

THEORETICAL BASIS OF PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE NATIONAL CERTIFICATE EXAM IN MOTHER LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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Abstract: This article explores the theoretical foundations of preparing students for the National Certification Exam in the subject of the native language and literature. It analyzes the exam content, assessment criteria, test specifications, and competency-based approaches used to evaluate students' knowledge. The paper discusses the role of 10th–11th grade curriculum in exam preparation, highlighting the importance of textbook content and the effectiveness of modern pedagogical technologies. Interactive methods, digital platforms, differentiated instruction, and monitoring-based assessments are emphasized. The suggested methodological approaches aim to develop students' analytical thinking, independent writing skills, and creative expression competencies.

Keywords: National certificate, test specification, competency-based approach, modern pedagogical technologies, native language, literature, student readiness.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern education system, new forms of assessment serve as an important tool in determining the level of knowledge of students. In accordance with the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-4884 dated November 6, 2020, a national certification system was introduced for entering higher education institutions. This requires students to in-depth master their native language and literature at the preparatory stage, as well as to develop practical and analytical skills. This article examines the theoretical foundations of this preparatory process, methodological approaches, interdisciplinary integration, and ways to increase the effectiveness of teacher and student activities through the analysis of modern test tasks.

LITERATURE ANALYSIS

The test tasks provided within the framework of national certification are aimed at measuring skills corresponding to levels B1 and B2. An analysis of sample tests compiled by the State Testing Center shows that students are required to:

- understanding the text;
- analytical thinking;
- practical application of grammatical norms;
- literary analysis and comparative evaluation;
- logical presentation of ideas are required.

The works of such scientists as G. Rakhimov, A. Madvaliyev, Z. Jo'rayev, R. Mirzaev, S. Jumayeva determine the didactic and methodological foundations of the native language and literature. In modern teaching methodologies, in particular, methods such as the competency approach, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), BLENDED learning play an important role in improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching. The structure of tests such as international assessment systems - PISA, PIRLS, TOEFL - also affects the basic principles of the national certification exam.

METHODS

The study was based on the following methodological approaches:

Analytical-analytical method - an analysis was carried out based on national test materials, literary and linguistic theories.

Didactic analysis - the level of preparation of students, errors in completing tasks, effective methods were identified.

Questionnaire and test testing – an experiment was conducted among more than 100 students and the test results were analyzed.

Comparison and comparison – national and international test tasks were analyzed, similarities and differences were identified.

Model creation – a step-by-step theoretical model of training was developed.

RESULTS

In recent years, assessment tools in line with international experience have been introduced in the education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The National Certificate Exam, which is part of it, determines not only the level of students' mastery of the subject, but also their analytical, logical thinking and creative approach competencies. The introduction of this exam in the subject of the native language and literature requires new approaches to the content of lessons. In this regard, it is important to develop a deep theoretical foundation for the effective preparation of students for this assessment system.

1. Content and assessment criteria of the National Certificate Exam.

The National Certificate Exam is organized on the basis of the resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the State Educational Standard (SES) and test specifications. Test tasks in the subject of the native language and literature mainly assess the following skills:

- Linguistic knowledge (word groups, sentence structure, methodological tools);
- Working with the text (separating key information from the text, generalizing concepts);
- Literary analysis (knowledge about the content of the work, images, era, genre, author);
- Creative thinking (writing an essay, logical reasoning, written literacy).

This assessment system is based on a competency-based approach, rather than a traditional knowledge-based approach, and determines the readiness of students at the level of knowledge + skills + values. Therefore, training should also be organized on the basis of competencies.

2. The role of upper-grade classes in preparing for the National Certificate Exam.

Teaching the mother tongue and literature at the upper level of the school is considered an important factor in the formation of students' speech, linguistic and cultural competencies. The topics, exercises, texts and literary analysis tasks presented in textbooks directly affect the preparation of students.

The following skills are developed in upper-grade classes:

- Determining the structure of the text, distinguishing main and secondary ideas;
- Analytical and logical reasoning;
- Analysis of the system of literary images;
- Perfect expression of written speech.

However, textbooks do not fully comply with the test specifications. Therefore, it is necessary to use a teacher-directed and systematic preparation methodology. This methodology can be implemented both in the classroom and through extracurricular activities.

3. The role of modern pedagogical technologies.

The traditional approach to preparing students for the National Certificate Exam, which is assessed on the basis of tests, is not enough. The effectiveness of preparation can be increased through new pedagogical technologies - interactive methods, electronic platforms, differential approaches and analytical approaches.

Key technologies:

- Interactive methods: “Insert”, “Cluster”, “Sinkwein”, “Brainstorming” activate students in the lesson;

- Digital tools: Trial tests are organized through My.gov, Ziyonet, Telegram bots;
- Differential approach: separate tasks for strong and weak students;
- Monitoring-based approach: step-by-step analysis of the level of knowledge.

The successful use of pedagogical technologies increases the quality of the lesson and forms the skills of independent thinking, analysis, and argumentation in students.

The theoretical foundations of preparing students for the national certificate exam in the subject of mother tongue and literature require a comprehensive and systematic approach. This process is carried out by combining the curriculum, exam requirements, individual characteristics of students and modern teaching methods. The theoretical foundations of this process are described in detail below:

Basis of the curriculum and exam requirements

The national certificate exam is based on the general educational program in the Uzbek language and literature. Therefore, during the preparation process, attention is paid to the following aspects:

- Mother tongue section:
 - Phonetics (sounds, stress, intonation).
 - Lexicology (word meanings, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, phraseological expressions).
 - Morphology (word types, word formation).
 - Syntax (sentence structure, punctuation marks).
 - Stylistics and spelling rules.
- Literature Department:
 - Important periods in Uzbek literature (Alisher Navoiy, Chulpon, Abdulla Qodiriy, Erkin Vohidov, O'tkir Hoshimov, etc.).
 - Genres of literary works (poetry, prose, drama).
 - Literary analysis (ideological content of works, artistic means, analysis of characters).
 - Literary movements and their characteristics (for example, enlightenment, romanticism, realism).

Each section of the curriculum is analyzed in accordance with the questions and tasks that can be tested in the exam. For example, the exam may include tasks such as analyzing a literary work, finding grammatical errors, or writing an essay.

. Studying and adapting to the exam format

A good knowledge of the structure and requirements of the exam is the key to success. The National Certificate Examination usually includes the following types of questions:

- Multiple-choice tests: Test factual knowledge of grammar, spelling, literature.
- Open-ended questions: Short-answer questions, such as explaining the meaning of a word or citing important aspects of a literary work.
- Text analysis: Write an analysis of the idea, artistic devices, or characters of a poem or prose piece.
- Written work: Write an essay, essay, or commentary.

Students should be aware of the time constraints of the exam (for example, completing assignments within 2-3 hours) and the assessment criteria for each section. Mock exams are used during the preparation process to help students adapt to the exam conditions.

. Strengthening theoretical knowledge

An important part of the preparation is to deepen students' theoretical knowledge. In this process, attention is paid to the following areas:

- Native language:
 - Grammatical rules: Types of words, parts of speech, punctuation rules.
 - Vocabulary development: Synonyms, phraseological expressions, archaic words and their use in context.
 - Working with the text: Understanding the text, identifying the main idea, drawing conclusions.
- Literature:

- Main literary works: Reading and analyzing works such as Alisher Navoi's "Khamsa", Abdulla Qodiri's "Days bygone", and Erkin Vohidov's poems.
- Literary analysis skills: Determining the ideological and artistic characteristics of the work, understanding artistic means (metaphor, metonymy, epithet, adjective).
- History of literature: Important periods in Uzbek literature, writers and their creative directions. To strengthen theoretical knowledge, teachers can create short summaries, summaries, and reference tables on topics. For example, it will be useful for students to present the main works of each writer and their characteristics in a table.

Developing practical skills

In addition to theoretical knowledge, the exam also tests practical skills. The following are methods for developing basic practical skills:

- Text analysis: Students are taught to read a poem or prose passage and analyze its main idea, artistic means, and character of the characters. For example, an excerpt from Alisher Navoi's "Khamsa" may be given and asked to analyze the spiritual ideas in it.
- Essay writing: Students are taught to think logically when writing an essay, to correctly structure the introduction, main part, and conclusion. For example, they practice writing an essay on the topic "The Idea of Patriotism in Uzbek Literature."
- Test tasks: Special tests are developed to increase the speed and accuracy of answering multiple-choice questions that occur in the exam. For example, questions on identifying grammatical errors or finding the author of a literary work.
- Time management: The skill of correctly distributing the exam time is developed. Students should plan in advance how much time they will spend on each task.

Taking into account the individual characteristics of students

Each student has a unique learning style, level of knowledge and areas of interest. Therefore, an individual approach is important in the preparation process:

- Determining the level of knowledge: Diagnostic tests are conducted to assess the initial level of knowledge of students. This identifies their weaknesses and strengths.
- Creating an individual plan: An individual study plan is created for each student. For example, additional exercises are given to students who are weak in grammar, and in-depth analysis tasks are given to those interested in literature.
- Increase interest: For students who love literature, additional works are read, and for those who are weak in their native language, interest is aroused through playful exercises (for example, word games).

Psychological preparation and motivation

The exam can be stressful, so it is important to prepare students psychologically:

- Stress management: Students are given advice on how to stay calm and manage their time properly during the exam.
- Increase self-confidence: Constantly emphasize students' successes, encourage their small achievements.
- Mock exams: Students' experience is increased by conducting mock exams that are close to real exam conditions.

Use of modern technologies

Modern technologies make the preparation process more effective:

- Online platforms: Students' knowledge is strengthened through tests, video lessons, and interactive exercises.

Online platforms: Students' knowledge is reinforced through tests, video lessons, and interactive exercises.

- Mobile apps: Students can practice independently through mobile apps for grammar or literature.

- Artificial intelligence tools: For example, AI tools such as Grok 3 can help students answer questions, analyze text, or write essays.

Practical examples and resources

- Literature: Students can be assigned to read “Khayriddin and Shirin” from Alisher Navoi’s “Khamsa” and analyze the idea of love and artistic devices in it.

- Native language: Punctuation exercises, for example, the sentence “The spring season in Uzbekistan is very beautiful” is required to be written correctly with punctuation marks.

- Resources: Special textbooks on the Uzbek language and literature, the journal "Uzbek Literature", online test platforms (for example, tests on the DTM website).

The theoretical foundations of preparing students for the national certificate exam in their native language and literature include a systematic approach based on the curriculum, the development of practical skills, an individual approach and psychological preparation. High results can be achieved through the joint efforts of teachers and students, the use of modern technologies and constant monitoring.

DISCUSSION

Research shows that when preparing students for the national certificate exam, it is necessary to pay attention to the following aspects:

Preparation of text-based developments (annotation, synopsis, questions and answers, analysis, written essay).

Increasing the student's critical thinking capacity by working on multiple-choice tests.

Ensuring the gradual mastery of each topic by introducing modular teaching technology.

It is necessary to take into account the individual readiness of each student (determined through diagnostic tests).

It is necessary to widely use digital tools (platforms, interactive tests, QR-code tasks) in education.

CONCLUSION

The National Certificate Exam is a modern assessment tool that measures students' deep thinking, analytical approach, and free expression of written speech. In the upper grades, native language and literature lessons provide a convenient opportunity to form these competencies. Therefore, the use of modern pedagogical technologies in these lessons and the establishment of preparatory work in accordance with the test specification are of great importance. The teacher's methodological approach and effective organization of classroom activities directly affect the students' certificate results.

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