The use of folk proverbs and interactive teaching methods in teaching the natural resources of Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article examines ways of improving the effectiveness of teaching the topic "Natural Resources of Uzbekistan" in the school geography curriculum. The aim of the article is to shift the focus from memorisation to analysis within limited instructional time and to develop students' logical thinking. To this end, a three-stage methodological model integrating traditional proverbs with graphic organisers and interactive teaching methods is proposed. The model is designed to develop critical thinking, the ability to identify cause-and-effect relationships, and skills in analysing geoecological problems. The study constitutes a methodological proposal, and the effectiveness of the model remains to be verified through future pedagogical experimentation.

Keywords: geography education, folk proverbs, natural resources, graphic organisers, interactive teaching methods, logical thinking, geoecological problems

Introduction

Teaching the topic "Natural Resources of Uzbekistan" in the school geography curriculum plays an important role in developing students' systematic understanding of the country's economic and ecological potential. However, the predominantly uniform presentation of information in textbooks and the frequent emphasis on memorising figures and facts in lessons may diminish students' interest in the subject. Such a traditional approach does not sufficiently develop critical thinking and makes it difficult to understand cause-and-effect relationships in geographical processes. Therefore, the use of interactive teaching methods is necessary [1; 6].

To address this problem, it is appropriate to incorporate proverbs, as expressions of folk wisdom, into lessons in the form of problem-based tasks and integrate them with effective pedagogical technologies. The aim of this article is to propose a methodological model for teaching the topic "Natural Resources of Uzbekistan" through proverbs and graphic organisers and to identify its potential and limitations.

Literature Review and Research Methods

Three major approaches to teaching natural resource potential can be distinguished in geography didactics. The first is based on an academic approach involving practical and research methods, such as cartographic analysis of territories

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and measurement of river basin parameters [2; 5]. The second approach provides a rationale for using graphic organisers such as "Classification", the interactive "Boomerang" method, and case-study techniques to improve lesson effectiveness [1; 3; 6]. The third approach focuses on integrating the natural sciences and fostering students' ecological culture. [7]

To overcome the limitations of organising classroom learning exclusively around paper-based materials or static visual aids, this study employs a methodology that integrates examples of oral folk literature (proverbs) with visual templates. The research is based on an analysis of scholarly and methodological literature, the selection of proverbs according to their relevance to natural resources, and the design of lesson stages around them. The proposed model has not been empirically tested; therefore, its content and anticipated potential are outlined below.

Proposed Methodological Model

To develop students' logical thinking and subject-specific competencies, a three-stage interactive model integrating traditional proverbs and geographical concepts was developed. The model comprises the following stages:

Stage One - the "Classification" graphic organiser. Folk proverbs relating to the land and water resources of Uzbekistan are distributed to students as handouts, and students are asked to classify them by resource type. For example, when analysing the proverb "Land is a treasure, water is a jewel", students may go beyond its linguistic meaning and identify the interrelationships between the abundance of sunlight and heat in Uzbekistan, the fertility of grey soils (sierozems), the length of the growing season, and irrigation water. This stage contributes to the development of students' skills in the systematic and structural analysis of natural resources. [2; 6]

Stage Two - the "Boomerang" technique. Students are divided into small groups and provided with maps of Uzbekistan's economic-geographical regions (e.g., Tashkent, Fergana, Mirzachul, and Zarafshan) [2; 4]. Each group identifies the natural resources of its assigned region using a map and explains their significance through relevant proverbs. Owing to the dynamic exchange of information (the "boomerang" effect), each student assumes the roles of both teacher and learner. This may facilitate a visual understanding of the spatial distribution patterns of natural resources through map-based activities.

Stage Three - the "Cluster" method and case studies. Proverbs such as "Land without water is a lifeless body" and "Do not spit into the well from which you drink" are presented to students not merely as moral guidance but as tools for analysing ecological problems. Drawing on these proverbs, problem-based case studies are developed on water scarcity in Central Asia, desertification in the Aral Sea region, and the decline in forest resources due to anthropogenic factors. Students map the causes

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of ecological problems and possible ways of addressing them in the form of clusters and propose their own solutions. [3; 7]

Thus, the model envisages a gradual progression from analysis (Stage One) to spatial understanding (Stage Two) and subsequently to problem-solving (Stage Three).

Discussion

A theoretical comparison of the proposed model with traditional teaching suggests that the integration of folk proverbs, graphic organisers, and interactive teaching methods may enhance students' cognitive (logical and intellectual) engagement during lessons. The pedagogical and scientific significance of this approach is reflected in the following aspects:

Transition from the abstract to the concrete. Many physical, climatic, and economic concepts in geography may appear abstract to students. Using proverbs, which embody centuries of collective life experience, as a means of inductive reasoning (moving from specific examples to general principles) helps students recognise the real-life foundations of geographical patterns and develop the ability to draw conclusions.

Transition from reproductive to productive learning. The model enables a shift from a reproductive approach based on memorising and retelling textbook content to problem-based analytical learning focused on analysing information, identifying problems, and proposing solutions. This is consistent with the requirements of a competency-based approach. [1; 3; 6]

Integration with digital technologies. In the future, incorporating artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and 3D terrain simulations into lessons may help visually explain dynamic processes such as changes in river flow, glacier melting, and land degradation. At the same time, these technologies require students to develop digital literacy and critical thinking: the ability to verify information generated by artificial intelligence against reliable scientific, statistical, and cartographic sources teaches students to identify inaccurate information. At present, this direction is not a component of the model but represents an avenue for its future development.

Limitations. First, the proposed model has not been empirically tested; therefore, no conclusions can be drawn regarding its effectiveness. Second, the availability of digital infrastructure varies among schools across Uzbekistan. Third, teachers may lack sufficient methodological preparation to organise such integrated lessons. Consequently, before implementing the model on a wider scale, it is necessary to test it in both urban and rural schools and conduct long-term monitoring of students' learning progress. Future research should develop the methodology into a collection of ready-to-use lesson scenarios for digital platforms.

Conclusion

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Integrating proverbs with graphic organisers and interactive teaching methods in geography lessons may enrich lesson content and stimulate students' logical thinking. The proposed "Classification", "Boomerang", and "Cluster" stages create conditions for a deeper understanding of the nature of natural resources and expand opportunities to apply knowledge in practice. However, the effectiveness of the model has not yet been empirically verified and should therefore be evaluated through future pedagogical experimentation.

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