

Peculiarities of Formation and Functioning of the Bilingual Mobile Communication Discourse in the Republic of Tatarstan

I.Zh. Edikhanov

Kazan (Privolzhsky) Federal University, Kremel'skaya St. 18, Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan

Abstract: The study outlines the linguistic situation established in the Republic of Tatarstan, the results of the author's cooperation with a cellular company providing services to its subscribers in the Tatar and Russian languages are discussed, the peculiarities of formation and functioning of the Tatar mobile communication discourse are specified. It is emphasized that formation of this discourse proceeds directly under the influence of the Russian language, since the main method is translation of the correspondent texts into the Tatar language. The Tatar terminological units of the mobile communication have not been the subject of research yet this is why the comprehensive view of the terminology of this sub-language taking into account the diversity of this phenomenon is still being established. Some terms of the sub-language being investigated do not feature the established Tatar equivalents and further on may be specified according to standardization of terminology. The discourse being formed promotes to enhancement of the sphere of functioning of the Tatar language. The following attributes of the mobile communication discourse have been specified: dynamism and procedurality, communicativeness, personified nature, contextuality, connotative nature, social and culturological markedness.

Key words: Terminology, discourse, mobile communication, translation, the Tatar, the Russian language, language policy

INTRODUCTION

One of the most topical issues of the language policy in Tatarstan is the necessity to take into account the linguistic interests of different ethnic communities where each language features peculiar problem areas and requires different support measures (Gilazetdinova *et al.*, 2014). According to the last Russian census in 2002 the ethnic composition of population of the Republic of Tatarstan changed significantly as compared to the last Soviet census in 1989 according to which the Tatars made 48.5% of the population and the Russians 43.3%. The ethnic share of the Tatars in the republic increased significantly up to 52.9% and the share of the Russian population slightly decreased to 39.5%. Therefore, the difference between the share of the Tatar and Russian population in the republic increased from 5% up to almost 13%; for the first time since 1920's the Tatars represent the absolute majority of the republic population. The third largest ethnic group in the republic are the Chuvashes amounting to 3.4% of population, they are followed by Udmurts, Ukrainians and Mordovians.

The complex ethnic composition of the republic population preconditions the complex linguistic situation and makes the language policy issue especially acute (Garipova *et al.*, 1998). At the same time, the obligation of pursuing it is undertaken by the state as the guarantor of

execution and protection of the linguistic rights of the population. The state approves basic principles of policy in terms of languages circulating on its territory and implements, it in the form of the language planning (Vakhtin and Volovko, 2004).

The position of the Tatar and Russian languages as the languages of the most numerous ethnic groups in the Republic determine the language situation in Tatarstan. At the same time, the priorities of the language policy are different for the Tatar and Russian languages (Minnullin and Sharifullina, 1999).

Despite the fact that the Tatar is the language of the ethnic majority in Tatarstan, it substantially falls short of its functionality, areas of application, social status and other aspects as compared to the Russian language. The linguistic researchers describe this language situation with the term 'linguistic asymmetry' (Bayramova, 2001). Such state of matters is also preconditioned by such an obvious factor that the Russian language is the official one on the territory of the entire state; Russia whereas the Tatar is the regional language, i.e., it features the status of the national one only within the boundaries of a single entity though being widespread in a few ones: the Tatar is spoken in many regions of Russia besides Tatarstan. These are the adjoining Udmurtia, Bashkiria, Chuvashia, the Samara, Ulyanovsk, Orenburg Region and the more remote regions for example, Siberia as well as abroad

Finland, Poland, Turkey, Lithuania. Therefore, the language policy of Tatarstan is aimed at intervening into the language sphere for the purpose of equalization of status of the two state languages. This preconditions closer attention to the Tartar language since, firstly, there are more problem areas here and secondly in contrast to the Russian language the problems of the Tartar one are not solved at the federal level. In this regard, the multi-nationality and the necessity of maintaining balance of ethnic interest are the principal factors influencing the language policy in Tatarstan (Suleymanova, 2015).

Another important factor that is essential in terms of the language situation in Tatarstan is the globalization, processes. In the era of globalization, the world becomes increasingly interconnected and interdependent. Due to the mass communications internet technologies, enhanced mobility of people and the capital flow the boundaries (political, ideological, administrative) in the globalizing world decline in their importance resulting in more intense contacts and interaction between countries, cultures and languages. On the one hand, globalization results in dissemination of the mass culture and leveling of the ethnic differences in different areas. On the other hand, another process takes place that is called in the literature 'glocalization' when globalization processes causes synthesis of the local and global elements, the hybridization thereof. This in its turn gives rise to revival of the local (regional, ethnic) identities and cultures in the new forms (Cvetkovich and Kellner, 1997). Thus for the local cultures globalization becomes the chance for survival and further development.

SOCIO-LINGUISTIC SITUATION IN THE MODERN TATARSTAN

The polling of the urban citizens of Tatarstan conducted in 2005 by the Center for Study of Inter-ethnic relations (Moscow) provides a certain view of the linguistic identification and competence of the Tatarstan population within the established language situation. Thus, 84.6% of the urban Tatars surveyed take the Tartar language for the native one whereas 8.2% take the Russian language for the native one. The trend of differences in the linguistic identification between the urban and countryside persists. In rural localities according to the previous surveys (2001), 96.4% of the Tatars named the Tartar language as the native one (Musina, 2002). According to statistical data (refer to Table 1), the number of urban residents speaking the Tartar in the cities of the Republic amounts to 65% at the average (Kandilov *et al.*, 2006).

Table 1: Number of urban residents speaking the Tartar in the cities of the Tatarstan Republic

Locality	Share of the population speaking the Tartar (%)
Agryz	25.0
Aznakayevo	over 50.0
Aktarysh	over 90.0
Altorneyevsk	over 50.0
Bavly	63.0
Bugulma	about 45.0
Zainsk	48.7
Leninogorsk	over 50.0
Mamadysh	59.0
Mendelejevsk	58.0
Menzelinsk	62.0
Muslyumovo	90.0
N. Chelny	52.0
Nizhnekamsk	46.5
Sarmanovo	78.0
Urussu	71.0

Thus, it is the urban area where the significant change in identifying with the language in Tatars is observed. It is interesting that 5.3% of the urban Tatars surveyed in 2005 remained undecided as to the question about the native language which shows that a certain part of the Tatar population has not decided yet which language shall be taken for the native one. The nature and frequency of the language use often provide a more objective view of the linguistic competence than the data reported. Thus, according to the same survey in 2005 (at that it shall be taken into account that 60.4% of the urban Tatars declared the fluency in the Tatar language), 47.5% speak the Tatar and Russian languages at home, 40.5% the Tatar only and 10.7% of the urban Tatar respondents speak only Russian at home. Besides to the urban Tatars even those who moved from the village recently such a phenomenon as mixing of languages is peculiar by which the lexis from the Tatar and Russian languages is mixed not within one conversation only but within a single sentence as well. As far back as in 1900 Baudouin de Courtenay wrote: 'Within the boundaries of Russia interaction of the Slavic language component with different 'foreign', non-Slavic ones: Lithuanian, Lettish, Estonian, Tatar, Chuvash, etc. takes place'. The idea by Baudouin de Courtenay from the article 'Concerning the hybrid nature of all languages' is also remarkable: 'The effect of mixing of languages is observed in two areas: on the one hand, it introduces to the specific language the elements of the foreign language that are peculiar to it (vocabulary, syntactic phrases, forms, pronunciation); on the other hand, it is blamed for reducing the distinctions peculiar to particular parts of the specific language. The simplification and mixing of forms proceeds much faster under the influence there of. All of these phenomena, in particular, penetration of the Russian language into the family sphere that is traditionally considered to be conservative in terms of exposure to external influence (Musina, 2002) are indicative of the trends of progressive language assimilation in the urban Tatar community.'

According to the Article 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan 'the state languages in the Republic of Tatarstan are the equal Tatar and Russian languages. In the government authorities, local self-governing authorities, public institutions of the Republic of Tatarstan the state languages of the Republic of Tatarstan are used on equal terms'. In the modern linguistic conditions of the Republic of Tatarstan when declaration of the two state languages raised the question of reduction of the terminological deficiency in the Tatar language the process of translating into the Tatar of the names of streets, institutions, etc. started and here the borrowings of both the words themselves and syntactic phrases Baudouin de Courtenay referred to could not have been avoided.

Thus for over 15 years passed after adoption of the law concerning languages the language situation in Tatarstan distinguished through enhancement of the social functions and public use of the Tatar language. The most significant promotion of the Tatar language was observed in the sphere of school education, in the public sphere (bilingual labels, advertisements, announcements, speeches of the public officials and politicians, etc.), partially in the mass media (TV, radio, printed press). To a lesser extent the changes affected the sphere of the government control, service industry, business entities and some other areas where the Tatar language is used rarely. Different categories of population adapt to changes in the language situation in a different manner. It may be assumed that the young generation adapts to the language situation most easily the pupils studying the Tatar at school and easily adapting to its presence in the public sphere. The older generation grown at the Soviet times that almost does not know the Tatar language is less successful in adaptation (it is referred not only to the Russians but to the Tatars who have small knowledge of the Tatar as well) and the attitude of which is still determined by the negative stereotypes of the Soviet times. Generally, the Russians take the enhancement of the public presence of the Tatar language positively unless it affects them in particular. More challenging are the aspects directly affecting their interests: for example, teaching the Tartar language at school. On the contrary, the overwhelming majority of the Tartars in the republic take changes in the language situation and enhancement of the public functioning of the Tartar language positively. Even those of them who are not competent in the Tartar language as they take it as a cultural-identification value. Certain part of the Tartars, however, remains unsatisfied with the fact that the progress in this area is not significant and the Tartar language has not become equal to the Russian one. This dissatisfaction comes from Tartar-speaking part of the population that is mostly affected by insufficient functioning of the Tartar language in the public sphere.

Although, the language policy of Tatarstan has not nearly reached its goal the equal functioning of both languages in the republic, it shall be recognized that it bore some fruits: it managed to decelerate the reduction of the sphere of the Tartar language functioning in conditions of the society transformation preconditioned by development of the market relations. At the same time, within the republic there is the common consensus of opinion on the necessity of the language regulation on the part of the state and in particular the support of the Tartar language as the one that requires support (Sharypova, 2004).

THE TATAR LANGUAGE IN INFORMATION-COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

The last decades were characterized by the rapid development of means and methods of information communication. Today no one is surprised by the possibility to get the necessary information from internet by downloading it to a cell phone or a pocket computer to send an email or just chat while being at any point of the cellular network operation. The cell and satellite communication, satellite TV, information systems and computers this is the main, however not the comprehensive list of technologies ensuring access to information at any point of the world. In this regard, globalization may give a chance to local languages: the modern communication technologies allow using the language on the Internet and thereby enhancing, its potential audience, creating the commonly available digital resources in this language including those promoting studying thereof for example, Internet-dictionaries, grammar aids, etc.

A lot of measures necessary for governmentalization of the Tartar language have been implemented in Tatarstan. There were issued the terminological dictionaries for officers of different state institutions, the acts of the federal legislation were translated (for example, the Land and Civil Codes of the Russian Federation). There were taken the steps on integration of the Tartar language in the computer and Internet technologies, in particular, Windows was translated into the Tartar, the social networks that are popular among teenagers such as Vkontakte.ru also have the Tartar interface. The presence of the Tartar language in the mass media increased significantly. There is a TV channel that contains 50% of the Tartar-language programs, a few radio stations broadcasting in the Tartar language only. The range of newspapers and journals was expanded as well.

MOBILE COMMUNICATION DISCOURSE

It is notable that the support of the state languages in the Republic of Tatarstan is provided not only by

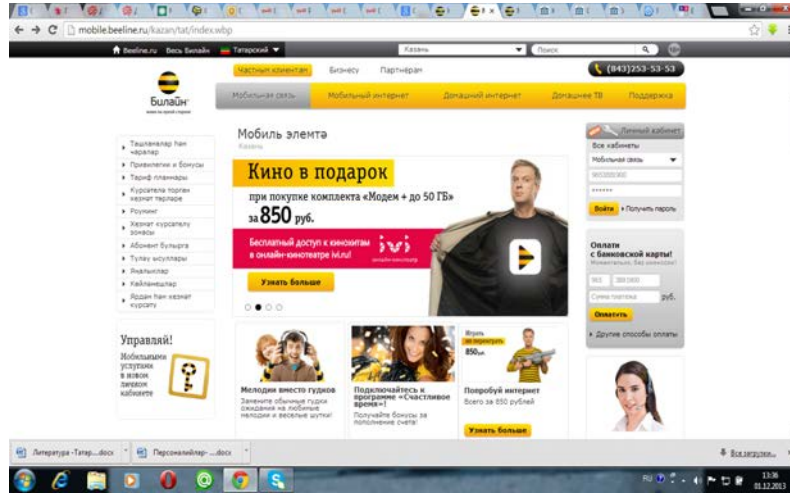


Fig. 1: Page of the regional web-site of the company

government authorities but by different private companies, corporations as well. The OJSC ‘VimpelCom’ in 2010 launched a unique project ‘All-inclusive servicing of Beeline subscribers in the Tartar language’. It shall be mentioned that Beeline previously provided services to its subscribers in their native languages (Georgian, Chinese, languages of the CIS-states). Prior to launching this project at the sales offices and branded outlets on the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan Beeline held a poll among the subscribers and visitors. To the question ‘Would you like to get services in the Tartar language?’ almost half of respondents in the branded chain confirmed their wish to get services in the Tartar language which is consistent with the ethnic structure (52% of the Tatarstan population are the Tartars). At the same time, the following fact shall be taken into account: the offices are contacted by those who are used to speaking Russian. The subscribers that feel easier to speak the Tartar previously were deprived of the opportunity to talk to operator in their native language. Besides, the urbanization process that was decelerated by the crisis of the 1990’s has not been completed yet as well as growth of cities are continued to be fed by migrations from the countryside and this means that more and more people arrive at cities that are speakers of the Tartar language.

Prior to launching of the project 16 employees of the call center completed special training of servicing the subscribers in the Tartar language (Yedikhanov, 2014). 587000 symbols were translated in the Tartar language: pages of the (Fig. 1), promotional materials (Fig. 2), texts of answering machines for autonomous service management. The implementation of the project started on August 30, 2010.



Fig. 2: Leaflet in the Tartar language

- Starting from this date a subscriber can
- Get advice of a specialist of the Customer support center in the Tartar language. For this purpose the specialized call center was created in Kazan
- To listen to the answers back of the call center 0611 in the Tartar language to independently manage the Beeline services
- To download the Tartar content from the site

The Tartar terminological units of the mobile communication have not been the subject of research yet this is why the comprehensive view of the terminology of this sub-language taking into account the diversity of this phenomenon is still being established. Some terms of the sub-language being investigated do not feature the established Tatar equivalents and further on may be specified according to standardization of terminology. Absence of the comprehensive description of the main linguistic issues of the mobile communication terminology significantly complicates the theoretical activities on systematization, unification and standardization of these terminological units and the practical activities including translation (Superanskaya *et al.*, 2009).

The description of methods of the term formation in the mobile communications by comparison with the other related underinvestigated term systems of the computer telecommunications and data protection as well as with the other ones already subjected to the comprehensive study may serve to creation of the comparative typology of the term formation of different sub-languages of science and technology for the purpose of identification of common regularities and distinctions (Leychik, 2009). The specified regularities in formation and functioning of the mobile communications with regard to development of this branch of science and technology will allow solving the issue of interaction of the linguistic and extralinguistic factors (Tikhonova, 2003).

SUMMARY

The discourse being formed promotes to enhancement of the sphere of functioning of the Tartar language. The following attributes of the mobile communication discourse have been specified: dynamism and procedurality, communicativeness, personified nature, contextuality, connotative nature, social and culturological markedness. Further on it is necessary to:

- Specify the structural and semantic peculiarities of these terminological units and their extralinguistic dependence
- Specify the regularities of the methods of formation of the mobile communication terminology as well as possibilities of forecasting further development thereof
- Specify the topic groups of the cellular communication terms which will allow showing the systemic character of this terminology in terms of content
- To make the Russian-Tartar dictionary of the mobile communication terms

CONCLUSION

Therefore, further on it is necessary to investigate the linguistic peculiarities of the Tartar terms of mobile communication, specify the peculiarities of formation, development and the modern state of terminological units of this sub-language, their extralinguistic dependence to examine the records of the call center operators with the subscribers, to understand in which way the population uses in its speech some or other words referring to the mobile discourse. It is of no doubts that the mobile discourse being formed promotes to enhancement of the sphere of functioning of the Tartar language.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

REFERENCES

- Bayramova, L.K., 2001. Tatarstan: linguistic symmetry and asymmetry. Kazan: Publishing House of the Kazan University, pp: 267.
- Cvetkovich, A. and D. Kellner, 1997. Introduction: Thinking Global and Local. In: *Articulating the Global and the Local: Globalization and Cultural Studies*, Boulder, Co: Westview Press.
- Gilazetdinova, G.Kh., I.Zh. Edikhanov, A.A. Aminova 2014. Problems of ethnocultural identity and cross-language communication. *J. Lang. Lit.*, 5 (3): 39-42.
- Garipova, Z.G. *et al.*, 1998. Language policy in the Republic of Tatarstan: documents and materials. F.M. Sultanov (Eds.), Kazan: Magarif, 207: 20-30.
- Kandilov, V.P. *et al.*, 2006. The Republic of Tatarstan, 2005: Federal State Statistics Service, Local Agency of the Republic of Tatarstan. Kazan: Publishing Center of Tatarstan, pp: 420.
- Leychik, V.M., 2009. Terminology studies: subject, methods, structure. M.: Librocom, pp: 256.
- Minnullin, K.M. and L.G. Sharifullina, 1999. Language policy in the Republic of Tatarstan: documents and materials. Kazan: Magarif, 80-90, pp: 342.
- Musina, R.N., 2002. Language and ethnos at the turn of the century: ethnic-sociologic essays of the language situation in the Republic of Tatarstan. Editorial board: Kazan: Magarif, pp: 206.
- Sharypova, N.H., 2004. Bilingualism in Tatarstan. Kazan: Publishing House of the Kazan University, pp: 251.
- Suleymanova, D., 2015. Language situation in Tatarstan. http://www.info-islam.ru/publ/statji/jazykovaja_situacija_v_respublike_tatarstan/5-1-0-11281.

- Superanskaya A.V., N.V. Podolskaya and N.V. Vasilyeva, 2009. General terminology: theoretical issues. Editor-in-chief T.L. Kandelaki: 5th Issue. M: Librocom, pp: 6.
- Tikhonova, E.V., 2003. Formation of the English terminology of the mobile communications and linguistic peculiarities thereof: Thesis of the Doctor of Phi. Sci., Omsk, pp: 140.
- Vakhtin, N.B. and E.V. Volovko, 2004. Sociolinguistics and sociology of the language. SPb.: Publishing center Humanitarian Academy, Publishing House of the European University in SPb., pp: 336.
- Yedikhanov, I.Zh., 2014. Language of the service industry by the example of operation of the Tartar-language of the Hall-center of a cellular company. Phi. Cult., 4 (38): 87-92.