



Linguocultural analysis of lacuna (based on the images of King Arthur, Robin Hood, Shirak, and Tumaris)

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ABSTRACT

This article examines linguocultural lacuna found in English and Uzbek folklore from a linguocultural perspective. Using the legendary figures of King Arthur, Robin Hood, Shirak, and Tumaris, the paper analyzes cultural concepts, semantic gaps, translation challenges, and discourse-specific features within a comprehensive analytical framework. The results contribute to the development of linguoculturology, translation studies, and intercultural communication theory.

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Lakunalarining lingvokulturologik tahlili (Qirol Artur, Robin Gud, Shirak va To'maris obrazlari asosida)

ANNOTATSIYA

Kalit so'zlar:

lakuna,
lingvokulturologiya,
madaniy konsept,
tarjima,
folklor,
diskurs.

Ushbu maqolada ingliz va o'zbek folkloridagi lakunalar lingvokulturologik nuqtai nazardan tahlil qilinadi. Qirol Artur, Robin Gud, Shiroq va To'maris kabi afsonaviy obrazlar misolida madaniy konseptlar, semantik bo'shliqlar, tarjima muammolari hamda diskursga xos xususiyatlar kompleks tahlil asosida yoritiladi. Tadqiqot natijalari lingvokulturologiya, tarjima nazariyasi va madaniyatlararo kommunikatsiya rivojiga hissa qo'shadi.

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Лингвокультурологический анализ лакун (на основе образов Короля Артура, Робин Гуда, Широка и Томарис)

АННОТАЦИЯ

Ключевые слова:

лакуна,
лингвокультурология,
культурный концепт,
перевод,
фольклор,
дискурс.

В статье проводится лингвокультурологический анализ лакун, встречающихся в английском и узбекском фольклоре. На примере легендарных персонажей – Короля Артура, Робин Гуда, Широка и Томарис – исследуются культурные концепты, семантические пробелы, сложности перевода и дискурсивные особенности в рамках комплексного подхода. Результаты способствуют развитию лингвокультурологии, теории перевода и межкультурной коммуникации.

INTRODUCTION

Lacuna are lexical units that exist in one language system but lack a full semantic and conceptual equivalent in another language. They emerge due to discrepancies in cultural, social, or conceptual frameworks and thus reflect the unique worldview embedded in each language. Lacuna are crucial in the fields of **intercultural communication**, **translation studies**, and **comparative linguistics**, as they highlight the cultural and cognitive gaps between linguistic systems (Sorokin & Markarova, 1996).

The science of linguoculturology studies the intrinsic relationship between language and culture. As noted by E.M. Vereshchagin and V.G. Kostomarov, "culture cannot exist outside language" (Vereshchagin, Kostomarov, 1983, p. 15), thus oral folklore represents the most vivid expression of national culture embodied in language.

The phenomenon of lacuna – elements present in one language but lacking direct equivalents in another – reveals cognitive and cultural differences across societies (Vorobyov, 1997). This paper aims to identify the conceptual, semantic, and discursive characteristics of linguocultural lacuna based on the figures of King Arthur, Robin Hood, Shirak, and Tumaris.

The Nature of Linguistic Lacuna

Primarily, lacuna refers to **semantic voids** in the lexical system of a language. These voids emerge from **conceptual mismatches** between languages. There are different types of lacuna:

- **Nominal lacuna** – when a particular object, tradition, or cultural element has a name in one language but lacks a direct equivalent in another.

- *Example: Thanksgiving Day* (a culturally specific holiday in the U.S.) has no direct counterpart in Uzbek.

- **Verbal lacuna** – refer to actions or states that are lexicalized in one language but cannot be succinctly or adequately rendered in another.

- *Example: to procrastinate* has no direct verb equivalent in Uzbek and must be explained periphrastically.

Classification of Lacuna

Lacuna can be categorized according to various linguistic and cultural criteria:

a) By linguistic system:

- Lexical lacuna

- Semantic lacuna
- Morphological lacuna
- Pragmatic lacuna

b) By cultural basis:

- **Realia lacuna** – related to cultural artifacts, institutions, foods, clothing, etc.
○ *Example: pub, salla*
- **Conceptual lacuna** – reflect culturally unique notions or mental constructs.
○ *Example: privacy, kattalik (social status in Uzbek context)*

c) By degree of translatability:

- **Partially translatable** lacuna
- **Descriptively translatable** lacuna
- **Untranslatable or zero-equivalent** lacuna

Etymological Analysis of Lacuna

Etymological analysis of lacuna involves tracing its origin, semantic evolution, and cultural embeddedness. It enables a deeper understanding of how certain words emerged and how they relate to the historical and sociocultural realities of a specific community.

Key elements of etymological analysis include:

The source of the word (e.g., Proto-Turkic, Latin, Greek, Anglo-Saxon);

The semantic shift or broadening that occurred over time.

The cultural connotations that have developed around the term.

Examples:

Pub – derived from public house (Anglo-Saxon origin); in English culture, it is not just a place to drink but a social center. There is no complete equivalent in Uzbek, where the closest might be choyxona (teahouse), but its function and connotation differ significantly.

Salla – a traditional Uzbek male headdress symbolizing dignity, maturity, and religious adherence. It has no cultural or linguistic equivalent in English.

Kattalik – a culturally embedded concept in Uzbek that reflects respect based on age and social standing. While English may use terms like seniority or status, they lack the same cultural weight and structure.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs the following methods:

- Conceptual analysis (Stepanov, Shmelev): understanding culturally embedded concepts;
- Semantic and translation analysis: examining meaning loss or distortion in translation;
- Discourse analysis (Karasik, Fairclough): identifying social roles and cultural models in folklore discourse.

Primary sources include original English and Uzbek folklore texts and their translations, supported by contemporary linguocultural literature.

RESULTS

Conceptual Lacuna

The "Round Table" concept from the King Arthur legend symbolizes equality, knighthood, and collective decision-making in British society – ideas that have no direct counterpart in Uzbek culture. Yu.S. Stepanov refers to such concepts as "coded signs of culture" (Stepanov, 1997, p. 40).

The notion of "yeoman" in the Robin Hood legend represents a free commoner with elevated social status, a concept foreign to traditional Uzbek culture. As the text states: "Robin was a bold yeoman who robbed the rich and gave to the poor..." (Pyle, 1883, p. 27).

Tumaris's quest for revenge for her son reflects the ancient Turkic ideology of justice on behalf of the nation. Unlike Western matriarchal figures, this character demonstrates a woman's active political role within collective identity.

Semantic Lacuna

The Uzbek phrase "non sindirish" (breaking bread), seen in the epic "Alpomish" – "The girl broke the bread to give her blessing" – is a ceremonial expression of matrimonial consent. There is no direct equivalent in English. In contrast, the phrase from Robin Hood, "He offered the Sheriff a wedding breakfast," refers to a morning wedding ritual unique to Western culture, which does not exist in Uzbek tradition. Such expressions result in semantic lacuna during translation.

Tumaris's symbolic act – beheading the enemy and placing it in a wineskin filled with blood, followed by the words: "You were thirsty for blood – now drink your fill!" – is alien to Western aesthetic norms.

Discursive Lacuna

The Shirak legend centers around sacrificial patriotism: "I shall die, but my people shall live." This model of heroism differs significantly from the pragmatic Western narrative, where self-sacrifice is less idealized.

Robin Hood, although an outlaw, is portrayed as a restorer of justice – a classic example of the "outlaw hero." In Uzbek thought, lawbreakers are seldom seen as positive figures.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that lacuna are not merely lexical or semantic gaps but reflect deeper cultural and conceptual differences. As V.V. Vorobyov notes, "a linguocultural lacuna is a concept that exists in one culture but lacks expression in another" (Vorobyov, 1997, p. 112).

While King Arthur and Robin Hood represent ideals of personal bravery, equality, and freedom in the West, Tumaris and Shirak exemplify Eastern values of sacrifice, collective identity, and national dignity. These differences hold significant implications for translation, linguistic studies, and intercultural understanding.

CONCLUSION

Lacuna embody the divergence between languages and cultural models. They manifest at:

- The conceptual level – through culturally unique ideas;
- The semantic level – via loss or distortion in translation;
- The discursive level – through speech roles and cultural functions.

Analyzing lacuna using the images of King Arthur, Robin Hood, Shirak, and Tumaris offers valuable insights into national worldviews, translation theory, and intercultural dialogue.

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