Pros and Cons of the Applied and Decorative Arts in the Fine Arts Teacher Training

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Abstract: In the article, the authors analyze the historical and recent trends in the use of the decorative and applied artifacts as didactic tools in the development of fine arts teachers and education in general and summarize the data received for reforming the musical and pedagogical education in Ukraine. The general purpose of the study is to generalize historical, multiregional, typological approaches to the role of the decorative and applied heritage in the contemporary pedagogical education, to define its constructive and conservative role. All results were formulated in the form of brief conclusion abstracts, which are called the frame public and educational regularities related to the subject being studied. As a result of the study of the methodological literature, the educational policy documents and the fine arts teacher training traditions allowed us to outline two substantial lines for the use of tradition of the applied folk art in the development of the fine arts teachers. The first one is to form values: the awareness of the spiritual, aesthetic, accumulating, nation-building, identification, culture-preservation role of the applied folk art. The second one is to acquire practical competencies of fabrication of artifacts with one’s own hands following the traditional artistic models, or fabrication of elements of such artifacts, variations thereof, etc. The international importance of the article is determined by numerous regions, traditions, approaches and contradictions analyzed within the subject of research. This can be of interest for educational typologists, methodologists who develop new methods of interdisciplinary, cultural and artistic aspects of the future teacher development.

Keywords: educational traditions, decorative and applied artifact, pedagogical potential of the folk heritage, favorable and unfavorable factors, three-component model.

1. Introduction

Young students are the most energetic, dynamic part of the population, who must realize the objective importance of traditional achievements and national-patriotic education to ensure active participation in the social and cultural life of the state. It is at the student age that one of the leading internal processes is determining one's place in life and realizing one's social status. This means that during this period the individual is directed to the search for the foundations of national, civic and professional self-determination. In psychological terms, the student age solves the problem of final self-expression and integration into the community of adults (Skrypchenko & Dolynska, 2006, p. 173).

The above positions indicate exclusively positive ways and results of the educational use of the folk cultural and artistic heritage, but presently there are also unresolved aspects of the problem such as the increase of indifference in young people to traditional culture, excessive informatization of educational and beyond educational space, a long search for an optimal educational model for the training of Ukrainian educational specialists (Nerubasska & Maksymchuk, 2020; Nerubasska et al., 2020). We addressed first to the latest Ukrainian studies and found out the following: in the recent years the Ukrainian methodological discourse is full of partial issues related to the topic of our article: metaphysical studies on the philosophy of education (Eivas et al., 2021); historical origins of training through the applied folk art (Boichenko et al., 2020); partial author’s methods for formation of teacher competencies through the folk art (Marushchak et al., 2020); integration of traditional (applied and decorative) and innovative (ICT) technologies in teacher education (Buchkivska et al., 2021), etc. However, at the stage of reforming education, there is a need to carry out a wider overview of the current and historical trends, regional features, the existing models of use of the applied folk heritage in the pro-pedagogical education. The main method for this was the study of relevant foreign scientific sources. The criteria for their selection were as follows: a) coverage of the most distinct regions and cultures; b) an emphasis on the latest Ukrainian and foreign scientific discourse; c) the possibility of critical attitude and the pragmatic assessment (see the Research Methods), etc.

Relevance of the article. Obviously, the effectiveness of the educational models of the fine arts teacher training depends on many factors: the level of society development, educational traditions, the current state of the educational system, the role of the applied folk art in the national self-identification, in the cultural and production life of specific countries
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and their citizens. Therefore, in order to determine the prospects for the fine arts teacher training through the folk art, it is necessary to comprehensively take into account the social, mental and educational features of Ukrainians, as well as the achievement of the world experience in this realm.

The modernist paradigm of education envisaged study, creation and perception of purely aesthetic artifacts, which are opposed to the real-life practice. But in the deep Ukrainian folk tradition, practicality prevailed on aesthetics. The purpose of our study is to summarize the historical and regional approaches to the applied and decorative arts and its role in the training of the fine arts teacher, to identify the destructive factors and modern problems related to the subject of the research. On the basis of the traced trends, we will try to summarize and evaluate the real obstacles and prospects of using the folk-art potential for contemporary musical and pedagogical education in Ukrainian realities.

In order to achieve the goal, we used social survey methods (semi-structured questionnaire of an unrepresentative sampling of 27 of fine arts teachers and 40 randomly selected senior high school students); the problem-thematic analysis of the relevant scientific literature from different regions of the world; the methods of selection, analysis and prediction of the effectiveness of pedagogical ideas; the methods of analysis for the predefined presuppositions (thematic, evaluative, functional, guidance) and generalization of the results of analysis.

The applied and decorative art is an intermediate link of culture, which binds two planes important both for personality and the whole society: (value, aesthetic, ideal, traditional) and practical (applied resource, useful) (Assem et al., 2020). We projected this dualism on the trends of contemporary education and formulated the research hypothesis. Since the education is now turning from knowledge and skills to vital competencies and personal self-expression, then it is possible to predict: there is a direct link between the relevance of the applied components of the content of fine arts pedagogical education and the needs of young people in synthetic perception, creation and use of the applied and decorative objects and artifacts. This can become a favorable basis for the training of fine arts teachers with the help of the folk applied and decorative artefacts.

2. From the history of views on the pedagogical potential of the applied and decorative arts

The foreign pedagogical experience have always valued the positive influence of children’s art work on the development of the student’s
personality. The Swiss scientist Pestalocci (1981, p. 199) believed that the combination of work and education optimally deepens the general education of children, if children's education is built in accordance with child psychology and their desire to work. He regarded the mastery of basic work skills and the development of physical strength as an integral part of his method, which he proposed to master through the “alphabet of skills”. This method develops all the senses, stimulates creative tension. It is possible to hold a parallel with the subject of our article: samples of the naive-household folk art are extremely similar to children’s craft, and teacher can use it in the developing purposes (imitation, emulation, copying, etc.).

However, let’s consider specific views of authoritative scientists. The pedagogical heritage of Steiner (2010) deserves close attention. He described the essence of Waldorf technology of education: it is the education of feelings, the formation of artistic taste, the cult of creativity, creative personality, the development of individuality by means of applied art. The Waldorf education system emphasizes in the pedagogical process the importance of practical classes, in particular the teaching of knitting; Emphasizes that through crafts, connections are made between the phenomena of the world around us. The world of colors, shapes and shades directly affects pets. Steiner (2010) rightly noted that through artistic experiences and creativity there is a way to humanization of useful.

In the context of our study, the position of the French researcher Minder (2008), set out in the monograph “Field of pedagogical action” is interesting. He argues that the preparation of young people for life in modern highly developed societies contributes to active creativity - modeling, pottery, decor, craftsmanship. It activates the creative potential of the individual, giving him life inspiration serves the personal growth of man: intellectual, physical, psychological, aesthetic.

A well-known Ukrainian researcher of foreign pedagogical technologies of teacher training for aesthetic education Leshchenko (1996, pp. 49-50) notes that in foreign pedagogical colleges serious attention is paid to arts and crafts as an integral part of the aesthetic development of future teachers. The curriculum in arts and crafts integrates elements of various techniques and technologies, including drawing, painting, modeling, etc. In the process of learning, students are involved in arts and crafts, practically learn the connections between different types of art, acquire skills of artistic design; organize children’s arts and crafts art.

The specificity of arts and crafts art in comparison with other types is the formation of the material environment, human existence. It reflects the subject-spiritual world of man and includes many types of artistic practice.
This is weaving, painting, embroidery, carving, sharpening and the like. The term “decorative and applied” was established only in the 70s of the XIX century. By this time, works of arts and crafts were considered works of a lower grade than “classical” art forms. Approximately at this time, the Austrian scientist and a public figure R. Von Edelberg launched the study of applied arts in higher educational institutions. He made a lot of effort to delineate shop education that trained masters for the production of decorative and applied objects (arts and crafts), and teaching applied arts in academic tradition (Brandow-Faller, 2010). This reform significantly influenced the rethinking of the value and educational role of the folk art in Europe.

In search of a new educational paradigm, contemporary scientists often carry out historical insights. They try not only to track the change in the paradigm, but also to find out the relation of the changing educational models to the unchanging decorative and applied folk tradition. Finding this relation, historical in its essence, will help to understand how the folk fine arts legacy affects contemporary arts and education. For example, Kárpaťi made an overview of the artistic education in Europe in the XIX-XX centuries and came to the conclusion of a consistent change of the Prussian, Soviet and English models. Most of them are modernist in their essence and have a common goal for the artistic education - the establishment of identity, preservation of heritage and integration of regional fine-arts achievements in the educational programs, to the world art dialogue (Kárpaťi, 2019). As we can see, even then the cross-cultural value of the marginal ethnos was outlined. But because of the domination of the colonialism and the military-political cataclysms of self-determination of many peoples through the folk-art heritage and its inclusion in higher education was limited.

At the end of the twentieth century, the identity issues appeared even before the developed nations. MacDowell (1984) in her methodological work substantiated the importance of studying in higher educational institutions of the United States not so much European or world folk art, but the American art. Obviously, the scientist experienced the figurative artistic potential of her people in the days of the Cold War and in the anticipation of global changes.

The study of the role of folk art in teacher training in different countries is determined by common and different social needs. For example, at the turn of the century, the educational elite of China rejected the concept of Western education and adopted the concept of fine arts teacher training on the basis of their own cultural consciousness and the authentic art applied heritage (Guang-Min, 2007). If Chinese education is based on the
authentic philosophy and material spiritual heritage, in many US states they study the intercultural heritage, the vast experience of which will form the character (this is the unspoken and traditional for the United States upbringing of young people), (Rosenberg, 1996). In another study of the intercultural philosophy of the American education Rosenberg recalls that in the middle of the twentieth century, the authorities in every way encouraged popularization of traditions of different peoples living or studying in the United States. In education, this was manifested through the introduced intercultural educational programs, and in the didactic practice - the arrangement of special situations in class to represent the decorative-applied and spiritual heritage of various peoples (Rosenberg, 1991).

The textbook “Folk Art in Education” (MacDowell, 1987) still has a great methodical value. In it one can find all the folk-art education programs wide-spread in the world at that time. But the main value of the textbook is in the methodological recommendations, methods of their implementation and finding resources to use the folk art as a didactic tool.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett considers the applied folk art the only incessant and inexhaustible source of “accessible aesthetics”, which exerts a permanent pedagogical influence. It has the power of both non-formal training (for example, designing national clothing, making baskets, etc.) and in the training of humanitarian specialists who are aware of its values and preach them (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1983).

Interestingly, the deepest educational transformations related to the use of the didactic and educational role of the folk art can be observed in the countries of the so-called “third world”. Mostly, they are decolonized African countries (Bassey & Akpan, 2021). This is due to a long absence of conditions for self-determination. For a long time these countries did not have a chance to show large-scale self-identity by representing authentic traditions and heritage. For Ukraine it is important to monitor the models of educational use of the folk art in countries that have a similar experience of late achieving independence. We traced a radical turn to the use of artifacts of the applied folk arts in the educational systems that are reformed after separation from the Soviet past. For example, in Uzbekistan they carefully use the semantics and symbolism of the folk patterns, traditional images both in the upbringing of children and training educators (Azimova & Olimova, 2021). This creates the effect of continuous education and supporting national self-identification. Similar phenomena occur in Tajikistan, where there is a lack of national-oriented fine arts teachers (Masolyev et al., 2019, p. 158), in Kazakhstan, which is in the process of entering into a single world educational space and through education
promotes national values and traditions as part of the world’s heritage (Kamak, 2016).

However, we noticed the difference: for the post-Soviet Asian countries, the need for self-affirmation is in the first place, and in the East Slavic post-Soviet republics, the most acute problem is the educational use of the national material heritage, which has aesthetic and educational significance. We will not analyze dozens of aspects described in Ukrainian publications in recent years, but the most important issues of educational and identifiable potential of the folk artifacts:

1. Preservation and the place of decorative and applied arts in the globalized world (Koreshkov & Novikova, 2020);
2. Didactic potential of the decorative and applied heritage in artistic training (Zvereva, 2015);
3. The didactic potential of the decorative and applied arts in the training of teachers (Gudkova, 2018).

In the next summary section, we summarized the above historical and geographical features of the use of pedagogical potential of the folk-applied art in the teacher training, took into account the results of sociological research and formulated obstacles and positive factors of such a potential.

3. Contemporary pedagogical potential of the applied folk arts. Generalization of the prospects and obstacles

The primary prerogative of the student who acquires the profession of a fine arts teacher is the age factor. During the student age, the individual acquires a high level of intellectual development, enriches the mental experience, forms a holistic self-image, self-determination in life and professional plans, meaningfully directs his gaze to the future (Craig & Dunn, 2010). At this age there is a new social situation of personal development, the center of which is the transition to independent living. Intensive development of self-awareness continues, young people self-determine in the system of moral values, principles, norms and rules of conduct, are aware of personal social responsibility. Professional self-improvement of students is stimulated by the processes of formation of “professional Ego-concept” as the interaction of the real idea of the individual as a specialist and the ideal idea of their professional achievements (Savchyn & Vasylenko, 2005, p.278).

Let’s consider specific factors. It is known that in the Ukrainian traditions methodologists have always emphasized the ideological and aesthetic-semantic role of the traditional fine art heritage in the formation of
professional competences of the teacher. However, we will also settle on the components of the professional readiness of the future fine arts teachers to fill them with a specific content and substantiate the positive impact of the applied folk art on such training. In the Ukrainian pedagogy, different number of components of the students’ readiness for future educational activity are distinguished: from 3 (Krasiuk, 2013) - to 5 (Annenkova, 2008). Since the subject of our study is specific and is on the brink of art, ethnology and pedagogy, we proceeded from the principle of sufficiency and pitched on the three-component model as the optimal: cognitive, motivational and activity (practical). The main argument is the possibility of filling each of these components with elements of the applied folk art.

We believe that formation of the cognitive component of artistic and pedagogical competence of a teacher of fine arts occurs in the process of perception, understanding of techniques, decorative and applied possibilities of works, application of theoretical knowledge in practical actions, which enriches the content of educational content, training students for preservation and reproduction.

Cognitive experience is reflected in the mental structure of national consciousness. At this level of mental experience is the provision, ordering, transformation and reproduction in the human psyche of perceived information, stable patterns of the world. Cognitive experience includes archetypal structures, ways of coding information, cognitive schemes, individual semantic and conceptual structures, reflected in works of arts and crafts art. Cognitive schemes are a generalized and stereotyped form of preserving past experience, which provides the perception and transformation of artistic information. These processes occur with the help of: artistic prototype, i.e. generalized representation, which is the basis for the identification of any images, hierarchical perceptual schemes, frame (ideal image of art objects, phenomena), creative scenarios that contribute to the imaginary reproduction of the sequence of stages of creation.

The motivational component of the artistic and pedagogical competence of the future teacher of fine arts provides a psychological resource and ensures the effectiveness of his mastery of professional skills and knowledge. According to Koul (1997), aesthetic orientations open the way to various aspects of the holistic process of socio-cultural and individual development of the future specialist. Thanks to the created optimal psychological conditions of assimilation by students of values of arts and crafts art, at future experts the certain system of internal regulators, inclination to independent designing of art products is formed.
The formation of the practical component of artistic and pedagogical competence of future teachers of fine arts occurs in the process of studying special courses in embroidery, carpet weaving, Easter painting, bead weaving, Petrykivka painting, ethnography, etc.) and in the process of pedagogical practices.

In practical classes, students learn the technologies of arts and crafts arts, decorate living rooms, premises, workplaces for the New Year, Christmas, Easter, Palm Sunday, Ivan Kupala and other holidays of the national calendar, as well as national holidays - Independence Day, Reunion Day; student - dedication to students, student equator, student parties, the celebration of the last bell and others. Participation in the celebrations connects the student’s personality with the people who in their powerful work created this cult of religious and ceremonial and calendar holidays.

The scientists note that the socio-political vicissitudes in Ukraine in the 20s of the XXI century make young people more sensitive to ethnic achievements. The positive factor, according to Eivas and co-authors, is a sufficient state of the educational system in Ukraine that is capable to produce future professional artists, as well as fine arts teachers and the decorative art tutors by the means of the applied folk arts (Eivas et al., 2021). This art in comparison with contemporary education and culture allows a future student to make an adequate choice of a musical profession considering various factors: abilities, prestige, motivation, self-expression capabilities, etc.

We conducted a sociological survey among senior high school students (prospective college students) and fine arts teachers on a conscious perception and attitude towards manifestations of the applied folk art in the youth environment and the system of values of the Ukrainian youth. Also, a semi-structured questionnaire included a question that required an explanation of a negative, positive or neutral attitude to the presence of elements of the applied ornamental aesthetics in contemporary artifacts, in consumer goods (clothing and accessories, design of premises and territories, household items), in the content of education, etc. Due to this, we studied trends and contemporary tendencies that could affect the motivation and needs of students to study and use the achievements of the applied folk art.

Therefore, in the contemporary Ukrainian social environment, we noticed such positive and unfavorable factors of the applied folk art elements.

1. Favorable factors. Return of folk and retro elements into fashion (elements of decor, design, integral products). Also, there is an active revival
of Ukrainian traditions for the reasons of self-affirmation of the Ukrainian nation during the period of the Russian-Ukrainian War (from 2014 till present). World trend is manifested in Ukraine: against the backdrop of globalization processes to recognize and periodically represent national aesthetics and pragmatics in the form of exhibitions, days of culture around the world. Recently, this raised the prestige and the value of the Ukrainian applied folk arts and crafts in Europe and the world. The next factor is the emergence of public movements, youth organizations dedicated to historical and ethnic reconstructions, which provide full-scale production of the applied artifacts with the characteristic of a certain era aesthetic decor. Also, members of these organizations provide for wearing and using such artifacts, revival and popularization of their symbolism. They often profess popular philosophy as a form of self-expression, an alternative to contemporary subcultural movements.

2. Unfavorable factors. Unfortunately, there is still a youth stereotype, in which ancient and traditional is opposed to innovative and trendy in terms of values, fashion, means of self-expression. We also see a schematic and formal, unconscious usage of folk artifacts or thematic variation. The widespread fact when most citizens use and recognize the value of the applied folk-art articles only in dedicated festive public or religious holidays: Christmas, Easter, Independence Day, National Unity Day, etc. In this case the artifact is used as a symbol of the holiday, a marker of involvement and unity in the celebration of this holiday.

As we can see, positive factors are quantitatively and qualitatively prevailing the negative, and among the latter one can choose conditionally negative (unconscious, formal use of folk-art products and artifacts). Therefore, extra-curricular factors of fine arts teacher training with means of the applied decorative art in Ukraine can now be considered favorable and promising.

4. Conclusions

The general positive factors of the use of the applied folk (applied-decorative) creativity in the formation of fine arts teachers are biological and methodical. The former is based on the age characteristics of student youth, who is sensitive to emotional stimuli (aesthetic, social), pass the stage of formation of the self-image, self-determining in life and professional positions. The latter consists in the integrated application of educational methods, individualized sensual and on the job training. In the process of watching and creating arts and crafts, students study patterns of ornaments, techniques, features of reflecting reality through the artist’s worldview,
identify the links of arts and crafts with symbols and history of the people, explore commonalities and differences in the art system of different regions of Ukraine. Students learn to perceive the feelings, moods, experiences and ideas that were adopted by the master, creating works of art. The variety of works, themes, plots, promotes successful mastering by students of aesthetic experience of the Ukrainian people, and also creative understanding of national decorative and applied art.

We studied the historical and regional approaches to the educational use of the heritage of the applied and decorative folk arts and came to the following conclusions:

1. Against the background of the need for nations in self-affirmation by representing the folk-art artifacts, we observe a variety of ways to use the folk-art heritage (imitation, use of elements, reconstruction, ritual marking of annual cycle holidays, etc.). It depends on the region, the experience of the statehood, the mentality of the nation, etc.

2. The role of the applied decorative art in the teacher training is based on the ancient traditions of the educational potential of the people’s heritage. This is reflected in the writings of many philosophers and pedagogues-classics.

3. The effectiveness and completeness of the fine arts teacher training depends on the organic use of the national and foreign ethnic applied heritage, as well as in the awareness of the significance of such heritage for Ukrainian society and culture and the cross-cultural significance.

4. The educational models of the fine arts teacher training in different countries are determined by traditions, the state of society and its urgent needs: pragmatic (USA), nation-building (former republics of the USSR), philosophical and traditional (China), lack of teachers and resources for national self-expression (African countries), etc.

5. In Ukraine, there is currently a favorable atmosphere to increase the educational and didactic role of the applied folk art. This is due to educational reforms, the rise of the national spirit through the war-political cataclysms, movement towards integration into the European and world educational space with preservation and popularization in the world of the achievements of the popular genius.

6. Universities have a greater opportunity for independent planning of the content of education in the context of transition to autonomy. This will allow patriotically minded methodologists to significantly increase the applied decorative heritage in the methodological, knowledge and practical components of the content of pedagogical education.
The research hypothesis is partly rationalized: we see fragmentary manifestations of conscious and deeply motivated use of the applied decorative objects and artefacts by young people. Fortunately, this phenomenon gradually becomes popular and eventually can reach a critical qualitative quantity. Objective criterion for checking the hypothesis is the frequency, motivation and the essence of the use of the applied folk (applied-decorative) art articles by young people. This should be verified by empirical methods.

5. Research limitations

Our research is a generalization-theoretical. It was able only to outline the trends, obstacles and advantages of the use of the applied folk art in fine arts teacher training and in education in general. We hope that in the near future the research on the development of specific models, techniques and tools of such training and the effectiveness of their use will be continued.

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