

The Modern Lacunology Studies' Linguistical Confirmation of Lacunae

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Abstract:

Lacunology is a new linguistic discipline which is developing today due to new approaches oriented towards research, analysis and experiment. Lacunology studies pertain to an international dimension supporting its status as a new linguistic discipline. Linguistic research has been compiling the terms of lacunology into the registry of lacunicon. Lacunology deals with sociolinguistics, nonverbal semiotics, corpus linguistics and other related linguistic areas. Lacunology focuses on the interpretation of empty spaces in contrasting languages, zero verbalization in written and oral discourse, and null transfer, or the explicit substitutes for the lacunar originals. This article gives the current status of lacunology studies where lacunae are regarded as results of change, innovation, substitution and transfer. The paper has revealed many lacunar linguistic phenomena which can be identified and found in texts and corpus data if lacunae are seen as rare words or hapaxes. It is important to differentiate communicative lacunae (lacunae in speech), paradigmatic lacunae (lacunae in language), and conceptual lacunae (lacunae of cognition). The methods to render lacunae in translation are revealed by the current linguistic study. The methods have been discussed by researchers.

Key words: lacunae, gaps, lacunicon, hapaxes, lacunology studies.

Introduction

Lacunology is a new linguistic discipline, which has its own fixed and non-fixed inclinations and terms. The category of lacunarity has the characteristics of “cyclical repetition”, which reflects the process of reduction and the simplification of languages in a scientific worldview. The constant development of lacunicon terminology is in the state of an on-going and renewal. It makes sense to research the category of lacunarity and its appropriate terms. The object of this article has revealed

many lacunar linguistic phenomena that can be identified and found in texts and corpus data – the subject of the article is when lacunae are seen as rare words or hapaxes.

The Lacunology studies were initiated by the French-Canadian School of Lacunology while embracing translation studies. The Lacunology Studies are devoted to empty places in the structure of contrasting languages and the ways of zero verbalization in written and oral discourse. The empty category of “*lacunarity*” has been studied by the Canadian translators Jean-Paul Vinay (1910-1999) and Jean Darbelnet (1904-1990) and their followers.

The Lacunology Study has “*lacuna*” as the basic term and its status was verified by the new linguistic science – lacunology. The root of the word *lacuna* is frequented in many lexical units: *lacuna*, *lacune*, *lacunar*, *lacunarity*, *lacunicon*, *lacunology*. *Lacuna* is of Roman origin (Greek – Latin) and is semantically charged as “*lake*”, “*pond*”, “*swamp*”, “*uncultivated land*”, “*pit*”, and “*cave*”. These words are of landscape topography. Later on, *lacuna* terms joined different domains of people’s activities, but today *lacunicon* is fortunate to be included in a terminological system of lacunology (at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century).

Lacuna is often seen as lacking a unit, zero verbal nomination, absent meaning, nonexistent concept in one language, culture and society which has no corresponding equivalent. *Lacunae* are systematized by linguists according to the following parameters: *lacunae* in language (the results of reduction, elision); *lacunae* in speech (caused by cognitive dissonance resulting in pauses); and extralinguistic nature (aphasia).

In Translation Studies *lacuna* are units that have a single-word nomination in another language. *Lacunae* are empty spaces in the system of language and vague concepts. Modern linguistics, translation studies and nonverbal semiotics have given birth to a new science that has become viral today – lacunology, the science which studies pauses in speech, cultural and linguistic gaps, *lacunae* of cognition, and zero transfer. The expansion of many various methods and disciplines interference resulted in the development of lacunology studies.

Lacuna is a unique phenomenon which mirrors zero reflection of non-equivalent vocabulary. *Lacunae* are quasi-comparable units that can refer to various referents of ethnic cultures. The phenomenon of the lack of specific elements in the culture of one ethnic group against another in English termed as “*gap*”. Cultural or linguistic facts can cause gaps or broad interpretation. Ethnographic specifics must be fully rendered in the target culture. The implicit gaps are results of the loss of some background information.

Lacuna is a signal of the specificity of a particular linguistic community compared to another. By gaps, or *lacunae*, linguists understand: the absence of a semantic structure of the word that would provide the designated object, or phenomenon. There is no unanimous term for this phenomenon. *Lacuna* can also be termed as *lacunema*. Fragmentary presentation of the information in a sentence, which is reflected in the incompleteness of the composition of the subject and the predicate is traditionally treated as the omission of minor members of the sentence. The term *gap* is also used. The reduction of the syntactic structure is typically regarded as ellipsis.

Lacunae in language, speech and cognition

There are different layers of *lacunarity*. The paradigmatic *lacunarity* can be illustrated by grammatical categories, such as the category of the article in English, or the category of gender in Ukrainian that emerge as zero in contrast. This phenomenon is considered to be a throwback to the synthetic background of the Ukrainian language and analytic background of the English language. The analytic design of English, its simplified wording stays *lacunar* for the Slavic speech model. Also, the word order of the English Language is standard in Slavic Languages.

The term linguistic lacunicon as a component of the structure of linguistic identity was suggested by Yuriy Sorokin (Sorokin, 1988); and later the term lacunicon became “a mechanism that controls the filtering of all incoming information” (Glazacheva, 2005: 33). The lacunicon is a terminologic registry, which includes linguistic units correlating with the semantics of lacunarity, absence, reduction, compression, truncation, and elision. These gaps are empty, implicit, compressed elements of language systems, voids of communication, speech emptiness (e.g., pauses, silence, the silent effect), and the lacunae of cognition.

The linguistic lacunicon includes the linguistic terms within grammatical, lexical, phonetic and syntactic clusters (the paradigmatic gaps), and the terms in respect with communicative and neuro-physiological gaps in speech (the syntagmatic gaps). Also, terms denoting the lack of background or specifically oriented knowledge regarding the linguistic lacunicon which is related to the semantics of decoding (the cognitive gaps) can also be used.

The syntagmatic cluster of the register of the linguistic terms of lacunicon has been formed by the following terms: compression, summarization, rhetorical question, interrogation. There are some culture-oriented terms of the lacunicon: ethos, ethnonyms, nationally biased lexicon, and xenonyms. The cognitive terms are adherent to the cluster of the linguistic lacunicon, among them there are such terms as: knowledge lacuna/gap, cognitive lacuna/gap, semantic lacuna/gap, narrowing of meaning, restriction of meaning, specification of meaning, and syncretism. The ethnographic elements are considered by linguists as gaps of transfer to another culture: that are not easily translated, so they are rendered with a phrase, not by a word (Anokhina, 2015: 10).

The semantic vector of the lacunicon is oriented towards a terminological development, producing such linguistic terms in the scientific worldview as: a reduced form; altered/transformed meaning; changed/modified meaning; faulty interpretation; incorrect interpretation; wrong interpretation/misinterpretation; erroneous interpretation; nonproductive substitution; and discrepancy/variance/mismatch of the multilingual products correlates.

The lexical and grammatical change in certain combinations differ in perception with native speakers. For example, not incidentally the German combination of “*zärtliches Schweigen*”, Ukr. “*ласкава тиша*” is translated as “*Gentle silence*”. “*Soft and mute*” is a rare combination, author’s epithets are unexpected with hidden comparisons that attract attention of the reader, so the translator tends to artificially save the reproducibility of the collocation.

Creating sequels of books and numerous screen versions provide lacunar prototypical copies, relics or artifact parodies, such as “Casino Royale” (1967). New versions are not worthy without comparison to older ones. Translations and a new film are always intertextual. The intertextuality is the “*right hand*” of semantic lacunarity. Artifact, where you can find the gaps, is incomplete with respect to its real or virtual prototype. When something is lost in translation, it must be the identity of the original.

Taxonomy of lacunar mentalese include the bottom taxon *nothing* and a top taxon *everything* denoting no distinctions (Frank, 2006: 32). Both *everything* and *nothing* in Boolean logic has no distinctions, thus lacunar taxons are taxons that have vague distinctions, or no distinctions at all. According to Frank (2006) a taxon is described as two sets of Boolean distinctions: the set of the affirmed and the set of negated distinctions ($D=\{\text{True. False}\}$) (ibid 2006: 32). The word concept describes a unit in the mental realm, something in our mind (Frank, 2006: 28). The taxons of a cognitive endozone can be highly figurative, cf.: *heavy thoughts*, *green ideas*, *flying proposals* (Frank, 2006: 37).

If analogy to the bifurcation processes is applicable to word building in multi word units, before splitting a neo, the virtual would-be element goes back to branch of earlier forms and other language potentialities and have resulted in the top choice. In a synergetic approach, the bifurcation

firstly goes to the old before creating something new like the *Celtic stone* (also known as *rattle back*, *anagyre*, *celt*, *rebellious celt*, *rattlerock*, *spin bar*, *Robinson Reverser*, *wobble stone*, *wobblestone* spins in the opposite direction, becomes unstable, “rattles” to a stop and reverses its spin to the preferred direction. Burt (2003) drew this analogy, based on case studies, with the biological concept of epigenetic change demonstrating how the epigenetic change “grows new from the seeds of the old” positing the use of a transitional object, “a mental construct that establishes continuity between the proposed changed situation and the past” (Burt, 2003: 391).

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