primary education departments of higher education institutions.

One of the most fundamental components of cultural competence is a deep knowledge of one's own people's history, customs, and art. This requires future primary school teachers not only to acquire professional knowledge but also to conduct an in-depth study of our people's rich spiritual heritage. The rich spiritual heritage of our people is an intellectual, moral, and cultural treasure formed over centuries, lived by the representatives of our nation, and passed down from generation to generation. It is not merely material objects, but rather the "soul" and "philosophy of life" of the nation.

The spiritual heritage of the Uzbek people primarily consists of the following structural components:

- Oral and written literature;
- National customs, traditions, and rituals;
- The spiritual and educational heritage of our ancestors.

Regarding literature, Mario Vargas Llosa writes: "Thanks to literature, thanks to the thinking, aspirations, and desires awakened by literature, and thanks to the experiences that arose in the heart during the journey to the realm of imagination, the person of today's

civilization became humanized and found salvation. The artistic fiction invented by the people of literature did not disappear like water into the sand; on the contrary, it illuminated stone-cold hearts like a candle. Had there been no good books, the current state of humanity would be pitiable, independent thought would vanish, unity of the heart would be lost, feelings of dependency would spread, and self-awareness—the leading factor of progress—would disappear." [3]

Literature is divided into two types: oral and written. Oral literature appeared earlier than written literature. The connection between oral literature and written literature is manifested in the lexical richness of our language. The role of written literature is incomparable in preserving the rich spiritual heritage of our people and delivering it intact to the future generation. Since the emergence of written literature, it has drawn nourishment from oral literature, refining its beautiful examples. It is observed that if a creator has lived within folklore traditions and absorbed them, that creator's work is significantly more perfect in terms of language. Indeed, the role of an artistic work in the formation of national consciousness and thinking is beyond measure. [4]

**Result and discussion.** It is well known that from an early age, children listen to examples of oral folk art shared by grandparents, parents, or siblings within the family, as well as by educators in preschool institutions. Various genres of folklore lead children toward perfection by calling them to goodness, bravery, patriotism, generosity, industriousness, and humanity. Furthermore, it would not be an exaggeration to say that oral folk art provides insights into the history and origins of a nation. The term "Folklore" is used synonymously with oral folk art, first introduced in 1846 by the 19th-century researcher William Thoms; it consists of two words: "Folk" meaning people, and "Lore" meaning knowledge, wisdom, or scholarship—essentially "the wisdom of the people." [5]

Since the dawn of humanity, there has always been a need for communal living. This can be observed from the earliest periods of human society, such as the primitive communal system. Even during those times, community members hunted together and performed various spectacles. As is known to all, writing had not yet been invented during this period; nevertheless, community members used oral art to express their hopes, dreams, and desires through various performances. This implies that oral art appeared long before the discovery of writing and has been refined through oral transmission from generation to generation among the people.

Works of oral folk art emerge and survive through a long-term creative process, passing orally from generation to generation and from master to apprentice. One distinction between

written literature and oral art is that in written literature, both the author and the time of creation are known. In contrast, the author of oral folk art is the people themselves; the time of creation is indefinite, and its origin is the land inhabited by the people who created it. As V.G. Belinsky stated: "There are no famous names in folklore because its author is always the people. No one knows who composed those simple and modest songs that clearly depict the inner and outer life of a young nation or tribe without embellishment, and these songs pass from clan to clan, generation to generation, changing over time. They are sometimes shortened, sometimes lengthened, sometimes re-composed, sometimes linked to other songs—thus an epic emerges from a song, and only the people can consider themselves its author. Literature is a different matter—it is no longer the people, but separate individuals who reflect various aspects of national life through their mental activity who are its creators. In literature, the individual enters the scene with full rights, and literary stages are always distinguished by the name of the individual." [5]

Today, the publication of a 100-volume collection of "Examples of Uzbek Oral Folk Art" by our state is a testament to the high regard for folklore. This collection includes 59 volumes of epics (dastans), 10 volumes of folk songs, 12 volumes of fairy tales, with the remaining volumes consisting of terma, legends, myths, adages, proverbs, riddles, askiya, anecdotes, oral drama, and other genres.

Studying oral folk art deeply serves to form cultural competence in future primary school teachers while imposing on them a responsibility to respect national values and preserve and transmit the rich spiritual heritage of our people to future generations.

National customs, traditions, and rituals, which are an integral part of the spiritual heritage of the Uzbek people, also possess distinct characteristics. It should be noted that our national customs and traditions are not merely a daily lifestyle but a living spiritual heritage filtered through centuries, embodying the people's wisdom, moral standards, and aesthetic views.

Tradition is a unique social phenomenon that has found its place in the minds and lives of people, passed from generation to generation, repeated, and accepted as rules and regulations in all spheres of life (by the general public or a specific group).

Custom ("urf-odat") refers to repeated actions integrated into people's lives over a specific period, consisting of rules of conduct accepted by the majority. Examples include:

- Younger people greeting their elders;
- Waking up early to tidy the house and courtyard;
- Showing special respect to guests;

- Visiting the sick and needy on the eve of holidays;
- Participating in hashar (community labor) for those in need.

While tradition pertains to all spheres of social life, labor, and culture, custom is more prevalent in specific areas such as daily life, work, behavior, communication, and family relations.

Ritual is a component of tradition and custom—a life event with its own accepted symbolic actions, held in a formal and spiritually uplifting atmosphere to celebrate important events in a person's life. Examples include:

- Naming ceremonies;
- Wedding ceremonies;
- Commemoration rituals;
- Sowing and harvest rituals.

While customs can occur at various times in daily life, rituals arise when significant events occur in a person's life.

Specifically, traditions such as hospitality, industriousness, respect for elders and kindness to youngsters, and modesty (*andisha*) serve as a "spiritual code" that distinguishes the Uzbek people from others. To preserve these values, nationwide charitable hashars are organized annually across the Republic during the spring and before Independence Day. As the First President I.A. Karimov noted in his book "High Spirituality—An Invincible Force": "In elevating the spirituality of our people, exemplary values such as mutual kindness, glorifying the human being, a peaceful and tranquil life, valuing friendship and harmony, and solving various problems together, which are embodied in our national customs, are gaining increasingly important significance. In this regard, the custom of hashar, which has become an integral part of our spiritual life, has taken on a new meaning and become a national tradition during the period of independence, which pleases us all." [6]

Another inexhaustible source of the spiritual heritage of the Uzbek people is the rich spiritual and educational heritage left by our ancestors. The heritage of those who created the first sources of science in their time and built the foundation for today's achievements serves as a guidebook for modern science. Looking back at history, our great ancestors studied the civilizations of not only our people but countries worldwide, leaving works that express respect for their history and culture. The scientific heritage of great Eastern scholars is such that it remains relevant today as an important source for new research. These sources include: Mahmud al-Kashgari's "Diwan Lughat al-Turk", Yusuf Khas Hajib's "Qutadgu Bilig", Kai Kaus's "Qabusnama", Ahmad Yugnaki's "Hibat al-Haqa'iq", Saadi's "Gulistan", Jami's "Baharistān",

Alisher Navoi's "Mahbub-ul Qulub", Davani's "Akhlaiq-i Jalali", Samarkandi's "Four Discourses", Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur's "Baburnama", Al-Biruni's "India", Al-Farabi's "Virtuous City", Avicenna's "The Canon of Medicine", and Al-Farghani's "Elements of Astronomy", among many other literary, historical, and cultural-educational works.

During the years of independence, many works regarding the lives of these scholars were published, enriching the spiritual world of our youth. More than 4,000 material and spiritual monuments in Uzbekistan are included in the UNESCO list as unique examples of world heritage. Studying the heritage of scholars from Central Asia leads a person toward progress, distances them from ignorance, and strengthens feelings of love for the homeland and loyalty to the nation. Regarding this, D. Farsaxonova states in the textbook "Education Science in Primary Education": "In the treasury of spiritual wealth created by humanity, the advice and teachings of wise men occupy a special place. They are eternal spiritual riches because their advice stems from life experience and expresses noble intentions. At the core of their teachings lie the ideas of humanism, patriotism, and enlightenment. These didactic-ethical works remain an important factor in preparing youth for life and practical activity today." [7]

**Conclusion.** In summary, cultural competence in the activity of a future primary school teacher is not merely additional knowledge; it serves as a bridge connecting core and specialized competencies. All aspects of our nation's rich spiritual heritage—ranging from examples of oral folk art to the ethical teachings of our great scholars—serve as a ready-made educational methodology for the future teacher. Furthermore, in our multi-ethnic society, the cultural sensitivity and tolerance of a primary school teacher are vital factors in ensuring social stability. Understanding the unique characteristics of traditions, customs, and rituals analyzed in the article enables the teacher to establish effective communication with every student and their family.

In the process of higher pedagogical education, it is a pressing task not only to provide theoretical knowledge but also to prepare students as living carriers of our national values to develop their cultural competence. Indeed, a profound understanding of the structural components of forming cultural competence in future primary school teachers helps prepare future educators who deeply grasp national-spiritual values, possess well-developed cultural competence, and are dedicated to instilling our rich spiritual heritage into the minds of the future generation while preserving it for posterity.

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