

## **Types of lacunae in intercultural communication**

### **Introduction**

The problem of types of lacunae is one of the theoretical questions put by linguists. The definition of lacuna is connected with the problem of the classification of lacunae.

The development of conceptions of lacunae, theoretical recognition of lacuna and its types say that lacuna is an integrated unit combining both language and culture. Lacuna is considered to be cultural units with extremely different contents.

### **The main body**

Lacunae may be divided by different criteria which will reflect linguistic and cultural reality. It is important to emphasize division of lacunae into linguistic and culturological. Lingacultural lacunae occupy an intermediate position. Let's characterize each of the mentioned groups of lacunae. Lacunae defined by languages comparison are called linguistic: they are divergences, gaps, failures, emptiness in relation to the units of compared languages, in other words, interlinguistic or the units within one language (insidelanguage lacunae).

Discussing lacunae, I. V. Tomasheva writes that "lacunae by languages comparison are called linguistic, which in their turn, may be lexic, grammatical and stylistic, complete, partial or compensated". [11, p. 54]. Besides, linguistic lacunae may be unique and partial, motivated and unmotivated, speechy, emotive, connotative, zeroed.

Lingucognitive approaches of Russian linguists to the study of lacuna typology were more fruitful. So, we can name the scientists which are engaged in detection, description and ordering of lacunae: Y. S. Stepanod, V. L. Muravyov, V. G. Gak, I. A. Sternin, O. A. Ogurtsova, Z. D. Popova, I. Y. Markovina, V. I. Zhelvis and L. A. Leonov and others, meanwhile each of them characterizes lacuna in their way. So that this or that described type of lacunae is connected with the

name of the researcher. “именными” are the existing attempts to order lacunae. The earliest and fullest classification of lexical lacunae belongs to V.L. Muravyov. In our view, V.L. Muravyov’s saying that “it’s necessary to investigate lacunae not only from the synchronous point of view but also from historical one”. This statement may serve “point of readout” – the commonest, basic criteria of classification of all varieties of lacunae, which, in scientist’s view, was not an established category for ever at all, but эволюционируют together with development of language lexicon and its simple concepts ". [9, p. 23].

There is more thoroughly described type of interlinguistic lacunae (Y. A. Sorokin, I. Y. Markovina, Y. S. Stepanov, V.L. Muravyov, V.I. Zhelvis, V.G. Gak, A. I. Belov, I. A. Sternin, L.S. Barkhudarov, L.A. Leonova, O.A. Ogurtsova, A. Lebedeva, etc.). In V.G. Gak’s view, interlinguistic lacunae are межъязыковые лакуны - это "absence of words for a designation of concepts, which, undoubtedly, exist in the given society and which have the special verbal designation in the other language " [5, p. 261]. In this context the ordering of interlinguistic (English and Russian) lacunas offered by V.I. Zhelvis seems original. Using concepts "united - uniting ", he considers possible cases of lacunae in the compared languages. [6, p. 138]

Y.A. Sorokin, I.Y. Markovina, A.I. Belova support a wider understanding of interlinguistic lacunas. " Under interlinguistic lacunas one should understand, - writes A.I. Belov, investigating a material of the Norwegian and Russian languages, - such "an emptiness ", "sites which are not signalyzed", which arise at the interaction of the recipient and the foreign text (literal translation)".

On perceiving the text " the recipient uses a set of rules, inherent only to his language and culture. The offered rules of other language realized in some text refer to another, not to his own language, and to another, not to his own culture, and are identified as unclear or erroneous".

The generalizing language aspect of classification of lacunas is considered in A.A. Makhonina's and M.A. Sternina's classification. On the material of Russian-English substantive lacunas they developed the classification, according to which all interlinguistic lacunae are subdivided into three large groups: nominative, generalizing and concretizing.

Nominative lacunae are allocated on the basis of absence in background language appropriate to nomination. For instance, a small отгороженная bedroom in a hostel - cubicle, one of the merging rivers - confluent and so on.

The generalizing lacunae are allocated on the basis of absence in background language of the appropriate generalization to the following attributes: the form, structure, action, place, rating, time and sequence, material. Concretizing lacunae are allocated on the basis of absence in background language of the appropriate concrete definition to the certain attribute: place, form, purpose, age, manner of behaviour, performance of the official duties etc. [8, p. 50].

I.A. Sternin, L. Kharitonova, A.A. Leonova, I.V. Tomasheva, A.A. Belova, proceeding from the same precondition, as Ю.А. Сорокин emphasized linguistic aspect of classification of lacunas. A.I. Belov's conclusions on the fact that different associations play a huge role in naming the subjects, phenomena and actions seem fair. On comparing the displacement of dominant features of the generalized image is possible. The opportunity of collision of various associations results in unequal *переносный* meanings in different languages .

As it was repeatedly marked, the culture finds its reflection in language, and as the emotions are a component of culture of any people, each of which consists of national and international elements, it is possible to assume that one should expect a lacuna exactly in verbalization of emotions.

It proves to be true by works of a number of the researchers. In the article "About linguistics of emotions " V.I. Shakhovsky wrote that "many aspects of human activity are not simply transferred by words: language is poorer than the validity, its semantic space does not completely cover the whole world. Each of us had difficulties when expressing their emotions: the degree of approximation of

language and momentary of experienced emotions is always far from desirable" [176, p. 7]. The thing is an emotive lacuna. Developing V.I. Shakhovsky's ideas, I.V. Tomasheva allocates an emotive characteristic of a lacuna reflecting national-cultural specificity of language. [11, p. 56].

Many words of any language are surrounded with emotional associations. The most known example of this point of view is the conception of E. M. Vereshagin, V.G. Kostomarov about connotative and associative lacunas. In case of their discrepancy it is possible to speak about presence of an emotive associative lacuna in the text of translation. I.A. Sternin names it connotative, V.L. Myravyov - associative, lexico-semantic, I.V. Tomasheva - emotive.

Emotive lacunas in translation will be also emotive-expressive forms of the reference, nicknames connected to elements of national folklore, epos, heroes of the national literature, which associate in speaker's consciousness with display of this or those qualities of the character, appearance etc. Such nicknames as Baba Yaga, Kikimora, Ilya Myromets, Kolobok, Abai Geser Mighty express first of all emotive-subjective rating of the addressee, which is not kept while translating.

G.V. Bykova writes that emotive lacunae are numerous (a little investigated and systematized) group owing to variety of expressive, emotional and modal - estimated associations, around the conceptual contents of this or that word.

The researchers engaged in revealing and the description of lacunas, consider emotive lacunae as national-specific elements of cultures reflected in speaker's language which are either not noticed or are understood incompletely by the representatives of different cultures in contact.

So, revealed and theoretically possible lacunae are divided into linguistic and extralinguistic (textual and culturological).

The subject of our interest lies in linguicultural lacunae, which are characterized from the angle of modern status of language and culture, i.e. in synchronism. One of the types of linguicultural lacunae is an ethnographic type.

The detailed study of ethnographic lacunas is offered in I.Y. Markovina's, V.L. Muravyov's, G.V. Bykova's works. The majority of the researchers consider this type of lacunas as a version of culturological lacunas, existence of which is caused by absence of realities, characteristic for one culture, in another culture.

To reveal absolute ethnographic lacunas V.L. Muravyov finds use of additional ethnographic criteria necessary. As appears from the name, the ethnographic lacunas are directly connected with *внеязыковой* a national reality, that forces us each time to ascertain presence or absence, and also a comparative prevalence of this or that thing (phenomenon) in people's life. Apart from linguistic lacunas, the absolute ethnographic lacunas can not be revealed with sufficient accuracy, if the absence of the word in one of the languages is simply ascertained to express the concept fixed in lexicon of other language.

V.L. Muravyov states that extralinguistic lacuna are not only absolute, but also relative, which are defined with the help of indirect linguistic and direct extralinguistic attributes. In this context it is necessary to note G.V. Bykova's point of view that the ethnographic lacunas, as well as stylistic, have two depths:

a) linguistic: an obligatory linguistic expression of absolute ethnographic lacunas is the absence of a word or an idiom in one of languages to express the appropriate concept;

b) extralinguistic: absence of a thing (phenomenon) in culture, people's life [3, p. 75].

The ethnographic lacunas (absolute, relative, vector) are known to occupy an intermediate position between linguistic and extralinguistic, it is relevant to name them linguicultural instead of culturological. As I.Y. Markovina points out, lacunas reflect national specificity of the language in much greater degree than any other phenomenon.

If one systematizes culturological lacuna according to the features of intercultural communication process, all versions of lacunas, according to Y.A. Sorokin's classification will be divided into four large groups:

1) subjective lacuna reflecting national-cultural features of communicators who belong to various linguistic societies (colour symbolics, digital symbolics characteristic features of this or that nation)

2) activity-communicative lacunas reflecting national-cultural specificity of various kinds of activity (gestures, household or daily behavior)

3) The textual lacunas arise in the special specificity of the text as a tool of communication, for example, беллетристические lacunas arise in the fiction as a communicative distance between the author and reader.

4) The lacunas of cultural space specify discrepancies in ratings of cultural space (environmental world, mode of life, stock of knowledge, cultural fund) of the representatives of linguistic societies.

G.A. Antipov was engaged in detailed study of this classification. As he marks, subjective or the national-psychological lacunas result from discrepancy of national-psychological types of the participants of the communication. According to components of national psychology it is possible to allocate some subgroups of subjective lacunas.

As G.A. Antipov writes, the existence of “characterological” lacunas is caused by specific features of national character of speakers of various local cultures. As a result of intercultural communication in one culture there are certain stereotypes in interrelations of other cultures, in particular such ones that fix more typical feature for this or that nation poorly expressed in other people’s culture.

Reciting examples of characterological lacunas, G.A. Antipov marks that they are relative. Traits of character are universal themselves systematically representing a certain invariant of people’s character, in national variants of character these universal attributes occupy different positions in the system of values of the appropriate culture and differ by the degree of prevalence. [p. 115].

G.A. Antipov allocates the group of "characterological" lacunas reflecting understanding and information about representatives of cultures. "Self-presentation" of nation represents a lacuna in the sense that it reflects a deeper penetration into essence of national character, rather than the possible behaviors of other culture. We mean the occurrence of "cultural - emotive" lacunas caused by features of national temperament.

Not concerning in details specificities of characterological lacunas, we shall consider active - communicative culturological lacunae. Lacunas reflecting specificity of various kinds of activity, characteristic for this or that nation are called active - communicative. This group also includes "mental" lacunae.

National-specific features of thinking of the representatives of various cultures can become the reason of occurrence "mental" lacunas. The existence of mental lacunas comes to light in solving thinking tasks characteristic for another's linguicultural society by the recipient. Such lacunas arise, for example, when the speakers of some culture are offered to guess a "another's" riddle. (the text of a riddle is showed in translation). The speakers of language of translation appear unable to give the correct answer to a riddle reflecting specificity of another's culture. [p. 122] In this case presence of lacunas breaks intercultural communication process.

To make this original intercultural communication hold, it is necessary not only to translate the texts from one language into another, but also to construct them in a habitual form for the speaker of language of translation, according to the features of his mind, to use cultural - ethnographic images and symbols, traditional for language - translation.

It should be noted that not only the verbal behaviour appears essential in this case: with the help of a mimic mark (or "removal" of such mark, absence of an expected mark) but also it is possible to inform some specific information. In the concept "behavior" (speakers of some culture) includes: cinesics (mimics, gestures), characteristic for the given culture; the daily behaviour caused by traditions, customs, lifestyle accepted in the given culture. [p. 122].

Let's discuss lacunas "of cultural fund". They specify discrepancies in that stock of knowledge which is owned by the "typical" representatives of various linguicultural societies. A cultural fund, from G.A. Antipov's point of view, is considered to be a complex of art and not art knowledge (historical, ethnographic), described by the certain level and direction of linguicultural societies. The synchronous layer of cultural fund makes "background knowledge". [ p. 134]

The special part of cultural fund makes cultural symbolics reflecting national specificity of nation and having lacunized character for other contacting culture (lacunae of cultural symbolics). In intercultural communication process a lacunized character of colour symbolics can become the reason of misunderstanding. [ p. 142]

Thus, a lacuna represents a culturological distance between communicators, which causes some "shift" in perception of one culture by the recipient who has been brought up in art tradition of other culture. Lacunas as signals of specificity of another's culture are exotic. [ p. 149] Such signals can be used to create "colour" of the appropriate culture in the text. Considering textual lacunas,

G.A. Antipov recites archaisms as signals of other historical epoch creating a temporary colour, but also complicating understanding of the text. Such lacunas should be considered as explicit, requiring interpretations or guesses. G.A. Antipov specifies the existence "lacunized intensity", created with the help of "default" about those or other important elements of the plot and writes that the concept "an empty mark" is possible to consider a synonymic concept to "lacuna".

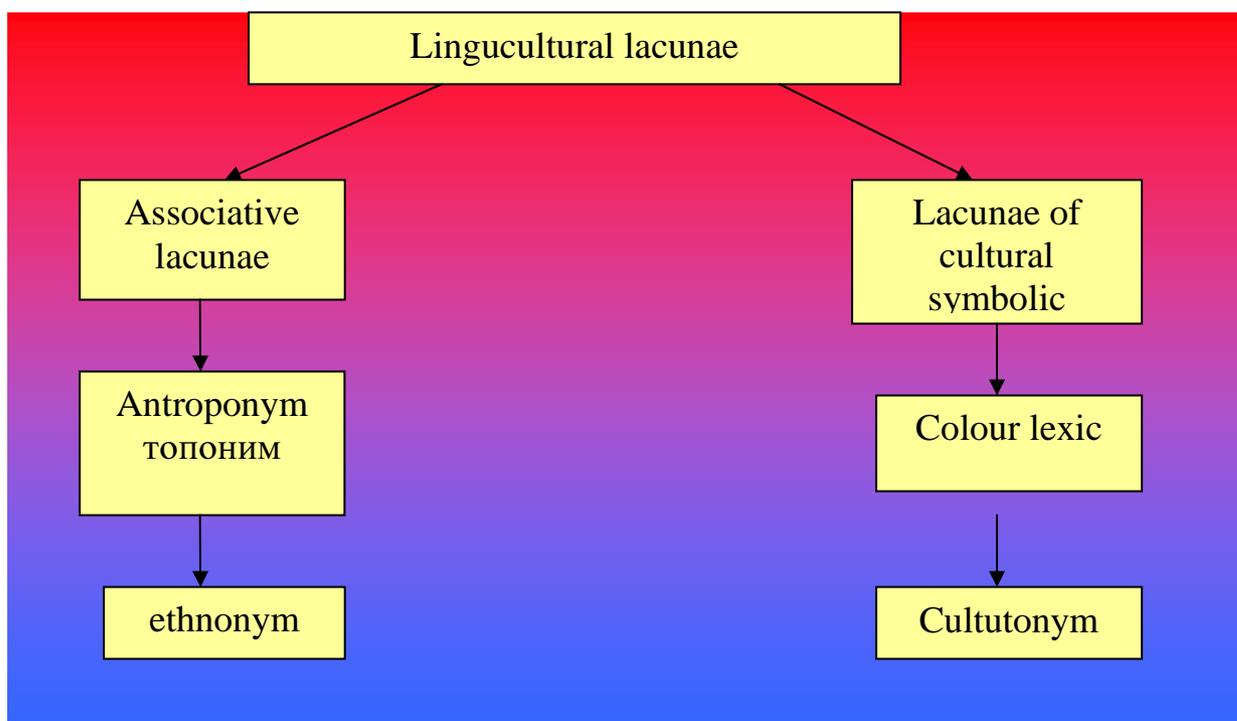
In this connection systematization of culturological lacunae has a great role. Different types of culturological lacunae are described in the book "Communication. Text. Statement" on the basis of drama fiction.

From all above, we should note that the described types of lacunas testify the lacuna as a linguicultural phenomenon which exists on different language (speech) and culture levels. The lacunas reflecting specificity of this or that linguicultural society are an obstacle for mutual understanding of speakers of various cultures.

Linguicultural phenomenon of lacuna exists in semantic space of the text. Divergences in spheres of compared cultures are lacunized.

Thus, a deeper analysis of classifications of lacunas supposes influence of intercultural communication processes on types of lacunas. Besides, all above-mentioned classifications allow to reveal the characteristics of lacunas, however, having generalized the data of classifications and features of the intercultural communication processes, we shall try to develop a classification of linguicultural lacunae on the material of the russian-buryat lacunas.

It is important to emphasize that the methodological basis of development of classification is ethnopsychological researches by Y.A. Sorokin, I.Y. Markovina, A.N. Krykova, which have allowed to reveal types of lacunas. All linguicultural lacunae are subdivided into two large groups: associative and lacunas of cultural symbolics.



To associative lacunae refer to place names, proper names.

This acknowledges the idea that the geographical names of one culture present lacunae for the representatives of another linguistic society not only because they are not present in other culture, but also because they are included in the certain social context. It makes the geographical names essential for speakers of initial culture and lacunas for the representatives of some other culture. [ p 141].

In N.A. Nikolin's opinion, anthroponyms and toponyms transfer not only a substantial - actual, but also a background information and promote disclosing of the ideological - aesthetic contents of the text, frequently revealing its latent senses and act, in V.A. Kukharenko's opinion, as the signal stimulating an extensive complex of certain associative meanings. [p. 106]. In this connection it is interesting to recite *внеязыковые* associations, which are based on historical, philosophical, myth-culturological and other knowledge of speakers of language about the phenomenon.

A.O. Ivanov writes that associative lacunae include a number of proper names which are not the simply geographical names or people's names, but bear additional cultural connotations representing a various kinds of symbols or *Переносные* portable meanings. [p. 134]. A lacuna can be a proper name, having cultural connotation. The proper name does not only name a subject, but has a certain additional meaning (in the form of motivation or cultural connotations). The internal form of a name becomes one of elements of urgent meaning of the text.

If one agrees with that the name bears a rich extralinguistic information and is closely connected to an ethnic and social history of the peoples, obviously, there is a necessity to investigate lacunas on an example of fiction.

Let's illustrate the given assumptions on an example of poetry of the Buryat writer Dondok Ulzytuev. The figurative system of poetry consist of the certain marks, deeply symbolical and characteristic for nomads' people. Lacunas, keywords are the marks which comprise extensive extralinguistic information on the nomads's history and culture.

The associative lacunas serve a key to interpretation of the text. They give national colour of poetry. For instance, associative lacunas from the Buryat heroic epos "Abai Geser Mighty": personal name Geser – the Buryat hero, Khankhan Khermos-tengri – a leader of fifty five western tengri (in the Buryat mythology), in the epos – Geser's heavenly father.

Special attention is given to lacunae of cultural symbolics which are divided into colour lexicon and cultonyms. For instance, cultonym fifty five tengrii associate with the Supreme deities of tengrian outlook epoch.

Tengrism is known to be a space managing the world, people's life and their activities in the Earth, an immense universal space. According to ancient Mongolian tribes tengrii are a privileged layer of zhaman which takes its uppermost step.

Each of these deities - tengrii or the group of them has his own function or purpose. Cultonym Maidary (Mitrey) is a unique botkhisattva recognized by all basic directions of buddizm.

The reader will be interested in a colour lacuna *the yellow books of destiny*, which symbolizes sacred books in which the destiny of the man from birth to the death, basic events of his life are predicted. A yellow color is connected to yellow clothes of lamas. The name of the books in the further narration is specified also by a buddhist deity Maidary (Future Buddha), resisting to malicious forces in the world.

### **Conclusions**

As a whole, lingucultural lacunae in poetry are found in certain social context and represent difficulty for the representatives of some other culture.

Thus, the analysis of classifications of lacunas has shown that the lacunas are divided on linguistic and extralinguistic (culturological). Lingucultural lacuna occupy an intermediate position between these lacunas. A lingucultural conception of a lacuna is based on the study of classifications of lacunas and contributes to the development of lingucultural lacunas. We believe that lingucultural lacuna in the intercultural communication can be associative and lacunas of cultural symbolics.

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