

## The linguistic characteristics of Tatar Paroemiae

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**Abstract.** This scientific article examines the linguistic (lexical and grammatical) characteristics of Tatar paroemiae, which are a prized source for studying linguistic level interrelations. Paroemiae incorporate unique lexical forms, rich grammatical material and types of syntactic constructions, speech patterns, and word combinations, which are not registered in written monuments. This explains the topicality of thorough linguistic research into Tatar paroemiae. The linguistic study of the language of Tatar paroemiae provides valuable material for typological generalizations, which enable us to identify the general and the specific in the structural-semantic organization of paroemiological units, which are manifested in specific lingual constructions.

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### Introduction

In the last decades, the language of paroemiae has become the subject of linguists' undivided attention. In our view, the need for studying the language of paroemiae is associated with trends observed in modern linguistics in conjunction with processes of globalization and active interaction of various ethno-cultures. Various approaches to studying the paroemiological fund of language can be found in the works of A.A. Potebnya [1], Z.K. Tarlanov [2], N.D. Arutyunova [3], V.G. Gak [4], A.S. Yusupova [5], V.I. Karasik [6], A. Taylor [7], H. Jason [8], G.L. Permyakov [9], A. Goatly [10], A. Krikmann [11], W. Mieder [12], M. Manser [13], and others. These works reveal the major issues in the linguistic study of paroemiae and investigate into the structural-semantic characteristics of paroemiae in the descriptive, contrastive, functional, ethno-linguistic, and anthropological aspects.

Paroemiology has attracted the attention of Tatar scientists from of old. The first specimens of paroemia are encountered as early as the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries in ancient Turkic runic written monuments. The dictionary by M. al-Kashgari, "Dīwānu l-Luġat al-Turk" (1072-1083), provides a large number of various folk maxims and adages, which is a prized paroemiological fund of Tatar folklore [14]. Folk maxims in the form of proverbs and sayings were collected and recorded in different years in various publications by such authors as I. Snegiryov, M. Ivanov, I. Berezin, S. Kuklyashev, M. Salikhov, K. Nasyri, V. Radlov, T. Yakhin, G. Miniyev, K. Badig, L. Yarmi, M. Gali, N. Isanbet, K. Makhmutov, L. Zalyai, N. Burganova, and G. Akhatov [15, p. 10]. A unique achievement of turkological paroemiology is the three-volume publication "Tatar Folk Proverbs"

compiled by eminent linguistic scientist N. Isanbet. It includes 38670 proverbs [16].

In Tatar language studies, despite a considerable number of published scientific works, issues related to the grammatical structure, lexical-semantic characteristics, or other aspects of paroemiae have not been fully resolved as yet. This work's major focus is on issues in the study of the language of Tatar paroemiae. Its primary aim is scientific coverage of the lexical-grammatical characteristics of Tatar paroemiae. The topicality of conducting a scientific investigation into this area is associated with the insufficient degree to which pan-linguistic characteristics of Tatar paroemiae have been studied. The study of the language of paroemiae is also valuable on account of that it identifies interactions between the people's language, culture, and poetics. This is also crucial in terms of resolving issues in the making and development of Tatar linguo-folkloristics. The object of our study is Tatar paroemiae selected from N. Isanbet's "Tatar Halik Mekallere" collection [16].

### Methods

The following methods were employed for an integrated analysis of the language of Tatar paroemiae: descriptive, comparative, comparative-historical, as well as lexical-semantic, contrastive, and linguo-statistical methods. The primary method of our study is the descriptive method, which incorporates such techniques as the study of factual material, generalization, interpretation, and classification. In the comparative analysis of paroemiological units at different stages of the development of the language, as well for the typological characterization of the language of paroemiae, the contrastive method is used. The comparative-historical method is employed in identifying changes in the semantics and syntactic

phenomena and in determining the genetic identity of the lexicon of paroemiae.

The study of the material was carried out using the methods of synchronic analysis, which in describing language is complemented by diachronic analysis.

### Main part

The language of Tatar paroemiae is a fine specimen of genuine speech and is one of the major sources for investigating the history and ethnography of the Tatar people, which contains verbal denotations of the culture of the past.

The base of the lexis of Tatar proverbs is characterized, above all, by its propinquity to the commonly used and pan-Turkic lexicon. It is common and understandable to all native speakers. It has been established that the jargon lexicon, neologisms, and (scientific) terms are not characteristic of Tatar paroemiae. Against the backdrop of the common popular lexicon, characteristic of paroemiae, we mainly come across the archaic Turkic-Tatar lexicon, dialectisms, and Russian-European lexical borrowings.

Comparatively few phonetic, semantic, and morphological archaisms have made it to this day as part of Tatar paroemiae, while lexical archaisms proper are distinguished by quantity and thematic diversity. Tatar lexical archaisms have been found to consist of nouns, adjectives, verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and auxiliary parts of speech: iris – happiness, himmet – studiousness, dana – specialist, nan – bread, kurekle – beautiful, beleksez – stupid, tabalau – to scold, esteu – to seek, want. Morphological archaisms are characterized by special inflectional affixes. Paroemiae especially often contain archaic affixes -mish/-mesh, -mak/-mek, -gil/-gel, which indicates a tangible Oguz influence on the Old Tatar language over the course of the century: Kushilmak – ungai, ayirilmak – kien; Almish – kaitmish; Barnaul da Barnaul, Barnaulga barmagil. Lexical-phonetic archaisms are characterized by sonorization, which is characteristic of the Oguz languages, and the use of the sound [g] in the middle and at the beginning of the word. One may conclude that it is due to the presence of archaic lexical forms that there are similarities between the language of Tatar folklore and specific Turkic languages within and the speech of the Tatar diaspora [17].

The presence of a great number of historicisms identified in Tatar paroemiae has made it possible to establish the direct link between the language of folklore and the history of the people; they are oriented towards ethnism, as they stretch back into antiquity and therefore have become ethnically tinted verbal folklore.

It is noticeable that the system of paroemiae actively employs Arabic and Persian borrowings, which belong to different thematic groups and have been mastered differently phonetically, grammatically, and semantically but drive the idea home clearly and accurately: isem – name, fiker – opinion, zihen – intellect, qader – virtue, sabir – patience, etc. Arabisms and farsisms are used in a third of the proverbs listed in the collection by N. Isanbet: Tele barlar — halik bulgan, tele yuklar — balik bulgan; Hunerne ostadan yureneler.

Paroemiae reach after euphony and consonance of thought, condensed form for quick memorization, and preservation of the rhyme and rhythm. To attain this, borrowings were subjected to positional (apocope, syncope, and epenthesis) and combinatorial (assimilation, accommodation, metathesis, and diaeresis) changes. Due to similarities between sound combinations, many Arabic masdars (verbal nouns) and forms of participles are used in paroemiae for alliteration and assonance. Arabisms and farsisms also reflect the dialectal characteristics of the common popular Tatar language, which indicates that borrowings are widely common not only in the literary language but informal speech.

The majority is made up of borrowings commonly used in literary Tatar; but there are those which have already made it into the passive lexicon of the literary language and are labeled in definition dictionaries as “archaic” or “formal” (or literary) or fail to be listed in a definition dictionary or a dictionary of borrowings altogether.

Linguo-statistical research into borrowings has shown that active Persian words are mainly used in paroemiae in the form of roots and have been preserved in modern Tatar. Compared with farsisms, only 3 of 14 active Arabic roots present in paroemiae are also used in the modern literary language. The wide use of arabisms and farsisms in religion and religious rites, the biblio-literary world, art, daily life, etc. has given rise to the presence multilingual words-synonyms in paroemiae. These lexemes expand the range of the use of paroemiae, help avoid tautology, and create variants of paroemiae, thus facilitating their distribution and activating the use of arabisms and farsisms in speech.

A special place in the framework of Tatar paroemiae, apart from Arabic-Persian borrowings, is occupied by Russian-European lexical units. Russian-European borrowings, which have formed part of the Tatar language since earliest times, have undergone phonetic and morphological changes, which are vividly traceable in Tatar paroemiae as well. These borrowings are fully included in the phonic system of the Tatar language; consonants uncharacteristic of the consonantism of Ancient Turkic are replaced with

Tatar consonant sounds. The presence of borrowings which have not changed their phonetic composition indicates that these paroemiae came into being not long ago.

The majority of Russian borrowings are made up of nouns: fonar – lantern/flashlight, limun – lemon, etc. Verbs (plivait – to spit, pashel – went/go), adjectives (mut – fashionable, harasha – nice), numerals (nol – zero, million – million), pronouns (ni pochem – not at all, nictava – nothing), and auxiliary parts of speech (tulke – only/just, het – at least, bun – there) of Russian-European origin have been identified in rare cases, which attests to the impact of the animate popular language on the language of folklore. There is a clear-cut pattern observed in paroemiological Russian lexical borrowings, which is reflected in strict word selection. Most changes in borrowings take place in the area of vowel substitution, since the source language and the recipient language have different vowel phonemes.

The metaphoricity, laconicity, accuracy, and expressiveness of paroemiae are attained through their syntactic structure. By their constitution, paroemiae are living productive predicative units. It is characteristic that Tatar paroemiae are organized based on commonly used communicative syntactic models of informal speech. This characteristic of paroemiae also makes them unique in the sense that it is them that are used in present-day academic publications as an example of a syntactic model in teaching languages [18].

In the syntax of Tatar paroemiae, composite sentences can be simple, compound, complex, as well as multi-member structures. Especially active are asyndetic compound sentences, which is associated with not only the oral form of the existence of paroemiae but the nature of paroemiological expression. These structures, which are a communicative characteristic of folklore, play the role of a norm, a genre model in paroemiae. The relations of counterposition, juxtaposition, and homogeneity-parallelism are a semantic characteristic of these constructions; one rarely establishes the relationship between events taking place concurrently and the temporal sequence of action. Conjunctions are used rarely in compound sentences (da-de, rarely ni-ni, ye-ye). Danning tube – hurmet, hurmetneng tube – hezmet; Bala kaderen ana beler, il kaderen ir beler ; Tapkan da – ana, bakkan da – ana.

Complex constructions in the system of paroemiae can be synthetic and analytic, with synthetic ones prevailing: a) subordinate clauses with a predicate in the form of a conditional verb make up the active segment; b) those with a predicate in the form of an adverbial participle or a participle make up the medium segment; c) those with a predicate in the

form of the predicative words bar/yuk, an adjective, and an adverb are used rarely; d) in rare cases, there are subordinate clauses with a predicate in the form of an action noun or a third person singular imperative: Mal kup bulsa, kader yuk; Scir tugerek bulganchi, il tugerek bulsachi.

Among analytic paroemiae, relative constructions (especially kem-shul, ni-shul, and kayda-shunda) and asyndetic with a relation of condition, cause, and clarification are productive structures.

In paroemiae with synthetic and analytic linkage, the range of specialized means of expressing corresponding relations is limited. Mainly, characteristic are the conditional, temporal-conditional, and comparative-adversative relations, which are governed by the poetic task and genre characteristics of proverbs.

In the system of Tatar paroemiae, for support of structural-semantic relations, along with the grammatical means (affixes of belonging, negation exponents) and lexical capacity of specific parts, there is a wide use of repetitions, antonyms, and synonyms; syntactic parallelism, semantic contraction, ellipsis, etc. The syntactic structure of paroemiae is bolstered by rhythmic organization, rhyme, and euphony.

Paroemiae include direct speech constructions, i.e. maxims that consist of one remark and one line, so-called wellerisms, which were known back in ancient Turkic folklore. Such maxims are sometimes called a proverb-yarn, a proverb-fable, a proverb-legend, or a proverb-parable. One may assume that due to the complexity of multi-member structures, their use in paroemiae should be limited; however, the analysis of our factual material indicates that multi-component structures are quite actively used in the system of Tatar paroemiae. Among them, the most active are 4-member sentences with parallelism of parts, which are akin to the compositional structure of a verse, and 3-member sentences, wherein the meaning of one component is clarified by the content of two following predicative entities: Lachin koshka hava kaderle, chapkin atka dala kaderle, ata-anaga bala kaderle; Keshe kurke – yuz, yuzneng kurke - kuz, uining kurke – tel, telneng kurke – suz. In our view, the study of such constructions makes it possible to identify the esthetic load, the stylistic characteristic of paroemiae, their link to the history of poetic speech, which represents the genesis and earliest forms of pan-Turkic poetry.

Studies into the structure and semantics make it possible to identify the most general trend characteristic of the structure of Tatar popular maxims – the trend towards honing and universalization of means and ways to express corresponding relations, which lead to the compression, harmony, euphony,

concinnity, and expressiveness of paroemiae. This process has been taking place concurrently with the streamlining of the proverb genre itself and forms of Tatar popular verbal art.

### Conclusion

Paroemiae catch our attention not only with their laconicity of forms of expression but mechanisms for the creation of meaning, capacity of form, generality, and didacticity. Their minimal size and the nature of their structural-semantic organization are the primary text-forming characteristics of popular maxims of this kind.

Thus, Tatar paroemiae represent the common popular language worked by masters of popular verbal art. They employ the lingual means of informal speech, which are the most perfect forms of expressing thought and are commonly understandable for different epochs and representatives of all dialects of a given epoch.

The conducted linguistic study into Tatar paroemiae makes it possible to substantiate the special significance of studying the works of folk art. Based on the picture of the language reflected in paroemiae, one can judge the lexical and grammatical norms of the common popular language.

### Inferences

Based on our analysis of the corpus of paroemiae, we can draw the following inferences:

— the base of the lexis of Tatar proverbs is characterized, above all, by its propinquity to the commonly used and pan-Turkic lexicon, which is common and understandable to all native speakers of the language. Against the backdrop of the pan-Turkic lexicon, characteristic of proverbs, we mainly come across the archaic Turkic-Tatar lexicon, dialectisms, and Arabic-Persian and Russian-European borrowings;

— Tatar paroemiae have a special place for Arabic-Persian and Russian-European lexical units, which belong to various thematic groups and have been mastered differently phonetically and morphologically. The majority is made up of borrowings commonly used in the modern literary Tatar language; there are also those that make up the passive lexicon of the literary language and have been used only in informal speech;

— the syntax of Tatar proverbs is characterized by simple and complex sentences. The diversity of syntactic forms of paroemiae overlaps with the syntactic diversity of animate popular speech and they are oriented towards active and productive syntactic models in the language.

Summing up, we would like to note that paroemiae in Tatar are indeed a conflux of background knowledge. This linguistic investigation leads us to conclude that the paroemiological fund of the Tatar language is very rich. The treasures of popular wisdom are full of mysteries linguists are yet to solve.

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