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# Bilingual Lexicography in the Republic of Tatarstan in 1990-2010

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## **Abstract**

This paper overviews the contemporary development of bilingual Tatar lexicography which started with the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Republic of Tatarstan in 1992 and its future prospects. The Law on Languages in 1992 proclaimed the Tatar language to be the second state language in the Republic of Tatarstan along with the Russian to safeguard and promote the language of Tatars. The renaissance of national awareness resulted in numerous lexicographic works. At first, Tatar-Russian terminological dictionaries were compiled, covering the spheres of oil refinery and management; later appeared the dictionaries for learners, including primary school pictorial dictionaries and collegiate dictionaries; finally, full academic dictionaries in respect to the Tatar language were created. The obvious progress has been made in compiling entries that meet the requirements of theoretical paradigms and practical applicability and present the proper information on the level of morphology, phonetics, semantics and stylistics. The steps to be taken are to include the example sentences from corpora for providing information about syntagmatic relationships at the level of phrases and sentences; to produce online versions of dictionaries relevant to digital reality; to adjust academic dictionaries to the needs of Tatar-speaking individuals in mastering the English language.

**Keywords:** dictionary; Tatar; lexicography

## **1 History and Geopolitical Characteristics of the Republic of Tatarstan**

The Republic of Tatarstan, or Tatarstan has a total population of nearly 4 000 000 people. The biggest group are Tatars 53,2%, followed by Russians 39.7% and Chuvashes 3.1%. Tatarstan is situated in the centre of the Russian Federation. The Capital of the Republic of Tatarstan is Kazan, a UNESCO world heritage city, more than 1000 years old.

The Republic of Tatarstan is a model region of Russian Federation due to its economic stability: it is remarkable for powerful and diversified industry, high intellectual potential, famous universities and the Academy of Sciences and qualified human resources. Kazan holds the official status of the “third capital of Russia”. Due to its historic and political background and under the influence of globalization the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan turns into multilingual environment.

## **2 Development and Preservation of the Tatar Language**

According to the UNESCO Atlas of World’s languages in danger, four dialects of Tatar, namely Siberian Tatar, Alabugat Tatar, Baraba Tatar and Yurt Tatar, spoken on the territory of Russian Federation are either definitely endangered or severely endangered (2016). The Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Republic was made in 1990; the Law on the national and other languages of

Republic of Tatarstan was adopted in 1992. The article 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan states that Tatar is declared as the second state language, all official, financial and legal documentation of the Government of the Republic of Tatarstan is written in Russian, and the enacted laws are translated into Tatar (2016).

Ethnic minority languages are rarely used in everyday speech until they are promoted. The Tatar language nowadays is spoken more often in public transport, official institutions and streets in comparison to the Soviet times. Significant attempts were made to rehabilitate the Tatar language for Tatars through financial support of cultural and educational initiatives. A great number of books on local history, ethnography, and language were published during the last decade. There are 16 state and private Publishing houses in the Republic of Tatarstan. The renaissance of national identity is closely connected with language politics. The Law on Education, the Law on Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan proclaim the wide usage of the Tatar language in education and in the state institutions (2016). Tatars are no longer ashamed of being Tatars. Though, the absence of English-Tatar-English dictionaries and school textbooks of English with instructions in Tatar is an obstacle for the successful mastering of English by Tatar-speaking children and teenagers.

### **3 The Tatar-Russian Lexicography, 1990-2010**

The Tatar lexicography has a long history of fundamental studies and traditions. The first Tatar lexicographers were educated people of Enlightenment of the XIX century, that created descriptive dictionaries; such as I. Giganov, A. Troyanskiy, S. Kuklyashev, L. Budagov, K. Nasyry, S. Rakhmankulov, G. Validi, N. P. Ostroumov, G. Shihnabutdin, A. Voskresenskiy, etc. Traditions were fostered and reinforced in the XXth century by R. Gazizov, N. Isanbet, G. ishmuhametov, K. Khamzin, H. Mushtary, G. Sayfullin, G. S. Amirov, M. G. Muhhamadiev, M. I. Makhmutov, L. T. Makhmutova, F. A. Ganiev, Sh. N. Asylgaraev, A. A. Timerhanov, and many other authors of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries (Yusupova 2008: 38-40).

According to the official data, 340 books were published in Tatar in 1913. Nowadays about 200 fiction books are published per year. Since the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Republic in 1990, intense work was carried on Tatar language studies. The first steps in lexicography which were undertaken in 1990s resulted in developing Tatar terminology mainly in manufacturing sectors which are and always were the main achievements of the Republic of Tatarstan. The authors of the first dictionaries were not linguists, but specialists in technical fields. About seventy terminological Russian-Tatar dictionaries of the professional lexicon were published in more than 40 fields, such as agriculture, agroecology, art, biology, business, chemistry, civil acts registration, compounds, construction, culture, economics, elements of Tatar national costume, ethnoscience, forestry, geography, history, hygiene, jewellery, law, librarianship, mechanical engineering, medicine, music, natural environment, oil production, physics, proper names, psychology, social and political terms, veterinary medicine, and so on (Garifullin 2007; Shayhetdinova 2008; Gazizov, Fakhrutdinov 1996; Sayfullina, Khisameev 1999; Khakimova I. F. 2009; Garifullin 2011, etc), with the largest number of five dictionaries on medicine (Shamsutdinova 1995, 2004; Minnebayev 1994, 1998; Gimadeev 2003).

Linguists invested their efforts into dictionary making process, producing more professional dictionaries embracing general lexis of everyday speech. Two volume Russian-Tatar Dictionary was published during the last five years (Ganiyev 2001, 2009, 2014; Agishev 2001, 2002; Safiullina 1996, 1998, 2001).

Tatar linguists study both synchronic and diachronic aspects of the language (Nurmukhametova, Zamaletdinov 2014), analyse translation issues from Tatar into Russian (Yusupova 2009), investigate various problems of bilingualism and multilingualism (Yusupova 2008, 2014; Kharisov, Kharisova 2014), etc. The corpus of the Tatar language “Tugan Tel” is also developed (Suleymanov, Nevzorova, 2013). Practical results of Tatar-Russian bilingual lexicography can serve as a basis for the future development of English-Tatar dictionaries and become the basis for Russian-Tatar-English multilingual environment.

#### 4 The English-Tatar Lexicography, 1990-2010

The practical necessity of English-Tatar dictionaries is rather a controversial issue, as many Tatars speak Russian and study at Russian schools. The most complicated challenge is to confront the contradicting ideology, and to answer the question: “Why do you need it? Tatars have to learn Russian first, and then use the English textbooks in Russian”.

Still there are some rural settlements in the Republic of Tatarstan where the population speaks only Tatar, schooling is provided in Tatar and people cannot speak Russian. These people, the young generation in particular should not be deprived of the opportunity of learning English as a foreign language. Intense international contacts and globalization establish new criteria for the education of schoolchildren. Internetisation of the households of the rural areas is 68%. The availability of texts in English in the World Wide Web creates all the necessary conditions for the promotion of studying the English language. The instrument of direct translation from English into Tatar, the English-Tatar Dictionary for learners would be of practical help. Previously and nowadays, the English language is taught using Russian as an intermediary language.

Since 1985, with the beginning of the so-called Perestroika era, English has become popular as a foreign language option for schoolchildren and university students. Until the 1990s only three secondary schools specialized in teaching English, nowadays there are more than 15 of such schools in Kazan. Until the 1990s there was only one Faculty of Foreign languages in Kazan at Kazan Teachers’ Training Institute, nowadays five Departments are established in different Institutes and Universities. The history of English-Tatar lexicography started in the 1990s with the brief “Uchebnyi anglo-tatarsko-russkii slovar’ -minimum” by G. A. Arslanova and F. S. Safiullina. It consists of 3 500 headwords and was the largest English-Tatar-Russian dictionary by the end of the 1990s (Safiullina G.R. 2015). The pictorial Russian-Tatar-English Dictionary by A. Sh. Asadullin, F. A. Asadullin, comprising 1000 words and illustrations of 60 topics for the primary Tatar-language schools was published in 1998.

Three English-Tatar Dictionaries for learners were published in the first decade of the XXI century in Kazan: the *Tatarsko-russko-angliiskii slovar’* by Professor Gatiatullina Z. Z. (2001), the English-Tatar Dictionary compiled by S. G. Garifullin, consisting of 9000 words with the translation both in Cyrillic and Latin alphabets, serving as a the bridge, uniting the community of Tatars on the territory of the Russian Federation with the rest of the Tatar world, using the Latin alphabet (2007); and English-Tatar dictionary for learners of 45 000 translations (Safiullina 2014). These English-Tatar dictionaries are of practical value and can form the foundation of the future English-Tatar lexicographic studies.

The lexicographers working on creation of English-Tatar dictionaries face several types of problems. The microstructural questions are solved practically and the word entry consists of the lexeme, grammar characteristics, pronunciation, stylistic register, terminology register (if any), translations,

collocations and idioms, in accordance with the basis of practical lexicography described by A. P. Cowie (2012), S. I. Landau (2004), H. Bejoint (2010), B. T. S. Atkins, M. Rundell (2008) and many others. The macrostructural concept of English-Tatar dictionaries should be adjusted to the needs of learners, for instance, examples from corpora should be given within the scope of the headword. The main task for lexicographers working in the field of English-Tatar lexicography is to present the linguistic data of the Tatar language following the main principles of world-wide experience of lexicography.

## 5 Conclusion

Thus, contemporary Tatar lexicography reflects the process of rehabilitation of the Tatar language as a language of everyday use. The process of globalization served as an impetus to the English-Tatar lexicography. Linguists invest their knowledge in widening the fields and enriching the variety of the lexis registered in dictionaries. The further Tatar lexicographic theoretical studies and practical implementation of new technologies involves corpus examples, online versions of dictionaries. Full academic dictionaries are to embrace the major challenge of establishing the fundamental school of monolingual and bilingual lexicography of the Tatar language.

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