ABSTRACT

of Zhanat Ametkhan's dissertation entitled «Innovative methods of teaching works of the Zar zaman era in general education school» submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational programme 8D01701-Kazakh Language and Literature

Research topic: "Innovative Approaches to Teaching the Works of the Zar Zaman Poets in General Education Schools"

Relevance of the study: The term "Zar Zaman poets" was introduced into scholarly discourse by Mukhtar Auezov in 1927. The legacy of the Zar Zaman poets did not immediately receive a comprehensive assessment in Kazakh literary scholarship. During the Soviet period, the works of Dulat, Shortanbai, and Murat were removed from school curricula on the grounds that they expressed "nostalgia for the past" and "defended the interests of the ruling class," and the poets were labelled "reactionary." Following Kazakhstan's independence, this literary heritage was re-examined by B. Omaruly, K. Madibai, E. Duisenbaiuly, and B. Kozhekeyeva from the perspectives of genre, genesis, and poetics.

However, these advances in scholarship have not been fully reflected in school education. Although the works have been included in the curriculum, no dedicated study has examined methods of teaching them in relation to specific grades and textbooks. Earlier methodological studies treated Zar Zaman poetry as material for Grades 9-10, whereas the current curriculum places these poets in Grades 5, 7, and 8. Consequently, recommendations developed for upper-secondary students are not suitable for lower-secondary learners, while methodological literature for the latter is extremely limited.

A second aspect of the problem concerns teaching approaches. The updated curriculum requires students to work independently with texts, understand their historical context, and express their own views. However, interviews with teachers showed that Zar Zaman poetry is still generally taught through traditional methods: expressive reading, explanation of meaning, and memorisation. The ideas of national unity, respect for the homeland, and justice expressed in Zar Zaman poetry also align with the values of the Birtutas Tarbie (Unified Education) Programme introduced in schools. Therefore, there was a need for a study that treats Zar Zaman poetry as a coherent system across Grades 5, 7, and 8 and is grounded in curriculum objectives and school practice.

Research aim: to analyse the current state of teaching the works of the three poets, including curriculum objectives, textbooks, school conditions, and teachers' practices; to propose a teaching methodology based on this evidence; and to evaluate its effectiveness.

Research objectives:

- to examine the historical and literary context of the Zar Zaman period and the works of the three poets through a six-stage literary analysis comprising context, theme and idea, structure, language and style, semantic field, and interpretation;
- to compare the textbooks containing works by Dulat, Shortanbai, and Murat in

terms of text length, glossaries, and task systems;

- to investigate teaching conditions and teachers' practices at Mukagali Makatayev Gymnasium No. 140 and School-Gymnasium No. 198 in Almaty;
- to develop grade-specific lesson plans, task systems, and assessment rubrics that address the identified shortcomings;
- to test the effectiveness of the proposed methodology in school practice.

Object of the study: the process of teaching the works of the Zar Zaman poets in Grades 5, 7, and 8 at general education schools.

Subject of the study: current methods of teaching Dulat's "O, Aktan Zhas, Aktan Zhas," Shortanbai's "Zar Zaman," and Murat's "Ush Kiyan" and "Saryarka," and ways of improving these methods.

Research hypothesis: If lesson plans are supplemented with complete versions of texts that address omissions in textbooks, comparisons of sources, and tasks sequenced according to levels of cognitive complexity, students' comprehension of the texts and understanding of their historical context will improve, while their aesthetic appreciation of literary texts and ability to express personal opinions will develop.

Research sources: The empirical base of the study comprises textbooks on Kazakh Literature for grades 5, 7, and 8 (authored by A. Aktanova, A. Zhundibayeva, et al.; B. Kerimbekova, A. Kuanyshbayeva; R. Zaikenova, S. Tursyngaliyeva; S. Daribayev, G. Orda, A. Satylova; S. Kaskabasov, et al.), the standard curriculum for the subject Kazakh Literature, the academic curricula of M. Makatayev Gymnasium No. 140 and School-Gymnasium No. 198 in Almaty, teacher interview transcripts, the full texts of the analyzed literary works published in scholarly editions, as well as student responses to the questionnaire and their written assignments.

Methodological foundations and research methods:

A combination of methods was used to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. Comparative textual analysis was employed to compare the full texts of the works with the versions presented in textbooks, while content analysis was used to systematise textbook tasks, glossaries, and biographical information. The textbook tasks were classified by cognitive level according to the revised Bloom's taxonomy.

School practice was investigated through teacher interviews, initial and final student questionnaires, a five-part diagnostic task, classroom learning profiles, and lesson observations.

The effectiveness of the methodology was tested through a quasi-experiment involving experimental and control groups. Group results were compared using Fisher's angular transformation criterion (φ^*) and Pearson's chi-square test (χ^2), and the effect size (h) was calculated. Before the experiment, the groups were tested to confirm the equivalence of their baseline levels.

Theoretical and methodological foundations of the study:

The interpretation of Zar Zaman poetry drew on M. Auezov's view that the poets shared the motifs of regret for the past, weariness with the present, and fear of the future, as well as B. Omaruly's understanding of the movement as a historically bounded

phenomenon that arose from colonial oppression. The works of Kh. Dosmukhameduly, K. Zhumaliyev, M. Magauin, K. Madibai, and B. Kozhekeyeva also provided a theoretical foundation.

The philosophical foundation of the methodology is grounded in the epistemological and dialogic theories of Socrates, Aristotle, Al-Farabi, Abai, and M. M. Bakhtin; its psychological basis draws upon L. S. Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development and the emotional perception of art; whereas its pedagogical framework is rooted in national methodological traditions and the updated content of education. The teaching methodology drew on K. Bitibayeva's recommendation that the Zar Zaman poets be taught in connection with history and through discussion; the works of A. Konyratbayev, T. Aksholakov, and T. Zhumazhanova; and F. Sh. Orazbayeva's theory of language communication. The progression of task complexity from one grade to the next was guided by L. S. Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development, while classroom dialogue was structured according to M. M. Bakhtin's concept of the dialogic nature of language. International foundations included L. Rosenblatt's transactional theory, S. Wineburg's concept of historical thinking, and the revised taxonomy developed by L. Anderson and D. Krathwohl.

Theoretical significance of the study:

The study connects scholarly concepts of Zar Zaman literature developed in the works of M. Auezov, Kh. Dosmukhameduly, K. Zhumaliyev, M. Magauin, B. Omaruly, K. Madibai, and B. Kozhekeyeva with methods of teaching literature and applies them at school level. For the first time, the teaching of Zar Zaman poetry at school is examined as a distinct methodological problem. L. Rosenblatt's transactional theory and S. Wineburg's concept of historical thinking are adapted to Kazakh poetry and translated into lesson structures designed for specific grades and literary works. These findings provide concrete didactic materials for approaches centred on holistic reception and historical and social context in literature education.

Practical significance of the study:

The lesson plans, lesson maps, tasks organised by cognitive level, assessment rubrics for written work, and the Grade 8 elective course programme developed in this study are ready for direct use by teachers of Kazakh language and literature. The elective course programme and the methodological guide entitled "Developing Students' Historical Consciousness through the Works of the Zar Zaman Poets" were approved by the Expert Council of the Almaty City Scientific and Methodological Centre for New Technologies in Education (Minutes No. 5 of 5 December 2025 and Minutes No. 2 of 3 April 2026). The findings of the textbook comparison may be used by textbook authors and publishers, while the diagnostic instruments may be used by other researchers. The research materials may also be incorporated into the university course Methods of Teaching Kazakh Literature.

Scientific novelty of the study:

- The four works included in the curriculum ("O, Aktan Zhas, Aktan Zhas," "Zar Zaman," "Ush Kiyan," and "Saryarka") were analyzed using a unified six-stage

framework, and the key aspects of teaching each work at school were identified: the question-and-answer structure of Dulat's poem; the "belgisi" formula and the alternation of the words "zar" and "tar" in Shortanbai's tolgau; and the epiphora of the word "zher" and repetition of the form "edi" in Murat's tolgaus. Common motifs connecting the material across the three grades were identified: land and settlement, time, power and justice, the fate of future generations, and hope.

-The psychological (age-related characteristics of learners and their level of literary text comprehension), social (historical memory and national values), and didactic (the principle of spiral curriculum design) foundations for teaching the works of the "Zar Zaman" (Era of Lament) literary movement in grades 5, 7, and 8 as a system of educational continuity have been identified. Furthermore, empirical data demonstrate that this continuity is not fully maintained in current textbooks: the number of assignments and the volume of lexical material increase unevenly across grade levels.

- Three principles adapted to teaching Zar Zaman texts were specified: holistic reception, historical and social context, and personal interpretation, together with the text-based lexical work required to implement them.

- An original instructional program has been developed, informed by the principles identified through theoretical and methodological analysis. Its core provisions are as follows: lessons begin with listening to the poem in its entirety, followed by the learner's initial response; the historical context is elucidated through a concise selection of sources; archaic vocabulary is acquired within the context of the literary work; assignments are structured according to levels of cognitive engagement; and written assignments are assessed using a standardized grading rubric.

-The dynamics of learners' perception of "Zar Zaman" poetry have been empirically established. Specifically, there was a marked improvement in students' understanding of the concept of "zar" in its historical context, their comprehension of the link between the past and the present, and their ability to identify the poet's civic stance; conversely, their perception of the sonic and rhythmic dimensions of the poetry showed minimal change.

Provisions submitted for defence:

An analysis of Dulat's works 'O, Актан jas, Актан jas', Shortanbay's 'Zar Zaman', and Murat's "Ush Kiyan" and "Saryarka" using a standard framework (context, theme and idea, structure, language and style, semantic field, interpretation) enables us to identify the key aspects of their study in schools: the question-and-answer structure of Dulat's poem, the "belgisi" formula and the alternation of "zar-tar" in Shortanbay's tolgau, and the epiphora "zher" and the repetition of the "edi" form in Murat's tolgau. The three poets are linked by common motifs of land, time, power, future generations, and hope; therefore, the material taught in Grades 5, 7, and 8 can be organised as a coherent system.

- In the A.Akhtanova's textbooks used in schools, the Zar Zaman works are presented in abridged form: approximately 20% of "Saryarka" and 31% of "Ush Kiyan" are included. The glossaries are limited, biographical details and genre labels differ from those in other editions, and the historical context requires supplementation. These features

correspond to the difficulties identified by teachers, including archaic vocabulary, historical distance, and limited lesson time.

- The innovative teaching of Zar Zaman poetry is based on three principles: holistic reception, which begins with listening to the complete poem and eliciting students' initial responses before the teacher's explanation; historical and social context, supported by a concise set of sources and the questions "who, when, to whom, and why"; and personal interpretation, in which opinions are supported by textual and documentary evidence. These principles are implemented through a five-stage lesson cycle, text-based vocabulary work, tasks aligned with cognitive levels, and assessment rubrics.
- The methodology is presented as an original programme comprising differentiated lesson plans for each grade, a system of tasks, assessment rubrics, and an elective course for Grade 8 and teachers can use it without additional preparation. The Grade 8 component of the programme was piloted at Gymnasium No.140 and School-Gymnasium No. 198 as part of the experimental study.
- The quasi-experiment showed that, in both schools, the experimental groups achieved statistically significantly higher results than the control groups ($\varphi^*emp = 2.07$-3.05). The greatest differences were observed in students' ability to identify the poets' social position and understand the concept of "zar" in its historical sense. The indicator of aesthetic perception showed little change, suggesting that the teaching methodology should place greater emphasis on the sound patterns and rhythm of poetry.

Research setting: Mukagali Makatayev Gymnasium No. 140 and School-Gymnasium No. 198 in Almaty. A total of 151 students participated in the experimental study during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Alignment with national research priorities and government programmes:

- Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, to the People of Kazakhstan, "A Fair State. One Nation. A Prosperous Society" (2022).
- Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, at the third meeting of the National Kurultai, entitled "A Just Person – Honest Work – Honest Income." Burabay, March 15, 2024. https://www.akorda.kz
- The Birtutas Tarbie (Unified Education) Programme for educational organisations other than higher education institutions. Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2023. https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/edu/documents/details/539827?lang=kk
- Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, to the People of Kazakhstan, "Kazakhstan in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Current Issues and Their Resolution through Fundamental Digital Transformation." September 8, 2025.
- Republic of Kazakhstan. Law No. 319-III of 27 July 2007 "On Education." https://adilet.zan.kz/kaz/docs/Z070000319_
- Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Resolution No. 249 of 28 March 2023 "On Approval of the Concept for the Development of Preschool, Secondary, Technical

and Vocational Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2029." https://adilet.zan.kz/kaz/docs/P2300000249

Description of the doctoral candidate's contribution to each publication: More than 20 works related to the research topic have been published, including six articles in journals listed by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, three papers presented at conferences abroad, nine papers presented at international conferences, and two articles in scholarly journals.

1. Scientific and Theoretical Foundations of Project-Based Learning Technology for Teaching the Kazakh Language in a Foreign-Language Classroom. Bulletin of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Pedagogy Series, No.2 (March-April), 2020, pp. 46-53. https://vestnik-apnk.kz/articles/d12f2c26e8_2_2020.pdf, www.apnk.kz (Zh. Ametkhan-50%, A. A. Satbekova -50%).

2. Epistemology as the Methodological Foundation of Project-Based Learning Technology in the Kazakh Language. Bulletin of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Pedagogy Series, No. 1 (January-February), 2021, pp. 37-44. https://vestnik-apnk.kz/articles/75ad685dbf_1_2021. pdf, www.apnk.kz (A. A. Satbekova-50%, Zh. Ametkhan-40%, S. Batyrbek -10%).

3. The Transformation of Modernist Poetics in Kazakh Poetry of the Independence Period. Keruen Journal, Philology Series, April 17, 2026, pp. 154-167. https://doi.org/10.53871/2078-8134.2026.1-11 (N.D.Khudaibergenov-50%, Zh. Ametkhan -50%).

4. Folk Pedagogy as a Source for Developing the Ethno-Artistic Potential of Students in Creative Specialties at Universities in Kazakhstan. Scientific Journal of Pedagogy and Economics, Pedagogy Series, May–June 2026, Vol. 3 (421), pp. 285-300. https://doi.org/10.32014/2026.2518-1467.1209 (R. Orazaliyeva -70%, Zh. Ametkhan -30%).

5. Psychological Safety and Empathy: The Role of AI Mediation in Teaching Zar Zaman Poetry. Bulletin of Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Psychology Series, Vol. 88, No. 3 (2026), pp. 15-169. https://doi.org/10.51889/2959-5967.2026.88.3.012 (Zh. Ametkhan – 80%, M. E. Usenova-20%).

6. The Use of Generative AI in Teaching Zar Zaman Poetry in Grade 8: A Pilot Experiment. Bulletin of SDU University, Pedagogy and Teaching Methodology Series, No. 3 (76), 2026, pp. 154–162. https://doi.org/10.47344/1774cn45 (Zh. Ametkhan-90%; L. Amankulova -10%).

7. Filoloji uzmanlari için proje öğretim teknolojisine dayali akmeolojik eğitim. VII International Symposium on Turkic World Studies, 20-23 October 2020, Niğde, pp. 105-114. ISBN 978-605-70218-3-0; ISBN 978-605-70218-5-4 (A. A. Satbekova-50%; Zh. Ametkhan-50%).

8. Spiritual Modernization: Project-Based Learning Technology in Higher Education Institutions. O'zbekiston respublikasi oliy va o'rta maxsus ta'lim vazirligi alisher navoiy

nomidagi toshkent davlat o‘zbek tili va adabiyoti universiteti «o‘zbek tili taraqqiyoti va xalqaro hamkorlik masalalari» mavzusidagi xalqaro ilmiy-amaliy anjuman materiallari. TOSHKENT, 2021, pp. 224-229. ISBN: 978-9943-7317-69 (A. A. Satbekova-30%, Zh. Ametkhan -60%, S. Batyrbek-10%).

9. Methodology for Teaching the Works of the Zar Zaman Poets in General Education Schools. ASES V International Bandirma Scientific Studies Congress, 26 September 2025, Bandirma, Türkiye, pp. 959-965. ISBN 978-625-92555-7-6 (Zh. Ametkhan -80%; B. Sh. Kozhekeyeva-20%).

10. A Few Words on Issues Related to Teaching the Subject “Kazakh Literature” in the Updated Education System. Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Online Conference. Kazakh National Women’s Teacher Training University. Almaty, December 4, 2020, pp. 470–474 (Zh. Ametkhan -100%).

11. Spiritual Modernization: The Representation of the Works of Zar Zaman Poets in General Education Schools within the Updated Education System. Collection of Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Online Conference. Almaty, Kazakh National Women’s Teacher Training University, 2020, pp. 197–199. ISBN: 9786017959739 (Zh. Ametkhan-100%).

12. Abai-Our Spiritual Mentor and a Symbol of Our National Ideology. Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Online Conference, Kazakh National Women’s Teacher Training University, Almaty, 2020, pp. 150-153. ISBN 9786017959739 (Zh. Ametkhan-100%).

13. K. Abilkasymova’s Pedagogical Works on Methods of Teaching Kazakh Literature in Schools with Other Languages of Instruction. Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Online Conference, Ablai Khan Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, 2021, pp. 293-296. ISBN 978-601-270-511-9 (Zh. Ametkhan -100%).

14. Methods of Teaching the Works of the Zar Zaman Poets in General Education Schools: A Way to Uphold the National Spirit. International Scientific and Practical Conference “Transformation of Aitys among Turkic Peoples,” Kazakh National Women’s Teacher Training University, 13 May 2025, pp. 77-82. ISBN 978-60-346-169-4 (Zh. Ametkhan – 100%).

15. Innovative Technologies for Teaching Zar Zaman Poetry: Methodological Models and Outcomes in School Practice. International Scientific and Practical Conference. Kazakh National Women’s Teacher Training University, November 28, 2025, pp. 203-211 (Zh. Ametkhan -100%).

16. Methods of Teaching the Works of Zar Zaman Poets in General Education Schools. International Scientific and Practical Conference “An Alash Figure Who Longed for the Dawn of Freedom.” Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, February 23, 2026, pp. 217-222. ISBN: 978-601-311-534-4 (Zh. Ametkhan -100%).

17. Effective Methods for Teaching Zar Zaman Poetry. International Scientific and Practical Conference “Modern Approaches to Teacher Training: Science and Practice,” organised by L. N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University of the Ministry of Science and

Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, M. Akmulla Bashkir State Pedagogical University (BSPU, Russian Federation), and Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University, Russian Federation), February 26, 2026, pp. 1554-1559 (Zh. Ametkhan-100%).

18. The Potential of Digital Platforms for Teaching Zar Zaman Poetry. Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Conference "Baitursynuly Readings," Akhmet Baitursynuly Kostanay Regional University, 20 May 2026, pp. 139-142. ISBN 978-601-356-6450 (Zh. Ametkhan-100%).

19. The Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning Technology in Developing Learners' Intellectual, Social, and Professional Competencies. Bulletin of Kh. Dosmukhamedov Atyrau University, Pedagogy Series, No. 3 (58), 2020, pp. 63-71. https://rmebrk.kz/bilimalushijournals/6320/42487/pdf, www.vestnik-asu.kz. ISSN: 2077-0197 (A. A. Satbekova -50%, Zh. Ametkhan -40%, M. E. Abdresh-10%).

20. Theoretical and Methodological Foundations for Teaching Zar Zaman Poetry in School Literature Education. Bulletin of Shakarim University, Philology Series, No. 2 (6), 2026, pp. 118-125. https://doi.org/10.53360/3080-3861-2026-2(6)-13 (Zh. Ametkhan -50%; A. A. Satbekova-50%).

Compliance with research ethics requirements was confirmed by the Research Ethics Committee of the Kazakh National Women's Teacher Training University.

Structure and length of the dissertation:

The dissertation comprises normative references, symbols and abbreviations, an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, a references, and appendices.