

## **Problems of Choosing the Main Language in a Bilingual Society of National Regions**

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### **Abstract**

The article deals with the problems of bilingual education in the Republic of Tatarstan and the peculiarities of bilingual students' linguistic consciousness. On the basis of socio-psycholinguistic experiments, surveys conducted over several years, conclusions were drawn about the language preferences of young students. The authors of the article analyze the causes of the imbalance of Tatar-Russian bilingualism in the Republic and suggest ways of promoting the Tatar language as a systemic approach that reflects the specificity of a multicultural mobile multilingual society. Systematic and consistent questioning of bilinguals and monolinguals allows saying that the linguistic consciousness of bilingualism in the Republic is determined by a complex of linguistic and extralinguistic factors. There are also several factors, which are undoubtedly influenced by factors of a personal nature. Thus, the basic constant and variable parameters of the personality (nationality, gender, education, specialty, family traditions, etc.) play a huge role in creating a general picture of linguistic consciousness, and, most importantly, form a behavior model of a bilingual, including speech and not only, in a multicultural society, which is today any state in the essence. Language education should meet the challenges of the time and prepare the younger generation for successful socialization and integration. The authors believe that the basis of bilingual education should be an ethno-oriented approach to teaching the language as a non-native (another native) one and the education of a bilingual person from childhood, at school and the development of this system for the university.

**Keywords:** *language as a native language, non-native language, regional languages, bilingual, main language, linguistic consciousness, interlingual cultural personality, new technologies, ethnocodes.*

### **Introduction**

In the context of globalization, which penetrates into the conceptual spheres of society, the issues of functional development of the state language of the Russian Federation and regional languages require harmonization with the historical linguistic phenomena, traditions, and modern political, socio-cultural and linguistic realities.

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The authors have repeatedly emphasized: An appeal to the pressing issues of application and functioning of a language in a particular discourse is due to the intensive development of contemporary linguistics. In this context, the specification and improvement of its fundamental theoretical concepts and models are quite natural (Alogali, 2018; Carothers, & Parfitt, 2017; Ozfidan & Burlbaw, 2016; Salimova et al., 2014).

It is spoken and written very much about the status of the Russian language in the modern world, about violations of norms of the Russian language. The well-known saying: "if you want to destroy a people – destroy its language" has a deep meaning, because a language is a means of expressing national thinking. Every word in the human brain raises the way. The language forms the carrier's outlook, mentality, national character, and ideology. The axiom: take care, protect the language means, take care of the people and the roots, is fair with respect to both the Russian language and other languages of the Russian Federation. In this article, the authors set a slightly different goal: to analyze the state of national languages in Russia by the example of one region, because the authors believe that the current situation of bilingualism in Tatarstan is characterized by a violation of the balance of social functions of contacting languages with a legally equal status; the gradual limitation of the use of the Tatar language in Tatarstan contributed to a decrease in the volume of its function as a means of communication, which led to a decrease in the number of native speakers. Many residents of the Republic think that it is enough to have only Tatar-Russian bilingualism. Almost all Tatars speak Russian; if communicating problems do not arise, why then, the conclusion is drawn, the Russians have to learn the Tatar language. The level of proficiency in the Tatar language in the vast majority of Russians, despite 10-11 years of language training in schools (and since kindergarten) is extremely low. If the Tatars themselves often do not know their native language, why Russians should learn the Tatar language – it is the opinion of the majority of the Russian population of the Republic.

Recent years have shown that the number of children studying in the Tatar language is decreasing. No matter how much the education system of the Republic works in terms of implementing the law on languages, today it is almost impossible to talk about real bilingualism. In the authors' view, there are a number of reasons, significant and important in this respect. It should be noted that not "famous Russian laziness" (it is said that Russians do not want to learn the Tatar language, as written by "brave" Tatar newspapers in the 1990s), and not "the gap in the chain of generations speaking the Tatar language", and not "the amplified hand of Moscow authorities", etc. (all these

quotes are from various national and regional newspapers) occupy the leading position among such reasons.

The main reason, in the authors' opinion, was the introduction of the Unified State Examinations for school graduates in Russia. It met interests both of true Russian national schools in Russia, despite the fact that the introduction of the exam has led to a decline of children's interest in the Russian language and literature, and of national schools, for which the Russian language is nonnative. Thus, the introduction of the unified state exam in Russian exclusively for all regions and republics of Russia, with undoubted positive trends and factors in education, played a negative role in terms of the real full-fledged functioning of languages.

Bilingualism in Tatarstan can with some justification be attributed to the phenomena at the federal level, and it is observed in all spheres of life: education, health, transport, economic, trade, media, etc. The main burden is on the shoulders of the representatives of the system of science and education (kindergartens, schools, universities, and research institutes). Most names of firms, companies, shops, goods, services, legal documents, signs, etc. are brought to the consumer in two languages at the same time. At the same time, it should be recognized that the requirement set out in the law on the use of both state languages in equal volumes in a variety of areas of communication (Gampe et al., 2019), primarily in the system of public administration, in the design of external and internal visual symbols, etc., is often performed only formally.

The second reason, or rather, a problem associated with the absence of the actual functioning of bilingualism in the Republic of Tatarstan, lies in the fact that the conditions for the realization of the need for the knowledge of the Tatar language have not still been created; it is very rarely used in public spheres of life. It is stated that the reasons for this are lack of a theoretical base and the fact that the methodical level of equipment does not fully meet the modern innovative environment, but the authors suppose that it is the desire to "switch". The Republic has created an excellent base – methodical, technical, and instrumental – for those who want to learn the Tatar language. These are republican programs, seminars, international conferences on bi- and multilingualism, dissertations on the Tatar language, pedagogics and psychology, TV programs for children, for adults, for example, translation; at Kazan Federal University, there is an online program "Ана теле". There are different educational and cultural-entertainment program-competitions "Татарча сөйләшәбез", "Тукай атналыгы", "Татар моны", "Татар егете", "Нечкәбил" and so on.

Huge money from the republican budget and funds of sponsors are spent for all this. Of course, these events help to maintain interest in learning the Tatar language. For example, the authors know a Russian girl Nastya from the Czech Republic who studies the Tatar language via the Internet, in order to participate in the competition "Себер чибәре"; a Tatar girl, whose family has never spoken in Tatar, stubbornly began to study the Tatar language. An interactive online tutorial on the Tatar language "Татар төле Онлайн" was formed; video lessons of the Tatar language were created (IIT, 2019). However, it is impossible not to recognize the fact that all this gives extremely unproductive results: the main obstacle to the implementation of the law on languages of the peoples of the Republic of Tatarstan is the lack of high motivation in language learning. Lack of motivation for a long time could be "interrupted" by the appearance of a natural desire to learn the Tatar language: "because it is interesting, useful, through the language I know the people better", "I need it myself".

However, the federal state has recognized the fact of equal learning of the Tatar language on an equal basis with Russian inappropriate in schools of the Republic and has taken a number of strict measures, which primarily affected the reduction in the number of teachers of the Tatar language in the Republic of Tatarstan.

## **Methods**

### *Participants*

The authors have chosen the starting points for the creation of this material and the technologies, which are based on: the practice-oriented analysis of tools and technologies available today for use with bi- and polylingual audience; conclusion: the materials are not preventive and comprehensive diagnostic in nature; do not implement an individual approach considering specific ontogeny and particular ethnic-cultural combination; competence analysis of the 21<sup>st</sup> century bi- and polylingual individuality, based on works by Maslow, Torrens, von Humboldt, etc. When working on the material, the authors used such methods and techniques of research as the analysis of scientific and bibliographic literature on the topic, observation, and classification.

In work, the authors used the methods and techniques of an interview, psycholinguistic polls, partially – sociological and statistical methods to look once again at the real problems of bilingualism in the Republic from the point of view of the language identity, language

consciousness of bilingual and monolingual persons. Such interviews and poll questioning were held by the authors within the last five years.

The authors were interested in the following questions:

1. What attitude to the Russian and Tatar languages is among the students who have chosen philology as the sphere of professional interests? (Among Tatars and non-Tatars). What language is the basic (first) for bilinguals of different categories? Is the main language always the native one? How do mono- and bilinguals estimate the language abilities?

The authors were guided by the known position of the psychologist J. Marcia that "if you want to learn something about the person, ask him. Perhaps, he will also tell something to you" (Marcia, 1987).

During a psycholinguistic experiment (however, this poll can also be called a technique of sociolinguistic research), in which more than two thousand people of the Republic of Tatarstan have taken part: 1000 carriers of each Russian and Tatar languages (students of the Yelabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University, seniors of the cities of Yelabuga and Naberezhnye Chelny have acted in 2014-2016 as respondents), the authors have received interesting results.

#### *Materials*

The following biographical questions were offered: 1. What is your nationality? Answers: a) Tatar; b) Russian; c) another. 2. What language do you consider for yourself as native? Answers: a) Tatar; b) Russian; c) another. 3. Do you consider that studying the second (Russian) state language is necessary for you? Answers: a) yes; b) no; c) I do not know. 4. Do you speak the second (Russian) state language of the Republic of Tatarstan and how do you estimate the level of proficiency? Answers: a) well; b) satisfactory; c) unsatisfactory. 5. What is the reason for the poor command of the second (Russian) language? Answers: a) I learned the language badly at school; b) poor language abilities; c) I do not consider it necessary to know this language. 6. Will you continue studying this language after the termination of school/higher education? Answers: a) yes; b) no; c) I do not know. 7. Do you have a feeling of irritation/protest when you are taught the second (Tatar/Russian) language? Answers: a) yes; b) no; c) I did not think. 8. Can you tell that the native language for you is the basic (first) one? Answers: a) yes; b) no; c) I do not know. 9. What language is the first (main) one for you? Answers: a) Tatar; b) Russian; c) another. 10. Do you find possible true bilingualism in the Republic of Tatarstan in the future? Answers: a) yes; b) no; c) I do not know.

One cannot but rejoice the position of students in relation to the "great and mighty" language: of all Tatar students and schoolchildren, 94% believe that the knowledge of the Russian language is necessary and that they know the state language of Russia well, and only 6 percent of the respondents (Tatars) estimate their knowledge of the Russian language as unsatisfactory. Out of 100 percent of Russian respondents, initiatives towards the Tatar language are very modest: only 43 percent believe that the Tatar language needs to be studied. An even smaller percentage (8 percent) thinks that they have a good command of the Tatar language. The reason for such a low level of Tatar language proficiency is (on a descending line): lack of the need for knowledge of the language in life, the complexity of the subject, the low level of teaching the Tatar language, lack of time, etc. Among these non-optimistic moments, there is also an optimistic one – lack of a sense of protest in the participants in the study of the Tatar language and their awareness of the need for Tatar as the state language of the Republic. 70% among the surveyed Russian respondents and only 40 – among the Tatars consider true bilingualism possible in the future. At the same time, the fact that 100% of Russian students recognize their native language as the first, the main language requires a special study; among the Tatars, it is only 63 percent.

Two more questions were added to this list of questions for the survey of 100 high school students in Naberezhnye Chelny: Do you know a foreign language and how do you assess the level of proficiency? Answers: Yes (language: \_\_\_\_\_; satisfactory, good, excellent). No. Do you consider studying a foreign language important? Why? Answers: Yes: a) without a foreign language, it is difficult to achieve success in a career; b) I plan to go abroad; c) now English is required everywhere. No: a) I will not learn English well anyway; b) I do not intend to leave the country anywhere; c) I have a bad memory for words.

Against the backdrop of an ambiguous attitude to their native and/or second state language, 100% respondents, regardless of the nationality, consider it extremely important to know a foreign language, primarily for their professional activities in the future. In the status of a foreign language, they see primarily English (only 11 indicated German). Only 12% of respondents who study a foreign language at school and additionally with a tutor indicate a good level of command of the language; the remaining 88% at the time of the survey assessed their knowledge as "satisfactory". Summing up in brief, it can be emphasized: absolutely all respondents understand that they need to learn a foreign language, but they have very little knowledge of it. The same picture is with the Tatar language for Tatars and non-Tatars: recognizing and understanding the necessity and fairness

of the introduction of bilingualism in the Republic, young respondents cannot boast knowledge of the language.

A completely different picture emerges on the base of the survey of students from the Russian- and Tatar-English Departments of Yelabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University (2014-2015 academic years, 50 people, 2015-2016 – 20 people). Of the entire body of respondents (60% Russians, 35% Tatars, 5% Bashkirs and Chuvashes), one hundred percent consider it important to study both the state languages and the English language. To the question: "Do you feel irritation/protest when you are taught the second (Tatar/Russian) language?", absolutely all respondents answered in the negative. At the same time, they assess the second (non-native) language as an average language, recognizing that if desired, one can reach the level of proficiency in all three languages. The Russian-English Department accepts students who already have good knowledge of at least two languages (Russian, English), while some of the students have the Tatar language as their mother tongue. So, bi-and trilingual students study in the group, realizing the need for knowledge and skills in other languages (Kourtis-Kazoullis et al., 2018; Lee, 2018).

The conclusion is that if at schools of the Republic there were true trilinguals (at least bilinguals) working as teachers of Tatar or Russian, or English/German, the productivity of their work would be much higher. For the pupil, whether he/she studies Tatar as a native or non-native language (for example, Russian nationality), hearing the impeccable Russian speech of a specialist in the Tatar language will undoubtedly be respected both for the teacher and for the subject, realizing that the command of several languages is quite realistic. However primitive and common it is, these thoughts are not trivial, but the truth is one: love, respect, and interest in the language largely depend on those who teach this language and what example he/she personally gives.

As is known, a language is not only a set of elements but also an effective mechanism for generating speech. Any conceptual system reflected in the mind of the individual in the form of a linguistic picture of the world depends on the collective and individual cultural experience and is directly related to it. To try to penetrate "behind the language" of young people, in the course of further experiments, the authors decided to go further, deepen and complicate both the questions themselves and the analysis of the results obtained.

#### *Procedure*

In the authors' last experiments (2015 academic year), only two faculties took part: Tatar and Comparative Philology, Russian Philology and Journalism at Yelabuga Institute of Kazan

Federal University. Of the two hundred students who took part in completing the questionnaires, the authors identified four types of groups:

1. According to the nationality of the respondents, three groups were distinguished from the point of view of this criterion: Russians (68), Tatars (126), and other nationalities (6, Udmurts, Mari, Bashkirs).

2. Two groups were distinguished according to the specifics of the training profile: students of 1) the Department of Russian Philology (80), 2) Tatar-English Department (52), 3) Russian-English Department (68).

3. According to the national specifics of families, that is, the students' parents: 1) students born in the so-called mono-national families: 122 families (87 – purely Tatar, 35 – purely Russian families); 2) children of mixed marriages, that is, one of the parents is Russian, the other is an ethnic Tatar (72); 3) families of a different nationality (6).

4. According to the place of residence, respondents were divided into 2 types: urban (134) and rural (66). The term "urban" is adopted conditionally; here, it refers to residents of district urban settlements.

5. By gender: out of 200 participants, there are 176 girls and 24 guys, which is understandable by the profile, the humanitarian orientation of future specialists.

In the experiments aimed at identifying the specifics of linguistic consciousness of mono- and bilinguals, the authors offered respondents questions of a deeply personal nature, that is, the goal was to find out: 1. What are the prospects for harmonious relations between young people of different nationalities in terms of their language? 2. How do the features of marriages (mono-national/multinational) affect the language preferences of mono- and bilingual parents of students?

In the questionnaires offered to students, other than the above, there were also questions: 1. Do you consider yourselves bilingual? 2. A representative of what nationality would you marry (or have already married)? Answers: a) my nationality; b) I do not care, if only there is love; c) other. 3. Imagine that you are 5 years old, what word will be the first to come to your mind? Answers: a) I do not remember; b) this word is ... 4. What language do you speak in a dream? Answers: a) in native Tatar; b) in native Russian; c) in non-native Russian; d) I do not see dreams; e) I do not remember; f) I speak both in Tatar and in Russian. 5. What word do you pronounce when you see your loved one?

#### *Data analysis*

The answers to the first question were distributed as follows: out of 200 respondents, 148 considered themselves bilinguals, while there is an absolutely natural picture: out of Russian students, only 26 people (all of them from the Russian-English Department) and all 132 non-Russian students consider themselves bilingual. Of the two hundred people interviewed, 112 people (80 Tatars and 32 Russians) answered the second question that they want to marry or have already married a representative of their nationality; 88 chose the second option, and no one chose the answer – another. At first glance, a paradoxical result can be noted: more bilinguals than Russian monolinguals want to bind their lives with a representative of their nationality. The prevalent opinion in the press that Tatars in the mass perceive interethnic marriages much more painfully than the Russians do was partially confirmed. This is substantiated by the fact that students who are children from mixed marriages want to connect life specifically with a representative of one nationality (basically – the father). The authors did not find any serious differences in the answers to these questions between urban and rural residents, perhaps, besides the fact that among villagers the desire to connect life with a representative of one's (Tatar) nationality is much stronger.

The answers to the third question were interesting: about 30% of the respondents at 5 years old would say "mom", 42 – "Eni", 20% "I want to walk!". There were some unexpected (written by future philologists!) and witty but useless for the current studies answers like "I bring to your attention", "I loved you, love still, perhaps ... ", etc.

The answers to the fourth question, about dreams, were as follows: a) in native Tatar – 65 percent of respondents (mostly rural residents); b) in native Russian – 96%, these are the answers of Russian respondents, including those who consider themselves bilingual; c) in non-native Russian – 25%, these are the answers of non-Russian bilinguals (urban residents); d) I do not see dreams – 8%; e) I do not remember – only 2%. The fact that the Tatars dream in Tatar, even those Tatars who consider their first (main) language to be Russian, is very noteworthy.

The answers to the fifth question (let us remind that the respondents are philology students) were the most versatile. The answers along the descending line: dear, dear (ah), altynym, maturam, hello, my sun, not Hallar? etc. At the same time, the authors did not find any serious regularity in the distribution of favorite designations among bilinguals and people who speak only one language. A Tatar student, bilingual, easily wrote the favorite word for "cat"; a Russian student and a Tatar student who did not speak her native language chose the word "maturam", apparently,

factors that were primarily deeply personal. It is noteworthy that Tatars have never been named as a favorite by the word "cat" among rural residents.

So, summing up the data of the respondents' poll to the so-called "common denominator", one can state the following: 1. A significant majority of philology students (most of them are ethnic Tatars) class themselves as bilinguals. 2. The number of bilinguals is relatively small among Russian students. 3. A small percentage of Russian students who consider themselves bilinguals are students who study a foreign language as a specialty. 4. The number of urban and rural residents among the respondents affects the main results only in terms of choosing the first (main) language. For natives of the village, the native language (mainly Tatar) remains the first (main) language in 90 percent of cases. 5. There are more bilingual future philologists among girls than among boys (by almost three times). 6. The absolute majority of philology students recognize that both state languages – Tatar and Russian – should function in the Republic, and they do not feel a protest when they are taught the second language.

The main task of mastering a second language (Russian for Tatars) is to learn how to speak (or write) the way a native speaker does, or to strive for this high level of mastery of the language. Today, young people are beginning to understand that mastering two or three languages is practically a real condition for future specialists. The specificity of the language personality of a new type is a skillful combination of different-structure languages. For example, the world languages (Russian, Chinese, English, Arabic) and the languages of the neighbors of the peoples of Russia (Tatar, Mordovian, Chuvash, Mari and other languages of Russia) or other post-Soviet states (for example, Ukrainian, Kazakh, Lithuanian, Tajik). In this same combination, the language of the confession is integrated (Arabic as the language of Islam). The current situation with the flow of specialists from different countries to Russia and the Republic of Tatarstan testifies to the fact that it is quite real to be bi- and multilingual in different societies (Rosselli et al., 2019). "In any case, we can confidently assert that in the bilingual and multilingual community of the twenty-first century, and specifically in connection with the intensifying momentum of the discovery of borders and mobilization of culture and ethnicity, it is possible for an advanced student to achieve fluent bilingualism, even with domination of the native language (in English) in a relatively short time: 100-120 hours of one-on-one lessons built on a complex methodology enriched with modern elements" (Salimova & Johnson, 2014).

## **Results**

"A man of the beginning of the third millennium can survive and save the world around him only if he understands and hears those who surround him. And the ability to listen and hear must be learned, first of all, through our languages.

It is time to rethink the problem of bilingualism in a new way, to deduce it from an exclusively "methodical orbit" (in this respect, basic research is conducted), to expand the range of issues, to direct a bunch of interests into a new vector combining the traditional understanding of the specifics of linguistic systems and new scientific knowledge about language/languages as a cultural code of nations" (Salimova & Timerkhanov, 2012).

Nevertheless, one has to admit that regressive phenomena in the language are more dynamic than the progressive ones, and the stock of positive inertia of the development of national languages in Russia is running low, regional languages and republics are at risk of losing their accumulated potential.

The notorious "human factor" (everything depends on the personality of the teacher, the personality of the trainee) here, quite rightly, becomes the main factor.

The authors' long experience of teaching Russian in Russian and national audiences, conducting the course "Theory and Practice of Translation" (the authors confirmed the thesis that the human brain automatically searches for the equivalent words in the second language in their native language and unknowingly translates these words into the native language) in different groups, and most importantly – a systematic and consistent questioning of bilinguals and monolinguals – all this allows saying that the linguistic consciousness of bilingualism in the Republic is determined by a complex of linguistic and extralinguistic factors. There are also several factors, which are undoubtedly influenced by factors of a personal nature. Thus, the basic constant and variable parameters of the personality (nationality, gender, education, specialty, family traditions, etc.) play a huge role in creating a general picture of linguistic consciousness, and most importantly, form a behavior model of a bilingual – speech and not only – in a multicultural society, which is today any state in the essence. Developing the thought, let us add: "The future, the 21st century is the age of polyglots".

The importance and practical novelty of the materials are in the fact that they can be used not only in the immediate practice of teachers-methodologists but also in research activities, training the teachers of the Russian and Tatar languages in the Republic of Tatarstan (the RT).

The authors would like to hope that true bilingualism in Tatarstan is quite possible and real, and the population of Tatarstan, as people of the 21st century, will really have a command at least three languages. State structures, executive power, scientific and educational institutions, and, most importantly, the population itself, will make one more attempt to ensure the actual functioning of both state languages. "Bulat Okudzhava said in one of his poems "To understand each other is a sacred science", and today, this approach to communication becomes a vital necessity in everyday life, in the sphere of science and education, in real space as well as in the virtual one" (Koudrjavtseva et al., 2015).

According to W. von Humboldt, "languages and distinctions between them have to be considered in such a way as a force penetrating all history of mankind; if to leave them without attention or to distinguish their influence not in a pure or limited look, then there is an incomplete understanding of how the mankind reaches mastering of that spiritual weight, if it is possible to be expressed so, which it took out from a thought kingdom in the clear and certain area. In this case, there will be no major as the language enters the action in the most direct way in that point where the generation of objective thought and eminence of subjective force come from each other at a mutual increase" (Humboldt, 1964).

The basis should be the focus of generations on history and modernity (present and future) and their perception as a measure of actions and perception of the world (Kudryavtseva & Zhizhko, 2011; Salimova & Timerkhanov, 2012). By means of training, these personalities (Tatar-Russian, Russian-Tatar), which absorbed different ethnocultural codes, are superimposed on each other (natural bilingual with two native languages), forming the so-called international zone of the individual, which is the basis for the perception of a bilingual not as a representative of two separate cultures, but as a "man of the world", ready to accept and understand other ethnocultural layers. "Ethnocultural identity is also important for intercultural communication space. It is on the basis of ethnocultural and linguistic identification that each person acquires the skills of communication with other cultures, recognizes "features" and mechanisms for the formation of ethnic attitudes of other peoples" (Sabitova, 2017).

## **Discussion**

The Republic of Tatarstan has not created mechanisms to overcome the situation, including legislative ones, and has left specialists teaching the Tatar language in limbo. The Tatar and Russian languages have the same status, but in practice, there is a real prevalence of Russian

as a language of interethnic communication over Tatar. One can imagine the situation: at the meetings of the State Council, the Supreme Court, various conferences, and official meetings, most people speak in Russian, someone speaks Tatar and requires an answer to the question in Russian. Legally, this person is right, but it is contrary to moral and ethical standards. Not all participants speak the Tatar language and there is no need to put them in an awkward position (it is known that any speaker and any person in the Republic knows the Russian language, and it means that this position is either a political gesture or a kind of protest). The only thing that can be recommended as the main way to preserve the Tatar language is to work in the family, at educational institutions. Creating a special system of stimulating the knowledge of the Tatar language for all professionals (as is customary in a number of states) in the form of an additional allowance to the salary is not a very useful way, because in this case the best Russian-speaking specialists (Russians, and Tatars) can feel infringed on their rights.

At the same time, let us present another situation: a Tatar grandmother who had worked throughout her life as a milkmaid at a collective farm (it is a real true-life story of the authors' acquaintance about which the authors have already written in a republican newspaper) got sick and went to the city to see a doctor. The Russian therapist who saw her could not understand the patient because she spoke Russian badly and could not explain the problems. Her first phrase was "I have come to you, sonny, from the village, forty kilometers" (in Tatar, the verbs "come" and "arrive" do not differ). The Russian therapist began with the words: "How can you, a grandmother at such an age, walk such a long distance? You should take care of yourself", which absolutely confused the grandmother. Having come back to the village, the grandmother (әби) told everything: "I won't go anywhere more, I won't be dishonored, I will die directly here, rather than run to "Russian" doctors". It is a pity for the grandmother, it is a pity for the system, and it is a pity for not absolutely real bilingualism! However, there is also another truth: it is necessary to look at the problem also through the eyes of the Russian expert. Healthcare professionals should not be accused, too, as it is a hard time now: the staff is reduced, one person works for two and does a threefold amount of paperwork and reporting. Under these conditions, it is impossible to force Russian doctors (competent professionals) to study a non-native language.

Interest in the second language in the regions of Tatarstan can be attracted only by beliefs, a personal example, through the heart (though it sounds a bit pathetic) of the pupil. The center of all has to be the impact on the student through ethnolinguocultural codes, Tatar symbols, speaking

in a different way. The teacher-methodologist has to seek to attract interest and love for the Tatar language, using the images of Söyembikä (Сөембикә), Sabantuy (Сабантуй), Şüräle (Шүрәле), the symbols of the Tatar table chak-chak (чәкчәк), belish (бәлеш), echpochmak (өчпочмак), fine Tatar folk music in ethnic villages, etc., through all that is pleasant to everyone and unites the people. The way to students' hearts should be laid through the surnames of Tatar actors, athletes, scientists (G. Tuqay, M. Cälib, F. Yarullin, S. Saydashev), popular and famous in the world; the surnames of famous Tatar scientists which are well-known in the world, such as R. Sagdeev; the artists popular around the world R. Nureyev, S. Gubaidulina, etc., who can promote the assimilation of Tatar. The student joins, falls in love with the Tatar world, spiritual and ethnic culture; therefore, the lessons of Tatar become not a burden at all. The so-called "ethnocultural codes" have to become available for not native speakers. If one has become interested in something, has fallen in love, of course, he/she will be interested and study it! Here is a simple truth! The most powerful requirement is the teacher's perfect command of Tatar and Russian speech, an example of a teacher for imitation by pupils.

In today's conditions, it is very easy to develop a second language, even in the absence of an opportunity to communicate with carriers: radio, television, audio and video lessons, the Internet, electronic dictionaries, online publications, etc., all this makes it possible to consider studying any of the known languages quite real. Kazan Federal University has taken a new initiative in training in Tatar: the already mentioned online program, Tatar courses for elderly citizens, regular telecasts where training is carried out in the Tatar and English languages at the same time. The teachers also work with foreign student in classes in Russian; various methods of training are combined: role-playing games, work in couples (sometimes, pupils become teachers and explain plain material, which they have acquired), short presentations and mini-reports of pupils, a variety of gaming techniques ("Understand me"), use of the latest technologies of training, a program with computer applications, experimental training platforms, online training and full immersion in new language elements, evening house lessons. Along with classroom training, communication in Contact.ru, SMS, Skype communication and other methods are applied. To make such lessons even more effective, conversations can be accompanied by Russian/Tatar music.

In the world, when studying the second and third language, the highly effective tandem system is actively used: this is real-time, most often – online (via Skype) communication of two

people, carriers of two different languages, each of whom is interested in the improvement of the interlocutor's language. Presently, in a compressed and dynamic time, when each hour has to be spent purposefully for the achievement of a result, undoubtedly, such type of work is the most successful. It should be noted that the technologies of teaching Russian as a foreign language (RFL), as well as European innovative tools, can help to develop the most various and interesting program techniques for training in Tatar already at preschool age. It is necessary to investigate not only the features of thinking and reaction of bilingual children but also the level of balance of two languages in their consciousness and the impact of this factor on the specifics of attitude, the self-presentation, and self-identification of bilinguals and also their integration potential in the global and mobile polycultural community.

Forcing Russian children to write Tatar dictations, to perform various types of grammatical analysis, to inflect nouns for case and so on – all this gives a protest in the soul of a Russian-speaking school student. Perhaps, training has to be limited to programs similar to teaching Russian as a foreign language: it is necessary to train Tatar children only for oral communication and elementary communication situations. In the authors' opinion, one of the reasons for the lack of real interest in the second language (the first language in the Republic, as it should be undoubtedly recognized, is Russian) is, apart from the above-mentioned reasons, the lack of complex linguistic, sociological, psychological, and ethnopolitical studies of native speakers in the Republic; there is not enough direct work with mono- and bilinguals as a subject of deep scientific research. It is known that today, studies making it possible to synthesize the results from different scientific directions (in this case – linguistics, ethnology, psychology, sociology, and history) correspond to the current trends in science, according to which the so-called "boundary" scientific researchers are capable to offer the most reliable scientific results.

### **Conclusion**

The most reliable and tolerant way in the movement towards true bilingualism is to conduct a purposeful and consistent work, to carry out a system of activities aimed at provoking interest in the Tatar language, fostering love and respect for it, in short, to ensure that a person consciously and independently (without coercion) comes to the conviction that knowing both languages in the Republic of Tatarstan is not only interesting and useful but also necessary.

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