

PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY AND TEACHING LEGACY OF SAFARALI BEY VALIBAYOV

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Abstract. The article comprehensively examines the pedagogical activity and teaching heritage of Safarali bey Valibayov, a prominent representative of Azerbaijani enlightenment at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. As one of the first Azerbaijani teachers to graduate from the Transcaucasian Teachers' Seminary, he rendered important services in the training of pedagogical personnel, in the formation of national educational traditions, and in the dissemination of enlightenment ideas. The article extensively highlights Valibayov's pedagogical views, principles of training and upbringing, teaching methods, as well as his role in the protection of national and spiritual values and the formation of students as personalities. The study especially emphasizes the author's application of the *sovti* method in teaching, the promotion of women's education, his contributions to the development of regional schools, and methodological approaches that can be applied in the modern educational process.

Keywords: Safarali bey Valibayov, pedagogy, teaching heritage, women's education, traditional method, national-moral values, enlightenment.

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SƏFƏRƏLİ BƏY VƏLİBƏYOVUN PEDAQOJİ FƏALİYYƏTİ VƏ MÜƏLLİMLİK İRSİ

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Annotasiya. Məqalədə XIX əsrin sonu və XX əsrin əvvəllərində Azərbaycan maarifçiliyinin görkəmli nümayəndəsi olan Səfərli bəy Vəlibəyovun pedaqoji fəaliyyəti və müəllimlik irsi araşdırılmışdır. O, Zaqafqaziya Müəllimlər Seminariyasını bitirmiş ilk azərbaycanlı müəllimlərdən biri kimi pedaqoji kadrların hazırlanmasında, milli təhsil ənənələrinin formalaşmasında və maarifçilik ideyalarının yayılmasında mühüm xidmətlər göstərmişdir. Məqalədə Səfərli bəy Vəlibəyovun pedaqoji baxışları, təlim və tərbiyə prinsipləri, müəllimlik metodları, eyni zamanda milli-mənəvi dəyərlərin qorunması və şagirdlərin şəxsiyyət kimi formalaşmasında rolu geniş şəkildə işıqlandırılır. Tədqiqatda, xüsusilə müəllifin sövti üsulun tədrisdə tətbiqi, qadın təhsilinin təşviqi, bölgə məktəblərinin inkişafına verdiyi töhfələr və müasir təhsil prosesində tətbiq oluna biləcək metodoloji yanaşmaları vurğulanır.

Açar sözlər: Səfərli bəy Vəlibəyov, pedaqogika, müəllimlik irsi, qadın təhsili, sövti üsul, milli-mənəvi dəyərlər, maarifçilik.

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CC BY 4.0. Müəlliflər açıq şəkildə öz əsərlərinin müəlliflik hüquqlarını təsdiq edir və jurnala Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) lisenziyası çərçivəsində ilk nəşr hüququnu verirlər. Bu lisenziya, əsərin bu jurnalda yayımlandığı və orijinal müəlliflərə istinad edildiyi halda, onun sərbəst şəkildə digər şəxslər tərəfindən yayılmasına icazə verir.

Introduction / Giriş

The activities of Safarali bey Valibayov, one of the prominent figures in the pedagogical history of Azerbaijan, are the subject of extensive research. Although some scientific studies have been conducted on his pedagogical heritage and teaching principles, they have mostly been generalized in the context of the enlightenment movement. This article presents Valibayov's teaching heritage for the first time in a systematic manner. The relevance of the topic is associated with the need to study national pedagogical traditions and the possibility of making a methodological contribution to the modern educational process. In addition, the analysis of the used literature shows that Valibayov's pedagogical principles remain relevant today. Safarali bey Valibayov's pedagogical principles and teaching activities are considered a significant legacy that contributes to the formation of theoretical foundations and the improvement of educational processes in methodological and practical aspects in the modern Azerbaijani education system.

Methods. Several scientific and methodological approaches were used in the preparation of the article. First of all, through historical and methodological analysis, the connection of the life and activities of Safarali bey Valibayov with the socio-political conditions of the period was investigated. Based on the method of source study, the primary sources on the author's pedagogical activity - textbooks, newspaper articles, journalistic writings, as well as the memoirs of his contemporaries - were reviewed. Using the method of comparative analysis, Valibayov's pedagogical views were compared with both the ideas of other educators of his time and modern pedagogical theories. In addition, the method of content analysis was applied, revealing the importance of national-moral values, the idea of women's education, and the sovti method in his works and pedagogical activity. Also, based on a systematic approach, Valibayov's pedagogical principles, teaching methods, and educational activities were evaluated in the context of a single pedagogical heritage. The joint application of these methods has allowed us to reveal not only the historical significance of his pedagogical heritage, but also its potential for practical contribution to modern Azerbaijani education. The main question, that is, the issue of the research is that the pedagogical principles and teaching activities of Safarali bey Valibayov are evaluated as a significant resource that contributes to the development of scientific knowledge and the improvement of practical pedagogical practice in the modern Azerbaijani education system.

Main part / Əsas hissə

Education is one of the most basic and important elements of a person throughout history. Education is a process that helps individuals develop their potential, increase their knowledge and skills, and play an active role in society. Education plays an important role in the development and progress of societies, and throughout history, many important educators have made effective contributions in this field. Valibayov is known as an educator who conducts important researches in the field of education and education. His understanding of education, pedagogical methods and educational activities contributed to the development and learning of students and left an important mark in the field of education.

The Azerbaijani branch of the Safarali bey Valibayov Transcaucasian Teachers' Seminary (ZMS) has trained more than 250 true national teachers over the 40 years it has been operating. Firidun bey Kocharli, Rashid bey Efendiyev, Safarali bey Valibayov, Alish bey Tahirov, Mahmud bey Mahmudbeyov, Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, Nariman Narimanov, Uzeyir Hajibeyli, Muslim Magomayev, Panah Gasimov, Hanafi Teregulov, Ali Huseynov, Farhad Agazadeh, Samad bey Ajalov, Teymur bey Bayramalibeyov, Suleyman Sani Akhundov, Badal bey Badalbeyli, Azad Amirov, Ahmadaga Mustafayev, Yusif Gasimov, Ali Gamarli, Museyib Isayev, Ahmad Seyidov and others were devoted to the teaching profession and carried out multifaceted activities as heralds of science, education, culture and art, illuminating their people with the light of education. Each of these people rose to the level of historical figures, artists, and masters [Ahmadov, H., 2014].

Among the graduates of the seminary, the services of Safarali bey Valibayov should be especially emphasized. He was one of the first three Azerbaijanis to graduate from the Transcaucasian (Gori) Teachers' Seminary, and he devoted eighteen years of his life to pedagogical work. During this time, Safarali bey raised dozens of talented young people who actively worked in various fields of science, education, literature and art, as well as in socio-political affairs, serving the homeland and the people with honor. J.Mammadguluzadeh, N.Narimanov, S.S.Akhundov and many others received their primary education from S.Valibayov and always remembered their demanding and caring teachers with great affection [Ahmadov, Q., 2007].

Safarali bey Sheikh Hasan oglu Velibeyov was born in 1861 in the city of Shusha. He received his primary education in a mullahkhana, and perfectly mastered the Arabic and Persian languages. In 1875, he entered the four-grade city school of Shusha and graduated from it in 1879. In that year, a significant event occurred in the life of S.Valibayov. A.O.Chernyaevsky, who came to Shusha to

recruit students for the Azerbaijani department opened under the Transcaucasian (Gori) Teachers' Seminary, talked with young Safarali, saw that he was prepared, and accepted him into the second grade of the seminary [Ahmadov, H.M., 2006].

In 1879–1893, the Azerbaijani department of the seminary was headed by A. O. Chernyaevsky. He devoted special effort to training progressive-minded, loving teachers. He taught students history and geography. Due to the shortage of teachers, A. Chernyaevsky trained S. Valibayov in his place. While still a student, Safarali bey closely assisted his teacher Chernyaevsky, and devoted special effort to the preparation of his book *Homeland Language (Part I)* [Ahmadov, H., 2014].

S. Valibayov, who graduated from the seminary in 1881, began working there as a teacher and worked at the seminary until 1896. Along with his main pedagogical activity, Safarali bey was also active in the social affairs of the seminary. He paid great attention to the extracurricular activities of the students. The young teacher continued his social and pedagogical activities in the summer. Usually, when he came to Shusha to rest during the holidays, he would teach children here for free, preparing them for entering secondary and higher schools. He would gather teachers who taught in Shusha and surrounding rural schools and introduce them to the methodology of teaching using the Sovti method. For this noble work, he was even awarded by the popechiteli of the Caucasus region [Ahmadov, H.M., 2006].

Safarali bey Valibayov was a great teacher and educator in the history of Azerbaijan. He exerted a wide influence with his activities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During his teaching activities, Valibayov played an important role in the field of education by developing many teaching programs and methodologies [Babayev, N., 2006]. His pedagogical views were based on the preservation of the national language and national-moral values, and he emphasized the correct and purposeful teaching of the grammar of the Azerbaijani language [İbrahimov, V., 2010].

Safarali bey Valibayov's teaching activity has gained wide popularity not only in the history of Azerbaijani enlightenment, but also in the field of literature and poetry. He influenced his students through his literary works and poems, increased their knowledge of language and literature, and emphasized the power of literature and poetry in teaching, giving space to music and art [Babayev, N., 2006]. Valibayov tried to develop students' creativity with an art-based teaching method, and used interactive and discussion-based approaches in the teaching process [İbrahimov, V., 2010].

His pedagogical principles were innovative and expedient, in line with the conditions of the time. Valibayov ensured the active participation of his students, created conditions for their free expression of ideas, and directed them to build

a healthy and balanced lifestyle [Hacıyev, M., 2014]. In his teaching, he paid special attention to national-moral values, physical and mental health, culture and art, which played an important role in the formation of students as personalities [Alizade, A., 2004].

When the reactionary leaders of the Caucasian educational institutions tried to remove the Azerbaijani and Georgian languages from the seminary curriculum in the 1990s, S.Valibeyov, together with A.O.Chernyaevsky, A.Akhundzadeh, and N.Lomouri, opposed this reactionary policy and demonstrated a principled position. This position was one of the reasons for his expulsion from the seminary [Ahmadov, H.M., 2006].

Valibayov was known among his contemporaries not only as a teacher, but also as an outstanding educator, methodologist, translator and publicist. His textbook “Vatan dili” (Motherland Language), prepared together with A.O.Chernyaevsky, and such works as “Qudrati-khuda”, “Usuli-jadid”, “Khazineyi-akhbar” (New Method), were widely used in Azerbaijani schools for a long time [Ahmadov, H., 2014]. He also appeared in newspapers such as “Ziyayi-Qafqaziyya”, “Terjuman”, “Kashkul”, “Kaspi”, expressed his attitude to the social and literary events of the time and promoted advanced enlightener-democratic ideas [Hacıyev, V., 2009].

His meeting with Ismayil bey Gaspirinsky occupies a special place in his pedagogical activity. During his visit to Bakhchisaray with Firidun bey Kocharli, Valibayov became closely acquainted with Gaspirinsky’s new-method school and shared his experience with a sample lesson [Baghirov, A., 1962]. This meeting played an important role in the formation of his pedagogical views.

The school opened in Shusha in 1883 on Valibayov’s initiative, as well as the reading books he prepared, created a new stage in the history of Azerbaijani school and pedagogical thought. Along with the sound method (sovti method) applied here, the provision of methodological instructions for teachers was also an important direction of his pedagogical heritage [Ahmadov, H.M., 2006].

Since most of the textbooks prepared from the beginning of the 19th century to the 20s of the 20th century were written in the Arabic alphabet, a large number of modern researchers have difficulty reading these sources from the original. On the other hand, since most of these textbooks are rare examples, their search and discovery both in Azerbaijan and the CIS requires special effort and long-term research [Ahmadov, H.M., 2006]. Reprinting such works by transliteration and facsimile, that is, adapting them to modern Latin script and presenting them to readers, is of great scientific and pedagogical importance.

Another important aspect of such works is their practical application possibilities. Thus, textbooks prepared on the basis of the sovti method occupy a separate

place in the program of the history of Azerbaijani school and pedagogical thought course taught today in pedagogical universities, colleges and technical schools, and every student studying in the pedagogical specialty must study the content and principles of composition of these textbooks [Ahmadov, H., 2014].

As a result of the research, it was determined that one of the textbooks prepared for teaching the Azerbaijani language – “Parables and Stories” published in Tbilisi in 1839 – was later adopted by Armenian authors and included in the “Armenian Book” published in Yerevan in 1967 (Volume I, p. 248) [Ahmadov, Q., 2007]. This fact shows that it is necessary to systematically collect, transliterate and make available to modern readers the first sources prepared for teaching the Azerbaijani language.

In recent years, the “Actual Problems of Education” scientific-research laboratory operating at the Azerbaijan International University has carried out significant work in this direction. In particular, in 2007, the first part of the “Vatan dili” textbook published by A.O.Chernyaevsky in Tbilisi in 1882 was reprinted in Latin script. Professor Vasim Mammadaliyev, a full member of ANAS, wrote a foreword to this 193-page publication, the editor of the book was Professor Kamandar Sharifli, and the author of the dictionary was Kamina Havil gizi [Ahmadov, Q., 2007].

Among the reading books compiled in the Azerbaijani language, the treatise published by S.Valibayov in 1888 at the printing house of the “Kashkul” newspaper in Tbilisi has a special value. This booklet, which was called “Knijka dlya samostoyatel'nogo chteniya na tatarsko-azerbaydjanskoy narechii” in Russian, and “A treatise on reading in the Azerbaijani language for elementary school students and on good morals,” consisted of moral and spiritual texts from the point of view of education [Babayev, N., 2006]. The choice of the phrase “Qudrati-Khuda” as an epigraph showed that the work combined religious and spiritual values as well as enlightening ideas. The positive feedback given to the booklet by the mufti of the South Caucasus countries, Huseyn Efendi Gayibov and Sheikhulislam Akhund Mirza Huseyn Tahirov, further increased its pedagogical significance. Here, in addition to the literacy of children, the necessity of moral and spiritual education was emphasized [Hacıyev, M., 2014].

Conclusion / Nəticə

In conclusion, Safarali Bey Valibayov’s pedagogical principles represent a significant and enduring contribution to the development of Azerbaijani education. His approaches emphasize the integration of moral, intellectual, and practical education, which remain highly relevant in contemporary pedagogical dis-

course. The study demonstrates that Valibayov's teaching methods can inform modern classroom practices and enhance student-centered learning. By analyzing his educational philosophy, the research highlights the importance of historical pedagogical experiences in shaping current instructional strategies. The article establishes that the adaptation of traditional principles to contemporary contexts can support curriculum development and teacher training programs. Furthermore, Valibayov's emphasis on ethical and value-based education offers insights for fostering holistic student development. The research identifies methodological approaches that can improve classroom engagement and learning outcomes. It also underscores the role of historical pedagogy in bridging theoretical knowledge with practical teaching applications. The study reveals the potential of archival and historical resources in enriching educational research. Additionally, it provides practical recommendations for policymakers seeking to harmonize traditional and modern educational practices. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how historical figures can influence contemporary educational reforms. The study also emphasizes the relevance of Valibayov's principles in promoting lifelong learning and critical thinking skills. By integrating his methods, educators can develop more effective instructional strategies and professional competencies. Overall, the article demonstrates the enduring value of historical pedagogical legacies for contemporary education. Finally, it highlights the necessity of continuous research on historical educators to inform and advance modern pedagogical theory and practice.

Relevance of the article. The article holds significant relevance as it addresses the integration of historical pedagogical heritage into contemporary educational frameworks in Azerbaijan. It focuses on Safarali bey Valibayov's pedagogical principles, which remain pertinent for understanding the evolution of teacher-centered and student-centered methodologies. In the context of ongoing educational reforms, the study highlights how traditional pedagogical practices can inform the design of modern curricula and instructional strategies. The research responds to the need for bridging historical educational experiences with current challenges in teacher training and classroom management. By examining Valibayov's approaches, the article provides an essential resource for scholars and practitioners seeking to contextualize modern pedagogy within Azerbaijan's educational and cultural heritage. In the context of deepening educational reforms in modern times, the relevance of studying the national pedagogical heritage, and the reassessment of historical teaching traditions, the study of Valibayov's pedagogical views is of great scientific and practical importance. The fact that his teaching principles - the unity of training and upbringing, respect for the student's personality, and the application of enlightenment ideas in teaching - remain rele-

vant in pedagogical theory and practice today further strengthens the relevance of the research. At the same time, Valibayov's activities are of particular importance in terms of the development of regional schools, the promotion of women's education, and the strengthening of rural education. Therefore, the study of his pedagogical heritage allows both to fill gaps in the history of Azerbaijani pedagogy and to make a methodological contribution to the modern educational process.

Scientific novelty of the article. The scientific novelty of the article lies in its systematic reconstruction of Valibayov's pedagogical philosophy using both archival sources and contemporary educational theory. Unlike prior studies, it establishes explicit connections between his educational principles and modern didactic methodologies, providing a unique perspective on their applicability. The research uncovers previously underexplored aspects of Valibayov's teaching methods, contributing new empirical data to the field of educational history. Furthermore, it introduces a conceptual framework for the methodological adaptation of historical pedagogical practices in contemporary classrooms. Consequently, the study represents an original scholarly contribution to the domains of pedagogy, curriculum theory, and educational methodology. The research conducted so far on the pedagogical activity of Safarali bey Valibayov has been presented generally in the context of the enlightenment movement. However, his teaching principles, teaching methods and pedagogical heritage are systematically analyzed in this study for the first time, and his role in the development of women's education and regional schools is separately examined. At the same time, the comparative analysis of Valibayov's pedagogical views based on national-moral values with modern educational theories and the demonstration of their practical application possibilities constitute the main scientific novelty of the problem.

Practical significance of the article. The practical significance of the article is manifested in its potential to influence both educational practice and policy-making in Azerbaijan. By analyzing Valibayov's teaching strategies, it offers evidence-based recommendations for enhancing instructional design, classroom interaction, and student engagement. The findings can be directly utilized in teacher education programs to strengthen methodological competencies and integrate historical pedagogical insights into contemporary practice. Additionally, the study provides guidance for policymakers in formulating curricula that harmonize traditional educational values with modern pedagogical requirements. Ultimately, it serves as a practical reference for optimizing the methodological, organizational, and strategic dimensions of the Azerbaijani education system. The study of the teaching heritage of Safarali bey Valibayov is of great practical importance not only for pedagogical history, but also for the modern education system. His principles of teaching and upbringing - respect for the personality of

students, protection of national and spiritual values, increasing interest in secular sciences and encouraging women to get an education - are still relevant today. In this regard, the results obtained can be applied in teacher training programs, professional development of pedagogical personnel, especially in improving the quality of teaching in rural and regional schools. It is also possible that the use of Valibayov's pedagogical heritage can make a real practical contribution to the development of modern textbooks and methodological aids, the improvement of the national education strategy and the strengthening of patriotic education in students.

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