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## UKRAINIAN FOLK SONG AS A FACTOR IN ENRICHING THE ARTISTIC COMPETENCE OF FUTURE MUSIC TEACHERS IN THE CONTEXT OF NON-FORMAL ART EDUCATION

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*У статті обґрунтовано педагогічний потенціал української народної пісні в контексті формування мистецької компетентності майбутніх учителів музичного мистецтва. Акцент зроблено на значенні неформальної мистецької освіти, яка реалізується в художньо-творчих колективах народного спрямування закладу вищої педагогічної освіти. Доведено, що отримання студентами неформальної мистецької освіти в фольклорних ансамблях та народних хорах сприяє поглибленню таких складників мистецької компетентності майбутніх учителів музичного мистецтва як особистісний, когнітивний, діяльнісний та соціальний. Теоретичний аналіз і спостереження за діяльністю художньо-творчих колективів народного спрямування дозволили констатувати, що виконання українських народних пісень має суттєвий вплив на ціннісні орієнтири, емоційно-естетичне ставлення до мистецтва, художню чутливість, внутрішню мотивацію до творчості та здатність до художньо-особистісного самовираження. Водночас постійна музично-освітня діяльність з використанням народної пісні сприяє поглибленню компетентностей щодо народної манери співу; класифікації голосів у народному хорі; музично-виразних засобів хорового виконавства; способів народного звукоутворення; складників вокальної фольклористики українського народу. Обґрунтовано, що саме в умовах отримання неформальної мистецької освіти в художньо-творчих колективах національного спрямування відбувається занурення студентів у світ пісенної культури українського народу, у результаті чого активізується внутрішня мотивація до творчості, употужнюється національні ідентичність та підвищується якість професійної підготовки учителя музичного мистецтва.*

**Ключові слова:** українська народна пісня, неформальна мистецька освіта, підготовка майбутніх учителів музичного мистецтва.

**Introduction.** The continuous modernization of the national education system aimed at integrating Ukraine into the European educational space brings to the forefront the issue of training highly qualified music teachers capable of effectively implementing the objectives of arts education within the framework of the New Ukrainian School. It is evident that competencies serve as the foundation for any type of educational activity, including artistic education. In this regard, the exploration of opportunities for enhancing such competencies is both relevant and necessary.

Within this context, the Ukrainian folk song heritage emerges as a significant educational resource and a powerful means of intellectual and spiritual enrichment for future music teachers. As a bearer of historical memory, ethnocultural codes, and the moral-aesthetic ideals of the nation, Ukrainian folk songs contribute to a deeper understanding by students of the essence of national musical art. They stimulate the development of analytical thinking, artistic and interpretative abilities, and foster value-based orientations and artistic reflection. Formal arts education serves as the basis for the formation of artistic competence in future teachers. At the same time, non-formal art education

obtained through participation in creative and artistic groups at institutions of higher pedagogical education constitutes a valuable complement to formal training.

When addressing competencies related to the folk song heritage of the Ukrainian people, it is crucial to emphasize the relevance of maintaining artistic and creative groups within pedagogical higher education institutions. These groups provide optimal conditions for the acquisition of non-formal art education, which, in turn, can significantly enrich the artistic competence of future music teachers.

The relevance of this research is driven by the need to reassess the role of Ukrainian folk song culture within the system of arts education and to search for new pedagogical approaches to activating its potential in the professional training of future music teachers.

**Literature Review.** The foundations for the systematic study of Ukrainian folk music were laid by prominent scholars of the past and present, including K. Kvitka (Kvitka, 1930), F. Kolessa (Kolessa, 1910-1913), D. Revutskyi (Revutskyi, 1936), and H. Levchenko (Levchenko, 2007). Researchers of a more recent generation, such as A. Ivanytskyi (Ivanytskyi, 2001) and S. Hrytsa (Hrytsa, 2008), made significant contributions to the development of vocal folkloristics by analyzing the specifics of folk sound production, regional singing styles, and issues of authenticity.

Equally valuable for this article are recent studies conducted by Ukrainian scholars. For instance, O. Krus (Krus, 2020), in her dissertation, explored the pedagogical potential of Ukrainian folk song creativity as an effective means of national education for future music teachers. N. Semychova (Semychova, 2022) examined the influence of Ukrainian folk songs on the formation of universal human values among future art educators. V. Drinevska (Drinevska, 2023) investigated the role of Ukrainian folk songs as a tool for shaping aesthetic and cultural values in future teachers, emphasizing that folk songs foster the development of national identity and students' aesthetic perception. N. Sulaieva (Sulaieva, 2014) identified the methodological, theoretical, and practical foundations of non-formal art education for future teachers within artistic and creative groups at institutions of higher pedagogical education.

However, existing research does not sufficiently highlight the aspects related to the enhancement of artistic competence of future music teachers in the context of non-formal arts education.

**Materials and methods.** To achieve the research aim and address its objectives, a set of general scientific methods has been used. These methods have complemented one another and ensured the attainment of the study's goals. Theoretical methods included the following: content analysis of literature to identify the current state of research on the topic; the problem-based method to distinguish general trends in the development of non-formal arts education within nationally oriented artistic and creative groups; the method of scientific extrapolation to project and adapt the experience of organizing non-formal education in the domestic pedagogical space; methods of theoretical analysis and synthesis to identify factors influencing the development of artistic competencies among students involved in non-formal arts education in creative collectives of pedagogical higher education institutions. Empirical methods included observational methods, specifically monitoring the artistic and educational activities of members of creative groups.

**Results and discussion.** The theoretical and methodological analysis of addressing the issue of non-formal arts education for future music teachers within artistic and creative groups has revealed that, under the conditions of pedagogical education modernization, non-formal artistic and educational activities are acquiring particular relevance. In the context of teacher professional training, we define non-formal arts education as voluntary artistic activity undertaken outside the framework of formal education at a higher pedagogical institution, primarily implemented within artistic and creative groups and not accompanied by the awarding of an official diploma (Sulaieva, 2014).

The integration of non-formal art education into the system of higher pedagogical education contributes to the formation of a spiritually enriched educational environment within the pedagogical university, which positively influences the personal and professional development of future teachers.

In particular, we emphasize the enhancement of the artistic competence of future music teachers through their engagement in non-formal art education within nationally oriented artistic and creative groups. Such groups within a higher pedagogical institution may include folk choirs, song and dance ensembles, folklore groups, trios, duets, among others.

Thus, it is within these folk-oriented artistic and creative groups that the deepening of artistic competence among future music teachers takes place, particularly in its personal, cognitive, practical, and social dimensions.

Concerning the Personal Component of Artistic Competence, it should be emphasized that this element plays a crucial role in the professional preparation of future art teachers. It encompasses value orientations, an emotional-aesthetic attitude towards art, artistic sensitivity, intrinsic motivation for creativity, self-identification through artistic practices, and the ability for artistic-personal self-expression. Participation in folk choirs or folklore ensembles enables future teachers to fully experience the beauty of Ukrainian folk song art, enjoy its melodiousness, and grasp its meaning on a deeper level.

Artistic and creative groups offer an environment in which the future teacher can become «one» with the musical heritage of the Ukrainian people, enhancing their sensitivity, empathy, and ethical consciousness. One of the most powerful factors in the personal development of participants in such groups is the opportunity for each member to express themselves creatively. Indeed, the main type of activity in this context is the performance of musical works either as part of an ensemble, a section, or solo.

The ability to take pleasure in one's own performance or in the act of sharing Ukrainian musical treasures with an audience opens a pathway to the experience of beauty, goodness, and the realization of harmony in the world through artistic forms. The personal component is of exceptional importance in the training system for art educators, as it shapes pedagogical charisma, aesthetic taste, and the capacity to inspire students.

An equally powerful and critically important component of artistic competence, which is enriched through participation in non-formal art education within creative groups, is the cognitive component. This component is reflected in knowledge related to the folk singing manner; voice classification within folk choirs; expressive musical tools used in choral performance; techniques of folk sound production and vocal methods; and key elements of Ukrainian vocal folklore studies.

The transmission of knowledge within nationally oriented artistic and creative groups takes place through the participants' practical engagement with art. One of the most vital conditions for attaining a high level of mastery in performing Ukrainian vocal traditions is the preservation of the folk singing style, which is grounded in the understanding of the uniqueness and distinctiveness of Ukrainian folk vocal performance; the difference between the vocal style of the Ukrainian people and those of other nations; the distinction between the folk-classical and the authentic Ukrainian singing traditions.

Students participating in folk-oriented artistic and creative groups come to recognize, through their own experience, the beauty and specificity of Ukrainian vocal techniques. As a result, in the future they will be less likely to allow folk songs to be distorted or reduced to caricature-like, intentionally simplified, or vulgarized versions (Levchenko, 2007). They will be able to distinguish genuine folk singing from its pseudo-cultural imitations, which are mistakes sometimes made by educators when preparing students for various performances and events.

At the same time, music teachers who have supplemented their formal education with non-formal music education are well aware of the distinctions between the Ukrainian folk singing style – characterized, for instance, by chest resonance and specific vocal production – and the singing styles of other nations.

It is crucial for future music teachers to understand the differences between authentic folk singing – typically performed by folklore ensembles from specific regions, each with its own unique vocal features – and the folk-classical vocal style, which is common among choral groups performing folk songs, their arrangements, and works by Ukrainian classical composers such as S. Hulak-Artemovsky, M. Lysenko, M. Leontovych, K. Stetsenko, Ya. Stepovy, and later national composers like A. Avdiievsky, I. Bidak, H. Levchenko, A. Pashkevych, and Ye. Savchuk.

In folk choral groups, the acquisition of knowledge about voice types and choral parts occurs naturally and effortlessly. After just two or three rehearsals, students who have only recently entered pedagogical university and begun their non-formal artistic education already know that

male voices are categorized as basses, baritones (lower voices), and tenors (higher voices), while female voices include altos (lower voices, divided into first and second), second sopranos (also referred to as «vyvid»), and first sopranos (higher voices).

Members of folk-oriented vocal ensembles also gain knowledge about the expressive means of choral performance. In addition to basic musical concepts such as melody, rhythm, and tempo, they become familiar with terms like forte (loud), piano (soft), crescendo (gradual increase in volume), and diminuendo (gradual decrease in volume). A notable feature of how these are learned in artistic and creative groups is that no specific time is set aside for instruction. Instead, these terms are mentioned in the process of learning the repertoire, briefly explained in one or two words to ensure the correct expression of the song's meaning. After several repetitions, such dynamic nuances become intuitive for the performers and are executed with understanding and intent.

Practical performance of musical works also requires knowledge of phrasing. After only a few sessions within an artistic-creative ensemble, students begin to develop an understanding of the necessity of distinguishing one musical idea from another and the importance of emphasizing the main motif or phrase, thereby making the work accessible not only to the performers but also to the audience. Both theoretical and practical approaches to phrasing presuppose familiarity with the placement of breaths, their duration or delay, and the comprehension of terms such as circular breathing, pause, and tempo.

A full artistic interpretation of a musical piece is unattainable without appropriate sound production, the understanding of which is cultivated among members of artistic ensembles – future music teachers – through their performance activities. In particular, students become acquainted with the concept of sound attack (soft, hard, or aspirated), and they learn the importance of clear articulation of consonants and the modification of vowel sounds during song study and performance. They also begin to understand the choir director's instructions regarding pitch elevation or lowering, as well as certain techniques for singing repeated or descending tones (such as the mental elevation of each subsequent pitch to ensure accurate intonation), among others.

The cognitive component of artistic competence in future music teachers encompasses knowledge of the elements of Ukrainian vocal folklore. Through acquaintance with the repertoire, students learn to categorize folk songs into specific genres: children's songs (lullabies, play songs, songs accompanying fairy tales, etc.); calendar-ritual songs (vesnianky, Kupala songs, songs of the St. Peter's fast, harvest songs, shchedrivky, and kolyadky); family-ritual songs (wedding songs, work songs, lamentations, etc.). A key element for their future professional activity is the assimilation of epic genres, which carry not only musical but also substantial narrative content (e.g., dумы, historical songs, and ballads). Equally important is the knowledge of Ukrainian lyric songs, including socio-domestic songs (Cossack, chumak, conscription, and soldier songs) and everyday lyrical songs (humorous and dance songs).

Of particular value for future educators is knowledge of authorial songs that, due to their widespread popularity, have come to be perceived as folk songs. Foremost among these are compositions set to the poetry by Taras Shevchenko having several hundred variants. These include patriotic songs («The Dnipro Roars and Groans»), historical songs («A Cloud Rises Over the Estuary»), Cossack songs («The Water Flows into the Blue Sea»), chumak songs («Oh, Beer and Mead Are Not Being Drunk»), ballads («A Father Sits at the End of the Table»), and lyrical songs («A Jackdaw Flies Over the Ravine», «The Nightingale Will Start to Sing»), among others. Additionally, students are introduced to romantic-style art songs (romansy), the origins of which lie in kants and works by 19<sup>th</sup>-century Romantic poets: V. Zabala («The Wind Roars Mightily in the Field», «Don't Sing, Nightingale»), M. Petrenko («I Gaze at the Sky», «I Would Take a Bandura»), D. Bonkovskiy («Is There a Young Woman in the World?», «Handzia»), K. Dumytrashko («Black Brows, Brown Eyes»), S. Rudanskyi («Blow, Wind, to Ukraine»), L. Hlibov («A High Mountain Stands»), M. Starytskyi («What a Moonlit Night»). Once set to music, these works have long been accepted by Ukrainians as part of their folk heritage.

As previously noted, the development of the activity-based component of artistic competence occurs in tandem with the cognitive one. Within the context of non-formal art education in nationally oriented artistic-creative groups, this component is manifested in a variety of skills and abilities, including reproducing the folk singing style; employing expressive means of folk choral and

instrumental performance; applying traditional methods of sound production and singing techniques of the Ukrainian people; recreating various elements of Ukrainian vocal folklore; creating artistic imagery through vocal means; engaging in concert performance; and navigating musical information flow.

Development of the activity-based component begins with the initial rehearsals, during which participants are tasked with performing songs in a traditional folk manner, which is typically characterized by a neutral laryngeal position, rounded vowel sounds, and exaggerated consonant articulation. This is often preceded by listening to samples of authentic folk singing by renowned performers such as R. Kyrychenko, N. Matviienko, M. Mykolaichuk, O. Pavlovska, M. Savchuk, and others. Phrase-by-phrase assimilation of the musical text in an amateur ensemble is accompanied by instructional prompts such as «cover the sound», «round the sound», or «sing, do not shout».

The ability to perform in a folk manner is inseparable from the use of expressive musical means. Repeated practice of sharp transitions from forte to piano – a hallmark of Ukrainian folk song tradition – enables performers to maintain pitch accuracy without sliding or glissando. Members of folk choirs demonstrate particular mastery in performing musical phrases with crescendo and diminuendo, usually resulting from a clear understanding of the conductor's gestures and an emotionally charged group response during performance.

Proper sound production is essential for the accurate performance of Ukrainian folk songs. It is cultivated primarily through vocal warm-ups, with exercise selection aimed at developing skills such as proper breathing; executing soft, hard, and aspirated sound attacks; precise intonation and tuning sensitivity; and clear articulation of consonants along with elongation and rounding of vowel sounds to avoid flatness. Mastery of correct sound production is further reinforced by new participants mimicking more experienced singers. In student choirs, this process is naturally supported through structured studio sessions and by seating novices next to senior peers within their vocal parts. This approach also fosters the acquisition of traditional singing techniques specific to Ukrainian folk music, including glissandos, downward pitch slides, pitch approaches, overtone coloring, grace notes, abrupt cutoffs, and the addition of extra syllables within words.

For future music teachers, the ability to reproduce various components of Ukrainian vocal folklore is essential for their professional development. When forming a repertoire, ensemble leaders usually select a variety of genres, such as lullabies (e.g., «Grey Kitty», «I Rocked My Baby»), which require not only soft vocalization (piano), but also emotional and expressive conveyance of affection toward a child; calendar and family ritual songs (e.g., «Vesnianka», «On St. John's Night», «Shchedryk, Shchedryk», «Good Evening to You, Master of the House», «Oh, Sun», «Beets in the Garden»), which demand sincerity, passion, and naturalness in performance; ballads and dumas (such as «The Ballad of Baida», «They Carry the Cossack», «Oh, Beyond the Green Grove», «The Duma about the Cossack Holota»), characterized by semi-sung and semi-spoken narration, exclamatory techniques, and glissandos to reflect solemnity and grandeur; and everyday or domestic songs (such as «Let's Go, Wife», «My Sweetheart Wants Dumplings», «You Are a Cabbage, You Are a Seedling», «Green Grove»), which feature distinctive vocal techniques (exclamations, accentuation, elongation of sounds) that add humor, dance-like rhythm, and liveliness to the pieces.

The performance of vocal works, especially Ukrainian folk songs, provides participants in artistic and creative groups the opportunity to learn how to create artistic imagery. This skill is particularly useful in organizing cultural and educational events within general secondary education institutions. Equally valuable are the competencies developed through non-formal art education in nationally focused artistic ensembles – such as the ability to engage in concert and performance activities and to navigate the vast flow of musical information.

The components of the activity-based domain shaped through non-formal art education empower future music teachers – who may also take on roles such as class supervisors or deputy principals for extracurricular activities – to enrich educational events with highly artistic, nationally oriented, and emotionally diverse musical repertoires.

The personal, activity-based, and cognitive components of artistic competence developed in folk-oriented creative ensembles are closely interconnected with the social component. The social dimension includes the ability to discuss art, collaborate effectively, represent Ukrainian musical art, and think creatively.

Knowledge, skills, and abilities gained through participation in folk music ensembles – both vocal and instrumental – equip students to confidently navigate the musical landscape and engage in meaningful dialogue about art. In addition to forming their own opinions and judgments about music, they become more interested in listening to others, gaining new insights about a form of art that is personally meaningful to them.

The ability to truly listen to others is a key to successful communication and an important step toward mutual understanding among people. Such understanding forms the foundation for collaboration, which is a critical factor in achieving high-quality educational outcomes. The ability of ensemble participants to cooperate effectively is cultivated through their ongoing collaborative artistic and educational activities. To reach a common goal, all members work together learning musical works, adhering to shared performance standards, and selecting appropriate forms of concert or presentation activity.

The ability to present one's own artistic activity to an audience, developed through non-formal artistic and educational engagement in nationally oriented creative groups, cultivates in future educators the capacity to showcase musical art through live performance. The ability to perform Ukrainian folk songs, or authorial songs close in style to folk music at a high or sufficient level forms a solid foundation for enhancing students' perception of folk musical art and fostering a sense of respect for Ukrainian folk song heritage.

A significant outcome of students' non-formal art education, achieved specifically within creative groups, is the development of creative thinking. A considerable amount of effort is invested in presenting musical gems as envisioned by ensemble participants. This includes a continuous creative search, namely exploring vocal projection, emotional expression of each verse, phrase, or even word; performance posture; facial expressions, gestures, and more – all of which contribute to the ongoing refinement of their ability to approach tasks creatively.

The constant aspiration toward artistic excellence motivates future music teachers to acquire a broader range of knowledge and to improve their existing skills and competencies. In turn, this fosters their ability to grow creatively as vocal performers.

**Conclusions.** In summary, the Ukrainian folk song heritage represents an exceptionally significant cultural and educational resource, capable of profoundly influencing the formation and deepening of artistic competence in future music teachers. Through the process of acquiring non-formal art education in nationally oriented creative groups, the professional development of future music educators is considerably enhanced. Artistic and educational activities within such groups contribute to the development of all key components of artistic competence: personal, cognitive, activity-based, and social. Among these, the personal component plays a foundational role, as it ensures creative self-expression, deep artistic reflection, and emotional comprehension of folk music as a factor of national identity. The cognitive component is deepened through the assimilation of specific knowledge about Ukrainian vocal folklore, traditional singing styles, vocal classification, and expressive means of choral art. This process occurs organically through practice, granting this knowledge not only theoretical but also practical value. As a result, students develop the ability to analyze and distinguish between authentic and stylized examples of folk song, a skill that is essential for their future professional activities. Thus, the integration of formal and non-formal art education within the system of professional teacher training ensures a high standard of preparation for future music educators. Participation in creative ensembles provides students with a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in national musical culture, shaping them into educated, emotionally sensitive, creatively active, and culturally conscious professionals. In turn, this not only promotes their professional self-realization but also strengthens the values of Ukrainian spirituality within the educational space of Ukraine.

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## UKRAINIAN FOLK SONGS AS A FACTOR IN ENHANCING THE ARTISTIC COMPETENCE OF FUTURE MUSIC TEACHERS IN THE CONTEXT OF INFORMAL ART EDUCATION

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*The article substantiates the pedagogical potential of Ukrainian folk songs in the context of developing the artistic competence of future music teachers. Emphasis is placed on the importance of informal arts education, which is implemented in folk-oriented artistic and creative groups at higher education institutions. It has been proven that students' informal arts education in folk*

*ensembles and choirs contributes to the deepening of such components of the artistic competence of future music teachers as personal, cognitive, activity-based, and social. Theoretical analysis and observation of the activities of folk-oriented artistic and creative groups have made it possible to conclude that the performance of Ukrainian folk songs has a significant impact on value orientations, emotional and aesthetic attitudes towards art, artistic sensitivity, internal motivation for creativity, and the ability for artistic and personal self-expression. At the same time, ongoing musical and educational activities using folk songs contribute to the deepening of competencies in folk singing styles; voice classification in folk choirs; musical and expressive means of choral performance; methods of folk sound production; and components of Ukrainian vocal folklore. It has been proven that it is precisely in the context of informal arts education in nationally oriented artistic and creative groups that students are immersed in the world of Ukrainian song culture, which activates their internal motivation for creativity, strengthens their national identity, and improves the quality of their professional training as music teachers.*

**Keywords:** *Ukrainian folk song, informal arts education, training of future music teachers.*

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