

The Term “Gap” (Lacuna) in the Works of Uzbek and Foreign Linguists

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Abstract: This article discusses and analyses the term "gap" in the works of Uzbek and foreign linguists. The national-cultural originality of vocabulary can manifest itself not only through the presence of a specific series of words but also through the absence of words for meanings (denotations) expressed in other languages. Concepts and the words expressing them, known as “Gap” (“lacunae”), become noticeable only when comparing languages. If we compare the languages and cultures of different people, we can distinguish elements that coincide and those that do not. Language is, of course, a component of culture. Linguists believe that the concept of non-equivalent vocabulary is closely related to the concept of “Gap” (“Lacuna”), which underpins the so-called problem of “lacunarity” in intercultural communication. The examples analysed in this article demonstrate that the gaps indicate either the redundancy or lack of experience of one linguocultural community in relation to another.

1 INTRODUCTION

“Gap” (from Lat. Lacuna - hollow, depression) - denotes the absence in one language of a name for a specific concept. The conditions of the socio-political, socio-economic, cultural life, and lifestyle of the people, their worldview, psychology, traditions, etc., give rise to concepts that are fundamentally absent from speakers of other languages. Consequently, in other languages, there will be no single-word dictionary equivalents for their expression. In linguistics and psycholinguistics, “Lacunae” are understood as the basic elements of the national specifics of a linguocultural community that complicate the understanding of some text fragments by foreign recipients [13]. V.L.Muravyov, who referred to them as «Gaps», «white spots on the semantic map of the language» (Sternin I. A. (2019)), introduced the term «Lacuna» into linguistics.

In the modern world, the term "lacuna" began to be used in scientific sources, in particular in dictionaries, from the 70-80s of the 20th century. Gaps are typically divided into motivated and unmotivated. Motivated lacunae are associated with the absence of

a certain reality in this or that nation. Motivated gaps are revealed in the sphere of the so-called non-equivalent vocabulary and are usually given in translation with explanations.

There are other terms for the concept of "gap" (referred to as "lacuna" in Russian and Uzbek literature): "random holes in speech patterns", ethnoidems, linguo-culturemes, and ethno-linguo-culturemes. There is no unified typology of gaps in linguistic literature, with researchers classifying them in various ways.

For example, Yu. S. Stepanov distinguishes between absolute and relative gaps. According to the researcher, absolute gaps are recognized when compiling translation dictionaries as words that do not have an equivalent in the target language [10]. Relative gaps include words that are rarely used in the language and only under special circumstances. I. A. Sternin refers to such gaps respectively as interlingual motivated gaps, due to the absence of the corresponding object or phenomenon, and unmotivated gaps, which cannot be explained by such absence. Therefore, examples of absolute gaps for the

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English language are the Uzbek words (choykhona, chapon, khashar], while gaps of the English language for Uzbek are [exclusive, sibling, and fortnight]. Relative lacunae for the English language are the frequently used Russian words [dusha, toska, sud'ba] (Khudaiberganova D. (2015)).

V. A. Muravyov, in addition to absolute and relative lacunae, also identifies vector, stylistic and associative lacunae (Sternin I. A. (2019)). Ethno-cultural gaps can be detected both at the verbal level (in particular, lexical - the absence of words and expressions; grammatical - the absence of grammatical categories; morphological indicators; stylistic - the difference in the use of similar linguistic means in different functional styles; paralinguistic - the method of filling pauses), and at the non-verbal level (the difference in the etiquette characteristics of communication acts, role-playing features of communication, the absence of gestures, colour associations, psychological attitudes, etc.). Even the nomenclature of text genres is considered among the gaps (nationally specific) features of speech.

Gaps can be linguistic (lexical, grammatical, stylistic) and cultural (ethnographic, psychological, behavioural, etc.). Additionally, gaps can be not only intercultural or interlingual (arising in the process of intercultural communication), but also intracultural ((CESS) (2001)).

The recipient may perceive them as something strange that requires interpretation (explicit lacunae) or remain for them in the "insensitivity zone" (implicit lacunae). Gaps can vary in strength or depth: confrontational (powerful, deep lacunae) and contrastive (weak, shallow). According to the authors, gaps exist in texts (communicates) and complicate the understanding of the corresponding text fragment for a foreign recipient.

From the perspective of Z. D. Popova and I. A. Sternin, a lacuna is the absence of a unit in one language when it is present in another. These authors emphasise, "The main feature of gaps is that they arise in the process of communication, in a situation of contact between two cultures". In addition, they systematise gaps and subdivide them on other grounds: according to system-linguistic affiliation (interlingual and intralingual), according to paradigmatic characteristics (generic and specific), according to the degree of content abstraction (subject and abstract), according to the type of nomination (nominative and stylistic), and according to the gap

belonging to a certain part of speech (part-of-speech) [11].

2 EXPERIMENTAL PART

Indeed, the initial insights into the phenomenon of gaps can be traced back to the work of the distinguished Turkic poet, thinker, and public and political leader A. Navoi in his work, "Muhokamat ul-lugatain". This suggests that ideas about the link between language and culture, the issue of the 'gap', were first formed in the east during the 16th century. He compared two languages: Turkic and Persian, analysed, and validated the richness of the Turkic language with examples, "By trade and occupation, such as a fowler and a cook and a guard and a stamper and a tailor and a quilt maker and a confectioner and a shipwright and a shepherd. However, this term exists in birdcraft, but not as a digger, a fowler, a crane, a deer or a warbler. [Hunar va peshada andoqki, qushchi va borschi va qo'riqchi va tamg'achi va jibachi va yo'rg'achi va halvochi va kemachi va qo'ychi. Andoqki, qush hunarida dag'i bu istiloh bordur, andoqki, qozchi va quvchi va turnachi va kiyikchi va tovushqonchiki, sort lafzida yo'qtur]" (Sultonova M.N., Stepanova Yu. S. (2021)).

Such concepts exist in both cultures, but these concepts are not named in the Persian language. The scientist supported his view with examples, like the titles of occupations: "qushchi, borschi, qo'riqchi, tamg'achi, jibachi, halvochi", but these concepts are not reflected in the Persian language.

Furthermore, Alisher Navoi noted that the Persian verb "giryakardan" (cry) is expressed in the Turkic language with hundreds of verb forms. The verb "giryakardan" equates to the verb "yig'lamoq" (to cry) in Turkic; the remaining ninety-nine verbs are gaps for the Persian language.

Navoi also identified words related to military weaponry and names of garments, which were not utilised in the Persian language, leading the Persians to adopt Turkish words. We can see that although the term gaps was not used as a scientific term in the 15th century, the first scientific research in the East had already been conducted.

A century later, Zahiriddin Muhammad Bobur penned his masterpiece "Boburnoma". He compared words between Turkic and Hindi in his work. Bobur stated that the Turkic language contained numerous

words, for example, there were seventy-two names for a duck in the Turkic language, but no such words existed in the Hindi language, although the concepts did.

Moreover, in contemporary literature, Anglo-American, Arabic, and Uzbek lacunae can be conveyed in novels, essays, stories, notes or magazine and newspaper articles through transliteration, tracing, and blending. For instance: Famous superstars are honoured to do business with him. Options for embroidery, tulle, moire, organza, patchwork are inexhaustible. This is demonstrated by the following gaps that entered the English language from the Russian and Uzbek languages:

"In some of these tupiks (тупик), close relatives lived, with houses linked by inner doors" (Babur Z.M. (2008)).

"The same as the wedding toi (to'y) but without the substantial gift to the bride or groom's family and the dowry" (Babur Z.M. (2008)).

Thus, in English, along with the word lawyer "lawyer, lawyer", there are several more words to denote variations of the legal profession, which in Russian and Uzbek languages do not have a corresponding one-word equivalent: barrister (having the right to speak in courts), solicitor (prepares cases for barrister), counsel (advises clients), counsellor (adviser on various legal issues), advocate (highly qualified lawyer).

In other instances, a gap in the language is formed because in a given culture it is not as often necessary to differentiate what is continuously differentiated in another culture. For instance, in Russian business language there is a general word "lygota", in the Uzbek language this word is translated as "imtiyoz", which has several correspondences in English. So "privilege, benefit" is a "lygota/ imtiyoz" with a hint of the meaning "privilege", franchise is "benefits" (as "special right"), exemption, immunity, relief is "benefits" (like "liberation"), grace is "benefits" (meaning "delay").

Sh. Usmanova analysed the gestures of the gap; they also vary from each other. Uzbeks may use a gesture, the index finger, which implies, "Come here". Koreans and Japanese cannot use this gesture towards a human because this gesture is meant to call dogs.

The use of these gestures can lead to misunderstandings between individuals. Similarly,

the researcher discussed various symbols; for instance, the fern flower symbolises good luck for the Japanese at New Year, while for Russians, the fern represents death. If some dishes are accidentally broken, this signifies misfortune for the Uzbek people. For the Scots, however, the same situation signifies a wish for good luck in a new marriage. Colours also represent different concepts across various cultures. For example, black signifies greatness in Turkish culture, whereas, in stark contrast, it represents evil in British culture.

Certain objects and their names exist in one culture, but the same objects can be found in another culture without being named. These discrepancies lead to the contemplation and exploration of the topic of gaps.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

"Muhokamat ul-lugatain" is regarded as a source of both practical and theoretical significance in the history of Turkic studies, particularly in the development of Uzbek linguistics. When comparing Turkic languages and the Sart (Persian-Tajik) language, it was noted that some concepts in the Turkic language are not expressed in the Persian-Tajik language, thus creating a cultural gap (a phenomenon now referred to as a lacuna in modern linguistics). Concepts that exist in the Sart language but lack a specific word form, whilst in Turkish such a lexeme exists, constitute a gap for the Sart language. The gap units mentioned in "Muhokamat ul-lugatain" can be categorised as follows:

1. Gap units representing body parts. The work "Muhokamat ul-lugatain" uses words that designate body parts lacking a lexeme in the Sart language: "Va ho'blarning ko'z va qoshlari orasinki, qabog' derlar, forsiyda bu uzvning oti yo'qtur [The Hob's eyes and eyebrows are so close, they call it a forehead; in Persian, there is no equivalent word for this body part]" (Sultonova M.N., Stepanova Yu. S. (2021)). It's observed that the Turks had a lexeme for a larger type of mole, "meᅇ", a term absent in the Sart language: "Va husn ta'rifida ulug'roq holkhakim, turklar meᅇ o't qo'yupturlar, alar o't quymaydurlar [In the definition of beauty, the Turks have a term 'meᅇ', the Sarts do not have such a term]" (Sultonova M.N., Stepanova Yu. S. (2021)).

2. Lacunar units representing human activities. Alisher Navoi argues that both cultures have certain concepts expressing human activity, but in the Sart

language, there is no specific word unit for their description. For instance, the Sarts had professions like "qushchi, borschi, qo'riqchi, tamg'achi, jibachi, khalvochi", but the people working in these professions didn't have corresponding lexemes, such as: gardener or bootmaker. "Xunar va peshada andokki, qushchiva borschi va qo'riqchi va tamg'achi va jibachi va yo'rg'achi va khalvochi va kemachi va qo'ychi. Andoqqi, qush hunarida dag'i bu istilokh bordur, andoqqi, qozchin va quvchi va turnachi va bug'uchi va tovushqonchiki, sort lafzida yo'qtur. Va alar mazkur bo'lg'onlarning ko'pin turkcha ayturlar. [In terms of trade and occupation, there are bird-catchers, watchmen, stamp-makers, quilt-makers, blanket-makers, shipwrights, and shepherds. However, there is no such term in the Sart language for a bird-catcher, crane-catcher, deer-catcher, and warbler-catcher. Most of the people mentioned speak Turkish]" (Sultonova M.N., Stepanova Yu. S. (2021).). In the above professions, such as: "qushchi, borschi, qozchin, quvchi, turnachi, bug'uchi, tovushqonchi", we see job types representing people's activities tied to their lifestyle and also the role of hunting in the socio-economic life of the Turkic people based on the kinds of animals they catch.

The names of military equipment and military uniforms are absent in the Sart language; examples are given where these terms in the Turkic language are used by the Sart. Lexemes: "Tamg'achi, jibachi, yo'rg'achi, kemachi" represent concepts associated with military activities. It is also highlighted that the Sart language doesn't convey gender distinctions, and consequently, 70 types of ducks recognised in the Turkic language are represented by a single lexeme in Sart. As a result, all these diverse names for duck species, the presence of multiple units representing concepts associated with ducks, indicate the development of poultry farming among the Turkic people. This is because the differentiation of duck species requires regular observation and specialised knowledge. Knowledge based on everyday experiences served to build skills and competencies in this area. The existence of numerous duck names suggests a developed hunting economy. Alisher Navoi observes that in Turkic languages, the names of horse species and objects related to horses are also diverse and varied. He cites the following examples: "Yana o't anvoidaki, tubuchoq va arg'umoq va yaka va yobu va totu yo'sunliq – borini turkcha-o'q ayturlar. Va otning yoshin dag'i ko'prakini turkcha ayturlar. Bir qulunni "kurra" derlar. O'zga: toy va g'o'nan va do'nan va tulani va ching'a va lang'a deguncha fasikhroqlari turkcha derlar va ko'pragi

muni ham bilmaslar. Va o'tni bilmas" (Sultonova M.N., Stepanova Yu. S. (2021).). Furthermore, these word forms do not exist in the Sart language.

3. Gap units reflecting the action and state of a person. Alisher Navoi mentions hundreds of Turkish verbs that express the behaviour and state of a person. Words expressing the concepts of motion verbs do not exist in the Sart language. The essence of the gap phenomenon is revealed through these words' absence in the Sart language.

4. Gap units denoting kinship concepts. A number of kinship terms, such as elder brother, younger brother, elder sister, father's uncle, do not exist in the Sart language: "Va uluq qardosh va kichik qardoshni ikkalasin "barodar" derlar va turklar ulug'ni – "og'a" va kichikni "ini" derlar, va alar ulug', kichik qiz qardoshni ham "khohar" derlar. Va bular ulug'ni – "egachi" va kichikni "singil" derlar. Va bular otaning og'a-inisin "opag'a" derlar. Va onaning og'a-inisin – "tag'oyi" (derlar). Va alar hech qaysig'a ot' ta'yin qilmaydurlar va arab tili bila "em" va "hol" derlar va ko'kaltoshni turkcha til bila derlar. Va atka va enagani ham bu til bila ayturlar. [Additionally, the Sart call both the elder and younger brother 'barodar', while Turks call the elder 'og'a' and the younger 'ini'. They call both elder and younger sisters 'khohar'. In addition, they call the elder 'egachi' and the younger 'singil'. Moreover, they call the father's siblings 'opag'a'. The mother's siblings are referred to as 'tag'oyi'. They don't assign a specific word to any of them and use 'em' and 'hol' from Arabic, and 'ko'kaltosh' from Turkish. They also use this language for the horse and the nanny]".

5. Gap units representing clothing. It is noted that some types of clothing are not named in the Sart language, but the Turkic equivalents of these concepts are utilised: "Va mahudiy albisadin misli: dastor va qalpoq va navro'ziy va to'ppi va shirdog' va dakla va yalak va yog'liq va terlik va qur yo'usunlug' nimalarni borisin turk tili bila ayturlar". ["And examples of Mahudy albisadin include: tablecloth, cap, navrozi, toppi, shirdog, dakla, yalak, fat, slippers, and dry grass, all of which are expressed in Turkish"].

6. Gap units representing household concepts. It's noted that the Turkic people utilised specific Turkic words to denote certain realities and objects that were unnamed in the Sart language: "Bir mutaayyin nimakim oq uydur, anga khirgoh ot qo'yupturlar. Ammo aning ajzosining ko'pini turk tili bila ayturlar. Andokki, tungluk va uzuk va to'rlug' va bosrug' va

chig' va qanot va ko'zank va uvug' va bog'ish va bo'sag'a va erkina va alo khozal qiyos. [A certain type of white invention is given a name. However, the majority of its components are referred to in Turkish. These include tungluk, ring, torlug, bosrug, chig, wing, kozanak, uvug, binding, bosaga, erkina, and an excellent comparison]”.

Thus, in the East in the 15th century, the issues of gaps had already been identified. The esteemed thinker and writer Alisher Navoi meticulously described and identified various types of gaps. In the work “Muhokamat ul-lugatayn”, the topic of the gap was emphasised, analysing the linguistic expressions of differences between languages and cultures.

In recent years, Uzbek linguistics has also been focusing on elucidating the problem of the gap. In most anthropocentric studies, particularly in cultural linguistics, numerous definitions and descriptions of this concept can be found.

In the "Explanatory Dictionary of Anthropocentric Linguistic Terms", attached to D. Khudaiberganova's doctoral dissertation on the topic "Anthropocentric interpretation of artistic texts in the Uzbek language", the language gap is defined as "the absence in the lexical system of the language of a lexical unit representing the concept" [12].

Sh. Usmanova, the author of the first textbook on linguoculturology in Uzbek, interprets the word gap as “words and expressions characteristic of the everyday, cultural, social, and historical life of a nation, alien to another nation and lacking a clear alternative in another language”. However, this interpretation seems to underscore features of reality more than gaps. A detailed study of the gap phenomenon in Uzbek linguistics is linked to the works of Professor Z. Kholmonova. The “Study of Linguistic and Cultural Concepts”, prepared under her guidance, contains invaluable information about the study of the gap phenomenon in linguistics, its essence, its distinction from other linguistic phenomena, the intralinguistic gap (introlacuna), and the challenges of studying it. The article by Z. Kholmonova, "The role of Alisher Navoi in the development of modern linguistics" (Navoi A. (2011)), focuses on the analysis of A. Navoi's views on the phenomenon of gaps (lacunae) in language. As the scholar highlights, even without the concept of a gap, scientists have extensively discussed the presence of empty cells in language vocabulary.

Additionally, in the monograph by F. Musayeva titled “Linguistic and cultural studies of Uzbek dialects”, a separate section is devoted to the enrichment of gaps in the Uzbek language with dialect words (Babur Z.M. (2008)). In this work, the researcher also makes important comments about the emergence of the gap phenomenon, its difference from related linguistic phenomena, as well as the potential of dialectisms in their elimination.

One of the most recent studies of the gap phenomenon in Uzbek linguistics is the dissertation by Ismatullaeva N., titled "The Emergence of Gaps (Lacunae) in the Chinese and Uzbek Languages". In analysing gaps in the Chinese and Uzbek languages, the scholar acknowledges the inevitability of such a linguistic phenomenon when comparing two languages and cultures. The types of gaps and methods of defining them are described, drawing upon theoretical perspectives available in global linguistics (Kholmonova Z. (2021)).

A noteworthy feature of the lexical gap is that it resides in the minds of native speakers as a concept (sememe). This concept is represented by phrases (or explanations) when it does not have its own unique expression. Such expressions pertain solely to the speech process; once the speech process is completed, the expression disintegrates, and hence, it cannot maintain the status of a lexical unit.

Taking into consideration these factors and aspects of the analysis of gap units and lacunae, we propose the following classification:

1. Level gap units and gaps: phonetic, lexical, phraseological, morphemic, morphological, syntactic, and stylistic.
2. Motivated and unmotivated gaps. The emergence of motivated gaps is, in our view, due to the absence of certain realities in the life of the people who are the bearers of one of the compared languages (no realia, no linguemes). It should be noted that unmotivated gap units and gaps appear despite the presence of the corresponding reality in the lives of speakers of one of the compared languages (realia without a lingueme).

Among the motivated gap units and gaps, the following are notable:

1. Ethnographic gap units and lacunae, which reflect the distinct features of traditional daily life and the lifestyle of the people whose languages are compared.
2. Linguocultural, socio-historical gap units and gaps, reflecting the culture, history, and society of people - speakers of the compared languages.
3. Mental, associative gap units and gaps, reflecting the worldview, self-consciousness of people, their way of thinking, associations, etc.

Currently, there are several classifications of interlingual gaps based on various principles:

- By system-linguistic affiliation (interlingual and intralingual),
- By extralinguistic conditionality (motivated and unmotivated),
- By paradigmatic characteristics (generic and specific),
- According to the degree of abstractness of content (subject and abstract),
- By type of nomination (nominative and stylistic),
- By the gap's belonging to a certain part of speech (part-of-speech),
- By gender of designated referents (gender),
- By the external and internal connections between the designated objects (metonymic).

The aforementioned classifications allow for the identification of specific characteristics of gap units and gaps. Simultaneously, the classification becomes comprehensive, considering both interlingual and intralingual gap units and gaps. Thus, concretising gap units are discerned due to the absence in the compared language of the corresponding concretisation on a certain basis, for example:

- Location
- Form
- Size
- Time
- Composition

The authors of this classification highlight the fact that "the direction of concretisation and the direction of generalisation in many cases coincide. The reasons for gaps can be the absence of both generalisation and specification in form, place, time, evaluation, action" (Khudaiberganova D. (2015)).

4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it's important to note that gaps are a universal category and are inherent in the vast majority of the world's languages, and gap units are unique. Therefore, the paradigm of universals - uniques - gaps represents uniques within universals. Thus, gaps attest to the redundancy or insufficiency of the experiences of one linguocultural community in relation to another.

From this, it can be inferred that in intercultural business communication, the process of adapting fragments of the value experiences of one linguocultural community, when perceived by representatives of another culture, essentially equates to the process of eliminating gaps of different types.

The elimination of gaps in texts addressed to a foreign cultural recipient can be executed, as literary analysis shows, in two ways: filling and compensation.

At each stage of intercultural interaction, the gap performs specific functions:

- Silence, manifested in the uncertainty of the communicative situation, and a null sign at the stage of cognitive dissonance;
- Linguistic cultures at the stage of cultural self-determination;
- Borrowing at the stage of cultural integration.

Filling is a process of revealing the meaning of a certain concept (a word belonging to a culture unfamiliar to the recipient), implemented through specific translation techniques such as descriptive translation or explanatory translation, or transformational (contextual) translation.

The expansion of the concept of gaps ("lacuna") to the comparison of both languages and other cultural aspects seems appropriate and methodologically justified. On one hand, such an expansion of the concept of gaps is founded on the position of a close relationship between language and culture; on the other hand, the identification of linguo-culturological and cultural gaps, along with linguistic gaps, contributes to the establishment of certain specific forms of correlation between language and culture.

Gaps constitute a significant portion of the national specificity of any language. The conditions of the socio-political, socio-economic, and cultural life of the people, the uniqueness of their worldview, psychology, and traditions, determine the emergence of images and concepts that are fundamentally absent from speakers of other languages.

According to linguistic research, the indicators of gaps and non-gaps can be represented as the following contrasts: incomprehensible - understandable, unusual - usual, unfamiliar - familiar, incorrect - correct. Often in both domestic and foreign science, the existence of gaps is explained by the mechanism of "functioning" of linguistic and cultural universals.

Thus, a gap is a virtual lexical entity that does not have a material embodiment in the form of a lexeme, but is capable of manifesting itself at the level of syntactic objectification in the event of a communicative demand for the concept.

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