

Problems and Perspectives of Bilingual Education in Republic of Tatarstan

Elmira Rashitovna Ibragimova and Rashida Khafizovna Tirigulova

Kazan Federal University,
Kazanskaya Street, 89, 423600, Elabuga, Russia

Abstract: The article deals with the problems of language policy and bilingual education in such polyethnic region as Tatarstan. Language policy is aimed on supporting of equal state of Russian and Tatar languages in communication and development of bilingual person. Tatar and Russian languages are studied at school in equal volumes. But Tatar-Russian bilingualism is fully functional while Russian-Tatar bilingualism is almost absent. It is caused by social factors and scientific and pedagogical aspects of bilingual education in republic. Modernization of textbooks, language studying methods, using information and communication technologies may be perspective directions of studying languages.

Key words: Bilingualism • Polylingualism • Language Personality • Communication • Bilingual Education
• Textbook • Multimedia Education

INTRODUCTION

All today problems of mutual understanding between peoples, interaction and mutual enrichment of languages and cultures are pressing topics [1, 2]. Bilingual (polylingual) education presumes functional study of one or more additional languages and development of skills of communication behavior [3]. Research of bilingualism and bilingual education in Tatarstan is timely measure because bilingualism is characteristic for language situation in different countries [4, 5] and Russia and is the requirement for graduating schools and universities.

The aim of research is language policy of Tatar Republic; research subject is bilingual education.

The authors give characteristic of language policy of Republic of Tatarstan, development of bilingualism and define the model of bilingual education.

Descriptive comparative method has been used for research.

At the beginning of 1990s legislative base for equal functioning of Tatar and Russian languages as state languages and for development of all languages was passed in polyethnic Tatarstan [6].

All the citizens are obliged to speak Russian and Tatar and use them in different areas of life. In the regions of compact settlement of Chuvash, Mari and other ethnoses it is necessary to speak the language of

respective ethnos. Speaking foreign languages as the instrument of professional communication is also required. Cultural specifics of Tatarstan is related to functional polylingualism [7].

The system of education of Tatarstan has changed significantly in 20 years. Now it is possible to choose the language of education. Two Tatar grammar schools, Tatar groups in kindergartens, classes with teaching in Tatar in Russian schools were opened on the city of Elabuga with population of 70 thousand people. Ethnic cultural schools were opened in remote villages with dominating Mari and Udmurt people. Pupils in these schools study native Mari and Udmurt languages and Russian and Tatar.

Tatar language was included in school educational programs. Tatar and Russian languages are being studied in schools (both by Russian-speaking and Tatar children) equally. They are also studied in universities by students of different nationalities.

Compulsory bilingual education in the republic should have led to real bilingualism of the citizens. But in practice only one type of bilingualism is spread-Tatar-Russian bilingualism. It is typical for the part of population with Tatar native language that speaks Russian. It is not always ideal bilingualism because specifics of native tongue are reflected in speech mistakes. Mixture of features of both languages results from the fact that these languages relate to different verbal families (Indo-European and Turkic) and structural

types (flexional and agglutinative) that makes it difficult to study languages for school-children: Tatar have difficulties in studying Russian and vice versa.

There were always complaints to textbooks of Russian for Tatar, their authors were accused in needless theoretical materials, etc.

In last years scientific and methodological level of teaching Russian as foreign language has increased due to modern textbooks and guideline complexes, written by E.A. Bystrova, L.Z. Shakirova, L.G. Sayakhova. Also approved is the principle of accounting for specifics of native language to correct and overcome interference on Russian speech. In textbooks written by L.Z. Shakirova, N.N. Fattakhova and others of Russian speech development for different grades of Tatar school that have been issued since 2007 teaching is based on texts full of grammar materials reflecting cultural values of Russian people.

Teachers in Elabuga are required to provide successful passing of the Unified State examination in Russian by their students that presume knowledge of the theory of Russian language. So they are forced to use textbook written by N.G. Gol'tsova, I.V. Shamshina for 10-11 grades of Russian schools in Tatar classes. Material in the textbook is organized into blocks and its structure is aimed on introducing Russian language as a system. In fact teaching Tatar pupils to speak Russian gets lower priority while preference is given to preparing to successful passing examination.

Absence of real bilingualism may be explained also by reduction of a number of active native Tatar speakers. In communication between Tatars-children and young people-in cities Russian language is dominating. High level of lingual tolerance in Tatarstan is proved by the results of sociological and linguistic surveys. 88% of Tatar consider it necessary to learn Russian and only 65% of Russian consider it necessary to learn Tatar [8]. For Tatar tolerance leads to speaking Russian as the main mean of communication that is functioning in social life. Internet plays significant role because for using it one should know Russian and English language.

Lowering of interest to learning and studying Tatar language by Tatar have been caused by reformation of the rules of university admission in 2009 that presume accounting for results of the Unified State examination in different subjects that is passed only in Russian.

Despite including Tatar language lessons in schools the number of people in the republic speaking Tatar is low. School leavers can only partially understand what is spoken in Tatar. Tatar language teaching programs for a

long time were oriented mainly of studying grammar with small attention to development of speech skills.

“System of studying second (non native) language mere as a discipline existing in Tatarstan now does not lead to development of bilingual person, so it became necessary to develop new educational policy regarding languages”, said the teacher R.Z. Khaydarova in 2006 [9].

It became necessary to prepare teaching guideline complexes of Tatar language as foreign, to change orientation of the work of methodologists and teachers on communicational technology of studying Russian language.

Positive trends in writing textbooks and development of programs and in changing of methods of teaching Tatar formed in last years.

New teaching guideline complex called “Kunelle Tatar tele” (nice means in Tatar language) was introduced in 2013 in Kazan. It was designed for Russian-speaking first grade schoolchildren and includes textbook, guidelines for teachers, the system of exercises in auditing, control and measurement instruments, manual for parents and CD. This CD was created together with the team from animation studio “Tatarmultfilm” and has integrated multimedia complex. Now is tested in the school of Kazan. Pupils like communicational form of work organized according to the principle “study while playing”. “Unique approach to educational process organization accounts for interests and needs of school-children in low grades. Learning process becomes not only interesting and exciting but effective. It is oriented on new educational standards”, said R.Z. Khaydarova, the author of the textbook [10].

Electronic textbook “Tatar language (for Russian-speaking students)” written by I.L. Litvinov, E.R. Sadykova, L.I. Garipova was issued in October 2012. Grammar principle is dominating in it and later transforming into thematic principle that is not typical for previous textbooks. Material is provided “in an order of learning of grammar structures that are being studied by school-children one by one. Sounds, letters, vocabulary, texts, etc. are linked with these grammar structures” [11].

Interactive multimedia library “BALA” (bala means baby in Tatar) may help studying language by children's own. It is designed for studying Tatar language. In contains Tatar fairy tales, other works and animation films in Russian and English translations.

There are other resources that promote learning Tatar language by Russian-speaking children and adults suzlek.ru (Tatar-Russian online dictionary), kitap.net.ru (electronic library), etc.

Textbook “Tatar language for beginners. Intensive course” written by L.Kh.Shayakhmetova may be pointed out as textbook of the new era. It is manual for students issued in Kazan in 2013. Each lesson in it includes exercises and games aimed on speech development, texts for reading and discussion. AudioCD for development of orthoepy is attached to it.

“Practical Tatar language: guidelines for learning Tatar language” written by R.F. Fattakhova is textbook for students issued in 2012. Target principle of this textbook is learning speech norms of Tatar language, it is structured by themes and functional of material.

“Tatarchasalashik=Davaite govorit po tatarski =Let’s speak tatar” is trilingual manual written by K.S. Fatkhullova, E.Sh. Yusupova, E.N. Dinmukhammetova. It was issued in 2012 and oriented on university students. It supports 100 hours and designed for studying Tatar as the mean of inter-cultural communication and development of polylingual person.

In all modern manuals studying Tatar and Russian languages is considered as creative process that helps development of speech skills and culturological knowledge.

In October 2013 Internet project “Ana tele” (the means “native language” in Tatar) was launched in the republic. It is on-line school that may be accessed any time from any place in the world.

There are nine language levels in “Ana tele” that allows getting upper-basic level of language. Each level has tasks in 4 types of competency: listening, speaking, reading, writing. Innovative feature of the project is speaking classes with Tatar language teaches. It helps learning Tatar language as communication mean.

Development of online-school is going on with account of interests of Tatar and other people speaking Tatar language the second in occurrence language in Russian Federation (more than M5 people). It may help Tatar who are losing the skills of native tongue as a result of increase of the role of Russian language in social life, Tatar living outside the republic and its' Russian-speaking population.

To from bilingual and polylingual person educational institutions should actively apply information technologies, develop programs of synchronous learning of two (or three) languages. In schools and universities it is necessary to create the ground for provisioning informational and computer (control and learning, multimedia, interactive) support of development of Tatar-Russian and Russian-Tatar bilingualism. Many schools and universities of Elabuga for example need modern computer equipment.

Each region has specifics that influence the strategy of bilingual (and polylingual) education and respective modes are unique. Model that is being developed in Tatarstan that presume equal use of Russian, Tatar and foreign languages as learning, communicating and professional training means.

The policy oriented on development of bilingual person is being carried out in the republic. Russian and Tatar languages are obligatory in schools but only Tatar-Russian bilingualism is really functional. It is caused by growing role of Russian language in social life and the lack of communicational orientation in teaching languages. Information and communicating technologies are introduced in educational process. Development of new programs and provisioning of schools with modern computer equipment is important task.

REFERENCES

1. Kibbee, D.A., 2004. Language policy and linguistic theory. Languages in a Globalising World. Cambridge, pp: 47-56.
2. Gunaratne, S., 2003. Proto-Indo-European expansion, Rise of English and the international language order: a humanocentric analysis. International Journal of the Sociology of Language. 164: 1-32.
3. Baker, C., 2006. Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, pp: 492.
4. TEL2L. Bilingual education in France. World Links. Date Views 20.08.2013 www.unavarra.es/tel2l/eng/france.htm.
5. Hollunder, A., 2013. In Germany, the future is bilingual. Date Views 18.08.2013 www.dw.de/in-germany-the-future-is-bilingual/a-15401189-1.
6. State program of Tatarstan republic on preserving, learning and development of state languages of the Pеспублиc Tatarstan and other languages in Republic Tatarstan on 2004-2013. Date Views 6. 16.08. 2013 prav.tatarstan.ru/rus/complan.htm/.
7. Ibragimova, E.R. and R.Kh. Tirigulova. Polilingual situation in Republic of Tatarstan. Date Views 12.09.2013 sworld.com.ua/index.php/ru/philosop.
8. Mukhametshina, R.F., 2007. Modern social and cultural situation in Republic of Tatarstan: languages in the context of national education. Modern lingual processes in Republic of Tatarstan and Russian Federation: legislation on languages in action. Kazan: Tatarskoye Knizhnoye Isdatelstvo, pp: 106.

9. Khaidarova, R.Z., 2006. Scientific and pedagogical aspects of bilingual education in Republic of Tatarstan. Naberezhniye Chelny: Magarif, pp: 11.
10. New textbook of Tatar language for Russian-speaking 1st grade school-children of "Kunelle Tatar tele" was presented in Kazan. Date Views 10. 12 10.2013 mon.tatarstan.ru/rus/index.htm/news/13781.
11. Guidelines on using textbooks of Tatar language and literature. "Tatar language (for Russian-speaking students)". Date Views 8.10.2013 mon.tatarstan.ru/rus/metodic.recommend_book.htm.