

## PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING BAKHSHI PERFORMANCE SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF FOLK ART

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**Abstract:** This article examines the conceptual pedagogical foundations and methodological principles for developing professional performance skills among students majoring in Folk Art, particularly in the field of Bakhshi (epic storytelling) art. The study scientifically substantiates the pedagogical conditions necessary for integrating the distinctive characteristics of traditional Bakhshi schools with contemporary standards of higher music education. It also explores effective methods for cultivating epic thinking and improvisational abilities in students based on the traditional master-apprentice educational model.

**Keywords:** folk art, bakhshi art, epic storytelling, pedagogical approach, master-apprentice tradition, performance skills, improvisation, epic thinking, music-didactic models

### INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of rapid globalization and technological advancement, preserving national identity and safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of a people for future generations has become one of the most urgent strategic tasks. The art of Bakhshi performance and epic storytelling, regarded as the pinnacle of Uzbek oral folk creativity, is far more than a simple musical performance genre. It represents a universal syncretic phenomenon that embodies centuries of historical memory, philosophical thought, pedagogical and moral values, and the national mentality of the Uzbek people.

The development of professional performance competencies among students studying “Folk Art (Bakhshi and Epic Storytelling)” in higher education institutions requires innovative pedagogical approaches. Owing to its epic scope, the integration of narration and melody, complex vocal techniques, and dramatic structure, epic performance differs significantly from other musical genres. Therefore, a systematic analysis of the pedagogical foundations of teaching this art form is of considerable theoretical and practical importance.

**Problem statement and methodological foundations.** Historically, the tradition of Bakhshi performance evolved within community life and natural cultural environments, primarily through regional master-apprentice schools such as the Sherabad School of Surkhandarya, the Kashkadarya School, the Khorezm School, and the Karakalpak School of epic storytelling. The transfer of this traditional educational model into the contemporary academic environment of higher education institutions inevitably generates pedagogical challenges.

The principal challenge lies in preserving the free, dynamic, and improvisational nature of epic storytelling while simultaneously transmitting it through scientific and pedagogical methodologies. When the educational process within departments of Folk Art is considered the object of study, the following methodological principles become fundamental:

**Principle of Historicity and Continuity:** Preserving the traditional performance styles of each regional school without compromising their authenticity.

**Integrated Approach:** Combining traditional performance practices with modern vocal training, acting skills, and musicological studies.

Principle of Individual Learning Trajectories: Adapting instruction to each student’s natural vocal capacities, temperament, and personal characteristics.

Structural components of bakhshi performance skills. The pedagogical process should be organized into interconnected modules to ensure the systematic and gradual development of epic performance competence:

### 1. Development of Epic-Musical Thinking

Students should not merely memorize epic texts mechanically. Epic thinking involves understanding the storyline, character development, and socio-psychological context reflected in the epic narrative. During instruction, educators guide students in identifying the logical connections between lyrical and epic sections of a performance. At the same time, students develop proficiency in traditional musical instruments such as the dombra, tor, and kobyz. Instrumental performance should not be regarded merely as accompaniment; rather, it should function as the Bakhshi’s “second voice.”

### 2. Bakhshi Vocal Technique and Voice Training

Traditional Bakhshi singing styles, including throat-based and open-voice techniques, require specific physiological and vocal preparation. Unlike academic vocal performance or conventional singing traditions, Bakhshi performance employs distinctive resonance and breathing techniques that emphasize diaphragmatic breath control. Pedagogical instruction should ensure that students develop throat-singing techniques without causing harm to their vocal apparatus. This objective can be achieved through specialized didactic exercises, including vocal warm-ups and the simulation of short melodic phrases. Particular attention should also be devoted to declamation - the ability to recite poetic texts melodically while preserving speech intonation and expressive clarity.

### 3. Improvisation as the Highest Stage of Mastery

A genuine Bakhshi is not merely a performer who reproduces memorized epics inherited from previous generations. Rather, a Bakhshi is a creative poet capable of reflecting contemporary social realities through spontaneous poetic expression.

To cultivate this ability, higher education institutions may employ the “audience motivation” method. During class, students are unexpectedly assigned a topic - such as respect for teachers, praise of the homeland, or descriptions of nature - and are required to compose and perform verses in traditional poetic meter accompanied by the dombra within a limited time. This method enhances rapid thinking, creativity, and musical imagination.

Contemporary pedagogical aspects of the master-apprentice tradition.

The preservation of the traditional master-apprentice system remains the primary factor ensuring educational effectiveness within departments of Folk Art. Today, this system is enriched through interactive pedagogical technologies.

Traditional listening and memorization practices are complemented by theoretical analysis of textual and musical structures, enabling students to gain a deeper understanding of the logic underlying performance. Visual imitation of the master’s performance is supplemented with audio-video resources and multimedia analysis, facilitating comparative study of regional performance styles. Participation in local cultural gatherings is further enhanced through courses on stage culture and audience interaction, contributing to professional stage competence and psychological resilience.

Through direct interaction between master and apprentice, students acquire not only musical techniques but also the behavioral, communicative, and psychological competencies necessary for successful public performance.

Conclusion and practical recommendations The development of Bakhshi performance skills among students of Folk Art is not simply a collection of mechanical exercises; rather, it constitutes a profound intellectual, spiritual, and cultural transformation process. To elevate the quality of Bakhshi education to national and international standards, the following recommendations are proposed:

### Differentiation of Regional Characteristics:

Curricula should provide opportunities for in-depth study of the Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya dombra traditions, the tor and accordion traditions of Khorezm epic performance, and the kobyz traditions of Karakalpak storytelling according to students’ interests. Implementation of the “Living Laboratory” Methodology: Students should participate in regional folklore and ethnographic expeditions and engage directly with experienced Bakhshi performers. Such experiences foster field research competencies and authentic listening skills. Integration of Digital Technologies: Rare audio recordings of epic performances should be analyzed using digital audio-visual software. Visual representation of melodic ornamentation and frequency patterns can significantly accelerate the learning process. The systematic implementation of these pedagogical foundations and methodological recommendations within higher education institutions will contribute to the preparation of authentic Bakhshi performers who possess national consciousness and are capable of presenting Uzbekistan’s living epic traditions on international stages.

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