

ORGANIZING EXTRACURRICULAR LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES BASED ON A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH IN MOTHER TONGUE EDUCATION

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Abstract: This research paper explores the importance of organizing extracurricular activities in mother tongue education (specifically, the Uzbek language) based on a competency-based approach. It examines how extracurricular language circles can enhance students' linguistic, communicative, and cognitive competencies by fostering creative expression, independent thinking, and cultural awareness. The paper discusses theoretical foundations of competency-based education, its practical implementation in language teaching, and the psycholinguistic and sociocultural aspects of language competence development. Emphasis is placed on developing students' communicative competence through interactive and student-centered extracurricular learning environments.

Keywords: competency-based approach, linguistic competence, communicative skills, extracurricular education, Uzbek language, language circle, creative thinking, language pedagogy.

Introduction

Language education has always been one of the core elements of human intellectual and cultural development. In the 21st century, when the global educational paradigm shifts from memorization to meaningful learning, **competency-based education (CBE)** becomes a priority. This approach does not merely focus on teaching linguistic rules, but on equipping learners with the ability to effectively use language in real communicative contexts.

Mother tongue education, particularly in the Uzbek language context, serves not only as a tool of communication but also as a means of preserving national identity and values. Therefore, language instruction must aim at developing **linguistic, communicative, and cultural competencies** in an integrated manner.

In this regard, **extracurricular activities** — such as language clubs, creative writing circles, and debate sessions — play a vital role. They provide an informal yet educational environment where learners can apply their language knowledge creatively, engage in interactive communication, and strengthen their sense of cultural belonging.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how extracurricular (circle) activities can be organized in mother tongue education through a competency-based framework, focusing on the development of speech and linguistic skills of students.

The concept of **competence** was first introduced in linguistics by **Noam Chomsky (1965)**, who defined “linguistic competence” as the speaker’s internalized knowledge of their language system. Later, **Dell Hymes (1972)** expanded this notion by introducing the term “**communicative competence**”, which includes not only grammatical knowledge but also sociocultural and pragmatic skills.

In the field of modern pedagogy, **competency-based education** implies a learning process centered around the formation of key competencies that ensure successful functioning in professional and social life. In language education, this approach emphasizes the ability to **use** the language — not just **know** it.

According to the **Uzbek National Curriculum for General Education (2020)**, the main goal of mother tongue instruction is to develop students’ abilities to express thoughts clearly, understand others’ speech, and use linguistic means appropriately in diverse contexts. This aligns with global educational standards proposed by **OECD** and **UNESCO**, which define language competence as one of the key life skills.

Extracurricular (or co-curricular) activities are essential for complementing formal education. Unlike traditional classroom lessons, extracurricular sessions are **student-centered**, **flexible**, and **creative**. They encourage experimentation, imagination, and deeper engagement with language.

In the context of Uzbek language education, **language circles** (in Uzbek: *to‘garak mashg‘ulotlari*) serve as effective environments for applying the competency-based approach. They typically include activities such as:

- storytelling and retelling exercises,
- debate and discussion sessions,
- creative writing and poetry workshops,
- linguistic games and competitions,
- text and media analysis,
- role plays and dramatizations.

Such activities provide students with opportunities to **speak more**, **think critically**, and **connect linguistics with real communication**. They also reduce the anxiety often associated with formal language classes, allowing learners to use language more freely and confidently.

The development of **speech competence** involves mastering phonetic, lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic aspects of language. In extracurricular sessions, students can practice all of these through diverse and interactive methods.

1. **Phonetic Competence:**

Activities such as tongue-twister challenges or expressive reading improve pronunciation and articulation.

2. **Lexical and Grammatical Competence:**

“Word chain” games, synonym-hunting, and short writing tasks help expand vocabulary and reinforce grammar in context.

3. **Communicative Competence:**

Role-plays, interviews, and debates enhance sociolinguistic awareness and adaptive speech behavior.

4. **Creative Competence:**

Writing short stories, composing dialogues, and performing poetry develop linguistic imagination and stylistic flexibility.

The **competency-based model** treats these skills as interconnected, ensuring holistic linguistic development. The teacher’s task is to design tasks that integrate comprehension, expression, interaction, and reflection.

Language acquisition is not merely a mechanical process; it is deeply connected to **thought, emotion, and culture**. As **Lev Vygotsky (1934)** stated, “Language is the tool of thought; through speech, thinking is formed and transformed.”

In extracurricular language learning, the **psycholinguistic** dimension becomes particularly important because students express personal emotions, beliefs, and attitudes through speech. When learners use their native language in creative settings — poetry readings, dramatizations, discussions — they internalize linguistic patterns more naturally and emotionally.

The **sociocultural aspect** is equally crucial. Extracurricular language activities often include elements of folklore, proverbs, traditional stories, and national customs, which connect students with their cultural heritage. For example, analyzing Uzbek proverbs such as “*Til – millatning ko‘zgusi*” (“Language is the mirror of a nation”) helps students understand how linguistic expression reflects collective identity.

Organizing extracurricular lessons in a competency-oriented framework involves several pedagogical strategies:

1. Learner-Centered Approach:

Activities should be tailored to students' interests, linguistic levels, and psychological needs. For example, younger learners may engage in storytelling or drawing-based language activities, while older students may prefer debates or research projects.

2. Activity-Based Learning:

Students learn best through doing. Practical activities — such as public speaking, media creation, or linguistic fieldwork — turn theoretical knowledge into active competence.

3. Collaborative Learning:

Group projects, team discussions, and peer feedback sessions foster cooperative communication and mutual respect.

4. Reflective Practice:

After each session, students can self-evaluate or reflect on what linguistic and communicative skills they improved.

5. Integration of Technology:

Modern language circles may use digital tools — blogs, podcasts, or social media platforms — to promote creative expression in the native language.

Expected Outcomes

When organized effectively, extracurricular activities based on a competency-based approach yield the following outcomes:

- Improved oral and written fluency;
- Greater motivation to use the native language creatively;
- Enhanced critical and independent thinking;
- Development of emotional intelligence through expressive language use;
- Strengthened national and cultural identity;
- Increased self-confidence in public speaking and discussion.

These results demonstrate that **language circles are not just supplementary**, but essential components of comprehensive language education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, organizing extracurricular language activities through a **competency-based approach** offers significant pedagogical value in the development of students' speech, linguistic, and communicative abilities.

In the context of **Uzbek language education**, such activities not only reinforce linguistic knowledge but also nurture creativity, cultural awareness, and independent thought. By combining

linguistic theory, psycholinguistic principles, and interactive practice, educators can transform language circles into laboratories of expression and identity.

Thus, the competency-based model of extracurricular education serves as a bridge between **knowledge and action, language and culture, individual and society** — fulfilling the core mission of modern language pedagogy.

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