

## **The scientific school under the guidance of Kunanbayeva S.**

### **"Modernization of foreign language education based on an updated cognitive-linguistic-cultural methodology."**

In the context of rapidly evolving integration processes, increasing professional and academic exchanges, and deepening international cooperation, a foreign language acquires the status of an effective tool for shaping the intellectual potential of society, becoming one of the main resources for the development of a new state.

Through the study of language as a reflection of socio-cultural reality and as a phenomenon of both national and universal culture, an understanding of the linguistic worldview is formed. This enables the ability to communicate harmoniously within our own society and in other societies, as well as to anticipate and overcome conflicts stemming from historical, political, and religious differences among cultures. Thus, language serves as an effective foundation for international and intercultural understanding.

However, as the analysis of the state of foreign language education in Kazakhstan has shown, the level of foreign language proficiency among students in both secondary and higher education did not meet the demands of modern societal needs. The objective necessity for modernizing the domestic foreign language education system found its expression in the Concept for the Development of Foreign Language Education developed by Salima Sagiyeвна Kunanbayeva in 2004. This concept aimed at a qualitative overhaul of the domestic foreign language education system and the preparation of professional personnel in this field in accordance with a hierarchical model of foreign language education that meets international standards. This model reflects the European Council's standard for language proficiency across six levels, denoted as A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. By defining the precise number of levels and their substantive aspects for each type of educational institution, this Concept ensures the implementation of the principles of continuity, consistency, and progressive development of the quality of foreign language education. It harmoniously combines the subject matter of the domestic foreign language education system with an internationally standardized mechanism for assessing foreign language proficiency at each level. The transition to a hierarchical organization of the educational process has significantly enhanced the quality of foreign language education.

The hierarchical model of foreign language education represents a significant step toward Kazakhstan's integration into the global educational space. The orientation of Kazakhstan's educational system toward a competency-based approach in education is reflected in the field of foreign language instruction, specifically in the development of intercultural communicative competence (Kunanbayeva S.S., 2005) as an indicator of an individual's ability to effectively engage in foreign language communication at the intercultural level. The specificity of the goals and content of foreign language education in the context of the intercultural paradigm is rooted in the fact that the central element of the hierarchical

model is the learner, who is viewed both as a subject of the educational process and as a subject of intercultural communication.

The Concept for the Development of Foreign Language Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan, developed by Salima Sagiyeвна Kunanbayeva, lays the foundations for the development of the state's language policy, the modernization of the domestic foreign language education system, and provides a basis for the organization of regulatory and educational-methodological documentation in the field of foreign language instruction. The aim of this Concept was to define the main directions for the development of foreign language education, create a national hierarchical model of continuous and coherent foreign language education, and ensure Kazakhstan's integration into the global educational space. The development of this Concept was driven by the urgent need to address the following tasks: identify the current state of affairs in the field of foreign language education in Kazakhstan at the present stage, outline the theoretical and methodological foundations of a continuous foreign language education system in Kazakhstan, and establish a system of continuous and coherent foreign language education that covers all levels of the educational structure (preschool, school, higher education) in all its variations.

It is worth noting that the organization of foreign language education in the Republic has been characterized by several negative phenomena. The absence of a unified methodological platform for continuous and coherent foreign language education and standardized regulatory support (state standards and program requirements) has led to the arbitrary selection by educational institutions of foreign educational programs and materials, without any alignment with the domestic conditions of language instruction. This lack of clarity in the planned outcomes of student learning and assessment criteria has resulted in the growth of spontaneous innovative experiments and the development of a chaotic market for foreign language educational services aimed at "filling in" the gaps in the state's foreign language education sector.

The situation was further complicated by a shortage of qualified personnel capable of fully providing foreign language instruction across the entire spectrum of different levels of foreign language education. There was also an insufficiently well-established system for retraining teaching staff in foreign languages, resulting in weak teacher replenishment, and as a consequence, a low level of provision of foreign language teachers in secondary educational institutions. All of these factors had a negative impact on the proficiency in foreign languages at all levels of the national foreign language education system. Despite the real opportunities for personal and professional contact with native speakers of the language in the context of the Republic's sovereignty, a significant portion of graduates still encountered difficulties in achieving full-fledged communication in a foreign language. One of the significant shortcomings of the traditional foreign language education system, as previously mentioned, was the lack of clarity in its conceptual foundations.

Therefore, a new methodological solution, rather than the introduction of isolated, albeit successful, but fragmented techniques into the educational process, allows for the establishment of an anthropological (humanistic) approach, implemented through learner-centered instruction as the conceptual basis of foreign

language education. Within Salima Sagiyevna Kunanbayeva's humanistic concept, a fundamentally new methodological direction with a strong intercultural focus is developed. This is achieved through the goals, selection of content, and technologies of foreign language education that are suitable for the process of personal development and growth, enabling individuals to effectively participate in intercultural communication. The transition to this new cultural-forming system of foreign language education extends beyond just the linguistic and cultural parameters of the country of the target language.

From the perspective of Salima Sagiyevna Kunanbayeva's new cognitive-linguistic-cultural methodology, there is a reorientation of the objectives in the study of a foreign language. The goal is not simply "learning a foreign language" per se, but rather "foreign language education," in which the content encompasses not only pragmatic knowledge, skills, and abilities but also the development of an individual through the use of a foreign language and the formation of a subject of intercultural communication. This approach involves the simultaneous and interconnected study of language and culture (Kunanbayeva S.S., 2010).

To achieve the reoriented objectives in foreign language education on this new conceptual basis, the subject matter and content of the hierarchical model of foreign language education revolve around the communicative sphere. Within this sphere, the thematic content of language and the composition of typical situations are defined, aiming to enable learners to achieve a socially sufficient level of foreign language proficiency and transition to professionally oriented foreign language education.

In addition to innovative conceptual approaches to defining the objectives and subject matter of foreign language education from Salima Sagiyevna Kunanbayeva's new methodological perspectives, there is also a focus on the use of educational technologies. Foreign language education, as a component of the overall system of education in the Republic, cannot be considered in isolation from the environment in which it operates and develops. In this context, significant positive changes have occurred in both the substantive and organizational aspects of foreign language education due to the adoption of the Concept for the Development of Education in Kazakhstan by 2015, the State Program for the Development of Education in Kazakhstan for 2005-2010, and the Concept for the Development of Foreign Language Education in Kazakhstan:

- The study of foreign languages (FL) has been recognized as socially significant, essential for practical and professional life in the contemporary multilingual and multicultural globalized world.

- The role of a foreign language as a language of international communication has been defined, alongside the national (Kazakh) language and Russian as a language of interethnic communication.

- The necessity of introducing early FL education with subsequent improvement and deepening of proficiency in a variable system of continuous, post-secondary, and higher education has been acknowledged.

- Conceptually significant terms have been clarified both in terms of content and terminology, including "foreign language education" with a focus on

intercultural communication, "proficiency level" (the final set of communicative and linguistic skills in FL as the result of the interaction between teaching and learning activities), and functional variations of the concept "foreign language": Basic FL (BL), Specialized FL (SL), Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) for teaching narrow professional communication, and "Language for Academic Purposes" (LAP).

A distinctive feature of the new foreign language education system, conceptually based on a hierarchical approach, is its focus on the final learning outcome, specifically the predetermined proficiency level.

The specified proficiency levels are harmonized with the features of the national educational system and are implemented according to the educational structure outlined in the educational concept as follows:

- For the early grades of secondary school, a starting program is recommended.
- For the main stage (grades 5-10), levels A1 and A2 are recommended.
- For specialized classes in the 12-year education system (grades 11-12), level B1 is recommended along with profile-oriented educational programs.
- Specialized schools follow programs and standards at level B2.
- Technical and vocational educational institutions teach at level B1 and include the basics of Language for Specific Purposes (LSP).
- Post-secondary vocational education follows level B2 and incorporates LSP.
- Non-linguistic universities teach at level B2 and offer a full course of LSP (professional program).
- Linguistic universities cover proficiency levels B2, C1, C2, LAP (Language for Academic Purposes), and specialized professional LSP programs.
- For master's programs, linguistic universities require levels C1 and C2 in the second foreign language, and level C1 in the first foreign language, while non-linguistic universities require LSP for specialized master's programs, LAP, and LSP for research-oriented master's programs.

This system combines international proficiency rating scales with domestic subject matter content. It standardizes the qualification and quality requirements for the final outcomes in foreign language proficiency at each level of educational institutions, with variable content and educational subprograms at each level.

In the context of the Republic's orientation towards scientific, technical, and industrial development, the societal demand in the field of foreign language education within a diverse range of non-linguistic universities lies in the preparation of professionals who are proficient in foreign languages. They should be capable of establishing personal, scientific, and cultural connections with native speakers of the language. Furthermore, these professionals should view foreign languages as a tool for facilitating effective professional communication and the exchange of expertise in their future practical production activities.

Achieving these goals is not possible without the use of various teaching technologies in the educational process, based on the principles of problem-solving, interactivity, and situational learning. This includes modeling professional-contextual situations closely related to the future professional activities of learners, using problem-based learning methods, and incorporating project-based work.

These approaches are essential for preparing students to effectively apply their foreign language skills in their future professional careers and for addressing the challenges and demands of the modern workforce.

Thus, foreign language education in diverse non-linguistic universities is conceptually and structurally presented as the formula: level B2 + LSP, which corresponds to international standards of language proficiency. The reorientation of these universities towards teaching Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) has required the creation of specific conditions, including:

1. Shifting the foreign language from being a general socio-humanitarian subject to being a part of the professional curriculum.
2. Rational determination of the time frame for language instruction.
3. Adequate regulatory, educational, methodological, and informational support for the educational process.

These changes have been essential in aligning foreign language education with the needs of professionals in various fields and ensuring that graduates possess the necessary language skills for their specific careers.

The planned expansion of the timeframes and the periodization of foreign language education to meet the contemporary societal demand for professionals proficient in one or more foreign languages at an international standard level required a significant modernization of the quality management system for foreign language education. This, in turn, involved:

1. A thorough review of the national foreign language education policy to ensure alignment with current demands.
2. Substantial updates in regulatory and management materials, as well as methodological, content-related, technological, and resource foundations of foreign language education.
3. The creation of a unified, structurally and content-wise standardized foreign language education framework for all forms and levels of the education system.
4. The systematic organization of training and retraining of personnel for each model of language education (early, specialized, variable-professional).
5. The development of educational and methodological complexes for each of the mentioned educational programs based on the standardization of the regulatory content for each level.
6. The establishment of a unified system for ranking and assessing language proficiency levels, aligned with international standards.

This comprehensive approach was necessary to ensure that foreign language education meets the evolving needs of the modern workforce and effectively prepares individuals to communicate and excel in an international context.

The process of globalization and economic integration among European countries, along with the need to align the state of education with the requirements of the global community in order to enhance its quality, has necessitated the transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to a competency-based paradigm in the preparation of professionals within the higher education system. The relevance of implementing a competency-based approach in the higher education system in the

Republic of Kazakhstan is aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of educational services (Kunanbayeva, 2014).

The competency-based approach, within the framework of the anthropological model of education, replacing the knowledge-based (systemic) approach, is considered as a pedagogical theory in the paradigm of foreign language education, alongside personality-centered and reflexive-developmental approaches. It contributes to the development of the learner's personality in both professional and personal dimensions. Competency-based education is based on a humanistic and culturally oriented methodology, defining a specific "competency system." There is a distinction between the concepts of "competence" and "competency." Competency is defined as "the knowledge-based, intellectually, and personally conditioned experience of a person's socio-professional life." Competence, on the other hand, refers to internal, potential, hidden psychological formations: knowledge, beliefs, action plans (algorithms), value systems, and relationships, which are subsequently revealed in a person's competencies.

According to Salima Kunanbayeva, during university education, the focus is on the formation of competencies, their accumulation, which together make up the competency model of the developing professional. As for the concept of "competence," its full development is achieved only in the course of future professional activity. Salima Sagiyeвна notes that "competence is a personal attribute, the potential ability of an individual to handle various tasks, as a combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for performing a specific professional activity." "Competency" represents the experience of successfully carrying out professional activities.

Competence is not an educational category and cannot be the ultimate result of higher professional education. "Competence" is defined as "professionalism," "mastery," "personal self-development," "the result of internal motivation for self-improvement," "the potential for intellectual and professional development of an individual," and "internal motivation for high-quality professional performance." Clearly, the concept of "competence" is the result of a personal commitment to professional self-improvement and self-development. The development of a competency-based education model proposed by Salima Kunanbayeva is associated with the shift from a general theoretical understanding of its content to the construction of subject-specific educational programs. The educational outcome of "professional readiness" defines the combination of a specific number of professionally significant competency blocks reflected in the competency model of a specialist.

In turn, the competency block included in the competency model for foreign language teachers is viewed as a combination of competencies that correlate with a widely recognized classification of competencies:

1. The professionally-oriented competency block constitutes "key competencies," which are defined as the ability to solve professional tasks based on the socio-legal foundations of an individual's behavior.

2. The professionally-based competency block with basic competencies represents the ability and readiness to engage in a specific professional activity.

3. The professionally-identifying competency block is represented by "specialized competencies," which reflect the specificity of a particular subject or interdisciplinary field of professional activity.

4. Intercultural communicative competence is a comprehensive system of special competencies formed through the means of a foreign language.

These competency blocks collectively form the competency model of a foreign language teacher, encompassing various aspects of their professional abilities and readiness.

The universal competency model for specialists developed by Salima Sagiyeveva Kunanbayeva and implemented in practice is oriented towards the future professional activities of specialists. Its composition of competencies provides a methodological foundation for the development of intercultural communicative and professionally content-driven individuals as "subjects of intercultural communication." The component structure of intercultural communicative competence shapes the intercultural communicative proficiency level in a foreign language to support an individual's life activities. It also implies professional communicative skills and sub-competencies that meet the needs of multi-level professional communicative activities.

The development of these four competency blocks contributes to the effectiveness of the professional training of future specialists, yielding positive outcomes and validation in master's dissertations and within the educational process. This ensures the level of preparedness of professional personnel capable of meeting qualification requirements, thereby demonstrating their legitimacy and future prospects.

An essential consideration in creating an educational program is defining the units of structural organization. Since the essence of the educational process within the competency-based approach involves creating situations and supporting actions that can lead to the development of specific competencies, the unit of subject content in shaping a student's professional readiness should be the professional concept. This concept implies the implementation of principles for psychopedagogical support, including the student's personal involvement in educational activities, recreating the subject and social context of future professional work, the leading role of collaborative productive activities between teachers and students, dialogical communication, the activation of professional value aspects in education content, the unity of education and upbringing, and the professional positioning of students' self-awareness during the design and implementation of educationally professionally oriented situations. These situations encourage student activity in the social and subject context of their future professional activities. The professional concept, or "profkoncept," essentially represents the leading invariant element and component of a graduate's competency. It reflects the essence and content of a specialist's professional activities, as well as the elements and components of that specialist's professional work. Salima S. Kunanbayeva considers the profkoncept as a unit of joint activity between the teacher and the student to identify the

foundational content of a profession. It serves as a system of conditions constructed by the educator (subject of teaching) that encourage and mediate the activity of the learner (subject of learning) in the social and subject context of their future professional activities. In the process of mastering the profkoncept, the assimilation and activation of professional knowledge, skills, and competencies take place, along with the development of essential professional qualities, professional thinking, and emotional-volitional regulation in implementing competencies.

Comprehensive and systemic measures to accelerate the implementation of the "Kazakhstan 2050" Development Strategy have fundamentally changed the approaches to the concept of network interaction among entities involved in the scientific and educational sphere. Elevating science to a strategic priority, integrating the business community with science, the necessity to align science with the actual demands and needs of the economy, and utilizing the scientific potential to address economically relevant challenges have all significantly complicated the understanding of the essence and content of the modern concept of "professional education" and its organizational structure. This complexity arises from the need to diversify professional education in accordance with a set of specified innovative specifications. The multi-tiered and integrated nature of the modern concept of "professional education" eliminates the possibility of a one-dimensional structuring and presentation of networked educational interactions between universities. This is because interdependence and networked organizational structures have become a permanent, intrinsic characteristic of contemporary professional education.

Therefore, network interactions across the entire scientific and educational route of higher professional education represent an environment and activity that requires the development of unified universal approaches. This begins with their categorization based on values and education, involves a predictive assessment of their applicability considering the specificities of universities, an exploration of internal resources to support them, and a series of other organizational aspects for clarification. Network interaction has become one of the most effective mechanisms for advancing educational activities and addressing the pressing challenges of education modernization and the development of virtual mobility in education. In this context, the issue of technical and technological support for network interaction arises. The convertibility of results from network education, particularly within the context of universalizing educational programs, highlights the relevance of mechanisms for universalizing educational outcomes obtained through joint educational programs as a result of general education.