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A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH TO ORGANIZING  
NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABOUT ARTICLE

**Key words:** Native language education program, pedagogical experience, development of students' cognitive activity, linguistic capabilities, aesthetic taste, spiritual and ideological views, skills in logical, critical, and creative thinking.

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**Abstract:** This article suggests that Uzbek literature holds an independent status as a separate subject within the general secondary education system, and the advantages of a competency-based approach to teaching the fundamentals of this subject are scientifically and methodologically substantiated. The study also analyzes the current achievements and shortcomings of the native language curriculum.

## Introduction

The Native Language Curriculum is an official state document. The requirements set forth in the curriculum must be fully implemented. The curriculum states that “...it aims to train specialists who can operate successfully in the native language education process and have an understanding of the content of the subject’s lessons, the requirements for organizing them, and the methods of teaching.” In the process of studying the methodology of teaching the native language, students—future teachers—must acquire knowledge about the principles on which the school native language curriculum is based, its content, and its requirements. In particular, they must be able to assess and comment on the quality of the educational materials provided in the native language textbooks for teaching topics; plan and design lessons for the topics being studied; select teaching methods, techniques, and tools that serve the goals of the lesson; manage the lesson process; identify difficulties students encounter in mastering the Uzbek language and speech, and understand how to address them. They must also be able to evaluate the outcomes of native language education and the development of students' speech, grasp the pressing issues linking theory and practice, and analyze and assess pedagogical experiences in the field of native language education.

Future teachers must be trained in a way that enables them to successfully demonstrate their full potential in the process of teaching the native language. They should be able to utilize scientifically grounded modern methods, techniques, forms, and tools of instruction; contribute to the development of students’ personalities; and achieve planned outcomes that focus on equipping students with knowledge, skills, and competencies in the native language. In particular, the following requirements are set for the personality of future native language teachers:

1. Ability to make practical use of the language’s capabilities;
2. Aesthetic taste and spiritual-ideological views;
3. Skills in logical, critical, and creative thinking;

4. Ability to study innovations in the field, internalize them, and apply them in practice.

5. Guiding Purpose. .

One of the key factors in the reform of the education and upbringing system in Uzbekistan is the principle of “the priority of the individual and education.” General education schools are tasked with forming core competencies that define the modern quality of educational content, represent an integrated system of universal skills and abilities, foster experience in independent activity, and instill personal responsibility in students. Defining educational content that ensures effective learning is considered a crucial task facing the education system.

The content of the native language curriculum must aim at the comprehensive mastery of speech culture—normative, communicative, and ethical—and be directed toward developing and enhancing communication skills for educational, scientific, official, business, social, and everyday interactions.

The state educational standard and curriculum for general secondary education state that “The main goal of native language instruction is to develop oral and written speech skills, as well as the ability to think clearly and expressively. Moving away from teaching grammar as an isolated set of rules, native language education must now adopt the principle: ‘grammar is a tool for the precise and concise expression of thought.’” As a result, the native language curricula developed in 2008, 2010, and again in 2017–2018 began to incorporate issues of a competency-based approach to teaching the native language. These can be regarded as the initial stages of a modern approach to native language education.

Improving the effectiveness of native language instruction depends on the high-quality development of subject curricula. Throughout the historical development of education, native language programs have been continuously improved based on the demands of the time and the study of international experience. In developing the native language curriculum, certain

principles were adopted based on the experiences gained in our country as well as the analysis of foreign models.

For example, curricula developed according to the linear principle focused on the grammatical structure of linguistic phenomena. In such curricula, the natural sequencing of grammatical components, their coherence, and the logical connection between interrelated units were presented in a scientifically and methodologically substantiated manner. For instance, the lexical, morphological, and grammatical characteristics of nouns were taught in logical succession: types of meanings of nouns → singular and plural forms → possessive suffixes → case endings → syntactic functions → word formation.

The native language curriculum developed according to the linear principle was based on logical consistency, which made it possible to clearly explain to students the lexical, morphological, and syntactic relationships of words—that is, the idea that language has a logically structured system. Although linguistic awareness in using language phenomena in speech was relatively high, teachers' emphasis on memorizing theoretical concepts hindered students from mastering the language in practical terms. The linear approach strictly adhered to time and sequence, which in turn limited the opportunity to revisit and reinforce previously covered material.

The second drawback of the linear approach was that, due to students' age and psychological characteristics in general secondary education, they found it difficult to consciously grasp the scientific concepts of linguistics. Additionally, a subjective factor played a role: teachers often explained linguistic phenomena in a dry, abstract manner without analyzing texts or sentences, which negatively affected students' practical language acquisition.

For example, teaching the lexical-semantic types and grammatical features of nouns in a strictly sequential and internally connected manner made it harder for students to understand and retain the material. As a result, many students preferred rote memorization. In conclusion, the curriculum developed on the basis of the linear principle showed both strengths and weaknesses in practical application.

The native language curriculum, based on the concentric (spiral) principle The development of the native language curriculum based on the concentric (spiral) principle allows for expanding and enriching the content of instruction by increasing the complexity of subject materials, introducing new structural components, and deepening the analysis of their interconnections. It also provides opportunities for multiple explanations and revisions.

In educational theory, the concentric principle refers to instructional content being organized around a central concept, where the learning material of a given subject course is delivered in separate, structured segments. Within this approach, firstly, topics are centered around a main issue; secondly, the student progresses from a general understanding of the topic to deeper analysis for clearer and more precise comprehension. This analysis is carried out in a step-by-step, sequential manner.

The concentric principle allows for defining the scope, volume, and content of educational material provided to students. Textbooks and instructional resources structured on this principle present texts, exercises, questions and answers, and educational tasks in a logically progressive and consistent sequence. As a result of relying on the concentric principle in selecting educational content, the material is grouped around a clear conceptual center and arranged in a defined sequence. This structure facilitates the holistic and systematic development of students' learning skills.

In developing the native language curriculum, priority is given, first and foremost, to ensuring the active acquisition and development of all forms of speech activity using its best examples (texts). Secondly, it is intended that model texts represent various genres and styles and are selected from examples of Uzbek and world literature and folklore. Additionally, scientific-popular and journalistic-style texts should be included where appropriate.

The selected texts should contribute to the development of students' aesthetic taste, nurture their speech culture, and enrich their knowledge. In lessons, both printed texts and audio materials (voice recordings) are to be used.

The curriculum is based on the principles of systematicity. A system is composed of interrelated elements and phenomena that functionally depend on one another to form a unified whole. A system consists of at least two parts, each of which is connected to what precedes and follows it. Each lesson is considered a complete unit made up of components that are functionally interconnected.

Language instruction is based on the principle of historicism, meaning that historical facts are used to explain archaisms.

The curriculum also relies on the principle of the parallel development of speech activity along with the knowledge of the structural and functional features of the language.

Grammatical analysis is carried out based on texts. This includes lexical-semantic, syntactic, phonetic and phonological, orthographic, and punctuation analysis conducted on the basis of the structural-semantic and stylistic structure of the text.

The curriculum is aimed at studying the composition of texts in various styles—prose, poetry, journalistic, scientific, literary-conversational, and spoken language—as well as monologic, dialogic, and other types of texts, with the goal of developing students' speech skills.

Native language and literature lessons serve to promote moral values in connection with the broader objectives of school education. The native language curriculum is expected to be developed in alignment with the curricula of other humanities and natural science subjects.

The socio-cultural goal of teaching the native language is to develop students' communicative and linguistic competencies. This includes enhancing their oral and written speech, both monologic and dialogic, as well as their ability to write correctly—a key indicator of a person's overall cultural level. It aims to help students apply their acquired knowledge in practice and to improve their ability to produce coherent statements by appropriately using language norms according to different communicative situations.

In conclusion, the curriculum is designed based on principles such as scientific rigor, consistency, systematicity, continuity, the integration of theory and practice, consciousness,

activeness, accessibility, and individualized learning. It ultimately serves to develop students' communicative competence.

The structure and content of the general secondary education native language curriculum have been improved several times in line with evolving approaches to teaching. Notably, the curricula developed in 2008, 2010, 2011, 2017, and 2018 introduced the initial steps toward a competency-based approach to teaching the subject. Alongside the general competencies common to all subjects, specific requirements were defined for linguistic and communicative competencies in native language instruction.

In 2020, based on the achievements of foreign education systems, the National Curriculum for the native language was developed using a spiral principle. This curriculum aims to develop the four main types of speech activity—listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing—in each grade, with clear standards for the skills and competencies to be achieved.

It envisions a dynamic process where students gain the ability to communicate independently in various real-life contexts—during study, work, in the family, and public spaces—by exchanging and expressing ideas, understanding what they hear, extracting information from written sources, and responding to events and situations in both oral and written form.

In native language lessons, special attention is given to reading comprehension in order to develop students' logical, critical, and creative thinking. The subject of native language aims to foster communicative competence in students—enabling them to think independently, understand others' ideas, and express their own thoughts fluently and correctly in both oral and written forms.

It also focuses on developing students' grammatical knowledge, including phonetics, lexicology, word structure, word formation, morphology, syntax, spelling and punctuation, speech styles, and stylistic concepts. Additionally, the curriculum aims to cultivate linguistic competence—the ability to make effective use of the rich expressive potential of the native

language for accurate and fluent communication. In terms of general competencies to be developed in philological subjects, the following speech (communicative) competencies are defined for school graduates:

- Reads texts of various styles expressively, understands their content, and can explain it in their own words;
- Reads unfamiliar texts aloud at a designated pace;
- Listens to audio texts, views videos and images, and expresses their understanding both orally and in writing;
- Presents their independent opinion about a literary work and its author, adhering to norms of literary pronunciation and spelling;
- Identifies the main theme of a text and assigns an appropriate title;
- Reads part of a text and logically continues it;
- Divides the text into meaningful parts and creates an outline; determines the meaning of a new word from context;
- Understands the content of texts from different genres, recites selected excerpts from memory, and compares the plot of a work to real-life situations;
- Reads literary works of various genres and expresses opinions about their themes and characters both orally and in writing.
- Understands the expressive possibilities of the language to the extent that they can enjoy reading literary works and articulate their emotions;
- Comprehends news and information on current topics from mass media and expresses their opinion about them;
- Uses dictionaries and encyclopedias.

These and similar competencies are defined as part of the speech competence expected of graduates.

The native language curriculum outlines the following linguistic competencies:



- Reads texts of various styles expressively, understands their content, and can explain it in their own words;
- Reads unfamiliar texts aloud at a designated speed;
- Listens to audio texts, watches video materials and images, understands them, and expresses opinions both orally and in writing;
- Presents independent opinions about a literary work and its author while adhering to the norms of literary pronunciation and spelling;
- Identifies the general theme of a text and assigns it an appropriate title;
- Reads a portion of a text and logically continues it;
- Divides the text into meaningful parts and creates an outline; determines the meaning of new words from context;
- Understands the content of texts from different genres, recites selected excerpts from memory, and compares the plot of a work to real-life events;
- Reads literary works of various genres and expresses opinions on their ideas and characters both orally and in writing;
- Understands the expressive potential of the language to the extent of enjoying literary reading and expressing their feelings;
- Comprehends news and information on current issues from mass media and expresses their opinion.
- Uses dictionaries and encyclopedias;
- Expresses their thoughts in written form while observing spelling rules;
- Uses proverbs and wise sayings appropriately in speech, understanding their meaning, and applies linking words correctly when composing texts;
- Distinguishes between literal and figurative meanings of words in prose works;
- Uses parentheses and punctuation correctly in writing, and transforms direct speech into indirect speech;

- Converts simple sentences into compound ones using the expressive possibilities of the language;
- Provides logical characterizations and evaluations of literary characters based on the texts read;
- Independently writes official documents (applications, references, letters, announcements, reports, character references, explanatory notes, and a résumé in table format); writes impressions, reports, essays, and creative texts (narratives) of 2–2.5 pages while observing the norms of literary language;
- Translates simple texts after understanding their content.

The development of society demands the modernization of native language education, and accordingly, the content and requirements of the native language curriculum are continuously improved.

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