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BILINGUALISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF TATARSTAN:
LANGUAGE POLICY AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS
TATAR LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Master of Arts Thesis

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Abstract

This thesis deals with the current Tatar language education policy within the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan. The research has three-dimensional focus: political, educational and social levels. The political level is investigated by analysing the corpus of Russian and Tatar legislative acts concerning Tatar language education. Educational level presents the implementation of the Tatar language policy and is studied by analysing school documentation. Attitudes of teachers, schoolchildren and parents or legal guardians of schoolchildren regarding the current Tatar language education are considered as the social level. Within the research, critical discourse analysis and survey have been conducted. Four schools of the Republic of Tatarstan (Kazan Secondary Comprehensive School №18 with Advanced Studying of the English Language, Arsk Secondary Comprehensive School №1 with Advanced Studying of Several Subjects, Bazar-Matak Secondary Comprehensive School and Leskhoz Secondary Comprehensive School) have been involved in the empirical research and participated in the survey. The results of the research have demonstrated that Tatar education does not entirely satisfy the needs of those directly or indirectly involved in Tatar educational system and must undergo changes. To improve the Tatar language education, the Russian and Tatar language policies should be modified. As the practical impact of the research, recommendations on possible changes in the current Tatar language education are given.
1. Introduction

The status and relevancy of minority and regional languages are undermined in the era of globalisation and international integration. This concerns language social activists and becomes a topical issue for sociolinguists. The attitudes to these languages within a state and the necessity of their acquisition are challenged in the modern society and conditional upon a language policy implemented in a state. Therefore, preserving, encouraging and developing the minority and regional languages are the responsibilities of the national governments and public authorities.

This study focuses on the language policies of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan, their implementation in comprehensive-school education and attitudes of the members of the educational process towards teaching, learning and using a regional language. The aim of this research is to clarify to what extent the current Tatar language education is conditional upon the language policy of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan and meets the needs of those directly or indirectly involved in the education system (teachers, schoolchildren and the parents or legal guardians of the schoolchildren). The study seeks to address the following research questions:

(1) What are the Russian and Tatar de jure language policies concerning the teaching of the Tatar language in the Republic of Tatarstan?

(2) How are the legal instruments concerning the teaching of the Tatar language implemented (de facto language policy) in the Republic of Tatarstan and reflected in the Tatar school curriculum?

(3) What kind of attitudes do the members of the educational process (teaching staff, schoolchildren and the parents or legal guardians of the schoolchildren) have to the current Tatar language education?

(4) What actions can be taken to improve the effectiveness of the Tatar language education in a comprehensive school?

The Republic of Tatarstan (Tatarstan) is the democratic state of law and subject of the Russian Federation. It is situated within the political framework of the Russian Federation and has its own sovereignty (the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan,
In the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan, Tatars have peacefully co-existed with Russians for centuries. Tatar-Russian and Russian-Tatar Bilingualism in Tatarstan are one of the linguistic and cultural outcomes of this cohabitation. Apart from other cultural and societal factors, bilingualism in Tatarstan and the acquisition process of the Tatar and Russian languages are maintained by the language education of the Republic of Tatarstan. The language education is based on the Tatar and Russian language policies, which have been incorporated in the legislation acts of the Russian Federation and Republic of Tatarstan. Social actors involved in this Tatar educational process form their attitudes to the language policy and its implementation in the educational system depending on its effectiveness and its relevance in the contemporary community. Moreover, the viability of the Tatar language and the possibility of its usage in modern Tatarstan influence the attitudes of the society to the Tatar language education.

From the perspective of sociolinguistic theory, the status of the Tatar language can vary. With respect to the territorial principle and according to the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages (1992), it is a language “traditionally used within a given territory of a State”; consequently, Tatar is a regional language. Taking into account the hierarchical principle, it is a minority language, since Tatar is the language spoken by “a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State’s population” (the Charter, 1992). According to the Russian Census 2010, Tatars comprise 3.87% of all the population of the Russian Federation and they are considered the second biggest ethnic group within the country. 3.09% of the Russian population has a command of the Tatar language, which is the third most popular language throughout the whole country after the Russian and English languages. Despite this data, Tatars are numerically much smaller than the 80.90% of the population who belong to the Russian ethnic group. Regarding the typology of minorities in modern states, Tatar is an indigenous language because it is the language of an ethnic group “whose homeland is entirely incorporated into a state dominated by another people” Coulmas (2018: 175). Moreover, the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan (1992) establishes Tatar as the official (state) language of the republic by the reason of being an autonomous region (state) of the Russian Federation. In this paper, the Tatar language is defined as the state language in
the context of Tatarstan and as the regional language while analysing the language situation from a bigger scale.

This thesis is arranged into several sections. First, the terminology used in this paper is defined: bilingualism (Hugo, 1986; Stavans and Hoffmann, 2015) language policy: de facto, de jure and top-down, bottom-up (Johnson, 2013), language education policy (Spolsky, 2004; Shohamy, 2006; Wigglesworth Baker, 2015). The Russian comprehensive school system is explained and the notion of “upbringing”, typical for the Russian education, is introduced (Tagunova et al., 2016; Leontjev, 2017; Solovova, 2005). Second, the information on the Russian and Tatar legislative instruments concerning the state languages, literature review of the previous studies on the Tatar language situation, language policy and language education (Bairamova, 1996, 2001; Gaifullin, 1999; Stepanova, 2015) and on bilingualism in Tatarstan (Guzelbaeva and Fatkhullova, 2012; Wigglesworth Baker, 2015) are provided. The current language situation in Tatarstan, its specificities and recent issues are described in the second section, thereby determining the importance of the research. The third section presents the thorough description of the methodology, which includes two chapters. The aim of the first chapter is to justify the choice of the critical discourse analysis and a survey to answer the research questions. The second chapter describes the participants involved in the research and explains the procedure of the data collection. Additionally, it includes the paragraph highlighting the researcher’s position in the context of the study. The fourth section consists of two chapters and is devoted to the findings of the research. The first chapter deals with the results of the de jure and de facto Russian and Tatar language education policies’ analysis, while the second chapter presents the survey findings. In section five, after discussing the research findings, the research questions are answered, the recommendations to evolve the current Tatar language education are provided and further research possibilities are indicated. The conclusion of the research brings together all the issues touched upon in the thesis, points out the significance of the conducted study and leaves positive speculations about the further successful implementation of the Tatar language policy.
2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical background preceding the empirical research and defines the specific terminology used throughout the thesis. The most frequently used terms within the thesis are bilingualism, language policy: de facto, de jure and top-down, bottom-up, language education policy. In addition, the Russian school system and its special aspects are described and the notion of ‘upbringing’ as a focus of the Russian educational system is explained.

Bilingualism has become the subject of active scholarly investigation for decades. The simple definition of ‘bilingualism’ is the use of two languages, which is considered as the opposite term to ‘monolingualism’. In fact, it is not limited with the situations involving contact only of two languages. Hugo (1986: 3) claims that it is “a shorthand form to embrace cases of multi or pluralism”. Stavans and Hoffmann (2015) agree that bilingualism can be included within the contexts concerning trilingualism and multilingualism. In terms of the Republic of Tatarstan, bilingualism is not restricted by the use of only the Tatar and Russian languages; the republic is inhabited by the representatives of many other ethnicities. Although this research is mainly focused on two languages spoken in Tatarstan, it subsumes multilingual society of the republic.

In sociolinguistic theory, two types of bilingualism are defined: societal and individual. Researchers interested in societal acceptance of two languages study in which conditions the languages interact and mutually effect, what are the attitudes of the society to the languages, how they are used by society members and to what extent they are influenced by political, cultural and social processes happening within a community. The investigations in this field can impact language policy and planning, what is also reflected in educational system (Hugo, 1986). As far as this thesis is connected with Tatar language policy and language education, the main accent is placed on the Tatar-Russian and Russian-Tatar societal bilingualism.

Johnson (2013: 10) describes “de jure” policy as officially documented in writing, policy “in law”, while “de facto” refers to the policy “in practice” and can either reflect or not reflect the official law. The current study critically examines the legislative acts of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan concerning
language teaching - de jure language policy, and reviews their reflection in Tatar language curriculum and implementation in the educational system with regards to teaching the Tatar language in Tatarstan – de facto policy. The top-down and bottom-up language policies are distinguished by such characteristics like who establishes the law and on which level. The top-down policy is directed to macro-level and introduced by legal authorities, when the law oriented to micro level and enacted by society or individuals is considered as bottom-up policy (Johnson, 2013). In the sense of the Republic of Tatarstan and within this research, the language policy prescribed by the Russian and Tatar laws and official documents is accepted as top-down; the use of the Tatar and Russian languages by the social actors (teachers, schoolchildren and parents/legal guardians) and their attitudes to the current language policy and its implementation are considered as bottom-up.

Shohamy (2006) considers a language education policy as a form of language policy facilitating the implementation of the legislation. She states that it is a powerful mechanism which establishes language behaviour, for example, when the government or educational authorities introduce mandatory learning of a language. In the same vein, the language education policy can be influenced from a bottom-up approach, when social actors request to include certain languages in school education. According to Spolsky (2004), language education policy can create a gap between a language used in a family domain and languages included in the educational curriculum. Wigglesworth-Baker (2015: 25) distinguishes covert and overt language education policies. Covert language education policy can, for instance, depending on “the political ideologies of the government in power”, exclude a language from an educational system. A language curriculum and language teaching standards indicating specificities of teaching a language and officially accepted can be the characteristics of the overt language education policy. This thesis seeks to find out the correlations or inconsistencies between the de jure and de facto language education policies and to identify the bottom-up initiatives to improve the Tatar language curriculum as the result of the bilingual language policy.

While school systems throughout the world differ and this paper deals with the school education in the Russian Federation, initially the features of the Russian school
system (see below Table 1) should be explained. It presents comprehensive ‘obsch’ee’ education with maximum 11 years of studies and three levels of education: primary ‘nachalnoje’, basic ‘osnovnoje’ and secondary ‘sredneje’. Children usually commence schooling at age 6.5 - 8 years, but they are allowed to start either earlier or later based on the application by parents or legal guardian. The primary school lasts 4 years, the basic level implies 5 years of studying period. These 9 years of schooling in total cover the basic comprehensive education, the completion if which is mandatory for all the Russian citizens. Secondary education, which includes the 10th and 11th grades, is non-compulsory if a citizen is not intended to obtain further education at a college or university. The Russian Federation guarantees access to free school education in state and municipal educational organisations (the Constitution of the Russian Federation, 1993; the federal law №273 ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’, 2012). In the empirical part of this research, the attention is mainly emphasized on the basic comprehensive level and the attitudes of those who have already experienced two obligatory levels of the school education.

Table 1: The Russian School Education System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Grades, duration</th>
<th>The average age of school children</th>
<th>Compulsoriness</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>comprehensive</td>
<td>primary ‘nachalnoje’</td>
<td>the 1st - 4th, 4 years</td>
<td>7-10 years old</td>
<td>compulsory</td>
<td>free of charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education ‘obsch’ee</td>
<td>basic ‘osnovnoje’</td>
<td>the 5th - 9th, 5 years</td>
<td>11-15 years old</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education ‘sredneje’</td>
<td>secondary ‘sredneje’</td>
<td>the 10th -11th, 2 years</td>
<td>16-17 years old</td>
<td>non-compulsory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educating and upbringing are two main goals of the Russian educational system. “The category of ‘upbringing’ as well as the upbringing itself has long been central for the Russian pedagogical science and practice” (Tagunova et al., 2016). In the contemporary
Russian educational system and modern pedagogical science, ‘upbringing’ is considered to be an activity directed to the development of the personality with socio-cultural, spiritual and moral values (the federal law №273 ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’, 2012). The synthesis of the educational and upbringing processes is an essential requirement of the Russian school curricula, in general, and language curriculum, in particular (Leontjev, 2017). Taking into account the language education, Solovova (2005) claims that the socio-cultural, spiritual and moral values are developed not only during the in-class sessions, but also by including in the school language curriculum extra activities outside of the classes. Throughout this thesis, the notion ‘upbringing’ is used as the obligatory part and important aspect of the Russian education.

3. The Socio-Historical Context of Bilingualism in Tatarstan

The Russian Federation is a multinational and multilingual state. According to the decree of the Russian President “On Strategy of State National Policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025” (2012), there are 277 languages and dialects spoken in the country. In spite of this linguistic diversity, the use of the Russian language is prescribed throughout the national territory as the only official language of the country. The Article LXVII of the Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993) declares the Russian language a state language for the whole territory of the Russian Federation. However, the republics of the Russian Federation are entitled to their languages. This is clearly stated in the Article LXVIII of the Constitution (1993) that the republics have the right to establish their own state languages, but these languages are used together with the state language of the Russian Federation.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993) recognises 85 federal subjects: republics, krays, oblasts, cities of federal significance, autonomous okrugs and an autonomous oblast, which have equal rights as constituent entities of the country. Article 5.2 states that the republics (states) of the Russian Federation have their own legislatures and constitutions. Thus, the Republic of Tatarstan has its legal instruments and the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan. According to the Constitution of
Tatarstan (1992), the Tatar and Russian languages are assigned the same and equal status – the state languages of the Republic of Tatarstan.

According to the Russian Census of 2010, more than 173 ethnic groups reside in the Republic of Tatarstan. The most numerous ethnicities in Tatarstan are Tatars comprising 53.2% of the population, the second largest group is presented by ethnic Russians with 39.7%, while the number of other nationalities amounts to 7.1% of the population. This ethnic diversity is characterised by the wide dissemination of bilingualism throughout the republic. However, as Wigglesworth-Baker (2015: 21) indicates:

Bilingualism in Tatarstan is considered to be asymmetrical. Asymmetrical bilingualism means that Russians are monolingual in Russian only whilst non-Russians are bilingual in their native language and Russian. In Tatarstan Russians speak Russian and Tatars may speak both Tatar and Russian. Asymmetrical bilingualism is suggested by the results of the Russian Census 2010: 95.5% of Tatars are competent in Russian and 92.4% of Tatars – in Tatar, while 99.9% of Russians have command of the Russian language and only 3.6% of Russians speak Tatar. Furthermore, 20% of all Tatars replying to the census indicated Russian as their mother tongue.

Spolsky (2004: 13) underlines that newly formed independent countries often write new language policies to “define the roles of competing languages”. The language policy in the Republic of Tatarstan was entered into force in 1992 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Afterwards, the active process of revitalisation and modernisation of the Tatar language started in the 90-s of the 20th century. This happened mainly because of the changes of the socio-political situation in the republic and as a result introducing in 1992 law №1560-XII ‘On the State Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan’, where both languages are recognised as equal state languages within the republic. Since then, considering the bilingual asymmetry with the predominance of the Russian language, fostering symmetrical bilingualism, encouraging society to embrace the Tatar language and increasing the number of the Tatar language speakers have become the main challenges of the Tatar language policy (Guzelbaeva and Fatkhullova, 2012).
A Tatar social scientist and the professor of the Tatar language at Kazan Federal University, Guzelbaeva and Fatkhullova (2012), doubt that it is possible to eliminate the linguistic asymmetry in Tatarstan. Notwithstanding, they assume that to diminish the linguistic imbalance is one of the targets of the Tatar language policy, which can be achieved with the further implementation of the law № 1560-XII ‘On the State Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan’ and with the meaningful but gradual changes in the Tatar educational system.

In 1998 with the implementation of the first Tatar law on education, both languages, Tatar and Russian, were made obligatory subjects and taught in equal amounts at the comprehensive schools of the Republic of Tatarstan. Yemelianova (2000) considers it to be the part of Tatarstan’s nation-building process imposed by Tatar political elites. Since then the compulsory Tatar language learning was causing discontent of parents whose children had to study Tatar at school, and eventually in 2017, the attitude to this top-down Tatar language policy in education was expressed by the parents with a protest in the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan, Kazan. These troubles were caused by introducing the final state exams [EGE – Edinij Gosudarstvenniy Examen] of the Russian Federation, which are in the Russian language, standardised and mandatory for all the school leavers throughout the whole country. All the alumni are obliged to take the final exam of the Russian language and its result is one of the essential criteria to enter Russian universities to state-funded student positions. However, because of the Tatar education policy of teaching two state languages in the same amount, the schoolchildren of Tatarstan had fewer classes of the Russian language than in the other federal subjects of the Russian Federation, since the amount of hours allocated for the other school subjects was fixed and invariable.

The protest held in Kazan was continued in republics that neighboured Tatarstan. In July 2017, this sensitive issue was addressed by the president of the Russian Federation during the official meeting in the capital of the Republic of Mari El. The meeting was devoted to the strategies of the Russian national policy for the period till 2025. Putin (2017) declared that “forcing a person to learn a language that is not his or her native tongue is as unacceptable as reducing the level and time spent to teach Russian” and drew the attention of the presidents and heads of the federal subjects to
this language issue. On the basis of the presidential instruction (2017), the federal prosecutorial investigation was conducted in all the subjects of the Russian Federation, where two official languages are declared and taught at schools. The investigation of the schools of the Republic of Tatarstan revealed some cases of judicial misconduct. As a result, 1412 educational organisations of the Republic of Tatarstan obtained federal injunctions banning the obligatory teaching of the Tatar language and reduction of Russian language lessons (Chapman, 2017).

The unrest concerning the teaching of the Tatar language at schools happened already several years ago, the third studying year after this prosecution is nearly finished, however, the unclear situation regarding the Tatar language education is still up-to-date and highly relevant in Tatarstan. Currently, the inspections of the schools are continued by the Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Tatarstan and the verification of the school documentations identifies inconsistencies with the federal legislation. This allows us to assume that either the federal and republican language policies do not correlate in some points, or the implementation of the actual laws on education causes obstacles which the school cannot meet. This research therefore focuses on the de jure and de facto educational language policies to find the vulnerable points of the Tatar language education.

Previously, the language policy, language education policy and language situation within the Republic of Tatarstan were described in the works of the Tatar and foreign researchers; the attention of the scholars was also paid to the issues of bilingualism in Tatarstan. The studies of local researchers, Bairamova and Gaifullin, have significantly contributed to the investigation of this topic. Bairamova (1996) was the first who defined the idea of the linguistic model of Tatarstan. She demonstrated how the Tatar language situation changed during history depending on the translation practices, publishing activities, the language relations and language education policy (2001). Gaifullin concentrated on the Tatar pedagogy and studied special aspects of teaching languages in a bilingual society. He assumed that an essential point in teaching the regional languages is the implementation of an ethno-regional component, ‘natsionalno-regionalniy komponent’ (Gaifullin, 1999). This implies encouraging the process of languages acquisition including the cultural and historical background
information of the country and the region and various ethnicities residing in the area. Stepanova (2015) claimed that one of the directions of the Tatar language policy is to accommodate the linguistic interests of different ethnic groups, taking into account that every language requires support. Wigglesworth-Baker (2015) investigated Russian-titular bilingualism and language policy in the Republic of Tatarstan and compared Tatar language use between the Russian and Tatar populations as a way to measure how successful the Tatar language policy was as a nation-building process twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

All in all, the studies to date tended to focus on the changes of the language situation and the language policy in the Republic of Tatarstan as the outcomes of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and their effect on the Tatar language skills of different ethnic groups residing within Tatarstan, rather than on contemporary legislation influencing the Tatar language situation and attitudes toward the Tatar language education policy. Hence, this research intends to determine the attitudes of the direct and indirect participants of the school educational process to the modern Tatar education as the result of de jure and de facto language policies and find out possible ways to increase effectiveness of Tatar language acquisition at school.

4. Methodology

This chapter deals with the methodology that was applied in the study and describes the procedure of compiling data, the types of data, their analysing process and the participants of the empirical research. This research approaches the topic of the language policy in the Republic of Tatarstan and the Tatar language education from three different angles (three-dimensional focus):

1) political – by analysing the corpus of legislative acts which are currently in effect and address language policy and language education in Russia and Tatarstan;

2) educational - by studying the school documentation concerning the language education to examine the implementation of the legislation in the school system (de facto language policy);
(3) social - by surveying the members of the educational process (teaching staff, schoolchildren and parents/legal guardians of the schoolchildren) to find out their attitudes regarding current language education at the schools of the Republic.

4.1 Data Collection and Analysis

Critical discourse analysis was conducted to examine the legislative acts and the implementation of the legislation. By carrying out this analysis, it was possible to answer the first two research questions, namely, (1) what are the de jure language policies concerning the teaching of the Tatar language in the Republic of Tatarstan; (2) how are the legal instruments concerning the teaching of the Tatar language in the Republic of Tatarstan implemented (de facto language policy) and reflected in the Tatar language curriculum?

Before describing the data collection process, a justification of why critical discourse analysis was chosen for this study is given. According to Blommaert (1996), language policy can be examined as a discourse of language and society. Reisigl (2018: 75-76) reports that critical discourse analysis is focused on “various social problems with a linguistic or discourse-related dimension”. He indicates being “critical”, “sociopolitically engaged” and “application oriented” as its general characteristics. The overview of the socio-historical factors of the current situation regarding the Tatar language education and literature review on bilingualism in Tatarstan gave grounds to assume that the top-down language policy does not correlate at federal and republican levels and does not meet bottom-up initiatives. In that regard, the analysis presented critical comparison of the Russian and Tatar formal acts on language policy and critical investigation of the school documents on compliance with the legislation.

To investigate de jure language policy of the legal instruments of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan, establishing the status of languages within the country and regulating the teaching of the Tatar language in secondary education were analysed. The list of these legislative documents is presented in Table 2.
Table 2: Legislative Acts Concerning Tatar language Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Document, year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Federal  | • The Constitution of the Russian Federation, 1993;  
• The federal law №1807-1 ‘On the Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation’, 1991;  
• The federal law №53 ‘On the State Language of the Russian Federation’, 2005;  
• The Federal National Educational Standards of the primary comprehensive education, 2009;  
• The Federal National Educational Standards of the basic comprehensive education, 2010;  
• The Federal National Educational Standards of the secondary comprehensive education, 2012;  
• The federal law №273 ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’, 2012;  
• The decree of the Russian President ‘On Strategy of State National Policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025’, 2012;  
• The Order of The Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation ‘On Approving the Procedure of Educational Activities in Accordance with the Educational Programmes of the Primary General, Basic General and Secondary General Education’, 2013;  
• ‘Federal Basic Curriculum and Indicative Curricula for Educational Organisations of the Russian Federation Supplying the Comprehensive Education’, 2004 |
| Republican | • The Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan, 1992;  
• The law of the Republic of Tatarstan №1560-XII ‘On the State Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan’, 1992;  
• The law of the Republic of Tatarstan № 1 ‘On Using the Tatar Language as a State Language of the Republic of Tatarstan’, 2013;  
• The law of the Republic of Tatarstan № 68 ‘On Education’, 2013;  
• The decree №695 of the President of the Republic of Tatarstan ‘Vision of the National Education in the Republic of Tatarstan until 2023’, 2013  
• The Cabinet of Ministers decree №794 on Approval the national program ‘Preservation, Learning and Development of the State Languages and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2014-2021’, 2013. |
De facto language policy was examined by studying the school documentation. The Educational Statutes of the investigated schools and their Provisions on Languages of Education demonstrated which languages were considered to be the languages of instruction or training, taught as subjects or used within the activities of the educational organisation (document management and visual aids). In the same vein, the school timetables of the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 studying years demonstrated the number of hours allocated to different language classes; that revealed whether the amount of language classes meets the requirements of the Federal National Educational Standards and other official documents. The access to the schools documentation is publicly available. All the necessary legal provisions of the educational organisations are presented at the official web-sites of the schools on the republican platform edu.tatar.ru.

The social focus of the research was investigated using a survey. The online survey was employed as a tool for quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in order to (3) investigate the attitudes of the members of the educational process (teaching staff, schoolchildren and parents or legal guardians of the schoolchildren) to the current Tatar language education and find out if they see the necessity of learning Tatar, in general, and (4) what actions they can offer to improve the effectiveness of Tatar language education.

In this research, the effectiveness of the Tatar language education encompasses the language skills of the schoolchildren and their ability to use the Tatar language in everyday life (mainly in two domains – school and home or family). The attitudes to the curriculum involve the motivation of learning and willingness to speak the Tatar language as well as the possible further perspectives and the benefits of the Tatar language proficiency.

It can be claimed that in the research investigating attitudes it could be reasonable to employ an interview. However, in this study, it was preferred to conduct a survey, rather than an interview. There are several reasons justifying this choice. First of all, the survey allowed the researcher to cover a big scope of participants from different and distant from each other localities of the Republic of Tatarstan. It would be time-consuming to interview a feasible amount of teachers, schoolchildren and their parents to collect the data. Moreover, it would be impossible to involve all the participant
groups within the time constraints allocated for this Master’s research. Secondly, the survey gave the participants the opportunity to remain anonymous and provide their opinion without any fear of being somehow evaluated by the researcher. The fact that the researcher finished one of the participant schools, worked there and is acquainted with the teaching staff and majority of the schoolchildren, could influence the answers of the interviewees, thereby impacting the purity of the research. In this sense, the survey ensured the anonymity of the researcher.

The aim of choosing the mixed method was, on the one hand, yielding objective, quantifiable measures to see the whole picture in numbers and know the statistics, and, on the other hand, collecting the individual comments to understand the attitudes to the language education and its perspectives. Although a survey is mainly the tool of collecting data for quantitative analysis, the questionnaire was designed to receive answers for qualitative analysis. With the exception of the multiple choice questions which facilitate the obtaining of quantitative data, a set of funnel (to find out more details) and open-ended questions were included. Moreover, the participants were asked to explain their choice and given the opportunity anonymously and voluntarily to share their opinion regarding the topic if some points were not touched. The questionnaire was created to minimise bias on the researcher’s part. Leading questions were avoided so as not to bias the respondents’ answers towards the researcher’s hypotheses.

Different questionnaires were created for three groups of the participants: the teaching staff (see Appendix A), schoolchildren (see Appendix B) and their parents or legal guardians (see Appendix C). Although the questions differ depending on the participants’ groups, all the questionnaires were designed in the way to find out the answers to the third and fourth research questions. The detailed explanation of the correspondence between the survey questions and the research questions are given in the Tables 3 and 4.

To find the answers to the third research question (What kind of attitudes do the members of the educational process have to the current Tatar language education?), two thematic blocks of questions were created. The first block was developed to find out the domains and frequency of the Tatar language use. It shows if the social actors
recognise the relevance of Tatar language usage in modern society. The first five questions from the survey cover the domains of the language use mainly affected by the language acquisition: home and school. The last two questions search for the answer if the Tatar language is popular beyond the educational or upbringing process and if it is accepted as a language of the social communication. The second block of the questionnaire deals with the motivation of learning and benefits of knowing the Tatar language. The first to fourth questions are devoted to the desire of the children to learn the Tatar language and the support or motivation they receive from their parents or legal guardians and teachers. The last four questions (5-8) help to collect opinions, whether the Tatar language proficiency is beneficial and practical and if the Tatar education is necessary.

The Table 4 presents the correspondence of the questions employed in the survey to the last research question (What actions can be taken to improve the effectiveness of the Tatar language education in a comprehensive school?). The thematic block of questions focused on the Tatar language skills was applied to find out if the Tatar language education is effective and what drawbacks it has. Taking into account the results of a pilot-study conducted in 2019, with applying the third and fourth questions in the questionnaire, it was designed to find if the majority of the respondents think that the Tatar language curriculum is difficult for schoolchildren. When more than half of the participants indicated that the help in doing homework is needed, then we would assume that the Tatar language curriculum does not match the level of schoolchildren’s competence in Tatar. In addition, the fifth and sixth questions served the same suggestion. If the majority of children wanted to move from the subgroup for advanced users of Tatar to the beginning level, it would show the complexity of the Tatar language education. If they wanted to choose a more advanced level, it would show that their language skills are higher than the Tatar language curriculum is implied. In the pilot study, the teachers of the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature complained that the amount of hours allocated for the classes did not correlate with the volume of teaching material and was not enough for successful acquisition of the Tatar language skills. Therefore, to see the attitudes to this issue from a wider perspective, questions seven and eight were included.
Table 3: Correspondence of the Questionnaire to the 3rd Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research question: What kind of attitudes do the members of the educational process have to the current Tatar language education?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thematic blocks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approximate questions from the survey:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Tatar language use. Domains.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) What language/languages do you speak at home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Do you speak Tatar at your classes (except for the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Do you speak Tatar at school (outside of the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes)? With whom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Do you have any extracurricular Tatar events at school (e.g. Tatar language week with the contests/events/concerts, Tatar poetry reading, etc)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Do you have a possibility to choose any extra activities taught in Tatar (music, sport, computer science, etc.)? Where?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Do you speak Tatar outside of school? With whom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) If I need to address a stranger (passerby, public transport workers, sellers, etc.), I will speak the ... language. Because...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The motivation of learning Tatar. The benefits of knowing Tatar.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Do you want to learn the Tatar language? / Do you want your child to learn the Tatar language? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Do you support a child in learning/speaking Tatar?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Would you like to study any subjects in Tatar? Which subjects would you like to study in Tatar? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) If you had a chance to replace Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes with any other classes, would you do this? Which classes would you choose and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Is teaching the Tatar language at school necessary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) In your opinion, will you/the schoolchildren need the Tatar language in the future, after finishing the comprehensive school? Where? / Why will you not need it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Does the command of the Tatar language give any advantages?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Which advantages does the command of the Tatar language give?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Correspondence of the Questionnaire to the 4th Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic blocks</th>
<th>Approximate questions from the survey:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Tatar language skills.</td>
<td>1) Assess your Tatar language skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Do the Tatar classes help you to improve your level of the language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) Do you help your child / do you need help to do the homework for the Tatar classes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4) Why do you help your child / do you need help to do the homework for the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5) In which Tatar language subgroup are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6) Would you like to change / would you like your child to change the Tatar language subgroup? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7) How many Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes in a week do you have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8) In your opinion, how many Tatar Language and Literature classes in a week are enough?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Actions and changes increasing the effectiveness of the Tatar language curriculum/education | 1) Would you like to change anything in curriculum concerning the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes? (What? / Why would you not like to change?) |
|                                                                                       | 2) What would you like to change in the teaching of the Tatar language at school? (e.g. amount of classes, activities within the class, etc) |
|                                                                                       | 3) What would you offer to include in the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes to make them more rewarding and interesting? |
|                                                                                       | 4) Do you use any web-sites, apps for learning the Tatar language? Does your teacher use any Tatar internet resources, web-sites or apps at the classes? |
|                                                                                       | 5) If there were apps for learning the Tatar language/ watching Tatar films/ for reading Tatar literature, would you use the apps? |
|                                                                                       | 6) What do you like in the Tatar Language classes and Tatar Literature classes? What do NOT you like in these classes? |
|                                                                                       | 7) To make the Tatar language more prestigious, it is needed to ... |
|                                                                                       | 8) The Tatar language would be more demanded/popular, if ... |
While employing the last block of the questions, it was planned to figure out if the changes in curriculum are necessary and which changes of the Tatar language education are important for the social actors. The first three questions were connected with the in-class sessions and forms of the classes. The fourth and the fifth questions concerned the issues of online tools as an opportunity to modify and update the language education. The seventh and eighth questions about the popularity and prestige of the Tatar language were asked to consider if the Tatar language education can be altered to fulfil the requirements and conform to the standards of contemporary society and modern life.

The survey was conducted online, using Google Forms. This tool was chosen for the survey, since it is the most familiar platform for the research participants and easy in use, and so facilitated the process of data collection. In addition, the Google Forms are free of charge, allow a researcher to download the data in Microsoft Office Excel tables and include bar and pie charts, which were helpful during the data analysis. It should be mentioned, although the Google Forms are not ideal in terms of data protection and could not be used for similar studies in many countries, this topic is not an issue in the realities of the Republic of Tatarstan and did not lead to the denial of participation. The questionnaires were anonymous, participation was voluntary and participants were informed about the aims of the survey.

4.2 Participants and Procedure

For this study, four schools of the Republic of Tatarstan were chosen: Kazan Secondary Comprehensive School №18 with Advanced Studying of the English Language, Arsk Secondary Comprehensive School №1 with Advanced Studying of Several Subjects, Bazar-Matak Secondary Comprehensive School and Leskhoz Secondary Comprehensive School. These four schools of the Republic of Tatarstan were selected for the study on various reasons, namely:

- they are Russian-medium schools where the Tatar language can be taught only as a school subject within the Native Language and Native Literature classes;
- they are comprehensive schools providing all three levels of school education - primary, basic and secondary;
• the researcher has contacts with the principals of these schools who granted their permission to conduct the survey and provided with information, which are not required to be uploaded on the official website of the schools but essential for this study (e.g. the national composition of the schoolchildren and the injunctions of the prosecutorial investigations in 2017);

• these schools are located in different localities of the Republic of Tatarstan. Kazan is a city; it is the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan and its urban centre with a population of approximately 1,250,000 people (Official Tatarstan, 2019). Arsk is a town (18,139 people), Bazar-Matak is a settlement (6,832 people), which is smaller than a town and Leskhoz is a village (1,017 people). Consequently, this choice of schools allows accumulating the answers of different social groups without concentrating on a territorial principle and the results of the survey cover a larger scope of participants.

In order not to deal with an enormous amount of responses while undertaking the survey among all the students of these four schools and their parents or legal guardians, the researcher decided to narrow down the focus. The ninth grade schoolchildren were chosen as the survey respondents. Firstly, they have complete the education which is mandatory for all in the Russian Federation and may terminate acquiring further education. Second, they are the eldest generation of the schoolchildren educated according to the new Federal State Educational Standards, which was implemented in 2012.

The national composition of the schools is heterogeneous. Kazan Secondary Comprehensive School №18 with Advanced Studying of the English Language comprises 1001 students, while there are 77.5% of schoolchildren are Tatars, 9.5% are Russians and 8% are from Tatar and Russian mixed families, 5% are represented by the children of the other ethnicities. There are 751 learners in Arsk Secondary Comprehensive School №1, 82% of them are Tatars and 3.8% Russians and 14% of the pupils are children of Tatar and Russian mixed families. Representatives of other ethnical background constitute 0.2% of the total number of the learners. 316 students study at Bazar-Matak Secondary Comprehensive School, where 85% are Tatars, 8.7% - Russians and 6% have Tatar and Russian mixed origin, 0.3% of the children have other
ethnicities. Leskhoz Secondary Comprehensive School has a total 202 learners, 93.5% are represented by Tatars and 1.9% - by Russians, the other ethnicities comprise 4.6%.

The procedure of distributing the questionnaire was the same in every school. Three messages with the requests for sharing the opinion regarding teaching the Tatar language in the Republic of Tatarstan were sent to the principals of the schools. The messages included the links to the surveys for the teaching staff, schoolchildren and their parent or legal guardians and they have been, respectively, forwarded by the principals to different WhatsApp groups of the participants. As the introduction, the respondents were provided with a message from the researcher. They could familiarize themselves with the topic of the study and were informed that their personal information would remain anonymous.

Some blocks of the questions were mutually exclusive. While responding to the survey, the participants were automatically redirected to different blocks of the questions depending on their answers. This function was planned in order to preserve the logic and coherence of the survey, in spite of the variety of the possible responses. The answers to the open questions involving expressing opinion or attitude were not mandatory. Notwithstanding, the majority of respondents explained their points of view to the issues of concern.

In total, while planning the research, fourteen days were allocated for the participation in the survey. The access to the Google Forms was open for two weeks. In spite of this, all the responses were collected for 5 days and the final amount was enough for the research of this scale which is on a master’s degree level. The complete information on the numbers of participants and analysed responses is given in the chapter reporting the survey findings.

As for the researcher, having Tatar origin and being raised in Russia and taught in this school system, namely finishing one of the schools chosen for the investigation, the researcher recognised the risk of subjectivity in this research and endeavoured to minimise this during the process of data interpretation. The researcher’s familiarity with the education system and the administration, teaching staff and learners of the school, however, aided in the processes of data collection and interpretation.
5. Findings

The section reporting on the findings of the research is divided into two chapters. The first chapter deals with the critical discourse analysis of the de jure top-down language policy and its implementation reflected in school documentation. The extracts from the legislative acts are included. The second chapter consists of four thematic groups of data analysis, which explain the social actors’ attitudes to the Tatar language education and emphasises what can be changed in the Tatar language curriculum.

5.1 Language Education Policies in Russian and Tatar Legislation Acts

This part presents the results of the first two methodological approaches of the research: political and educational. The thorough analysis of the legislative acts concerning the use of the state languages and the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan in every sphere of language use, in general, and educational system, in particular, demonstrated the following findings.

Under the Article 1.7 of the federal law №53 ‘On the State Language of the Russian Federation’ (2005), the obligation to use Russian as the state language does not deny the right to use the regional languages, which are the state languages of the republics of the Russian Federation, and the other languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation. Moreover, the Article 68.2 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation establishes the right of the republics to use together with the State language of the Russian Federation their own state (regional) languages in state government bodies, local self-government bodies and state institutions. Hence the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan stipulating the equal functioning of the Tatar and Russian languages as the state languages of Tatarstan is compliant with the Constitution of the Russian Federation - the supreme legal force of the state.

When referring to the Republic of Tatarstan, the state (Tatar and Russian) and other languages of Tatarstan are under the state protection. The Tatar government guarantees and ensures social, economic and legal protection of the languages regardless of their status. This means that the Tatar language policy aims to conserve,
develop and encourage learning the Tatar, Russian and other languages in the Republic of Tatarstan. The state projects and scientific programmes designed to implement this policy are supposed to receive budget allocations. The violation of the law on the languages of the Republic of Tatarstan imposes the legal liability (the law of the Republic of Tatarstan № 1560-XII ‘On the State Languages of the Republic of Tatarstan and Other Languages in the Republic of Tatarstan’, 1992).

The freedom to choose the language of education and training is stated by the Article 26 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation (1993) and the Article 34 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan (1992). The law on education of the Russian Federation (2012) guarantees the right to receive education in the state language and to choose the language of instruction and upbringing within the linguistic capacity provided by the educational system. The language policy in the education of the Russian Federation is reflected mainly in the Federal National Educational Standards, which are prescriptive for all the educational organisations throughout the country. Federal National Educational Standards of the primary and basic comprehensive education prescribe providing the opportunity of obtaining education in Russian and the state languages of the republics of the Russian Federation and other languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation. This is ensured in Tatarstan by establishing a variety of schools with different languages of instruction and upbringing. In accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers decree № 794 (2013), providing education in Russian, Tatar and 6 more (Chuvash, Mari, Udmurt, Mordovian, Bashkir and Hebrew) languages of the Republic of Tatarstan.

The equal use of Tatar and Russian in all spheres of language use, prescribed by the Tatar legislative acts, covers the educational system. The Article 14.3 of the federal law allows the state and municipal educational organisations to include teaching of the state languages of the Russian Federation republics to the studying curricula in accordance with the legislation of the republics, but not at the expense of the Russian language teaching and learning (the feral law ‘On the Education in the Russian Federation’, 2012). The legislation of the Republic of Tatarstan determines teaching the Tatar and Russian languages in equal amounts within the framework of the Federal National Educational Standards (Article 8.3 of the law of the Republic of Tatarstan
№ 68 ‘On Education’, 2013). However, the analysis reveals that the regional law establishing an equal amount of the classes of the Tatar and Russian languages in comprehensive schools is not feasible: the Article 8.3 of the Tatar law on education does not correlate with the federal provision ‘Federal Basic Curriculum and Indicative Curricula for Educational Organisations of the Russian Federation Supplying the Comprehensive Education’, which is compulsory for schools to follow while creating the timetables. In primary school with the Russian language of instruction 32 academic hours are devoted for the Russian Language and Russian Literature classes per week, while for the Native (regional) Language and Literature classes there are only only 12. In general school, it is 34 versus 15 weekly hours in total. At the secondary school, the Native (regional) Language classes, firstly, according to the Federal Basic Curriculum are not obligatory, and secondly, if a region or a school decides to provide these classes, the amount of hours allocated for them is less than for the state language of the Russian Federation and Russian Literature classes – 4 Tatar classes to 8 Russian classes per week in the tenth and eleventh grades together. This contradiction between the Russian and Tatar formal acts at this point is rendering impossible the full implementation of the Russian and Tatar legislation on language education.

The Federal National Educational Standards require, except for the obligatory Russian Language and Russian Literature classes, two mandatory subjects - Native Language and Native Literature at primary and general school. In this context, either the Russian language as the native language or one of the languages of the Russian Federation is considered as the native language. The choice of the language taught at school as the Native Language is based on the application by parents or legal guardian (changes in 2018 of the federal law №273 ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’, 2012).

The federal law №273 ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’ states that a language of education must be defined by the local legal provisions of the educational organisations. The analysis of the school statutes and provisions on languages of education indicated that all investigated schools recognise Russian as the language of instruction and training. They allow carrying out the extracurricular educational activities (contests, competitions, concerts, school theatre, quizzes, etc.) in various
languages taught at the school, the choice of the language depends on the aim of the event, its theme and target audience.

Regarding the Native Language classes, all examined schools provide them at every level of school education. At these schools, mainly the Tatar language is taught as the native language. Although all the schools offer the Russian language classes, there are the applications for the Russian Language and Russian Literature classes as the native language only at Kazan School №18. This can mean that parents in smaller settlements than the capital consider the Tatar language skills necessary for their children. Although the scope of this research (only with one Kazan school under investigation) does not allow us to draw such conclusion, it can be a hypothesis for the further studies on this topic. However, the survey data analysis shed some light on this assumption.

The school curricula and timetables analysis showed that all four participant schools provide the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes for two levels of language competence – beginning and advanced. The beginning level is mostly designed for schoolchildren from non-Tatar and Tatar-mixed families. The same textbooks and studying materials for the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes are used at all the schools, because they are included into the federal list of textbooks for comprehensive schools of primary, general and secondary education, which requires its adherence by the educational organisations. The schools provide the same amount of the classes: 2 hours for the Native Language and 1 hour for the Native Literature classes in every grade at primary and general school, 2 classes in total at secondary school. This meets the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standards and Indicative Curricula for Educational Organisations of the Russian Federation. Notwithstanding, while examining the school timetables of the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 studying years, the imbalance between amount of the Tatar and Russian language classes was revealed. This reveals non-compliance with Article 8.3 which requires teaching the state languages of the Republic of Tatarstan in equal amounts.
5.2 Survey Analysis

337 responses were collected initially: 112 teachers, 110 children and 115 parents or legal guardians of schoolchildren or their legal guardians took part in the online survey. While analysing and sampling the data, the researcher had to eliminate 3 responses of the schoolchildren, as the responses contained inappropriate (vulgar) vocabulary and were not consistent with the questionnaire. In total, the final number of the responses, which were analysed in this study, comprised 334.

In Table 5 the scope of the participants’ ethnicities in numbers is presented. As you can see in the table, despite the examined schools being Russian-medium, the majority of respondents are Tatars. In total, 73% of the respondents are Tatars, 18% are Russians, 7.8% have mixed Tatar and Russian origin and 1.2% are comprised of the representatives of the other ethnicities. Notably, in the contrast to the other participant groups, the majority of ethnic Russian respondents were represented by the teaching staff (31.3%).

Table 5: Study Participants and Their Ethnicities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity Participants</th>
<th>Tatar</th>
<th>Russian</th>
<th>Tatar and Russian</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>67 (59.8%)</td>
<td>35 (31.3%)</td>
<td>8 (7.1%)</td>
<td>1 (0.9%) Uzbek 1 (0.9%) Ukrainian-Russian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolchildren</td>
<td>77 (72%)</td>
<td>18 (16.8%)</td>
<td>11 (10.3%)</td>
<td>1 (0.9%) Udmurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents/ Legal Guardians</td>
<td>91 (79.1%)</td>
<td>17 (14.8%)</td>
<td>6 (5.2%)</td>
<td>1 (0.9%) Udmurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>235 (70%)</td>
<td>70 (21%)</td>
<td>25 (7%)</td>
<td>4 (2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.1 Tatar Language Use in Different Domains

Highlighting the focus of the research on education and upbringing, the majority of the questions were concentrated on school and family as two main domains of the language use. The other spheres of the language use were touched upon in some of the respondents’ comments.

The results concerning the Tatar language use at home underline the clear imbalance between the Tatar and Russian language use within the family communication. 115 (34.4%) respondents have indicated Russian as the language used at home, while Tatar was mentioned only by 71 (21.3%) respondents. Both state languages of the Republic of Tatarstan were chosen by 136 (40.8%) participants. However, if to distinguish Russian and Tatar or Tatar and Russian as two different answers, assuming that the first mentioned language is more popular in the domestic domain, then Russian and Tatar are spoken by 82 (24.6%) respondents which is more than those who indicated only Tatar or Tatar and Russian, 54 (16.2%), languages. In this follows, the majority of the participants mostly speak Russian at home, although their mother tongue is Tatar.

In school domain 2 aspects of language usage were analysed: in-class and outside-of-class. Outside-of-class language use includes the extracurricular activities like school events and communication with the schoolchildren, teachers, school administration, staff, guests and parents or legal guardians of the students. Analysis of the in-class use of the Tatar language by the teachers led to the following findings. 18 (11.6%) teachers speak only Tatar at their classes, where 13 of them are the teachers of the Tatar language. This piqued the interest of the researcher: why did 5 other teachers speak Tatar at the schools with the Russian language of instruction? The thorough data analysis revealed that these teachers work at the primary level of Bazar-Matak and Leskhoz comprehensive secondary schools, which are located in a settlement and a village respectively. The further analysis was connected with the assumption that there is an association between the language use and location of the users. 13 (11.6%) teachers indicated that they often speak Tatar within their classes. They either teach humanitarian subjects in Bazar-Matak and Leskhoz, or work with the primary classes at
Arsk school no.1, which is located in a town. All of the teachers working at Kazan school no.18 (except those who teach the Tatar language) answered that they never speak Tatar within their classes. Taken together, these results suggest the following:

- the location of a school can influence the language use and consequently forms the bottom-up school language policy;
- children at primary school, who have just come from preschool educational organisations or been educated at home, tend to speak more Tatar than the students of the basic or secondary school, who have already adapted to the teaching system at a Russian-medium school and feel comfortable with Russian as the language of instructions;
- schoolchildren at the primary level make the teachers switch from the instructions in Russian to Tatar, thereby establishing the language policy within the class.

According to the statistics of the survey, the interaction in the Tatar language at schools outside of the classes between the teachers and their colleagues, schoolchildren, school administration, technical and kitchen staff, guests or schoolchildren’s parents is minimised. The teachers mainly speak Tatar at school only with the technical and kitchen staff. This comprises almost half of the teachers: 52 (46%) teachers indicated that they ‘always’ or ‘often’ communicate with the staff in the Tatar language. Among the schoolchildren’s responses, the answers they ‘never’ or ‘seldom’ speak Tatar at school prevail. This indicates that schoolchildren prefer using the Russian language in everyday communication more if they do not have to speak Tatar, for example, like at the Native Language and Native Literature classes.

To define the other domains of the Tatar language usage by contemporary schoolchildren, the researcher decided to investigate if they speak Tatar outside of school, where and with whom. The results showed that 78 (73%) schoolchildren use the Tatar language outside of school. The surprising aspect of this data is that the correlation between the ethnicity of the schoolchildren and their use of the Tatar language is not proved, since some schoolchildren with the Tatar origin answered ‘no’ to the question if they use the Tatar language outside of school, as well as the respondents of the other ethnicities reported speaking Tatar. However, among 29 (27%)
schoolchildren denying speaking Tatar, there is no one from Leskhoz – the village of the Republic of Tatarstan. This proves the correlation between the locality and the language use: the smaller the locality, the more people know and speak the Tatar language.

As for the domains of the Tatar language use, to the questions where they speak Tatar, the most popular answers can be formulated in the following way “at home”, “in a Tatar village” and “outside”. The responses to the next question clarified that “outside” meant “with friends”. However, the most frequent answers were that they speak Tatar with their families and relatives. Most of the schoolchildren specified their answers, mentioning the family members, namely parents and grandparents. It is noteworthy that although the survey was conducted in Russian, some of the respondents indicated their grandparents in Tatar. These answers in the Tatar language, as a result of code-switching from Russian when the topic concerned family bones, highlighted that the main domain where the children mainly speak Tatar remains home.

It was planned to find out the languages spoken by schoolchildren outside of school not only to determine the other domains of the Tatar language use, but also to identify which languages the children are fostered to speak and learn by contemporary society. Therefore, the respondents were offered to complete the sentence If I need to address a stranger (passerby, public transport workers, sellers, etc.), I will speak the ... language and explain their choice of the languages. The results revealed that only 2 (1.9%) children out of 107 would use the Tatar language. 8 (7.5%) respondents indicated two languages, justifying their choice that if the stranger replied them in Russian, they would continue the conversation in Russian. 97 (90.6%) schoolchildren grounded their choice of the Russian language citing the ignorance of the majority of the Tatar language. All their answers were similar: either “it is much easier to speak Russian to strangers”, or “all people in my locality speak Russian” and “not everyone knows Tatar”. All in all, we can conclude, if there are no factors forcing to speak Tatar, the society encourages the usage of the Russian language as a lingua franca. The main reason of this choice is the limited Tatar language skills of the residents of the Republic of Tatarstan.
5.2.2 Motivating Factors of Learning and Speaking Tatar

71.3% of all the participated schoolchildren have ethnic Tatar heritage. Interestingly, 95 (89%) out of the 107 schoolchildren take the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes when the amount of the respondents from Tatar or Tatar-Russian mixed families is calculated to be 88 (82.3%) children. This allows us to assume that at least 7 participants learn the Tatar language as a native language at school. However, the thorough analysis of the individual responses demonstrated that the amount of children from Russian families taking the Tatar language classes is even higher, because there are Tatars who have chosen the Russian language to be taught at Native Language and Native Language Literature classes. In what follows, that the choice of a language for the classes does not depend only on the ethnicity, but also other factors play essential roles. What are these factors motivating the children to learn and speak the Tatar language? Do the schoolchildren in the Republic of Tatarstan have the motivation to learn and use the Tatar language?

Taking into account the findings of the legislative acts analysis, the numbers of the classes taught in the Tatar language were compared with the amount prescribed by the Federal State Educational Standards. It was discovered that the language classes’ timetables of these participant schools comply with the Standards. The survey revealed that all the children who chose Tatar for the Native Language and Native Language Literature classes, had 2 hours of the Tatar Language and 1 hour of the Tatar Literature classes. However, 45 (47%) schoolchildren learning the Tatar language voiced their disagreement with the amount of classes allocated for the Native Language Literature. They expressed their willingness to have more than 1 hour of the Tatar Literature class per week. This is the first proof that the children want to learn the Tatar language.

The other proof of the motivation for learning and speaking Tatar is the following statistics: 71 (66.4%) schoolchildren responded that they want to learn the Tatar language. The majority of the reasons were “it is my mother tongue” and “everyone must know his/her mother tongue”. Moreover, 90 (78%) parents and legal guardians confirmed that they wanted their children to have Tatar Language classes at school. They claimed that the Tatar language is necessary in order to live in Tatarstan
and they expressed the hope that the Tatar language skills will be useful for their children in the future. The children, however, rejected the opportunity to choose and learn any other subjects with Tatar as the language of instruction, reasoning that the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes are enough to maintain the language they obtained in bilingual Tatarstan and improve the skills to the level they will need.

When the parents, grandparents and relatives foster speaking the Tatar language within family communication, it is one of the motivations for children to learn and speak Tatar. According to the results, 83 (77.5%) schoolchildren agreed that they felt their parents and families’ support in speaking Tatar. The majority of the parents or legal guardians, 97 (84.3%), confirmed, if their children wanted and tried to speak Tatar, they encouraged this commitment. Furthermore, the necessity to teach and learn the Tatar language at school was emphasised by all the respondents groups. The opinion of the teachers 95 (89%) and parents or legal guardians 88 (76.5%) that the Tatar language teaching at schools is necessary can influence the children’s willingness to attend the Tatar Language and Literature classes. 70 (65.4%) schoolchildren agreed that it is important to learn the Tatar language at school.

The majority of the respondents stated that the Tatar language skills are beneficial. To the question if the command of the Tatar language gives any advantages, the majority of the respondents, 239 (71.5%), answered in the affirmative. The scope of the examples and reasons, given by the respondents, can be summarised with the following answers “it is needed for employment”, “it is directly connected with culture and traditions”, “it develops and expands horizons, giving more opportunities to read the Tatar literature and to learn history” and “it facilitates the learning of the other Turkic languages”. In addition, most of the participants highlighted the communicative benefits of knowing the language as the most essential reason for learning the Tatar language. It is worth noting, the answers of the schoolchildren demonstrated the lowest percentage (65.4%) comparing to the other target groups and the smallest difference between those who claim that there are advantages of the Tatar language command and those who disagree. 37 (34.6%) children confessed that they cannot indicate any benefits of knowing the Tatar language, since everyone in the Republic of Tatarstan speaks Russian, and, moreover, they are more interested in learning English as it is the
language of international communication. Moreover, half of the schoolchildren answered that they would like to substitute some of the Tatar Language classes with the other courses to learn Russian or foreign languages. This contradictory result shows the tendency of prioritising a foreign language over the regional language of the Russian Federation.

Overall, the main motivations for children to learn and speak the Tatar language are the opinion and support of their family and teachers, the possibility to use the language in practice, the fear of Tatar language and literature loss, the wish to know the state language of the republic they reside and to be closer to the Tatar culture. The study demonstrates that the motivation level is high. Although there are schoolchildren whose willingness to learn world languages challenges the interest in the mother tongue or the regional language, there is still hope that the Tatar language is demanded and popular among the youth, because the majority displayed their desire to learn the Tatar Literature and speak the Tatar language.

5.2.3 Tatar Language Skills as the Result of Tatar Language Education

The effectiveness of the Tatar language education is primarily manifested by its results – the Tatar language skills of the objects of the language education. With this in mind, the participants of the survey were asked to assess their language skills.

Initially, two generations of the participants are compared as the objects of different curricula, namely, preceding the year 2012 and contemporary. Two target groups of this study, teachers and parents/legal guardians, represent the objects of the previous language-education curricula, while the ninth grade schoolchildren are those who are educated in accordance with the new Federal State Educational Standards, implemented in 2012, and current Tatar language curriculum. Chart 1 demonstrates the results of the language skills evaluation by all the three participant groups. To gather this data, the participants were asked to self-evaluate. The scale for evaluating included five grades from ‘no functional ability’ to ‘exceptional ability’; four different skills were assessed: speaking, understanding spoken Tatar, reading comprehension and writing. Notably, in the responses of the teachers and parents/legal guardians, the grade
‘exceptional ability’ prevails in all the language skills. This means that the majority of the elder respondents are fluent in Tatar. The majority of the children did not indicate the high language level, which suggests that they do not feel comfortable with their level of the Tatar language skills.

Examining every skill separately, we can figure out that only 16% of the teachers and parents/legal guardians cannot say anything in Tatar. The percentage of the children is lower, it comprises only 5%. We can assume that the speaking skills of the children are medium. As for listening comprehension, this skill is developed in majority of the schoolchildren the best. Firstly, only 2 (2%) students learning the Tatar language indicated having no functional ability of understanding spoken Tatar. Secondly, this is the skill, in which more than 30% of the children have exceptional abilities. In reading and understanding the Tatar texts, the schoolchildren show moderate abilities; this is the level that is most often indicated by the children. The chart showing the writing skills evaluation reveals average abilities of the students. All in all, as it is shown in the chart, the schoolchildren have intermediate level of the Tatar language skills, in comparison to the elder generation, whose ability in all the skills is mainly exceptional. These results lead to the idea that the Tatar language curriculum should concentrate on improving all the language skills in order to have an effective impact on the contemporary schoolchildren.

The schoolchildren were asked if the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes contribute to improving their language skills. More than half of them (66.4%) responded positively. Besides, 85 (79%) schoolchildren affirmed that the extra activities in Tatar are regularly held at schools. Some of the respondents reported that every year they stage Tatar plays, participate in poetry reading contests and arrange other activities at schools in Tatar. In accordance with the language curriculum, these events are organised within the obligatory ‘Tatar Language Weeks’ and aimed at the increasing the schoolchildren’s interest in Tatar culture and language, expanding their knowledge and mastering their language skills. These all influence on the effectiveness of the Tatar language curriculum.
5.2.4 Changes Increasing the Effectiveness of Tatar Language Education

Several parents admitted that the Tatar language curriculum is difficult for their children. They assume that it overloads the students, because it is focused on grammar, formal speech and theoretical knowledge of the language. Remarkably, the half of the parents (51%) confessed that they help their children with Tatar homework due to the difficulties the schoolchildren encountered in understanding topics and the tasks. On the one hand, it can be explained with the findings in the previous chapter: the schoolchildren’s reading and writing Tatar language skills are not strong. On the other hand, this reveals the weak points of the current Tatar language curriculum. This begs the question: what actions can be offered to improve the effectiveness of Tatar language classes?
First of all, the schoolchildren were asked to indicate what they like in the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes and with which of the aspects they do not feel comfortable. Surprisingly, the children have found more positive aspects in the classes of the Tatar Literature. They confessed that they relish reading the Tatar literary works and find them compelling, nevertheless the outdated vocabulary and literary language challenges their reading comprehension. The majority complained that one academic hour is not enough to accomplish the curriculum and they expressed the wish to expand the amount of the Tatar Literature classes. As for the Tatar Language class, the learners expressed their doubts that the exercises in the textbooks improve the language skills. According to the respondents, the exercises have mainly grammatical tasks and do not concentrate on phrases and speech patterns the schoolchildren would be able to use in practice.

The following step was to ask all the respondents if they want to change something in the Tatar language curriculum. The responses to this question were controversial. Although the possibility of any changes in the curriculum was perceived with the scepticism by more than half of the respondents (66%), the majority (89%) agreed that in-class activities should be developed. The answers about the modification of the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes and activity forms did not significantly differ. The participants requested to pay more attention to in-class discussions and promote modern Tatar literature. With this, consequently, they give a high priority to the practice of speaking skills and reading comprehension. The teachers of the Tatar language confirmed that the common curriculum for the Tatar Language class throughout the whole Republic of Tatarstan focuses, unfortunately, mainly on grammar-oriented approach, while the communication-oriented approach would make the Tatar education programme more successful and attractive for schoolchildren. Moreover, to make the classes more rewarding and interesting the respondents offered to organise more in-class conversations, create situations for unprepared dialogs, read more Tatar literature, watch authentic films and discuss them. In other words, they wished for the schoolchildren to become acquainted with the products of the Tatar culture and experience linguistic environment within a classroom.
Further findings dealt with the question in which school grade the teaching of the Tatar language and Tatar Literature was necessary. The results were surprising, because they significantly differed from the findings of the pilot study, implemented before the beginning of the studying year 2019/2020 and with the fewer amounts of participants. In the previous study, the majority of the respondents preferred keeping the opportunity to take the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes throughout all the 11 years of schooling. The current research showed that the majority of schoolchildren preferred to complete the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature curriculum finishing the eighth grade. The elder generation of the respondents, teachers and parents/legal guardians, claimed that it would be enough to provide the native language classes till the end of the basic school – the ninth grade. The common wish to vacate the secondary level of school education can be easily explained – in the tenth and eleventh grades the schoolchildren require more time to concentrate on the subjects they need to learn for federal state exams.

The majority of the respondents expressed their opinion that the Tatar language education would be more demanded in the modern society, if, firstly, the school leavers were allowed to take the final exams in Tatar and, secondly, the colleges and universities in Tatarstan offered education with the Tatar language of instructions. Most of the teachers and parents/legal guardians expressed their concern that, although the Tatar legislation proclaims two state languages on the territory of the republic and guarantees their equal use, in fact, conditions for using the Tatar language after school education are not developed.

6. Discussion

The aim of this research was to find out to what extent the current Tatar education, first, reflects the legislation of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan regarding the language education and, second, conforms to the contemporary requirements and expectations of the social actors engaged in the educational process. This aim was achieved by the coherent process of answering the research questions.
First of all, the corpus of legislative acts and their implementation in the educational system were examined. This revealed that the Russian and Tatar laws and official documents are mainly consistent with each other. The Tatar language policy with respect to the hierarchy of political regulations and taking into account the supremacy of the federal statutes does not contradict the language policy of the Russian Federation. The legislations on both levels establish the Tatar and Russian languages as the state languages of the Republic of Tatarstan. The analysed acts guarantee an enabling environment for preservation, teaching, learning and developing all the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation. The Russian law on education empowers the educational organisations of its republics to include in their curricula teaching the regional languages. It requires the curricula to be in conformity with the Federal State Educational Standards. However, while conducting this research the problem area was discovered. Despite the Tatar law on education requiring to develop the school curriculum in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standards, it prescribes teaching Tatar and Russian in equal amount as the state languages of the Republic of Tatarstan. The Standards, nonetheless, allocate different amount of classes for Russian and other languages in primary, basic and secondary school curricula. This contradiction complicates the education management and control the de facto language policy within the language education. Moreover, it challenges the implementation of the language policy in Tatarstan by education workers.

The analysis of the legislation acts dealing with the language policies and language education in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan and the review of the documentations reporting on the implementation the policy in contemporary schools of Tatarstan brought us to the following conclusions.

1. The top-down Russian language policy promotes the teaching of the regional languages, but it leaves the priority of the Russian language as the state language throughout the whole nation.

2. The Russian language policy in education does not demand the acquisition of other languages except for the Russian language. The only linguistic aim of the obligatory basic education indicated in the Federal State Educational Standards is Russian language proficiency of all the school leavers.
3. Russian Language and Russian Literature classes are obligatory at comprehensive schools throughout the Russian Federation, regardless of the specialisation of schools and languages of instructions.

4. The Federal State Educational Standards and the Federal Basic Curriculum reflecting the Russian language policy allocate and require fewer academic hours for teaching regional and minority languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation than the Russian language.

5. The Russian and Tatar language policy in education permits the free choice of the language or languages of education at primary and basic schools. However, in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standards, the education at secondary level of comprehensive school must be provided only in Russian as the language of instructions.

6. The state exams, which are obligatory to finish the secondary school and apply for the Russian universities, are held only in the Russian language.

7. The Republic of Tatarstan, being a sovereign republic, proclaims the equal status of the Tatar and Russian languages on the territory of Tatarstan.

8. In Tatarstan, the school education at primary and basic levels is provided in Tatar, Russian and six more languages of the Republic of Tatarstan.

9. To support and encourage the Tatar language education, the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes are guaranteed at every level of school education throughout the whole Republic of Tatarstan.

Taking into account all the aspects mentioned above concerning language education, we can conclude that the language policy of the Russian Federation emphasises the superiority and necessity of the Russian language throughout the whole state. The Russian language policy reflected in the Federal State Educational Standards can be seen as discriminatory towards the minority and regional languages in the educational sphere by establishing fewer amounts of Native Language and Literature classes than the Russian Language and Literature and providing the opportunity to receive the secondary education and to take the state exams only in Russian. Although the language policy of the Republic of Tatarstan gives the right to receive the primary, basic and secondary education in mother tongues accepted as the languages of the
peoples of the Russian Federation, its implementation is impossible and illegal in accordance with the Russian language policy.

The second step to attain the aim of this research was made and it was to find out, what kind of attitudes the social actors of the educational process, namely teachers, schoolchildren and their parents or legal guardians, have to the current Tatar language education. Although only four schools were involved in the study, the results can provide insight into the current situation dictated by the contemporary Tatar language education and attitudes of the social actors to this. The participants encompassed different social groups varying in place of residence (city, town, settlement and village), age (elder generation – teachers, parents and legal guardians, younger generation - schoolchildren of the ninth grade), inclusion in the educational process (directly and indirectly) and roles in the educational process (giving and receiving the education). Thus, the responses collected while conducting this research can be generalised and give the understanding if the language curriculum meets the needs of those involved in the educational process and how it should be developed.

The attitudes to the Tatar language education were assessed on four criteria: the Tatar language use within the educational process and willingness to use Tatar in other domains, motivation to learn Tatar, level of satisfaction with the current language education and wishes to change the Tatar language curriculum. In this research “the attitudes” mean if the social actors need the Tatar language education and for what, if they consider it being effective and in which forms of education it would be more effective.

The analysis of the Tatar language use showed that not every respondent knows the language and consequently does not speak Tatar in spite of living in Tatarstan. There are several of the schoolchildren who do not take Tatar language and literature classes preferring to learn other languages. They claim that the command of Tatar is not necessary in Tatarstan and the lack of the Tatar language skills does not negatively impact on their life. Therefore, they think that the Tatar language education is not rewarding. This is the minority of the research participants.

Those who use the Tatar language confessed that they mainly use it in everyday life in communication with the family members and friends. The majority of
the respondents indicated the ability to make conversation in Tatar as the main advantage of knowing the Tatar language. In spite of that, they assumed the importance of the Tatar language and Tatar literature classes. They voiced their belief that Tatar language education gives the opportunity to be closer to the culture of the Republic of Tatarstan, its history and expands the horizon. The majority of respondents consider the Tatar language education essential for an individual as well as the whole society of the Republic of Tatarstan and helps to preserve the Tatar language and Tatar culture. One unanticipated finding was that not only schoolchildren from the ethnic Tatar families, but also learners with ethnic Russian origin acknowledge the need of the Tatar language and feel encouraged to obtain knowledge of the Tatar culture and experience the benefits of the bilingualism.

In the chapter reporting on survey findings concerning the language use, it was founded that the Tatar language is more frequently and actively spoken in smaller localities than in the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan. This reveals the tendency of popularisation the Russian language in the urbanised centre of Tatarstan and preservation of the Tatar language in rural areas. Hence, the attitudes to the Tatar language and the necessity of the Tatar language education differ depending on the territory.

The effectiveness of the Tatar language education is evident in the language skills acquired in the process of education. The data analysis showed, on average, the moderate Tatar language competencies of the research participants. However, the difference between the language levels of two generations is distinct: the teachers and parents or legal guardians assessed their level higher than schoolchildren. One of the possible explanations for this might be that they received different language education. As the analysis of the modern language curriculum revealed that, firstly, the Tatar language is not compulsory to learn at school and, secondly, there are only two hours allocated for the Tatar language and one hour for the Tatar Literature classes at primary and basic school. The reports of the teachers highlighted that the reduced amount of the academic hours for the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes makes it impossible to learn the whole volume of the material.
The data analysis showed that the Russian education policy does not imply any forms of the native language knowledge assessment or monitoring at school, consequently the results of the Tatar language education in Tatarstan cannot be officially evaluated by the educational authorities. This means that the schoolchildren leaving the basic or secondary school do not have to take the Tatar language examination. On the one hand, the absence of a final test can discourage the schoolchildren from learning the Tatar language, since one of the main functions of the assessment is rewarding and motivating. On the other hand, this reduces the stress of learning and encourages the atmosphere of academic freedom. The schoolchildren are not required to obtain any specific skills to pass an exam and the teachers are allowed to introduce various topics and forms of in-class sessions and activities outside of the classes within the Tatar language curriculum. In both cases it influences the attitude on Tatar language education.

The last research question, likewise the previous topical issues, was considered while undertaking this study and ultimately answered. Evaluating the effectiveness of the Tatar language education and its adoption in practice by the social actors revealed that several changes in the Tatar language curriculum and forms of the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes are needed to be accomplished. When referring to a practical implication, the recommendations for the official moderators developing the native, namely, Tatar language education and the teachers of the Tatar language were proposed.

1. To pursue the negotiation with the federal authorities responsible for the language policy in education on observance the linguistic equality of the state languages in the Republic of Tatarstan.

2. To provide the opportunity to take the final exams in all the subjects in the Tatar language.

3. To prescribe the compulsory Tatar language learning for those who acquire the comprehensive basic education at schools in the Republic of Tatarstan.

4. To admit to the colleges and universities of the Republic of Tatarstan at the majors taught in the Tatar language.
5. To increase the number of the Tatar language classes at comprehensive school in order to promote the Tatar literature and develop the reading comprehension skills of the young generations in Tatar.

6. To organise the regular meetings of the schoolchildren with the Tatar writers, artists, politicians, scientists and other famous people within the Tatar language education and hold discussions and master-classes with them in the Tatar language.

7. To adapt teaching programmes for the integrated classes, for example, Tatar Language and History, Tatar and Russian Literature, Tatar Language and Art.

8. To facilitate the educational blocks with the complex grammatical topics in the in-class teaching materials.

9. To incorporate into the in-class work interactive forms of teaching and learning, for example, role play and discussions.

10. To develop exercises fostering the dialogical speech and public speaking skills.

11. To include an ethno-regional component, ‘natsionalno-regionalniy komponent’ (Gaifullin, 1999) in the language curriculum.

12. To enhance the cultural and ethno-regional components in the Tatar language curriculum with including in the in-class sessions authentic Tatar books, cartoons and films.

All in all, these recommendations are based on the synthesis of the educational language policy’s analysis and responses of the research participants. After looking at how the Tatar language teaching can be efficiently accomplished and how further it can increase the motivation of learning and speaking the Tatar language, it is concluded: to meet the contemporary needs of those directly or indirectly involved in the educational system, Tatar language education must undergo changes.

The relevance of the research results can be proved by the annual message of the president of the Republic of Tatarstan, Rustam Minnikhanov, to the parliament. Minnikhanov (2019) recognised the existence of the problems in Tatar language education. He emphasised the importance of evolving the teaching methods of the Tatar language as the state language of Tatarstan. Although it was one of the main targets of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tatarstan set by the president, it was not reached and no successful process was traced. Minnikhanov also noted that unresolved
issues regarding the language education causes “reasonable dissatisfactions from the citizens”.

Taking into account the parents’ protests in 2017, which were described earlier in this thesis, the recommendations of requiring the obligatory Tatar language education and increasing the Tatar Literature classes could be considered as unjustifiable. One of reasons that the parents were against of the obligatory Tatar language education, was that the final exams can be taken only in Russian and the examination of the Russian language is mandatory for every school leaver throughout the whole country. The social actors acting against of the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes concerned that the obligatory classes of the regional language would negatively influence on the results of the final state exams in the Russian language. However, the review of the reports of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tatarstan (2017) on the of final state examination’s results in 2012-2017 demonstrated that the average score in Tatarstan is higher than the national average score in all the compulsory subjects. It should be mentioned, that the optional Tatar language education was introduced only in 2018. Thus, the recommendations as the practical impact of this research can be claimed feasible and reasonable.

This thesis deals with the language policy in the Russian Federation and its federal subject, the Republic of Tatarstan, therefore it is essential in this part of research results’ discussion to throw light on the possible political changes affecting on the language policy. In 2020, it is planned to hold a referendum aimed to amend the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The legislative proposal № 88524-7 ‘The Law of the Russian Federation on Amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation’ (2020) establishes the Russian language as the state language of the Russian Federation throughout its territory as the language of “the state-forming ethnicity”. The notion “the state-forming ethnicity” in the Constitution will be against of the democratic principle in federal state, since it emphasises the superiority of the Russian ethnicity over other ethnic groups. This, in turn, can lead to the changes of the language policy and have an adversely impact on the harmonious inter-ethnic cohabitation with the Russian Federation and its federal subjects. In this context, it is crucial to prevent such
consequences by treating the cultures and languages of the other peoples with respect and consideration.

The current research extends our knowledge of the language situation in the Russian Federation, namely, in the bilingual Republic of Tatarstan providing analytical and empirical investigation of the de jure and de facto language policy, language education and attitudes towards it. In further studies the scope can be expanded and the research can be undertaken involving more participants representing various social groups, including the other languages of the Republic of Tatarstan or focusing on other republics of the Russian Federation.

7. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that the Tatar language education is a sensitive subject in the Republic of Tatarstan, because of the recent changes in the language policy of the Russian Federation. The mandatory teaching the Tatar and Russian languages at all the schools of Tatarstan was the implementation of the Tatar language policy, prescribing two state languages in the sovereign Republic of Tatarstan and promoting equal treatment of these languages. Notwithstanding, the Russian federal legislation takes precedence over the Tatar republican law and requires compliance with the principle of voluntariness in education. In accordance with the Russian law on education, only the Russian language is taught on a mandatory basis throughout the Russian Federation.

The contemporary Tatar comprehensive-school education is conditional upon the Federal State Educational Standards, which are prescriptive for all the educational organisations throughout Russia. Nowadays the Tatar language education is optional and provided at schools in Tatarstan only within the compulsory course ‘Native Language’.

The attitudes of the social actors to the Tatar language education vary. On the one hand, those who are involved in the educational process have the positive attitudes to the Tatar language education, underlining that the Tatar language proficiency is essential for them, regardless their ethnicity. The majority believe that, despite the Russian language skills are enough to live in Tatarstan and be part of the Tatar societal
life without feeling discriminated, the Tatar language is the connection to the culture and history of all the ethnic groups residing Tatarstan. Therefore, they want to learn, preserve the Tatar language and transmit it to the following generations. On the other hand, the participants of the educational process think that the Tatar language curriculum should be changed to satisfy the linguistic needs of the contemporary society. The tendency of using the Tatar language mainly as the language of communication imposes the requirements to the Tatar language education, namely, the Tatar language curriculum should be eased and the foci of the classes should have more practical-oriented character. In addition to that, the social actors expressed the concern that the Tatar language education is optional, though Tatar is a state language of the Republic of Tatarstan.

The asymmetrical bilingualism in Tatarstan, which was studied by local and foreign linguists, sociologists and sociolinguists (Guzelbaeva and Fatkhullova, 2012; Wigglesworth-Baker, 2015) is negatively affected by the current language policy of the Russian Federation. The linguistic imbalance between the Tatar and Russian languages skills of the residents of Tatarstan will be increased if the Tatar language education remains without any meaningful changes, such as introducing the compulsory learning of the Tatar language at the comprehensive school and improving the effectiveness of the education by upgrading Tatar language curriculum.

The scientific study, unfortunately, cannot change the language situation in the Republic of Tatarstan or significantly influence the top-down language policy, but it can reveal the problematic points and draw attention of authorities and social linguistic activists to them. This research identified the inconsistencies of the language policy of the federal centre and the regions and demonstrated the linguistic needs and educational expectations of the social actors. There is a belief that this research will contribute to the development of the Tatar language education and the further investigations in the field.

In conclusion, there are several important changes that need to be made in the language policies of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan. The negotiation of the federal and regional authorities is vital for the future development of the language education and maintaining the inter-ethnic harmony within the federal subjects of the Russian federation and the whole country.
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Appendix A: Questionnaire for Teachers

1. In which city/town/settlement/village do you live?
2. At which school do you work? (e.g. Kazan, №1)
3. Your gender.
   - female
   - male
4. What is your length of service?
   - less than 5 years
   - 5-10 years
   - 11-15 years
   - 16-25 years
   - more than 25 years
5. What is your ethnicity?
   - Tatar
   - Russian
   - Tatar (from mother’s side) and Russian (from father’s side)
   - Russian (from mother’s side) and Tatar (from father’s side)
   - other _______
6. What language/languages do you speak at home?
7. Which subject(s) do you teach?
8. Do you speak Tatar at your classes?
   - never
   - seldom
   - often
   - always
9. Do you speak Tatar at school?

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<th>never</th>
<th>seldom</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>always</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With schoolchildren</td>
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<td>With colleagues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No functional ability (I cannot at all)</td>
<td>Minimal ability (I do a bit)</td>
<td>Moderate ability (Neither good, nor bad)</td>
<td>Strong ability (I am competent, but some words and phrases cause difficulties)</td>
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<td>Speaking</td>
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11. In your opinion, is teaching the Tatar language at school necessary?
   - yes
   - no
   - other ________

12. In which forms (classes) should the Tatar language be taught?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
13. Explain your answer to the previous question.

14. Would you like to change anything in curriculum concerning the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes?
   o yes
   o no

15. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
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<th>yes</th>
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<tr>
<td>What would you like to change in curriculum concerning the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes?</td>
<td>Why would not you like to change anything in curriculum concerning the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. What would you offer to include in the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes to make them more rewarding and interesting?

17. If you had a chance to replace Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes with any other classes, would you do this?
   o yes
   o no
   o yes, but not all the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes

18. Continue the sentences:

   If I had a chance to replace the Tatar language or the Tatar Literature classes with any other classes, I would choose ________.

19. I would choose the classes mentioned in the previous question, because ________. 

20. In your opinion, does the command of the Tatar language give any advantages?
   o yes
   o no
21. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which advantages does the command of the Tatar language give?</td>
<td>Why, in your opinion, does not the command of the Tatar language give any advantages?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. Continue the sentences:

To make the Tatar language more prestigious, it is needed to ________.

23. The Tatar language would be more demanded/popular, if ________.

24. Here you can write your opinion regarding the Tatar language teaching at schools of the Republic of Tatarstan (if some items were not touched upon in the survey).

________

25. Thank You for your answers!

________
Appendix B: Questionnaire for Schoolchildren

1. In which city/town/settlement/village do you live?
2. Which school do you study (e.g. Kazan, №1)
3. In which form (class) are you?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7
   - 8
   - 9
   - 10
   - 11
4. Your gender
   - female
   - male
5. What is your ethnicity?
   - Tatar
   - Russian
   - Tatar (from mother’s side) and Russian (from father’s side),
   - Russian (from mother’s side) and Tatar (from father’s side),
   - other ______
6. What language/languages do you speak at home?
7. Do you take Tatar classes at school?
   - yes
   - now
8. How many Tatar Literature classes in a week do you have?
   - 1
   - 2
9. How many Tatar Language classes in a week do you have?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - other ________

10. In your opinion, how many Tatar Literature classes in a week is enough?
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5
    - other ________

11. In your opinion, how many Tatar language classes in a week is enough?
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5
    - other ________

12. Would you like to study any subjects in Tatar?
    - yes
    - now
13. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which subjects would you like to study in Tatar?</td>
<td>Why would not you like to study any subjects in Tatar?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Explain your answer to the previous question.

15. In which Tatar language subgroup are you?

- o advanced
- o beginning
- o we do not have any subgroups
- o other _______

16. Would you like to change your Tatar language subgroup?

17. Explain your answer to the previous question.

18. Do you want to learn the Tatar language?

- o yes
- o no
- o other _______

19. Why? Explain your answer to the previous question.

20. In your opinion, will you need the Tatar language in the future, after finishing the comprehensive school?

- o yes
- o no

21. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where will you need the Tatar language after finishing the comprehensive school?</td>
<td>Why will you not need the Tatar language after finishing the comprehensive school?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22. Do you use any web-sites, apps for learning the Tatar language?
   o  yes
   o  no
   o  other ________
23. Does your teacher use any Tatar internet resources, web-sites or apps at the classes?
   o  yes
   o  no
   o  other ________
24. If there was an app for learning the Tatar language, would you use the app? If you already use, then choose “other” and write its name.
   o  yes
   o  no
   o  other ________
25. If there was an app for watching Tatar films, would you use the app? If you already use, then choose “other” and write its name.
   o  yes
   o  no
   o  other ________
26. If there was an app for reading Tatar literature, would you use the app? If you already use, then choose “other” and write its name.
   o  yes
   o  no
   o  other ________
27. Do you have any extracurricular Tatar events at school (e.g. Tatar language week with the contests/events/concerts, Tatar poetry ready, etc)?
   o  yes
   o  no
28. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name these extracurricular Tatar events</td>
<td>Which extracurricular events would you like to be held at your school?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
29. Do you have a possibility to choose any extra activities taught in Tatar (music, sport, computer science, etc.)?
   - yes
   - no

30. Do you speak Tatar outside of the Tatar language and/or the Tatar Literature classes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>never</th>
<th>seldom</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With schoolchildren/classmates</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With teachers</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With school administration</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With staff</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With guests</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. Do you speak Tatar outside of school?
   - yes
   - no

32. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where do you speak Tatar?</td>
<td>Why do not you speak Tatar?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With whom do you speak Tatar?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. Continue the sentences:

   If I need to address a stranger (passerby, public transport workers, sellers, etc.), I will speak the ________________ language.

   Because ________________ .
34. Assess your Tatar language skills (check the box):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No functional ability (I cannot at all)</th>
<th>Minimal ability (I do a bit)</th>
<th>Moderate ability (Neither good, nor bad)</th>
<th>Strong ability (I am competent, but some words and phrases cause difficulties)</th>
<th>Exceptional ability (I am fluent, do not face any problems)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding spoken Tatar</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35. Do the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes help you to improve your level of the language?

  o yes
  o no
  o other ________

36. What do you like in the Tatar Language classes?

37. What do you like in the Tatar Literature classes?

38. What do NOT you like in the Tatar Language classes?

39. What do NOT you like in the Tatar Literature classes?

40. What would you like to change in the teaching of the Tatar language at school? (e.g. amount of classes, activities within the class, etc)

41. What would you offer to include in the Tatar classes to make them more rewarding and interesting?

42. Do your parents / does family support you in learning/speaking Tatar?

43. Who helps you with your homework for the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes?
44. If you had a chance to replace the Tatar language classes with any other classes, would you do this?
   o yes
   o no
   o yes, but not all the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes

45. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes / yes, but not all the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Continue the sentences: If I had a chance to replace the Tatar language classes with any other classes, I would choose ________.
I would choose the classes mentioned in the previous question, because ________.
| (a respondent is automatically directed to the other question) |

46. In your opinion, does the command of the Tatar language give any advantages?
   o yes
   o no

47. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Why, in your opinion, does not the command of the Tatar language give any advantages?</td>
</tr>
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48. Continue the sentence:
To make the Tatar language more prestigious, it is needed to ________.

49. Continue the sentence:
   The Tatar language would be more demanded/popular, if ________.

50. In your opinion, is teaching the Tatar language at school necessary?
   o yes
   o no
   o other ________

51. In which forms (classes) should the Tatar language be taught?
   o 1
   o 2
   o 3
   o 4
   o 5
   o 6
   o 7
   o 8
   o 9
   o 10
   o 11

52. Thank You for your answers!
   ________
Appendix C: Questionnaire for the Parents and Legal Guardians

1. In which city/town/village/settlement do you live?
2. Your gender.
   - female
   - male
3. How old are you?
   - younger than 30 y.o.
   - 31-35 y.o.
   - 36-40 y.o.
   - 41-45 y.o.
   - 46-50 y.o.
   - 51-55 y.o.
   - 56-60 y.o.
   - 61-65 y.o.
   - 66-70 y.o.
   - 71-75 y.o.
   - 76-80 y.o.
   - older than 80
4. How many of your children study at school?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - more than 5
5. At which school/schools do they study? (e.g. Kazan, №1)
6. At which form(s) (class) do/does he/she/they study?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
5. What is your ethnicity?
   - Tatar
   - Russian
   - Tatar (from mother’s side) and Russian (from father’s side)
   - Russian (from mother’s side) and Tatar (from father’s side)
   - other _______

6. What language/ languages do you speak at home?

7. Assess your Tatar language skills (check the box):

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No functional ability (I cannot at all)</th>
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<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Does/ do your child/ children take the Native Language and Native Literature classes at school?
   o yes
   o no
   o other ________

11. Which language does/do your child/children at the Native Language class?
   o the Tatar Language
   o the Russian Language
   o other ________

(The set of the questions 12-18 is only for those who choose “the Tatar Language” to the previous question, other respondents are automatically directed to question 19.)

12. In which Tatar language subgroup is he/she / are they?
   o advanced
   o beginning
   o other ________

13. In your opinion, would he/she/they like to change his/her/their Tatar language subgroup?
   o yes
   o no
   o other ________

14. Why would he/she/they like or not like to change his/her/their Tatar language subgroup?

15. Would you like him/her/them to change his/her/their Tatar language subgroup?
   o yes
   o no
   o other ________

16. Why would you like or not like him/her/them to change his/her/their Tatar language subgroup?

17. Do you help your child/children to do their homework for the Tatar classes?
   o yes
18. Why do help/do not help your child/children with the homework for the Tatar classes?

19. Do you want your child/children to learn the Tatar language?
   - yes
   - no
   - other ________

20. Explain your answer to the previous question.

21. Do you support your child/children in learning/speaking Tatar?

22. In your opinion, is teaching the Tatar language at school necessary?
   - yes
   - no
   - other ________

23. Explain your answer to the previous question.

24. In which forms (classes) should the Tatar language be taught?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7
   - 8
   - 9
   - 10
   - 11

25. Would you like to change anything in curriculum concerning the Tatar language and Tatar Literature classes?
   - yes
   - no
26. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What would you like to change in</td>
<td>Why would not you like to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curriculum concerning the Tatar</td>
<td>anything in curriculum concerning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language and Tatar Literature classes?</td>
<td>the Tatar language and Tatar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literature classes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. What would you offer to include in the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes to make them more rewarding and interesting?

28. If you had a chance to replace Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes with any other classes, would you do this?
   - o yes
   - o no
   - o yes, but not all the Tatar Language and Tatar Literature classes

29. Continue the sentences:
   If I had a chance to replace the Tatar language or the Tatar Literature classes with any other classes, I would choose _______.

30. I would choose the classes mentioned in the previous question, because _______.

31. To make the Tatar language more prestigious, it is needed to _______.

32. The Tatar language would be more demanded/popular, if _______.

33. In your opinion, does the command of the Tatar language give any advantages?
   - o yes
   - o no

34. (depending on the answer to the previous question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which advantages does the command of the</td>
<td>Why, in your opinion, does not the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Tatar language give?</td>
<td>command of the Tatar language give</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>any advantages?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
35. Here you can write your opinion regarding the Tatar language teaching at schools of the Republic of Tatarstan (if some items were not touched upon in the survey).

36. Thank You for your answers!
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The Student's Statement on Plagiarism

I, Kamila Safina, have read the requirements for research papers in the MA programme Sociolinguistics and Multilingualism. I understand that plagiarism is wrong and that it can take different forms, some direct and some indirect. I also understand that plagiarism in an essay, project or thesis submitted to this programme will result in a greatly reduced mark or rejection of the paper entirely.

Date: 20.04.2020
Signature: [Signature]
