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DEVELOPING STUDENTS' CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING THROUGH PROBLEM-BASED TEACHING OF ALISHER NAVOI'S LITERARY WORKS: AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract. This article explores the methodological potential of integrating problem-based learning with the teaching of Alisher Navoi's literary works in secondary education. Particular attention is paid to developing students' critical thinking, creative interpretation, analytical reasoning, and the ability to connect literary knowledge with historical, linguistic, and ethical contexts.

Keywords: Alisher Navoi, integrative approach, problem-based learning, critical thinking, creative thinking, literature education, literary interpretation, interdisciplinary learning, instructional methodology, reflective learning.

Introduction

The teaching of classical literature occupies an important place in secondary education because it connects students with the cultural memory, intellectual traditions, and moral experiences of earlier generations. However, the educational value of classical literary works cannot be fully realized through the memorization of biographical information, the reproduction of plot summaries, or the passive acceptance of predetermined interpretations.

Navoi's works offer opportunities to explore questions related to human dignity, justice, intellectual development, responsibility, moral choice, and the relationship between individuals and society. Such questions remain meaningful in contemporary educational contexts, although they emerge from literary and cultural traditions that require careful historical interpretation.

Literature review: integrative and problem-based learning

Integrative learning involves establishing meaningful relationships among concepts, disciplinary perspectives, and learning activities [1; 2]. In literature education, this approach enables students to explore literary works as artistic creations situated within broader linguistic, historical, philosophical, and cultural contexts. For example, the representation of Farhod in Farhod and Shirin [5] may be explored through literary characterization, the historical significance of craftsmanship, and the ethical meaning of dedication and responsibility. However, literary education must remain the central focus of such integration. A classroom discussion about engineering, for instance, should not replace an analysis of the literary techniques through which Navoi constructs Farhod's character.

Problem-based learning complements this approach. Barrows distinguishes problem-based methods according to how the initial problem is structured and how far learning is directed by the students themselves [3]. In this study, critical thinking is understood, following the expert consensus summarized by Facione, as purposeful, self-regulatory judgment that results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference [4]. The development of students' creative thinking through an integrative approach to Navoi's works was addressed in the author's earlier study [8].

Research methodology

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The investigation is based on the analysis of educational literature concerning curriculum integration, problem-based learning, and critical thinking, together with a pedagogical interpretation of selected works by Alisher Navoi.

The following methods are employed:

- **Theoretical analysis**, to identify relevant principles of integrative and problem-based instruction.
- **Comparative analysis**, to examine relationships between literary interpretation and interdisciplinary learning.
- **Instructional modeling**, to develop a structured sequence of classroom activities.
- **Pedagogical task design**, to formulate problem-based and creative assignments using selected literary works.

Results: a proposed instructional framework

The model is built on the assumption that students develop deeper literary understanding when they move systematically from identifying a problem to examining evidence, establishing connections, constructing interpretations, and reflecting on their conclusions.

Table 1. Stages of the problem-based integrative framework

Stage	Instructional purpose	Student activity
1. Problem identification	Establish a meaningful literary question	Recognize contradictions, dilemmas, and interpretative challenges
2. Textual investigation	Explore the literary evidence	Analyze selected passages, characters, imagery, and language
3. Interdisciplinary interpretation	Connect relevant forms of knowledge	Relate literary evidence to historical, linguistic, and ethical contexts
4. Creative response	Develop an independent interpretation	Produce an essay, dialogue, argument, or creative project
5. Reflective evaluation	Assess and refine understanding	Evaluate reasoning, reconsider evidence, and formulate conclusions

For example, at the problem-identification stage, students may consider how Navoi presents the relationship between knowledge and action in Hayrat ul-Abror [7], or which criteria for evaluating human conduct emerge from the portrayal of different social groups in Mahbub ul-Qulub [6]. At the following stages, they examine the relevant passages, relate them to historical and ethical contexts, present their interpretation in written or creative form, and finally reconsider their reasoning in light of their classmates' arguments.

Discussion

The proposed framework suggests that the integration of problem-based learning with classical literature education can offer a coherent methodological foundation for developing students' analytical and interpretative activities.

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Its first distinctive feature is the central role of the literary question. Rather than beginning with a predetermined interpretation, the teacher creates an educational situation in which students recognize a problem requiring investigation. Its second feature is the use of textual evidence as the principal source of reasoning. Students are encouraged to justify their ideas by referring to selected episodes, images, and expressions rather than relying exclusively on personal impressions.

Its third feature is that interdisciplinary knowledge serves literary interpretation rather than replacing it: historical, linguistic, and ethical information is introduced only when it helps students explain the meaning of the text. Finally, reflective evaluation encourages students to reconsider their initial assumptions and to recognize that a literary work may allow several well-justified interpretations.

The framework is presented as a theoretically grounded instructional model; its effectiveness requires empirical verification in classroom settings.

Conclusion

The methodological analysis of problem-based and integrative teaching of Alisher Navoi's literary works supports several conclusions.

First, classical literature provides a meaningful context for developing critical and creative thinking when students are actively engaged in identifying problems, interpreting literary evidence, and evaluating alternative viewpoints.

Second, the five-stage framework – problem identification, textual investigation, interdisciplinary interpretation, creative response, and reflective evaluation – provides a coherent sequence for organizing such activities.

Third, interdisciplinary connections are productive only when the literary text remains at the center of analysis.

Further experimental research is needed to assess the impact of the proposed framework on students' critical and creative thinking.

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