



Ethnopolitical, Socio-Demographic, and Linguistic Landscape of Indigenous Peoples in The Tyumen Region of the Russian Federation: A Case Study of the Siberian Tatars

Rishat Saurbayev^a, Aitmukhamet Trushev^b, E.Yu.Pogozheva^c,
Fatima Yerekhanova^{d*}, Assel Bakhralinova^e, Raushan Karimova^f,
Nurlan Omarov^g

^a Department of Foreign Philology, Toraighyrov University, Pavlodar, 140000, Kazakhstan.
Email: rishat_1062@mail.ru

^b Department of Philology and Journalism, Toraighyrov University, Pavlodar, 140000,
Kazakhstan. Email: trushev56@mail.ru

^c Department of Foreign Philology, Toraighyrov University, Pavlodar, 140000, Kazakhstan.
Email: pogosheva@mail.ru

^d Department of Languages and Literature, Central Asian Innovation University, 160021,
Shymkent, Kazakhstan.
Email: siliconoasis702@gmail.com

^e Margulan Pedagogical University, Pavlodar, 140000, Kazakhstan. Email: 87013271319@mail.ru

^f Margulan Pedagogical University, Pavlodar, 140000, Kazakhstan.
Email: rausankarimova8@gmail.com

^g Higher School of Humanities, Margulan Pedagogical University, Pavlodar, 140000, Kazakhstan.
Email: omardos@mail.ru

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Abstract

Sociolinguistic research has addressed issues related to bilingual and multilingual education in the post-Soviet period of the Russian Federation, particularly the issue of preserving the Siberian Tatar language. The study aimed to examine the stance of the Russian government on the indigenous peoples of Siberia, including the Siberian Turkic peoples from the Tyumen region. The underlying question was whether these people should be considered a distinct ethnic group and recognize the existence of a distinct Siberian Tatar language, or the language of the Siberian Tatars should be recognized only as a dialect of the Tatar language, despite differences. Adopting a mixed method research approach to analyze the ethnopolitical, socio-demographic, and linguistic situation of the Tyumen Region, this study used a historical and case based explorative research technique. The sample comprised the Tatar population, mainly schoolchildren, parents, teachers, leaders of educational institutions, and employees of district and city public education departments. The study found out that the Siberian Tatar language was facing the risk of extinction and required taking collective action to preserve this language. It was also confronting substantial challenges stemming from urbanization, the predominance of the Russian language, and insufficient support. It is important to document the language and its dialects to keep it alive. Regional and federal authorities should initiate legislative frameworks to

*Corresponding Author

Email: siliconoasis702@gmail.com

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design policies to safeguard the Siberian Tatars as a unique Indigenous community, and to conserve the folklore, music, and rituals of Siberian Tatar cultural heritage.

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Keywords: Bilingualism, Cultural Identity, Russian Federation, Siberian Tatars, Tatar Language, Language Policy.

Introduction

In late 1980s and 1990s, sociolinguistic research decisively addressed issues related to bilingual and multilingual education in the post-Soviet period of the Russian Federation, sparking extensive and intense discussions that shaped these fields. Due to these discussions alone, the appeal to the problems of preserving the Siberian Tatar language, as well as its potential isolation as an independent one, was recognized (Baranova & Fedorova, 2020). Today it is included in the UNESCO list of languages that face the threat of extinction (Campbell & Belew, 2018). Older generations of the Siberian Tatar intelligentsia, who studied at the Tatar Pedagogical College and the Russian-Tatar department of the pedagogical institute in the 1950s and 1990s, assert that Tatar is the native language of all Tatars and should be used by the current day Siberian Tatars as well. To foster the vitality of the Siberian Tatar language, it is emphasized that all Tatars must be united. Linguistically, the Siberian Tatar language can be enriched by drawing upon the strengths of its various dialects, and potentially by creating a hybrid language incorporating elements from Kazan Tatar — the variant predominantly spoken by Siberian Tatars today.

In accordance with the historical and cultural plan concerning the Siberian Tatars ethnic group, much effort has been made to preserve and develop the language of the Siberian Tatars (Gabdrakhmanova, 2023). For instance, the Institute of Turkic Studies of the University of Hacettepe was established in May 2012, in the Turkish city of Ankara, jointly with the Institute of the Turkish Language. The 4th International Scientific Symposium of Turkic Studies "Endangered or Extinct Turkic languages and cultures," further highlighted the issue of Turkic languages and cultures like the Siberian Tatar language and the Siberian Tatar culture on the verge of extinction included (Ilyina, 2016, 2018). The deliberations of the symposium and various research studies concluded that there is also the danger of losing the cultural identity of the Siberian Tatar people and not only their language. Last, but not the least, the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences conducted a comprehensive research project on bilingualism (Isakova, 2018; Iskhakov, 2004).

This notion of cultural identity suggests that language development is also determined by socio-cultural, ethnopolitical and demographic factors, rather than by mere emotions or subjective desires of individuals. In today's changing circumstances, a thorough examination of bilingualism, therefore, becomes particularly significant from a linguistic, sociolinguistic, psychological, ethnographic, and pedagogical standpoint, irrespective of the types of languages involved or the number of native speakers in either individual or widespread bilingual settings. An analysis of these and other complex issues related to sociolinguistics and bilingualism indicates that, despite the active efforts to address the negative impact of Russian-dominant bilingualism, there has been a lack of discussion or initiatives on the study of bilingualism. When analyzing the ethno-political, socio-demographic, and linguistic situation in the Tyumen region, we can determine the dynamics of change in these areas and reveal the content of the important category of bilingualism within the native language. This will lay the scientific groundwork for studying the various forms and spheres in which the native language of Siberian Tatars exists. The ethno-political and socio-demographic situation in Tyumen is complex, as is its linguistic landscape.

Sociolinguistic research on bilingualism and multilingualism has traditionally focused on objective factors such as language diversity, national composition of populations, and settlement patterns of residents from various ethnic backgrounds (Baranova & Fedorova, 2020). The main issues with previous approaches were that they were based on assumptions about the equality and freedom of languages, the well-being of linguistic life in multicultural countries, and language policies that did not consider the level of national and linguistic awareness among people and different ethnic groups. Additionally, subjective factors such as national and ethnic identities, the role of languages in national identities, and other factors have not been adequately addressed. If these subjective factors were taken into account, it is possible that conclusions about language policy and planning would not conflict with official stereotypes. Thus, it is an important challenge for the Russian Federation and other CIS countries to develop language policies and programs that take into account both objective and subjective factors to promote the preservation of linguistic diversity and cultural heritage.

Several studies have discussed the issue of bilingualism and multilingualism including Landry & Bourhis (1997), Karkina, Nurgayanova, & Kaur (2020) Spolsky (2004), Marten, Van Mensel, & Gorter (2012), Zakharova et al. (2021), Zamyatin (2023), Gazzola et al. (2023), Gorter & Cenoz (2023). In addition to these studies, the *Magarif Journal* has published a large amount of material related to the Tatar language, their

history, culture, language, and social structure. The journal also promoted the bilingual education system among the Siberian Tatars. In spite of these literary and cultural efforts, the subjective aspects of Siberian Tatars language policy have remained neglected for several decades, a period which also ruined the national values and the linguistic needs of ethnic communities. Hence, there is a need to take into account, the objective factors of national and linguistic development, which could lead not only to resolve linguistic issues at national level but will also delve into its regional peculiarities and requirements to ensure the language's survival and advancement. Besides, a need is also felt to design an appropriate language policy to identify objective patterns of language development as well as the values and needs of individuals in their native tongue. This may vary depending on socioeconomic, political, cultural, and educational factors.

In this context, the current study was envisaged, to examine the situation of the smaller nations in Russia, including the Siberian Tatars and their language. The study aimed to examine the stance of the Russian government on the indigenous peoples of Siberia, including the Siberian Turkic peoples from the Tyumen region. The underlying question was whether these people should be considered a distinct ethnic group and recognize the existence of a distinct Siberian Tatar language or the language of the Siberian Tatars should be recognized only as a dialect of the Tatar language, despite differences. The current study highlights these critical issues and examines the educational objectives, goals, and research activities aimed at developing and promoting bilingualism in the Tyumen area.

Literature Review

Many researchers have studied the issues of bilingualism and multilingualism (Baranova & Fedorova, 2020; Betancourt & Ramos, 2024; Bialystok, 2024; Briceño et al., 2025; Filippi et al., 2025; Pagé & Noels, 2024). A holistic approach to language, identity, and education is vital for supporting the rich diversity in the Tyumen region where, as in other parts of Russia, favorable conditions are emerging for the development of bilingualism. The major cause of such growth of bilingualism is due to the democratization of society and the formation of federal rule of law, which has led to the emergence of national cultural and religious organizations. At the national level, one-third of Russia's population being bilingual, is able to preserve ethnic communities' cultural and linguistic heritage. Owing to socio-economic interaction with ethnic groups, Russia is able to consciously form and develop two-way Russian-national bilingualism. In addition, the Russian government has also introduced bilingual education to support ethnic minorities. This kind of orientation has led to the widespread use and spread of Russian as the language of everyday communication among different ethnic groups. This, in turn, facilitated the integration of these groups into Soviet society.

However, as time passed, the penetration of the native language prevented changes in language practices, though changes in linguistic and ethnic identities continued. A native language is a language that is historically associated with a particular ethnic group, irrespective of its size, which is fixed in the ethnic consciousness and is freely used by members of the group in various forms and areas to meet their ethnic needs. The functioning of the native language is crucial for the existence of an ethnic group. The native language provides full intra-national communication during social interactions and contributes to the development of ethnic processes. Therefore, a native language can be seen as a stable feature inherent in each ethnic group.

Although individuals from different ethnic backgrounds may share or differ in their physical characteristics, each ethnic group possesses its distinctive mother tongue. For instance, Russian, Belarusian, Kazakh, and the Siberian Tatar speakers who switched to Russian for everyday communication did not consider it their native language nor identify themselves as Russians. Each of these ethnic groups maintained their respective vernacular or native language, though none evolved into a literary form. As a result, none of these native languages were used in public education or culture. There was also no literature available in these languages. This precarious status leads to a stable Trilingualism which, in the given context, was characterized as the revival of the Siberian Tatar as well as the literary Tatar, coexisting with the Russian language. Historically and currently, Russian serves as the state language, while literary Tatar is the language used in education and culture. Consequently, the native language of the Siberian Tatars remained preserved primarily as a spoken language within households and the community. While the community activists were concerned about the increasing influence of the Russian language in all aspects of life, this trend was affecting indigenous groups such as the Siberian Tatars, who experienced the replacement of their native language with Russian.

It is important to note that the loss of language often leads to the loss of culture, leaving behind only "relics" of the past. For instance, when an ethnic group loses its language, it ceases to exist as a distinct entity. Similarly, the mother tongue loses its importance when there is no longer an ethnic identity. The disappearance of languages and cultures is a global problem of our time. The rapid death of languages is leading to the impoverishment of cultural diversity and the loss of historical and social knowledge. In the 20th century, "mass extinctions" were described as the "waves of life" (Garvey, 2024). According to Olko & Sallabank (2021), by the end of this century, half of all languages will have disappeared. Pessimistic predictions suggest that only a tenth of current languages will survive (Campbell & Belew, 2018). The revival

of the native language of the Siberian Tatars brought significant attention to the indigenous language as a foundation of national culture. It serves as a means of expressing and preserving ethnic identity, self-identification, and social development.

For preserving their ethnic identity, a few western researchers of language processes in the USSR analyzed the population census as an indicator of Russification. However, they noticed a discrepancy between the results of the census and the actual language practices. This discrepancy prompted them to rethink the concept of "native language" and its psychological and self-identification significance. As a result, therefore, the low percentage of non-Russian speakers who recognized Russian as their first language were not seen as evidence of a low level of assimilation, but as a reflection of a high level of self-identity. Likewise, the use of native languages was encouraged to provide their representation in local governance. It was assumed that by incorporating the history and culture of ethnic groups in the educational curricula, it is possible to promote understanding and appreciation among all citizens.

According to some sociologists, linguists, and historians who have studied the Soviet state's language policy, it was characterized by, on the one hand, stimulating the use of the Russian language as a means of social mobility and interethnic integration. On the other hand, it supported the languages of the titular nations of the union republics and autonomous regions. In all such scenarios, the Russian language is an integrating factor, and both the public and the state must pay close attention to provide material support for its development. Since language is also deemed essential for the linguistic unity of the multinational Russian Federation, it was necessary to build a scenario of bilateral National-Russian bilingualism. Such a scenario comprehensively improved the level of teaching of native and Russian languages. Consequently, it became necessary to introduce the most effective methods of bilingualism in the form of interconnected teaching and curricula. It was also important to make greater use of the native language as a language of instruction, especially in universities and at faculties of humanities, with training in additional specialties in Russian. The training of specialists for national schools should include teachers who are subject and bilingual, teachers who are linguistic personalities.

When conducting a linguistic, national, and educational policy in the region, it is important to consider that almost a third of the people do not have their national-state formations within the territory of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The main goal of national policy is to create a civil society that can harmoniously coordinate and ensure the realization of the interests of different people based on the priorities of national strategic interests. The most important element of this proposed system of measures is to create conditions and mechanisms to support the reproduction of the ethnic lives of people in all their diversity, preserving and developing their languages, cultures, and traditions. One of the essential mechanisms for the implementation of national policy is to have a scientific program-oriented approach, which will ensure the unification of the efforts of the authorities, and the National Assembly for the enrichment of national life. Programs should be nominal and targeted in nature and cannot be isolated, taking into account the budgetary possibilities of the region.

Based on the analysis of the dynamics of Tatar population growth, its gender and age composition, fertility and mortality rates, the formation of family and marital relationships, professional structure, the distribution by sectors of the economy, and levels of literacy, education, ethnic language, and other factors, socio-demographic issues among Tatars have been identified. In addition, studies have been conducted to show how to preserve and promote the languages of small ethnic groups in Europe, North America, Australia, and Oceania. Some of the most notable countries for studying language policy include the United States, Canada, Switzerland, France, Spain, and Belgium.

Curdt-Christiansen (2022), in his research, considered the role of English as a unifying language for the American people, overcoming linguistic conflicts based on linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and social differences. He also emphasized the importance of preserving the languages of minority groups. May (2013) believes that it is the duty of those creating a state to protect and promote minority languages, not only for democratic reasons. She argues that the fundamental cause of inter-ethnic tension is a lack of appreciation for linguistic and cultural diversity. According to Noam Chomsky, language is a matter of power, and addressing language issues is addressing power issues (Smitherman, 1983). O'Reilly (2003) agrees with this view, arguing that at the root of any inter-ethnic conflict is the unwillingness of the linguistic majority to address the status of the minority language. Researchers in language policy and language planning, (Gabbrakhmanova, 2023; Lenker, 2016), believe that linguistic diversity and support for minority languages are essential for societal development. However, studies (Tlepbergen, Akzhigitova, & Zabrodsckaja, 2023; Tollefson, 2006) take a different view, supporting the idea of a single national language as the means of maintaining a multi-ethnic state, as they argue that supporting minority languages only divides and fractures civil society and the state.

Several linguists and public figures in Tobolsk have been actively promoting the Siberian Tatar culture and language. For instance, Vajda (2009) has studied the dialects of Siberian Tatars and recorded memoirs of several expeditions in the form of monographs. Based on the historical and archival data, and citing linguistic features, the study identified three dialects within the Siberian Tatar language: Tobolo-Irtysh, Barabinsk, and Tomsk. This classification was confirmed by other researchers (Isakova, 2018; Iskhakov, 2004;

Strauss, 1993) and has remained largely unchanged since then. Such initiatives have largely contributed to preserve and promote the Siberian native language and culture. A few local poets and writers were inspired by these initiatives and published a few collections of poetry and prose in the Siberian Tatar language, including one folklore collection. Zakiev (2008), an academician from Kazan, admits that Siberian Tatars now "have come to terms with the idea that they are part of the Tatars of the Ural-Volga region," but also argues that the Siberian Tatar language is simply an eastern dialect of the Tatar literary language.

Siberian Tatar comprises three dialects: Tobolo-Irtysh, Barabinsky, and Tomsky (Vajda, 2009). These are dialects of a common Tatar language, suggesting we should refer to them as East Siberian dialects. They show similarities to southern dialects of other Turkic languages, such as Altai and Tuvan. If accepted as dialects of Tatar, they belong to the Volga-Kipchak subgroup of Turkic languages. However, they are phonologically and grammatically closer to the Kipchak-Nogai subgroup, notably to Nogai and Kazakh. Historical evidence suggests that Siberian Tatars may have been identified as Nugai in the past.

On the other side, however, a few Tyumen scholars completely changed their perspective on the independence of the Siberian Tatars and their language. Vajda (2009) and Isakova (2018), for example, called on the Siberian Tatars to reject the shameful name of Siberian. These studies argued that it was necessary to start teaching children their native language at the age of three and seek funds to ensure that all children's magazines are subscribed to in schools and kindergartens from Kazan (Kvashnin & Bakieva, 2021). All these are unfortunately the real state of affairs though without factual basis, but under the strong influence of 21st century Kazan scholars. The social aspect of this controversy is also important. The Siberian Tatars do not see their language as "prestigious". According to Kvashnin & Bakieva (2019), "the Tatar literary language is not popular among the majority of modern Siberian Tatars" This contributes to the language shift and transition to Russian.

However, it is understandable that Siberian Tatars may feel insignificant compared to Kazan Tatars. Seven per cent of children from Siberian Tatar families are "ashamed" of their language (Kvashnin & Bakieva, 2019). This indicates that the Siberian Tatar language is in a critical situation. This crisis is not just a quantitative change but also a qualitative shift in the system. This crisis clearly indicates that the Siberian Tatar language is approaching a moment when its upward trajectory will be replaced by a downward one: the dominance of assimilation over dis-assimilation will cease (Kvashnin & Bakieva, 2019). This crisis has affected all aspects of the culture, not just individual elements. It is a systemic crisis, which is characterized by the following features: a characteristic feature of crises is that it is futile to try and improve any one aspect of the system. Instead, a different approach is needed; crises are not just a violation of balance, but also a process of transition towards a new equilibrium. At a point of bifurcation, language can enter a qualitatively new state and regain stability (Kvashnin & Bakieva, 2021).

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a mixed method research design to rightly understand and analyze the ethnopolitical, socio-demographic, and linguistic situation of the Tyumen Region. The study adopted a historical and case based explorative approach to identify what challenges are being faced by the Siberian Tatars. This case study method rightly suited because of its evaluative approach (Yin, 1992) and the accessibility of this method to examine ethnical and socio-economic situations.

Instruments and Research Procedure

Data was collected through field research methods like surveys, interviews, and direct observation. Surveys were conducted using pre-designed questionnaires with a set number of questions determined by the research goals. The survey aimed to collect information about the participants and specific aspects of their linguistic patterns. During the interviews, significant attention was given to the preparation of an interview protocol and the development of interview techniques. To ensure reliable data on the impact of situational ethnopolitical, socio-demographic, and linguistic factors, the field study carefully controlled their linguistic environment to elicit naturally relaxed or intentionally directed narratives from participants. Observations were also structured to minimize the researcher's influence on their linguistic patterns.

Sampling and Data Collection

Data was collected through both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected from the sample comprising schoolchildren, their parents, teachers, leaders of educational institutions, and employees of district and city public education departments. The sample size was about 100 overall, who participated in surveys, discussions and conversations. The objective was to find out the significance of teaching the Tatar language in schools and colleges throughout the Tyumen region, and what challenges schools and universities face in teaching the Tatar language.

The secondary data was retrieved from sources like related works of local historians, ethnographers, linguists, and even classic Marxist-Leninist literature which encompassed the ethnogenesis, ethnic history, language development, and traditional and spiritual culture. Of the Siberian Tatars. Specifically, a bibliography published on Siberian Tatars in Tyumen proved a rich resource which comprised scientific papers and monographs, articles, dissertation abstracts, conference and symposia reports and proceedings.

Data analysis

Data collected through field observation was analyzed using various types of quantitative and content analysis techniques and thematic classifications of social variations. The correlation data was also analyzed based on stratification, contextual, and communicative factors.

Results and Discussion

The Tyumen Region's Linguistic and Ethno-Demographic Environment: Identity and Bilingualism Concerns

The ethnopolitical, socio-demographic, and linguistic situation of the Tyumen Region is very difficult: there are three federal subjects on the same territory, where representatives of 125 nationalities live, with a total population of 3.1 million people. Let us consider the ethnic landscape of the Khaty-Mansy Autonomous Okrug: the majority of ethnic groups whom we consider include Russians - 2.2 million, Ukrainians - about 260 thousand, and Tatars - 227.4 thousand. Among the largest diasporas of the region include Belarusians - 49 thousand, Bashkirs - 41 thousand, Chuvash - 31 thousand, Germans - 29 thousand, Azerbaijanis - 20 thousand, Moldovans - 18 thousand, and Kazakhs - 16 thousand. Here live 25 small-numbered indigenous peoples of the North, including 23 thousand. Based on interests, professions, the population can be divided into five groups: (1) Small northern peoples, also known as indigenous group, who link their future with traditional farming and the preservation of their habitat. This group also includes the Siberian Tatars; (2) Old-timers from other regions of Russia, who have linked their fate with that of the region, including old-timers of various ethnicities such as Russians and Tatars; (3) Government employees of the oil and gas industry; (4) aborigines who see their future in their historical homeland, namely Russia and other CIS countries; (5) Shift workers from Russia and neighboring countries who work in the region.

Despite the socio-demographic dissimilarities, all these groups have different attitudes towards the structure of their lives and social goals. They lived their own way of life and followed customs and complied with the state policy that ensured good relations, peace, and harmony. These groups ensured the priorities of national strategic interests and responded to the opportunities of bilingualism for social and professional communication, though unbalanced bilingualism still exists in some regions. Comprising these groups of people, currently, there are over 23 national and regional cultural associations and more than 200 religious' groups. These organizations promote the preservation and development of various cultures, including Russian, Tatar, Chuvash, German, Jewish, Nenets, Khanty, and Mansi. Newspapers, radio and television programs are published and broadcast in all these languages, helping to raise awareness of each culture and promote bilingualism or multilingualism. All these efforts contribute to the growth of civil harmony and understanding among different groups in the region.

Interpretation Change and Cultural Identity: The Tatar Community in Russia

It is necessary to develop principles of national consolidation of each nation based on a common cultural and historical past, native language, other national values and interests associated with the interests of other ethnic communities, it is unacceptable to oppose one nation to another, due to manifestations of national selfishness, dependency, budget formation and use on a national basis. The programs should be based on issues of formation of national identity, respect for original cultural values, the language of all peoples, and issues not only of national and regional but also of all-Russian patriotism. It is necessary to create all conditions for the equal participation of small peoples in the management of state and public affairs, the development of traditional sectors of their economy, spiritual revival, preservation and development of national cultures, education in their native language, taking into account the problems of the socio-demographic, linguistic situation of each people of an ethnic group.

A special role in the system of interethnic relations is occupied by the problems of the Russian people, who make up 72% of the population of the region, on whose social status the fate of ethnic minorities largely depends. Therefore, the needs and interests of the Russian people should be fully reflected in federal and regional programs and constantly taken into account in the political, economic, and cultural life of the republics and autonomous entities of the Russian Federation. The dynamics of the growth, distribution, and migration of the Tatar population in the region can be seen from population censuses. In 1920, there were more than 62,000 Tatars in the Tyumen province. By 1926, their number had grown to around 70,000, before the start of industrial development in the Northern areas of the Russian Federation. If referring to the census data there were 72,300 Tatar people, 102,800 in 1970, 136,700 in 1979, and 227,400 in 1989. This increase in the Tatar population can be attributed to oil workers, gas workers, and other migrants who arrived during this time.

Over the years, as the northern regions of the Russian Federation have developed, the Tatar population has grown significantly (by more than three times). The Russian census revealed that the number of Tatars in Russia rose from 1959 to 2010. In 1959, 90.1% of Tatars lived in the southern rural areas of the region. This index changed to 54.6% in 1989, and 124,100 people lived in the northern autonomous regions. The number of Tatar population in the Khanty-Mansiysk and Yamalo-Nenets autonomous okrugs increased 18-fold over the past 20 years, mainly due to working migration. The migration of Tatars accelerated urbanization as well. In 1959, the proportion of the Tatar urban population was only 21%. By 1995, it had grown to 75.3%. The difference in quantitative ratio between Tatars and Russians among townspeople has decreased significantly. In 1959, the index of the two ethnic groups differed by 13%. By 1995, however, this difference had reduced to 4.5% and their share in the overall population also declined from 1.4% to 0.7%. These findings, as seen from the population census, are consistent with the trends observed in other regions. For example, in the Tyumen Region, the Tatar population increased from 35,300 in 1926 to 39,400 in 2002, but over all their proportion decreased from 0.9% to 0.2%.

One of the major challenges is the functioning of secondary schools, cultural, educational, and medical institutions, as well as the training of relevant personnel. The shortage of national staff, particularly in rural areas, negatively affects the operation of educational, cultural, and healthcare facilities. There is also a lack of teachers with higher qualifications in Tatar schools who can teach in the native language, and there are very few individuals in cultural institutions who are knowledgeable about Tatar poetry, music, and literature. Additionally, there are few lawyers and doctors among Tatars, particularly for children. Hence, significant regional disparities exist, particularly in the Khanty-Mansiysk (0.7% enrollment) and Yamalo-Nenets (11.2%) districts, highlighting inadequate access to native language education in these northern areas. These trends prove that relying on the Tatar language as the sole medium of communication is not a viable solution for preserving cultural identity. Rather, efforts should be directed toward promoting bilingual education and supporting the continued use of Tatar as the native language among younger generations.

A major role was played by the increase in the number of Tatar schools in the Russian Federation, from 117 to 126, reflecting a commitment to educational opportunities for the Tatar community, with 8,552 students enrolled in native language education, representing 21% of Tatar children. The opening of national schools by the Department of Education was planned from 1994 to 2005: in 1994, there were 117 planned schools, then 119 in 1994-95, 121 in 1995-96, 123 in 1996-97, 125 in 1997-98, 127 in 1999-2000, 129 in 2000-01, 131 in 2001-02, 133 in 2002-03, 137 in 2003-04, and 143 in 2004-05. However, despite this planning, the issue of teaching a native language in the region cannot be considered satisfactory. Historical plans though expanded Tatar language education but dissatisfaction with outcomes raises concerns about implementation and resource adequacy. To address these challenges, several strategies could be implemented, viz., (1). Targeted Funding for Tatar schools in northern regions to improve infrastructure and teacher training; (2). Community Engagement by involving local Tatar communities in educational decision-making to better meet their needs; (3) Curriculum Development to create cultural awareness that resonates with northern Tatar students; (4). Bilingual Education by introducing bilingual programs to help Tatar children gain fluency in both their native language and Russian.

As stated earlier, between 1979 and 1989, while the growth in Russia as a whole was 7.4%, it was even higher in the region at 66%. Therefore, during the first decade after the census, the increase in the number of Tatars in the Tyumen region was twice as high as the national average. During the second and third decades, this increase was 7.4 times and 8.9 times greater, respectively, compared to the national average growth. The sharp rise in the Tatar population in the Tyumen region has negatively impacted their ethnic identity and language use, leading to alienation from their mother tongue. This situation could have been mitigated with more educational and cultural institutions in Tatar, but such resources have declined instead. It remains to be assumed that the theoretical dependence of the function Y (the percentage of those alienated from their native language) on the argument X (date of observations) is linear: $Y=aX+b$. The coefficients a and b of the dependence are to be found by the least squares method.

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Table 1: *percentage of Tatars Alienated from their Native Language (1959-1989).*

Year (ni)	1959	1970	1979	1989
xi	1	12	21	31
yi	7.9	10.8	14.1	16.8

Here, the argument xi is introduced using the formula: $xi = ni - 1958$ to facilitate the calculation. Without going into the mathematical details, the coefficients a and b of the dependence $Y = aZ + b$ are found from the system of equations: $\sum xi yi - a \sum xi - b \sum xi = 0$. On the other hand, $\sum (yi - a \bullet xi - b)^2 = 0$ provides a minimum sum of squared deviations. Here, each sum (sign \bullet) consists of four terms according to the amount of experimental data.

In our case, $\Sigma xi = 65$ and $\Sigma yi = 49.6$. The system can be written as: $\bullet xiyi = 954,4 - 1547a - 65b = 0$.
 $49,6-65a-4b=0$.

So, the studied dependence is described by the formula: $Y = 0.3024X + 7.486$ or depending on the years of observation:

- 1) $Y=0,3024(n-1958) + 7,486$
- 2) $Y=0,3024n - 584,6132$ (*).

Table 2 enumerates the errors of relativity in all the four scenarios. The error from replacing specific statistical data with "theoretical" values obtained by the formula $Y = 0.3024n - 584.6132$ does not exceed 3%. If the number of people (in %) who are alienated from their native language changes according to this formula (2), then about 50% of Tatars will not know their native language in around year 2099.

Table 2: Errors Enumeration.

	1959	1970	1979	1989
Relative Error (%)	7.9	10.8	14.1	16.8
	7.7884	11.1148	13.8364	16.8604
	1.41	2.91	1.87	0.36

To find this year, we solve the equation: $0,3024n-584,6132=50$ $\bullet n \approx 2099$.

$$Y=0,5656X+3,734 \text{ или } y=0,5656(n-1958) + 3,734 \quad \square$$

$$y=0,5656n-1103,7108 (**)$$

$$40=0,5656n-1103,7108 \bullet n= 40+1103,7108$$

$$0,5656$$

Table 3 combines statistical data, theoretical point and relative error (%) of the estimated year.

Table 3: Statistical Data, Theoretical Point and Relative Error (%).

Year (n)	1959	1970	1979	1989
statistical data	3.8	8	21.9	18
The "theoretical" point	4.2996	10.5212	15.6116	21.2676
relative error (%)	13.14	31.51	28.71	18.15

Table 4: Forecast Chart of Alienation from the Native Language Among the Tatars.

Years	Across Russia %	Across the Tyumen region. %
2000	20%	27%
2010	23%	33%
2020	26%	39%
2030	29%	44%
2040	32%	50%
2050	35%	56%
2060	38%	61%
2070	41%	67%
2080	44%	73%
2090.	47%	78%
2100.	50%	84%
2110	53%	90%
2120	56%	95%
2130	59%	100%
2140	62%	-
2150	65%	-
2160	68%	-
2170	71%	-
2180	75%	-
2190	78%	-
2200	81%	-
2210	84%	-
2220	87%	-
2230	90%	-
2240	93%	-
2250	96%	-
2260	99%	-
2264	100%	-

The dependence for the Tyumen region, obtained using the formula (**), has a fairly large error. Therefore, based on the above, it is possible to compile a forecast chart of alienation from the native language among the Tatars in the country and the Tyumen region (between years 2000 to 2264 (See Table 4).

This linguistic situation has fostered a unique environment of stable Trilingualism among the Siberian Tatars, who commonly speak three languages: Siberian Tatar, Tatar, and Russian. Russian has long served as the state language, deeply embedded in governmental and educational systems, while Tatar literature has played a significant role in cultural expression and academic instruction. In contrast, the native Siberian Tatar language predominantly thrives in informal settings, primarily spoken within the confines of homes and family gatherings. This dynamic creates a rich tapestry of linguistic interaction, reflecting the complexities of cultural identity and the challenges of language preservation in a rapidly changing society.

A question is often raised whether the Siberian Tatar language is a dialect of Tatar. Truly speaking, the Tatar language, which was once taught as their native language, is facing challenges as well. The Tatar people in Siberia face the dual challenge of preserving their culture and identity while also adapting to the dominant language of their region. Despite the long-term efforts of educators, the Tatar literary language remains largely unclaimed by most Siberian Tatars. In their daily lives, they continue to communicate in either their native Siberian dialect or Russian.

Discussion

While Tatar has been well-studied in Tatarstan, Siberian Tatar remains insufficiently researched, despite numerous publications on the culture and lifestyle of the Siberian Tatars. Its survival depends much on effectively addressing complex threats from social, economic, and political dynamics. Critical factors contribute to this crisis, highlighting the need for comprehensive strategies to mitigate the decline. A linguistic shift towards Russian and Kazan Tatar is also noticed which deems to be a significant threat to the survival of the Siberian Tatar language. This is due to the increasing adoption of the Russian language by the local Turkic people, which is due to several interconnected factors. The prevalence of Russian in the socio-economic landscape of the region, both linguistically and culturally, hinders the continued use of minority languages. To address this linguistic shift, it is essential to implement measures that enhance the standing and recognition of the Siberian Tatar tongue, emphasizing its rich cultural heritage and unique identity. Even in everyday language, there is a perception of the high prestige of Kazan Tatar. The standardized Kazan Tatar, with its grammatical and lexical rules, has a rich literary tradition and is supported by the Tatar government, which makes it an attractive model for other Siberian Tatars.

Therefore, it is not enough to simply "preserve" the Siberian Tatar language. Instead, we need to promote its transformation, creating a situation where it can coexist successfully with the global language, English, as well as the regional language, Russian, and Kazan Tatar, which is spoken in the area. This requires careful planning and future-oriented language development. This task is complex and challenging. However, if this issue is not resolved, the second, and unfortunately, most likely outcome of the crisis would be the disappearance of the Siberian Tatar language, followed by the culture. The two factors of urbanization and migration have also exacerbated the language crisis, as numerous young Siberian Tatars relocate from rural areas to urban centers in pursuit of improved economic opportunities. Within urban contexts, the utilization of Russian becomes nearly unavoidable, often resulting in cultural assimilation. Strategies aimed at revitalizing the language must include the development of economically viable opportunities within rural areas to encourage young individuals to remain and cherish their linguistic heritage. Moreover, it is critical to integrate the Siberian Tatar language into urban settings where these individuals may settle.

The Siberian Tatar language has three main varieties: Tobol-Irtysh, Baraba, and Tomsk. Despite not having a standardized written form, speakers of Siberian Tatar actively preserve their language, which differs from other Tatar languages. While a significant portion of the population uses this language in both spoken and written form, it lacks strict grammatical rules and is not as structured as formal written language. Currently, there are promising avenues for the use of Siberian Tatar in educational systems, cultural institutions, media outlets, and the arts. The forms of existence of the language of the Siberian Tatars can be comprehensively understood by examining the dynamic interplay between dialect and spoken language on one hand, and the reciprocal influence of spoken language on literary language on the other.

Currently, the linguistic landscape of the Siberian Tatars manifests in three main forms: Dialects, Everyday Spoken Language, and Literary Language. The first form of Dialects of the Siberian Tatars functions primarily as oral languages and are categorized into distinct subdivisions according to the geographical areas where the Siberian Tatars reside. These include: Tobolo-Irtyshsky: Characterized by unique phonetic and lexical traits, this dialect reflects the cultural nuances of its speakers; Barabinsky: This dialect serves as a linguistic marker for the communities within the Baraba steppe, often exhibiting features that align closely with historical Turkic linguistic states; and Tomsky: This variant caters specifically to the linguistic identities found around Tomsk and contains elements that link back to the ancient Turkic language. All these dialects are inherently oral, lacking formal written representation, which limits their dissemination beyond immediate communities. They are characterized by spontaneity in use, are private, and exhibit significant variability, ranging from the number of speakers to the frequency of usage. Each dialect represents a treasure trove of historical language features, but the lack of standardization results in considerable linguistic diversity and uncertainty;

With regard to the second form of Everyday Spoken Language, it is important to note that the contemporary spoken language used by the Siberian Tatars is mainly represented in daily interactions. However, a notable trend has emerged in which many Siberian Tatars increasingly resort to the Russian language, leading to a gradual erosion of their native tongue. This shift is particularly pronounced among younger generations, who may prefer Russian in educational, social, and professional contexts. In many instances, both Tatar and Russian are employed in written communication. This linguistic mix contributes to a dilution of the distinct characteristics of the Tatar language, and as a result, the everyday spoken language of the Siberian Tatars can be depicted as diglossia, meaning it exists in a complex relationship with both the native language and the dominant Russian language. The spoken language, therefore, showcases differences in structure, use, subjective interpretation, geographical distribution, and adherence to any kind of standardized norms.

When examining the third form of Literary Language, it is noticed that the Siberian Tatars predominantly utilize a general Tatar literary language for formal written expressions, which encompasses literary, educational, and cultural contexts. This literary form is marked by its dual oral and written nature, allowing it to reach wider audiences, but it remains somewhat limited in geographical scope and the number of fluent speakers. While this language has been prepared for public use, it is not rigorously codified or standardized, leading to variations in use and understanding. For the literary language to effectively embody and represent the diverse characteristics of the Siberian Tatars across Siberia, there is a pressing need for a unified approach that integrates the entire Tatar population. This integration would involve recognizing and preserving the valuable heritage found within various dialects while simultaneously incorporating the rich linguistic resources of the broader Tatar language. The proposed literary standard may adopt a mixed nature, largely based on the literary Tatar language—commonly referred to as the Kazan Tatar language—while also drawing upon unifying elements unique to the Siberian Tatars' linguistic identity.

Presently, ample conditions exist to facilitate this unification, bolstered by the use of the literary language in educational settings, cultural institutions, and various mass media, including radio, television, and print (e.g., the local national Siberian-Tatar newspaper "يانارش" (*Renewal*)) as well as in the realm of artistic creativity involving established figures like 20th century Siberian-Tatar writer Zankeev and a Siberian-Tatar poet Suleymanov (1938-1991). Nonetheless, comprehensive research focusing on the linguistic life within this region remains essential, considering both monolingual and bilingual contexts, to truly understand the evolving dynamics of the language of the Siberian Tatars.

There are factors like educational challenges, cultural representation and media presence, promotion of social identity, and political advocacy and recognition, that can play a significant role in the sustenance of the Siberian Tatar language. Educational systems have served a pivotal role in the preservation of languages. The alarming decrease in educational institutions offering instruction in the Tatar language signifies a fundamental concern. It is imperative to strengthen educational policies that support the teaching of the Siberian Tatar language. This includes training a greater number of proficient teachers, developing engaging curricula, and revitalizing scholarship opportunities that enable families to educate their children in their native language.

The factor of cultural representation of the Siberian Tatar language and its presence in media is robust. Increased visibility in media, literature, and the arts can reaffirm the language's value. Additionally, providing resources and support for Siberian Tatar literature, music, multimedia projects, and cultural events will enhance community engagement and foster pride in their linguistic heritage. Furthermore, enhancing the online presence of the Siberian Tatar language, encompassing educational content and social media involvement, can elevate its relevance among younger generations. Likewise, promotion of social identity means making active efforts to challenge public perceptions that regard the language as "non-prestigious." Campaigns highlighting the beauty, utility, and cultural richness of the Siberian Tatar language can cultivate pride among its speakers. Community workshops, storytelling events, and cultural festivals that celebrate the language can also strengthen collective identity. Finally, advocating for the political recognition of the Siberian Tatar language at both local and national levels is critical in securing greater institutional support. Engaging with policymakers to develop programs that protect and promote minority languages is vital, utilizing successful initiatives from other countries that have revived endangered languages as possible models.

Additionally, increasing awareness of the crisis surrounding the Siberian Tatar language is essential for mobilizing collective action. Engaging academics, community leaders, and activists in collaborative efforts may yield more effective strategies for language preservation. Additionally, documenting the language and its dialects will not only preserve its form but also inform future revitalization initiatives. The Siberian Tatar language currently stands at a crucial juncture, facing significant threats from urbanization, the predominance of Russian, and shortcomings in education and cultural representation. However, coordinated efforts across political, social, educational, and cultural dimensions can avert a potential crisis. By fostering a sense of community, encouraging pride in linguistic heritage, and transforming the sociopolitical landscape, there exists considerable potential for the revitalization and sustainability of the Siberian Tatar language for future generations.

To summarize, the Siberian Tatars are an ethnic group with a unique language and culture that does not require special evidence. There is a sufficient amount of scientific research on this topic. Today, it is important

to recognize the Siberian Tatars as a separate people at the state level and not to unite them with the Kazan Tatars in a fictional unified Tatar nation. The Siberian Tatars face a difficult choice - to preserve their native language or lose it. Preserving it at the family level is not enough, so it is necessary to promote it in schools and the media, as well as publish fiction based on it. Methodological developments in grammar, phonetics, graphics, dictionaries, and literature are already available. It is possible to introduce the study of the Siberian Tatar language in national schools and special courses in urban centres of Siberian Tatar culture. Currently, efforts to preserve the language and culture of the Siberian Tatars are being made only by enthusiasts, and they do not receive support from the administrative level. The heads of educational authorities rely on old programs and methodological developments for the Tatar language and literature, and do not see a need to introduce the Siberian Tatar language into the curriculum. In our opinion, continuing to ignore this problem will lead to further marginalization of the Siberian Tatars in the Tyumen region and a gradual loss of their identity.

Conclusion

This study thoroughly analyzed the ethnopolitical, sociodemographic, and linguistic context surrounding the Siberian Tatar community in the Tyumen Region of Russia. It focused on the language challenges faced by the community, particularly regarding the Siberian Tatar language, which has evolved from the fusion of different dialects and colloquial speech patterns of the local Turkic, Finno-Ugric, and Samoyedic peoples. Addressing the evolution, current state, and prospects of language and culture among the Siberian Tatars was crucial. This crisis arose from challenges in recognizing the Siberian Tatars as a distinct group, defining the status of their language, and preserving their national identity. The significance of this research is underscored by diverse perspectives on the Tatar language's formation, evolution, and trajectory.

With respect to the issue of the Siberian Tatar language, this study raised awareness about the crisis facing the Siberian Tatar language and implored to take collective action. Working together with academics, community leaders, and activists can help create effective plans for preserving the language. Documenting the language and its dialects is also important, as it helps keep it alive and supports future revitalization efforts. It is evident that the Siberian Tatar language is currently confronting substantial challenges stemming from urbanization, the predominance of the Russian language, and insufficient support. Nonetheless, a concerted effort involving political, educational, and mitigating this crisis. By cultivating a cohesive community and instilling pride in the language, a more supportive environment can be established to revitalize and safeguard the Siberian Tatar for generations to come.

The primary threat to minority languages, such as Siberian Tatar, is linguistic shift, specifically the process of transitioning to Russian. This challenge is exacerbated by a range of additional factors, each of which, while potentially problematic in its own right, when considered collectively, can lead to catastrophic consequences for the linguistic and cultural heritage of the community. The Siberian Tatars are an ethnic group with their language and culture, deserving recognition as distinct from the Kazan Tatars. They are confronted with a vital decision: to safeguard their language or face the risk of its extinction. Maintaining it only at the family level is not enough; it must be promoted in schools, the media, and through published literature. Currently, efforts to preserve Siberian Tatar culture rely on enthusiastic individuals without support from administrative bodies. Educational authorities stick to outdated programs for Tatar language and literature and do not recognize the need for a dedicated curriculum for the Siberian Tatar language. Ignoring this issue will lead to further marginalization and loss of identity for the Siberian Tatars in the Tyumen region.

Limitations and Recommendations

Although this research provides insightful findings about the intricate socio-demographic, linguistic, and ethnopolitical reality of the Siberian Tatars in the Tyumen region, we need to highlight that the paper mainly employs existing statistical data and qualitative observations, which might not sufficiently represent regional variance or the subtleties of local lived experiences among the Siberian Tatar populations. Additionally, some generalizations could not be typical of all subgroups in the community due to the lack of access to disaggregated or updated data, particularly when it comes to micro-level identity dynamics and language vitality (in rural communities). Overall, this research did not discuss other indigenous or Turkic-speaking populations in the area, which could provide a more comprehensive contextual framework, instead dwelling on the Siberian Tatar status.

Based on the findings of research, some recommendations were made to resolve the current issues facing the Siberian Tatar populations and fostering the long-term growth of their language and ethnocultural identity. First, it is necessary that regional and federal authorities should update present legislative frameworks and improve the execution of their policies, to better acknowledge and safeguard the Siberian Tatars as a unique Indigenous community; second, traditional knowledge, folklore, music, and rituals of Siberian Tatar intangible cultural heritage should be conserved and promoted with the support of cultural institutions; third, a diversity of programs designed to revive the Siberian Tatar language should be created (attempts to promote bilingual education, the conception of instructional materials, programs for instructing teachers, and the integration of the language into local media and internet platforms); fourth, it is necessary to expand research activities on

bilingualism and multilingualism, not only at research institutions but also at the university level. This will help develop new approaches to solving language problems and methods for sociolinguistic, linguistic, and pedagogical research. The research should consider both objective and subjective factors that influence modern linguistic and ethnocultural development. Last, but not the least, through mass media and the press, it is important to promote knowledge of the native language and culture. It is also essential to encourage the acquisition of bilingual skills as a way to unite the people of Russia. Gradually, this will lead to a better understanding of the trends in language development in our multinational country.

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