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VISUALIZING SHASHMAQOM FOR THE DIGITAL GENERATION: THE MAQOMGRAPH PEDAGOGICAL MODEL AS AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO CULTURAL HERITAGE EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study introduces the MaqomGraph pedagogical model, a visual-analytical approach designed to improve the teaching of Uzbek Shashmaqom in secondary education. The research addresses challenges in transmitting complex traditional music to digital-generation learners. Using a qualitative classroom-based methodology, the study examines how visual mapping techniques influence student engagement, conceptual understanding, analytical thinking, and cultural awareness. Findings indicate that visual representations significantly enhance comprehension of maqom structures by transforming abstract musical elements into accessible visual forms. The study concludes that MaqomGraph can serve as an effective educational tool for integrating cultural heritage into modern pedagogy.

Introduction (Condensed)

Shashmaqom is a complex classical musical tradition central to Uzbek cultural heritage and recognized internationally as intangible cultural heritage. However, its structural complexity, modal system, and performance traditions create learning difficulties for secondary school students. Contemporary learners, who are highly exposed to visual and digital learning environments, require innovative pedagogical approaches.

This study proposes the MaqomGraph model, which transforms maqom structures into visual learning maps. The aim is to improve comprehension, engagement, and cultural appreciation while maintaining the authenticity of the tradition.

Literature-Based Rationale

Research in music education confirms that multimodal learning (visual + auditory + experiential) improves cognitive retention and conceptual understanding (Hallam, 2015; Campbell, 2021). Ethnomusicological studies emphasize that traditional music systems rely heavily on oral transmission, which limits accessibility in formal education (Nettl, 2015).

Despite extensive theoretical research on Shashmaqom (Rajabov, 2017; Matyoqubov, 2020), there is a lack of visual pedagogical models designed for school-level instruction. This gap justifies the development of MaqomGraph as a structured visual learning system.

Theoretical Foundation

The model is grounded in:

- Constructivist Learning Theory (students actively construct knowledge)
- Dual Coding Theory (visual + verbal processing improves memory)
- Visual Learning Theory (diagrams enhance pattern recognition)
- Cultural Heritage Education (supports identity formation and heritage transmission)

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These theories collectively support the use of visual mapping in teaching complex musical systems.

Methodology (Condensed)

A qualitative research design was used in secondary school music classes (ages 12–14). The MaqomGraph model was implemented in four stages:

1. Introduction to Shashmaqom through listening activities
2. Visual mapping of maqom structures
3. Analytical student exercises using diagrams
4. Reflection and feedback collection

Data were collected through classroom observation, student reflections, teacher feedback, and document analysis. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns.

Ethical considerations included confidentiality, voluntary participation, and preservation of cultural authenticity.

1. Increased Engagement

Classroom observation showed higher participation rates when visual materials were introduced. Students who were previously passive became active participants in discussions and group tasks.

2. Improved Conceptual Understanding

Students demonstrated better recognition of maqom structure, including segmentation, melodic progression, and rhythmic organization. Visual diagrams helped transform abstract musical concepts into structured knowledge.

3. Development of Analytical Skills

Learners improved their ability to interpret musical structures rather than memorize information. They used evidence-based reasoning when explaining maqom elements.

4. Cultural Awareness Enhancement

Students showed stronger interest in Uzbek musical heritage, linking music with historical and cultural identity. Reflection responses indicated increased respect for traditional music.

Conclusion

The MaqomGraph model demonstrates that visual-analytical pedagogy can significantly improve the teaching of Shashmaqom at the secondary level. The study confirms that combining visual mapping with auditory learning increases engagement, strengthens understanding, and enhances cultural awareness.

The model provides a scalable framework for integrating intangible cultural heritage into modern education systems. Future research may expand this approach through digital applications and quantitative evaluation.

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