

PAPER

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF LACUNA IN LINGUOCULTURAL AND TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Abstract

The article discusses the concept of lacuna, its classification, its manifestations in intercultural communication, and its role in translation studies. It also emphasizes the issue of achieving balance in translation with the example of English-Uzbek and Uzbek-English comparisons. Approaching the term “lacuna” from the linguocultural point of view is highly supported in the article. It is proved that the study of lacuna in the linguocultural aspect has a number of advantages. This approach can help to understand the lacuna in integrity, in all its beauty, to see deeper foundations of the lacuna, and to open up new perspectives and opportunities for understanding intercultural communication. In particular, we stand for the use of linguocultural analyses in Uzbek-English translation fiction, the languages, which are distant from each other, because in prose works there are many lexical units with a clear linguocultural component, and in most cases they are given the decisive roles as expressing the literary value and idea of the work. Deep background knowledge is required to properly understand and translate these lexical units. Insufficient understanding and incorrect translation can lead to misunderstandings and cultural errors in communication. In this context, this paper aims to show the benefits of a deeper and combined study of the lacuna in linguistic and cultural aspects. It is also stated in the article, that due to the complex and multifaceted nature of the lacuna, classifying them into a single principle becomes a very difficult task. It is only natural that a lacuna may be associated with a classification system based on a specific aspect of the lacuna, since one lacuna may belong to more than one classification system at a time. Contrary to a number of scholars, we emphasize the need for both lacuna studies to be conducted both synchronously and diagonally.

Key words: lacuna, alternative vocabulary, intercultural communication, relative lacunae, national conceptual space, constants.

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INTRODUCTION

Due to the growing scientific and technical process and globalization as a result of large-scale international dialogue, lately cultural focus has been on these links. Cultures are more than languages, but this is why there is an urgent need to study intercultural communication – intercultural communication. Naturally, such communication is characterized by a clash of cultures, which in turn creates some barriers to communication. Currently, the changing methodological paradigm in linguistics and translation, the rapidly evolving world and globalization, now require translation to focus not only on linguistic issues, but also on its cultural aspects, and is now regarded as a form of intercultural and intercultural communication. Certainly, as a result of inter-linguistic and intercultural alternatives arising from intercultural or intercultural communication, the problem of understanding and interpreting the concepts of another language and culture by one language and culture owner arises.

As the scientific paradigm shifted towards anthropocentrism in the 20th and 20th centuries, special attention was paid to the national-cultural nature of linguistic phenomena and the close relationship between language and culture. The urgency of these issues has prompted the emergence of such areas as cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnopsycholinguistics, linguistic philosophy, linguistics, and lacunology. In the second half of the twentieth century in the work of researchers comparing aspects of language and culture, the concepts of lacuna and lacuna emerged. First of all, the national aspects of the conceptualization of the world surrounding the lacuna phenomenon are related to the fact that people of different nationalities have a deep and unbalanced attitude towards the world, based on their own worldview. In the course of the research, the lacuna was classified into lexical and lingual cultures. Lacunas indicate the national and cultural identity of languages, and this is due to the fact that there are no other languages or concepts that have emerged as a result of living conditions, worldviews, psychology, traditions of a particular nation. Of course, mutual understanding is not an inescapable goal, but achieving this goal in a realistic way requires a deeper understanding of the national

culture, linguistic and conceptual worlds of this nation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Yu.A.Sorokin and I. Markovina, "Lacunas are the result of a lack or excess of experience in linguocultural unity"[1.15]. Lacunas, first mentioned in linguistics, in particular in stylistics, are currently being considered in many studies on ethnopsycholinguistics, cultural studies and linguistics, with different classifications, research and elimination methods. In turn, there appeared a special area of study of lacuna – lacunology. A number of authors who study lacuna from a linguistic and cultural perspective perceive it as a barrier to communication, and we consider it to be a valid conclusion. Lacuna as a linguistic phenomenon that causes the process of mutual understanding between participants of any kind, especially intercultural communication, always occurs when certain parts of the culture and language codes are not covered by semantic means and cause confusion.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

This research paper analyzes the specifics of lacunae concept in intercultural communication from a translation perspective, drawing on semantic and conceptual approaches. It summarizes the theoretical foundations of studying the gaps between different cultures and the challenges of adaptation during translation. Using a linguacultural approach, it identifies the ethnic, national, and cultural aspects of communication gaps that arise during translation. Using translation studies methodology, it develops methods for overcoming these challenges.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

When considering the differences between languages and cultures, one of the first issues to consider is the notion of 'lacuna', which is used in a narrow and broad sense. This is because the difference between the two languages and cultures is obvious in the example of the lacunae. When the term "lacuna" is used in the narrow sense, it is assumed that the vocabulary does not contain the necessary words to describe a particular concept.

According to Yu. Stepanov, the lacunas are "white spots" or spaces in the semantic map of the language [3.120]. They exist in each language and are units that are not felt in the internal structure but which are distinguished in the comparison process. Stepanov proposes to differentiate between absolute and relative lacunas. Absolute lacunas appear in translation dictionaries and are understood as words that have no equivalent in a particular language. In other words, the absence of a lexical unit in one language is absent in another. The meaning of absolute lacuna can only be illustrated. For example, for English, the expression of parts of the day in the Uzbek words such as *azan* (early morning), *peshin* (noon time), *asr* (after noon time) and *hufton* (time for night prayer) (for example, slept before noon, stayed home in the evening, went out in the afternoon prayer and left in the night prayer) are the absolute lacunas. Relative lacunas are words that are used rarely in the language, in exceptional cases. The relative lacuna for the English language is an example of such concepts as "*bolajonko'ngil* (heart striving for love of children), *yo'nqo'shni – jonqo'shni* (close neighbor – soul neighbor)". Separate studies of lacuna in absolute and relative species are supported by many researchers. But there are some who oppose it. According to Gudkov, the term "relative lacuna" itself has not been successful. Because, "there is no relative gap" [2.79].

The term "Lakuna" is used not only to compare languages but also other aspects of culture. With some modifications to Stepanov's description, researchers recommend describing the lacuna as "white spots" in the semantic map of language, text, or culture, the tools of national consciousness. Lacunas also appear in comparisons that have their place in intercultural communication. According to Tomasheva "national elements of culture that are harmoniously reflected in the languages of certain cultures and that are not fully understood or partially understood by other linguists and cultures" [5.49]. In general, the lacuna expresses concepts that exist in one culture and do not exist in another, to be more precise, a sign of the specifics of language and culture. In contrast to the language lacuna, culturological (cultural) lacunas are also highlighted. This approach methodologically justified, because on the one hand such a broad

interpretation of the term "lacuna" relies on a real connection between language and culture, on the other hand it helps to clearly identify some forms of language and culture. Different classifications of the lacuna are suggested, depending on the differences and the basis. Ethnopsycholinguistics presents the following types: Language lacunas (lexical, stylistic and grammatical), cultural lacunas (ethnographic, psychological, lifestyle, kinesic), text lacunas. As we have already mentioned, when the English and Uzbek languages are compared, the lexicon for the English language is an example, such as the *azan*, *evening*, and *noon*, referring to the time in Uzbek. For English, the suffixes that are added to the verb in the Uzbek language are grammatical lacunas. An example of a stylistic lacuna is the absence of a word with similar stylistic color in one of the contrasting languages. For example, the word "*oraz*" (literally "face") in the Uzbek language or the word "*sarv*" referring to the beautiful figure are stylistic lacunas for the English language.

Ethnographic lacunas are directly related to the non-linguistic environment, and their existence is explained by the fact that the realities of one culture are not in another culture. For example, the Uzbek concepts of English such as "*sochpilik* (used for fastening the hair endings)" and "*tillaqosh* (women's ornament)" are ethnographic lacunas. Because ethnographic lacunas are located in linguistic and extraterrestrial environments, some researchers suggest that they are called linguocultural phenomena rather than culturological phenomena. This view is also true in our view.

There are other types and classifications of lacuna. According to the language system, the lacunas are divided into types of inter-linguistic and one-language systems. Lacunas are defined when comparing different languages, and in one of them there is no lexical equivalent to another language unit. Lacunas belonging to one language are defined within a paradigm of language – for example, the absence of a word with opposite meaning or the absence of any morphological form of the word, etc. The interracial lacunas can be classified as well-founded and non-substantiated. Lacuna based on the fact that there is no corresponding thing or event in the national culture. But unreasonable lacuna cannot be explained by the absence of something or

event – in culture they exist, but the words they are named by do not exist. For example, "sochpilik" is a lacuna based in English, because this word is a culture-bound word that is not typical of English culture. The words "noon" and "supper" are called unsound lacuna. Bogdanova says that "when it comes to lacuna, the absence of a word in a given language does not always indicate a lack of words in that language" [4.29]. The point is that certain concepts are in demand in society. On the one hand, it is the lacuna that play the key role in defining concepts that are important to one culture and not important to another. This means that not only the current understanding of the language, but also the non-existent concept, can provide information about an event.

The issue of linguistic and cultural lacuna is of special importance in literary translation. Linguocultural lacunas indicate that the lexical unit of cultural meaning in one language does not exist in another language. Cultural meaning refers to the components of culture recorded in the word. As we study the lacuna, we almost always encounter lexis without equivalents, and this is no coincidence. If the absence of that unit in one language is the lacuna for the second language, then the existing unit in the second language will be equivocal with respect to the first language. Equivalence units and lacunas always "go in pairs or, more precisely, if there is a lacuna in one language, the equivalent language is called an equivalence unit, or vice versa. In fact, lacuna and equivalence vocabulary can be said to study the same phenomenon from different perspectives: if the lacuna does not exist in any A unit, the non-equivocal lexicon emphasizes its presence in B language and its relation to A language. As a kind of conceptual lacuna, or narrow conceptual lacuna, cultural concepts that exist in one culture and which are absent or partially absent in another. Yu.S. Stepanov uses the concept of "constants" in cultural concepts, that is, they are regarded as the most basic cultural concepts. Some of the cultural concepts of the two cultures in conversation are equivalent to each other, some are partly equivalent, and some are highly specific to a particular culture. For example, in the Anglo-Saxon culture, the concept of challenge, positive, born as a result of Protestant ideas, is Constantine. The definition of Challenge is as follows in the Longman Dictionary

of Contemporary English: Something that tests strength, skill, or ability, especially in a way that is interesting – something that tests power, skill or ability in an interesting way. 2. When someone refuses to accept that someone or something is right and legal. – When someone or something refuses to admit that it is right or wrong. The US Life and Culture Dictionary defines the concept of challenge as: 1. task 2. problem, difficulty 3. challenge 4. challenge. This word is one of the key concepts in understanding American national character; it represents the courage, the courage, the willingness to take risks, the sense of adventure, the desire to compete. "[6.69]

The absence of such a concept in the Uzbek language suggests a difference in the two comparative language mentalities, and this concept is translated into Uzbek for the purpose of its use in the context. Or another example. Positive is a Protestant culture concept that reflects all the positive aspects of the idea and can be summarized in the short formulation of "you can do it" (you can do it). See also The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English: If you are positive about things, you are hopeful and confident, and think about what is good in a situation rather than what is bad – if you are positive about the environment, you are hopeful and confident you are perfect, and in a certain situation you think of something better than bad. The Dictionary of US Life and Culture emphasizes "positive thinking" (a description of N. Pyle's book *The Power of Positive Thinking*), and this concept is firmly rooted in the basic principles of Anglo-American thinking. The absence of this concept in the Uzbek conceptual landscape does not preclude the delivery of its form in various ways, but the concept remains the lacuna for the Uzbek language. In the Uzbek language, the concept of housing is associated with such words as "courtyard" "apartment in a multi-storey house" and in English they usually refer to "courtyard of a house" "house with a walled courtyard" "household" "house". home ". In the Uzbek linguocultural context, the concept of "home" is multifaceted and may not often coincide with English-language units. For example, subtle cultural features, such as the splitting of Uzbek apartments into interior and exterior, inviting guests to sit in the center of a house, or settling

in certain rooms according to their age, status, and social status in the presence of a few guests, can be confusing for an English reader. It also requires proper background knowledge to keep seeing off the guests till the threshold of the house.

The presence of cultural lacunas is explained by the historical and cultural heritage of a particular lingua-cultural nation. In other words, cultural lacuna is the alienation of one language or culture's knowledge of art, literature, historical events to other linguists. Cultural lacunas arise from the use of precedent texts in the communication process. Precedent texts are those texts that are important to a person or that are extremely personal to members of a particular community and their contemporaries. For example, phrases such as "How many sheep have you bought" from the Uzbek movie, "The neighborhood has gone crazy" or excerpts from the poem such as "I remember those times, flying carpets ..." are cultural stock. Cultural fund lacuna, which is the type of cognitive lacuna, in turn cause the formation of lexical and phraseological lacuna through communication practice. The following two examples are examples of cultural stock lacuna. Brooklyn Bridge - Brooklyn Hanging Bridge is a famous architectural building built in the late 19th century, with many proverbs related to its sale (the bridge is not available for sale). The person who has the strongest conviction of "the person who can sell the Brooklyn Bridge" is "a person trying to sell the Brooklyn Bridge a fraudulent, "the one who agrees to buy the bridge" is a stupid fool [6.53]. The people of Missouri in America are generally described as "people who hardly believe in something." If we look at the history of the terms "Show-Me State" or "I am from Missouri" "I don't believe, prove," we can see that its roots go back to the beginning of the century. At a banquet, Congresswoman Vendverver from Missouri said, "I don't believe in loud talks. I am from Missouri. Prove to me" [6,190]. As a result of this incident, the Missourians got such nicknames. As can be seen from the examples above, not only the equivalence vocabulary, but also the partial equivalents present problems for translation because the proportionality of words or expressions is deceptive, and their features are covert. Such differences in semantics are usually associated with an axiological component. Lacunas, as well as equivalence-free vocabulary with which

they correlate, appear when comparing languages and cultures, and are the fixers of identity.

It is well-known that the concept of "lacuna" is a concept that has received sufficient attention in linguistics, which is relevant not only for this science and a number of related sciences, but also for the translation. If we look at the work done on the problem of "lacuna" in translation studies, we can see that although there have been many studies based on the concepts of "equivalence" and "alternative" it is almost certain that the concept of "lacuna" needs a fixed determination in order to be practically widespread. We see that it has not been resolved. This means that the question of how to use the term lacuna and what else to include in it, and to "clarify" or arrange some of the initial and obscure ideas on how to eliminate the lacuna, still awaits a solution. The most important issue for us is that in the work of psycholinguists and cultural scholars, a more serious approach to link lacunology and translation has begun. The famous psycholinguist Y.A. Sorokin wrote: "It is excessive to emphasize the complementarity of lacunology and translation, but nevertheless it is expected that the first will be a productive impulse to solve problems in translation" [7.6]. A number of dissertations have been written on the link between lacuna theory and translation studies [8; 9; 10]. The problem of lacunas and their elimination has been of great interest to psycholinguistics theorists. Logically, the issue of lacuna, which is relevant in the disciplines closely related to translation (macrolinguistics, including psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, ethno-linguistics), should, of course, be studied in the work of translators. Theorists of translation have not ignored the various interpretations of existence, the phenomenon of the universe, but it is interesting to see how they use the term lacuna in this process and in what cases. Let's try it. Given that the description of the lacuna is a description of certain gaps in a language comparable to another language, we mainly deal with the issues of equivalence and translation.

Equivalence is the basic notion of translation. Equivalence in translation is the equality that comes from the similarity of meanings. It may not be accurate. V.N. Komissarov writes about the equivalence between the original and the translation: "The comparative analysis of

translations reveals that there are such lexical and grammatical units as the original language units, which have one or more alternatives in the translation language. there are no alternative units "[11.147]. The same issue is addressed in the aspect of cultural studies: "In general, the whole process of translation is to eliminate the lacuna, that is, the obstacles that arise from the differences between the languages and cultures involved." In order to ensure the equivalence of texts, translation methods have been developed to overcome these barriers, in particular, translation transformations. In cultural studies, transformations have been characterized as means of filling lacunas. Thus, lacunas by cultural experts are associated with lexical equivalence, that is, for some lexical units, there is no direct alternative to the language of translation. E.M. Vereshchagin and V.G. Kostomarov interpret the vocabulary without equivalence as follows: "Words that express the concepts that do not exist in other cultures or languages. Only culture items that are culturally A and culture B that are not in the culture, and words that cannot be translated into one language and have no alternative outside the language of their own ". Compare this definition with the opinion of cultural expert V.L. Muravev: "If their alternatives in another language cannot be expressed in one word, the lacunas are absolute." Does this mean that words without the equivalents and lacuna are one thing? Some researchers disagree. "If the lexical unity of one language can be expressed in a regular language in another language, this unit cannot be considered a lacuna. For example, words such as essential (first priority), rejectee (not suitable for military service), designation (appointment) are not considered lacunas for the Russian language in the background of the English language, because the relevant meaning in Russian is represented by regular vocabulary "[13.46]. From these examples we can conclude that the issue of the interaction of the lacuna with the non-equivocal lexicon remains open.

Let us look at a few other words – specific words that make translation difficult. Are these units representing the objects of material and spiritual culture, living events in one nation and not in another, called lacunas? Referring to V.K. Kalinina's textbook: "Most concepts are universal in spite of

the various verbal forms. However, the concepts expressed by the specific words are of a national nature and can be seen in the lexicon without alternatives "[14.41]. In this regard, S.I. Vlachov and S.P. Florin refer to lacuna in terms of the term "realia" in terms of equivalence-free vocabulary, exotic lexicon, exoticism, barbarism, localism, ethnography, spaces, and zero alternatives [15.49]. The authors argue that these terms combine national, historical, local color, and the lack of alternatives to translation. In their writings, these researchers analyze the above terms in order to clarify the term realia and include the term "gap" among non-realial terms: "... naturally, in terms of translation, "gaps" and "neologism" neither synonyms nor signs of realia". Thus, in the book "Non-Translated in Translation", lacunas are separated from specific words. V.G. Gak, one of the few translators who wrote about the lacunas, describes them as follows: "Lacunas are the missing places in the lexical system of the language, words that do not exist. In fact, given the function of language reflection and the lexical system of the corresponding language, these words must exist in the language "[16.244].

The term "lacuna" is used in the chapter on translation of non-equivalents in the translation book by Dzhen and co-authors. In writing about types of alternative units, this guide refers to lexical lacunas as casual non-alternative vocabulary (realias – absolute; terminology and scientific neologisms – temporal; partly compatible with the so-called "false friends of the translator"). Random alternatives, that is, lacunas, are "expressions that define things and events in the language of translation, as in the original language, but for some reason have not received a specific term in one of the languages"[17.33]. The same paragraph gives an example of the word "sutki" in Russian, which in German says "24 hours "day and night". In the study of G.V. Chernov and L.S. Barhudarov's classification of alternative units, the book also uses the term "lacuna": "lexical units that can be referred to as random lacuna, that exist in one language, but in the dictionary of another language do not have their own alternatives for some reason"[the same source.94-96]. Many other works on translation theory do not mention the lacuna. There are enough examples that can serve

to illustrate the concept of lacuna. For example, one of the cases mentioned that there are two English alternatives to the word "hand and arm". In translation it is faced with a choice problem. Which one should be used, hand or arm, for the example of "he was injured in the arm"? "In this case, the presence of two words in the language to represent different parts of an object suggests that there is a distinctive way of thinking that distinguishes English speakers from the Russian language" [18,122]. In our view, this difference could have been studied within the context of lacunas. Reflecting on differences in culturological and interpretive approaches to intercultural lacuna, D.I.Yermolovich notes that "in culture studies, lacunas are equivalent to inequivalence, and that lacuna and inequivalent vocabulary are almost synonyms" [19]. They take a very broad spectrum of lawlessness and interpret this concept as "unexplainable, unusual, alien, unknown to the recipient." However, such a broad view is not appropriate for translation theory because from the point of view of translation studies the lacunas are only considered as an event of comparative analysis of lexical units.

CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATIONS

Deep analysis of the lacuna helps to gain new knowledge about the culture of the people, including its mentality. This facilitates the translation process and helps preserve the original form and content in translation. As a result of this analysis, we can see that the concept of "lacuna" is still inaccurate in the scientific apparatus of translation theory. The term "lacuna" successfully used by a number of authors, does not have a single interpretation. There have been several articles and theses published in the translation, but the development of a more accurate approach to this term and concept remains relevant. In general, it has been proved that the study of lacuna in the linguocultural aspect has a number of advantages. This approach can help to understand the lacuna in integrity, in all its beauty, to see deeper foundations of the lacuna, and to open up new perspectives and opportunities for understanding intercultural communication.

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