

SEMANTIC VACUUMS AND TRANSLATION SPECIFICITY OF NON-EQUIVALENT LEXICON (BASED ON RUSSIAN, UZBEK, AND ENGLISH)**Murodkhodzhaeva Malika Alisherovna**

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Abstract.

The article explores the phenomenon of interlingual lacunarity and the functional features of non-equivalent lexicon within the interaction of three distinct linguacultural and structural-typological environments: inflected Russian, agglutinative Uzbek, and analytical English. The author analyzes ethnographic, social, and mental factors conditioning the emergence of non-correspondence zones in lexical systems and provides a detailed breakdown of translational strategies aimed at compensating for these voids. Based on an extensive selection of linguistic material, the most productive transformations for achieving pragmatic adequacy in trilingual translation are determined.

Keywords: semantic vacuum, lacuna, non-equivalent lexicon, comparative-contrastive linguistics, intercultural communication, translation strategies, linguacultural studies, Uzbek language.

Introduction

In the era of global migration and information processes, the contrastive study of structurally diverse languages opens new facets of understanding how humans categorize the world around them. As a distinctive mirror of national identity, each language captures not only the universal constants of existence but also the highly specific experience of a particular ethnic group—its history, climate, daily life, and mental attitudes. Consequently, when comparing different linguistic systems, "blind spots" or zones of non-correspondence inevitably emerge, which modern linguistics terms semantic lacunae, and the substratum filling them is known as non-equivalent lexicon.

The present study focuses on identifying the nature of interlingual lacunae and finding optimal pathways for their semantization within the triad of the Russian, Uzbek, and English languages. Scientific interest in this issue is driven by the need to overcome communicative failures in direct and mediated translation, especially given the intensifying cultural ties between the Central Asian region and the English-speaking world. The main objective of the paper is to trace how the structural characteristics of these languages influence the methods used to compensate for these lexical voids.

Methodology and Materials

The empirical baseline of the study comprises lexicographical data from academic explanatory and multilingual dictionaries, alongside representative samples from contemporary literary works and publicistic texts in all three languages. The primary research tool was the comparative-contrastive method, supplemented by a componential analysis of dictionary definitions, which allowed for the precise splitting of word meanings into individual senses to detect lacunary gaps. Additionally, contextual analysis was applied to evaluate the adequacy of translation within live discourse.

Results and Discussion

The phenomenon of lacunarity in structurally diverse languages is traditionally associated with the specifics of national cognition. When comparing inflected Russian, agglutinative Uzbek, and analytical English, a clear division of lacunae into absolute (objective) and relative (categorical) categories becomes apparent. In the former case, the target culture completely lacks the object or phenomenon itself, while in the latter, the concept exists, but the target language lacks a dedicated, fixed lexeme to verbalize it, thereby forcing reliance on descriptive constructions.

The national-specific layer of the Uzbek language, which reflects an Eastern lifestyle and deeply rooted social traditions, is of particular interest. For instance, the concept of *hashar*, denoting collective, voluntary, and uncompensated labor for the common good, becomes an absolute lacuna for European languages. When attempting to translate it into Russian, it is frequently replaced by the historically close word *субботник*, and into English by the phrase *community work*; however, both instances completely sacrifice the national flavor and the crucial sense of a centuries-old Eastern tradition of mutual aid. A similar fate structuralizes the concept of *mahalla*, which is often erroneously interpreted simply as a quarter or a *neighborhood*, whereas it actually represents a unique institution of civil society and an organ of local self-governance.

Distinct lacunae are also uncovered in the sphere of kinship terms. The Uzbek lexical system demands a rigid differentiation of relatives based on age and lineage, as embedded in the words *aka* (elder brother) and *uka* (younger brother). For Russian and English, such semantic distinctions are optional at the lexical level, and the meaning is conveyed only through additional modifiers (*elder brother* or *младший брат*). On the other hand, the Russian linguistic worldview is also rich in concepts that are difficult to adapt. A classic example of an abstract-mental lacuna is the phenomenon of *тоска*. English matches like *yearning* or *melancholy*, as well as the Uzbek word *sog'inch*, cover only separate facets of this complex emotional state, missing the specific Russian sense of causeless, existential angst. In the domestic sphere, the word *купяток* is illustrative; in the English (*boiling water*) and Uzbek (*qa'nagan suv*) traditions, it is coded by describing an attribute (boiling water), losing its status as an independent substance.

The contemporary stage of language development, unfolding under the banner of digitalization, generates new types of lacunae originating from the English-speaking environment. The concept of *privacy* remains a stumbling block: in Russian, it breaks down into the notions of *личное пространство* (personal space) or *конфиденциальность* (confidentiality), while in Uzbek it requires the elaborate phrasing *shaxsiy hayot daxlsizligi*. Similarly, the gender-neutral term *sibling*, which denotes a brother or sister in a single word, finds no single-word equivalent in either Russian or Uzbek, remaining a categorical lacuna.

An analysis of translational practice allows for the isolation of several key strategies to bridge these semantic rifts. The first is direct transliteration or transcription, which is indispensable for preserving unique local flavor, though it obliges the translator to introduce contextual explanations or footnotes, as occurs with the word *sumalak*. The second path is calquing, which reproduces the internal form of the foreign prototype, vividly illustrated by the transition of the English expression *brain drain* into the Russian *утечка мозгов*.

The third and most widespread strategy is explication, or descriptive translation. It inevitably robs the text of conciseness but guarantees the accurate transfer of the denotative core, as seen in the adaptation of the term *jet lag*, which turns into *синдром смены часовых поясов* in Russian and *vaqt zonalari almashgandagi horg'inlik* in Uzbek. Finally, the method of seeking an approximate quasi-equivalent allows for functional substitution, translating, for example, the Russian word *дача* through concepts that are kindred in spirit but not identical in other cultures.

Ultimately, the choice of a specific tool is always dictated by the genre specifics of the text. While artistic discourse prioritizes the desire to preserve the ethnographic uniqueness of the original via transcription, the informational and scientific fields prioritize semantic transparency, achieved through descriptive structures.

Conclusion

The conducted research proves that lacunarity is a natural consequence of the distinctiveness of national cultures, rather than a sign of lexical poverty in any given linguistic system. The highest concentration of absolute lacunae in the examined triad of languages is observed in the segment of everyday and socio-ritual vocabulary, where unique Uzbek realities dominate. The successful compensation for these gaps requires the translator to perform a deep linguacultural shift rather than a mechanical selection of dictionary equivalents. Further investigations in this direction could serve as a theoretical framework for developing innovative, next-generation trilingual dictionaries of non-equivalent lexicon.

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