

The Development of Tatar Lexicography

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Abstract

Lexicography in short is a branch of linguistics which deals with the theory and practice of compiling dictionaries. The product of lexicography – dictionary – is the book which reflects the lexicology of a particular language in a particular part of time, which makes dictionaries an important source of language material.

The aim of this paper is to describe the development of Tatar lexicography (both monolingual and bilingual) and give the examples of main dictionaries in Tatar linguistics. The information given in this paper may be useful for researchers of Turkic lexicology and lexicography, especially linguists interested in Tatar.

The Tatar language is a Turkic language spoken by Tatars mainly located in republics of Tatarstan and Bashkortostan (European Russia) and some parts of Siberia. As Tatar belongs to Turkic language family the history of Tatar lexicography begins with such dictionaries as Mahmud al-Kashgari's *Compendium of Turkic Dialects* and linguistic manual of Middle Ages *Codex Cumanicus*.

The first attempt to compile a dictionary of Tatar language was made by Tatar enlightener Kayyum Nasiri. Finished in 1896 *Tatar Dialect (Lehçe-i Tatari)* played a great role in formation of Tatar literary language. *Lehçe-i Tatari* is also the first explanatory dictionary in the history of Turkic linguistics. Jamal Validi was the second person who was working on an explanatory dictionary of Tatar language. His *Full Dictionary of Tatar Language* was published in two volumes in 1927 and 1929. The latest dictionary of Tatar is *Explanatory Dictionary of Tatar Language* (3 volumes published in 1977, 1979 and 1981 respectively).

As from the middle of XVIth century, the territory of modern Tatarstan became part of Russian state bilingual lexicography started developing. Modern Russian-Tatar lexicography has a rich tradition as for a long time Tatars and Russians were collaborating in culture, economics and politics. First bilingual dictionaries were small and written by hand. The first bigger Russian-Tatar dictionary was made by Halfin in 1785. It was still written by hand but includes about 20 thousand lexical entries. Till modern times different linguists both Russian and Tatar were preparing bilingual dictionaries: K. Nasiri, A. Voskresenski, S. Rahmankulov

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and A. Karam. The last widely used Russian-Tatar and Tatar-Russian dictionaries are made by Fuat Ganiev.

Nowadays the work on dictionaries is held by the department of lexicography in Institute of Language, Literature and Art named after G. Ibrahimov attached to Tatarstan Republic Academy of Sciences.

Key words: Tatar lexicography, Tatar dictionaries, Tatar-Russian dictionaries, explanatory dictionaries of Tatar