



## EDITORIAL PREFACE

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*Dear Colleagues,*

We are pleased to present a new issue of *Sociolinguistika*, dedicated to the 35th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan.

This issue appears at a challenging yet highly significant moment for sociolinguistics, a time marked by the reconfiguration of linguistic identities and by the search for a balance between globalization and locality, between digitalization and living speech traditions. Its principal focus is the Tatar language. Like previous issues, this volume brings together scholars for whom language is not an abstract system but a living social practice. The contributors examine the Tatar language in its full complexity: from its legal status to its actual functional distribution; from the literary standard to dialectal variation; from urban place-naming to language shift in Tatar diasporic communities in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. For the first time in many years, the Tatar language is presented not only within a regional framework but also as a broader model for the study of linguistic processes in multiethnic settings.

Taken together, the articles in this issue provide a multidimensional picture of the current state of research on the Tatar language. On the one hand, they reflect a well-established scholarly tradition. Corpus-based and sociolinguistic dialectology is developing actively, covering material from Siberian dialects to the written heritage of Belarusian Tatars. The functioning of Tatar in the public sphere, in urban place-naming, media texts, and national branding, is being studied systematically, while empirical evidence on Tatar-Russian and Tatar-other-language bilingualism, including child bilingualism, continues to accumulate.

On the other hand, the materials presented in this issue also reveal the limits of established approaches and point to areas in which Tatar linguistics, and Tatar sociolinguistics in particular, are beginning to undertake more systematic work. First, there is a clear need to move beyond the Republic of Tatarstan and the Russian Federation as a whole. The trajectories of the Tatar language in the diasporas of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Belarus demonstrate that Tatar-speaking communities require not merely a regional but a transnational analytical perspective, as well as methodological frameworks capable of accounting for language shift, interference, and language loyalty across different political and sociocultural contexts.



Second, there is the challenge of integrating diachronic and synchronic perspectives. The history of the Tatar periodical press in the early twentieth century and the analysis of the syntax of contemporary media texts, for example, belong to a single research field concerned with the emergence and transformation of the Tatar public language. At present, however, these areas are still more often pursued in parallel than treated as interconnected dimensions of the same process.

Third, there is an increasingly urgent need for standardized and comparable instruments for measuring language proficiency and linguistic adaptation. The use of adapted international methodologies, such as the child version of the LEAP-Q questionnaire, should become part of a systematic framework for monitoring Tatar-Russian bilingualism both within the Republic and beyond it.

The future development of Tatar sociolinguistics is closely linked to the creation and maintenance of up-to-date sociolinguistic databases and corpora encompassing the literary language, dialectal variation, and the linguistic practices of diasporic communities. It also requires systematic monitoring of the language situation, language policy, and the actual outcomes of such policy through the analysis not only of legislation and survey data, but also of linguistic landscapes, the media, education, and digital environments.

Another important task is to advance comparative research that situates Tatar-language data within the broader context of Turkic studies, while strengthening the connection between theoretical sociolinguistics and its applied dimensions, including language planning, educational policy, and the maintenance and revitalization of the language and its dialects. As the contents of the present issue demonstrate, it is precisely at the intersection of these areas that a new generation of Tatar linguistics is now taking shape, open to interdisciplinary approaches, attentive to living speech practices, and at the same time firmly rooted in a rich scholarly tradition.

We wish you an enjoyable and thought-provoking read, and many new scholarly discoveries.

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