

LATIP 2021

International conference «Language and Technology in the Interdisciplinary Paradigm»

TERMS OF TRADITIONAL CUISINE AS INTERLINGUAL GAPS

Olga Shibiko (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Komsomolsk-on-Amur State University, 27 Lenina street, Komsomolsk-on-Amur, Russia,
olga.shibiko@gmail.com**Abstract**

This work is devoted to the study of the terms of traditional cuisine as interlingual gaps or lacunae. The author examines the terms related to the traditional cuisine of Russia and Japan as gaps in the English language on the material of English-language culinary sites. The research is descriptive and qualitative in nature using elements of comparative analysis, typology and scientific generalization with an interdisciplinary approach. The research revealed the terms of traditional Russian and Japanese cuisine that are absent in the corpus of the English language. The author classifies them as interlingual gaps. It is noted that the essential characteristics of the studied terms are their motivated and nominative nature, and also their historical and cultural conditioning by the methods of adaptation of the studied peoples to natural and social environments. The identified interlingual gaps function at the lexical level of the language. To understand the text by a foreign language recipient, it is necessary to eliminate the gaps that impede the understanding of the text, that is, to eliminate gaps by filling them in. Based on the research material, it is shown how the filling of gaps can be carried out by means of transcription or the creation of various kinds of comments, notes, explaining the missing concept. Competent and correct elimination of such interlingual lacunae contributes to the improvement of the practices of intercultural communication, a deeper and more adequate mutual understanding of the participants in communication.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Interlingual gaps, traditional cuisine, terms

1. Introduction

The modern information and cultural space is characterized by a high degree of complexity, an ever-increasing number of constituent elements and the complication of intra-system connections between them. One of the ways to adapt a person and society to this state of affairs is to consider reality from new points of view and use new approaches that help to see phenomena and facts in a new light, in a new perspective. Since changes affect all aspects of human life and society, such an approach is relevant for various scientific areas. One of the most important attributes of a person and society-forming factors is language. Therefore, the study of natural languages in a new paradigm is promising for gaining new knowledge about a person and society, which in turn will help to better understand the essence of linguistic phenomena, the current state of natural languages, and will open new opportunities in the application of this knowledge in the development of society. Thus, innovative linguistic research at the present stage opens the way for a person's deep understanding of himself and society as a whole, which is important for determining the prospects and vectors of development. The study of linguistic gaps (or lacunae) seems to be such an innovative approach in the comparative study of different natural languages, since it allows us to identify those areas of linguistic consciousness of representatives of different cultures that are the most culturally specific and therefore contain a particularly large number of culturally significant meanings. One of the most culturally specific areas of a person's life and, accordingly, one's linguistic consciousness is cuisine or cookery, which in its traditional form carries information about the ways of adaptation of a particular people to the natural and social environment. Therefore, the study of interlingual gaps (or lacunae) in this area seems to us very productive and opens up wide opportunities for gaining new knowledge about languages and cultures.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of linguistic gaps has existed in linguistic science since the second half of the 20th century, when linguistic scientists began to attach particular importance to the relationship between language and culture. Of course, at earlier stages of the development of linguistics, this relationship was known and interested the minds of researchers (since the work of Wilhelm von Humboldt). However, precisely in the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, with the development of globalization and the exponential growth of the need for translation, special studies devoted to the problem of linguistic gaps as a phenomenon that complicates the process of translation and intercultural communication appear. In the last decade, various aspects of the problem of linguistic gaps for various natural languages have been considered in the scientific works of the following scientists. Onyshchuk (2015) examines interlingual lacunarity in the lingual and culturological aspect based on the material of the English and Ukrainian languages. She conducts the comparative typological analysis of linguistic gaps and identifies the ways of eliminating them in translation and in the process of intercultural communication. Shchitova and Shchitov (2020) investigated interlingual phraseological equivalents and lacunas in the ethnocultural aspect on the material of the Russian and Chinese languages. Belikova (2019) explores interlingual lacunae as epistemological phenomena in interlingual research using the example of French and Russian. Shaymardanova (2020) explores the role and position of gaps

in the process of intercultural communication using the material of the Russian and Uzbek languages. Liutińska (2019) explores the ways of translating linguocultural lacunae in the English-language media discourse. Denisova-Schmidt et al. (2020) developed the lacuna model as an innovative research tool for studying intercultural differences in a broader context. One can see that in modern linguistic science, significant work has been done on a multifaceted study of linguistic lacunae. In the listed works, the concept of "lacuna" is interpreted with varying degrees of breadth, but without fundamental differences that could be opposed to each other. Narrower definitions consider gaps as mismatches or absence of certain units in languages (first of all, lexical units). In a broader sense, gaps are defined as inconsistencies of elements of local cultures that find expression, in particular, in language. This option is, in our opinion, correct and promising for linguoculturological studies, the subject of which is both language and culture, which are in dialogue, interaction, since language is closely connected with culture, it grows into it, develops in it and expresses it. In this paper, we will adhere to a generalized definition, according to which lacunas are something that in some languages and cultures are designated as separate elements of a language or culture, and in others they are not present, because they do not find a socially fixed expression in the language. Currently, in linguistic science there is no single strict classification of lacunae. Within the framework of different approaches and different interpretations of the concept of "lacuna", researchers distinguish the types of lacunae in different ways. Intralingual lacunarity is a complex phenomenon and very promising for all kinds of linguistic research. However, within the framework of this work, as well as for linguocultural studies, it is more relevant to study interlingual gaps, that is, examples of discrepancies and inconsistencies in the languages of various linguocultural communities. Linguistic gaps in linguistic science are usually considered at the lexical, grammatical or stylistic level. A lexical lacuna is the absence of a certain lexical unit in the presence of a similar unit in another language. A grammatical gap is the absence of a grammatical phenomenon in one language, if it is present in another (interlingual grammatical gap), or the absence of one or more elements of the grammatical paradigm within the same language (intralingual grammatical gap). Both lexical and grammatical gaps can be absolute and relative. An example of an absolute grammatical lacuna is a gerund in English, which, being an impersonal form of a verb, combines verbal features with substantive functions in a sentence, and a gerund can be combined with a definition and introduced using a preposition. Gerund has no parallels in Russian and, therefore, is an absolute grammatical lacuna in the Russian language. An example of a relative grammatical lacuna is the more frequent use of the imperative in Russian compared to Finnish. The more frequent use of the passive voice in English in comparison with Russian is also a relative grammatical gap. Linguistic gaps can be so-called motivated and unmotivated. Motivated gaps in the English language include such Russian words as "kvass", "schi", "ushanka", and others. Motivated lacunae are found in the sphere of non-equivalent vocabulary and, when translated, are usually given with explanations or comments (for example, Russian schi – cabbage soup). Unmotivated gaps are not explained by the absence of realities: there are corresponding realities, but the people, due to ethnocultural and historical reasons, left them unnamed. For example, in English "grandparents" and in German "Grosseltern" is the common name for "grandmother and grandfather". There are no such common names in Russian and a number of other languages. As can be seen from the above, one and the same particular example of a gap, based on different research principles, can be

attributed to several types of gaps at once. For example, the Russian word "borscht" is an interlingual, absolute, lexical, substantive, motivated lacuna in the English language. The experience of theoretical typologization and classification of lacunas on various grounds convinces of the complexity and versatility of the phenomenon of lacunarity in linguistic science. In practical terms, in the process of intercultural communication and in translation, gaps cause difficulties and the need to eliminate them in order to convey the meaning of the statement to the recipient as correctly and adequately as possible. In the above research papers on linguistic lacunae, sometimes culinary or cuisine-related terms are cited as examples. Indeed, the names of dishes and utensils, especially the traditional cuisine of different peoples, can cause difficulties when translated into another language, since there may not be a suitable equivalent for naming these phenomena. However, to date, there has been no study entirely devoted to the problem of linguistic gaps in a specific area of traditional cuisine or traditional food culture using the example of several languages and cultures. This work is intended to fill this gap in science and to find out what the terms related to traditional cuisine, considered as interlingual gaps, are, as well as their features and ways of functioning. For the purpose of this research paper, we use the terms lacuna and gap as synonyms.

3. Research Questions

The study of interlingual gaps presupposes an appeal to those segments of reality where they are most likely to be found, namely in the sphere of national and cultural specifics. At the language level, ethnic and cultural specificity is largely reflected in the non-equivalent vocabulary. Since non-equivalent vocabulary is a very broad concept, which includes realities, place names, proper names, and much more, it makes sense to choose for research that area of non-equivalent vocabulary that most clearly expresses national and cultural characteristics, and therefore presents rich material for our study. We chose the area of traditional cuisine for the reason that this area is directly related to the historically established ways of adapting a particular people to the natural and social environment. Since environments and ways of adapting to them vary in different countries and cultures, comparative analysis of the characteristics of different cultures can be very productive and provide tangible results. The traditional cuisine of various nations usually falls into the focus of attention of researchers in the field of sociology and cultural studies, tourism and food industry. Recent scientific publications by scientists (Asimeng and Zhang, 2020; Bereznitsky et al., 2020; Fais-Leutskaiia, 2019; Kim, 2014; Lin, 2019; Terziyska & Georgiev, 2014; Tanjung et al., 2020), and others really reflect various aspects of traditional cuisine within the specified scientific areas. But the present research is focused on traditional cuisine from the point of view of lexical units expressing national and cultural specifics. The research question, therefore, can be formulated as follows: can the terms of traditional cuisine be reasonably called interlingual lacunae, or gaps, and if so, what are their essential characteristics in this capacity? The answer to this question will help clarify modern knowledge in this area and improve the practice of intercultural communication by improving the quality of interlingual translation of these terms.

4. Purpose of the Study

In accordance with the research questions posed, the purpose of the research can be formulated: to consider the terms related to traditional cuisine as interlingual lacunae, and to identify their main characteristics. This goal is achieved in the following ways. For clarity, we will choose two languages (Russian and Japanese), in which we will consider the vocabulary related to traditional cuisine. The Russian and Japanese languages reflect the more traditional Russian and Japanese local cultures. In the third language (English), we will identify gaps, that is, the absence of identified words. The English language in our study reflects not so much the British local culture as the global culture, since English is currently the language of international communication. Thus, we will be able to speak not only about the absence of some culinary terms in one local culture relative to another, but also indirectly draw conclusions about the absence of some terms in the global culture relative to the local ones. In addition, the identified gaps should be typologized in accordance with existing classifications, which will help to identify their essential characteristics.

5. Research Methods

This research was carried out within the framework of an interdisciplinary approach that combines elements of linguistic and cultural methods. It is descriptive, since it largely describes linguistic phenomena (terms of traditional cuisine) from a certain angle (from the point of view of the theory of interlingual lacunarity). Such a scientific description helps to combine disparate linguistic phenomena and facts in one context within one paradigm and gain a deeper knowledge of the subject of research. The method of continuous sampling was used to select the appropriate terms from the texts of culinary sites in English (the author analyzed more than 20 culinary sites containing recipes of traditional Russian and Japanese cuisine, description of kitchen utensils, as well as the characteristics of the traditional cuisine of these cultures). This study is also a qualitative research, since it aims to identify not quantitative, but qualitative characteristics of the subject under study. The study uses elements of the comparative method when comparing culinary terminology related to different cultures. The method of typologization or classification is used to identify the qualitative characteristics of the studied terms, their arrangement within the framework of existing approaches. Scientific generalization helps to establish the general properties of the terms under study in accordance with the purpose of the study, as well as to move from listing and describing particular examples to a more general understanding of their properties.

6. Findings

The study examined more than 20 websites containing texts of culinary discourse (such as Cooks (2021), MyRecipes (2021), Recipe Goldmine (2021), and other) in the English language. These texts include step-by-step instructions for cooking dishes, descriptions of the necessary kitchen utensils, descriptions of how to serve dishes and information on table setting, articles describing national traditions of meals. To narrow the scope of the study, only the texts that were related to traditional Russian and traditional Japanese cuisine were selected. In those texts, the method of continuous sampling was used to

select the terms corresponding to the search criteria that is, denoting the concepts of traditional Russian and Japanese cuisine with the corresponding semantics. Russian cuisine terms included such words as borscht (beetroot and cabbage soup), schi (cabbage soup), venegret (vegetable salad with beets), solyanka (pickled cucumber soup), kissel (thick drink with starch), ukha (fish soup), okroshka (salad with kvass), kvass (fermented bread drink), jellied meat or kholodets (meat dish in a frozen broth) and others. Japanese food terms included words such as aonori (powdered green seaweed), miso (fermented soybean paste), okonomi-yaki (unsweetened dough with fish broth, fried with seafood and vegetables), dashi (fish broth made of dried mackerel fish flakes), harusame (transparent thin noodles made from green beans), kampyo (dried pumpkin shavings), hanpen (fish paste with starch), tsumire (boiled fish paste balls), and others. Most of the found terms have no analogs in English, so in English-language websites, they are transmitted using translation transcription, in many cases together with comments or explanations in parentheses. The use of such techniques indicates that in the lexical system of the English language, units with such semantics are absent, that is, they are gaps in the English language. It is noteworthy that most of the terms in Japanese cuisine mean a wide range of various seafood, as well as vegetables and fruits. This is due to the peculiarities of the geographical position of Japan (on the islands surrounded by the ocean), as well as the length from north to south, which explains the presence of a variety of plants from different climatic zones. Russian cuisine has a lesser variety of seafood due to the country's continental location, but is rich in various ethnic cuisine options, which is associated with a large territory and a variety of peoples that have historically been part of Russia. The terms of traditional cuisine as gaps are revealed at the lexical level, therefore they are lexical gaps. The names of dishes, ingredients, food products are nominative, that is, they name objects of reality. They are motivated because they are conditioned by historical and sociocultural reasons, climate and geography of peoples' residence. Among the terms studied, there are both absolute lacunae (the names of some species of fish or plants that are not found in the region of residence of another culture), and relative (reflecting local options for preparing more or less similar dishes). In general, the identified interlingual lacunae carry information about the national and cultural specifics and are distinct culturally specific elements of the text.

7. Conclusion

As can be seen from the above, the study of the terms of traditional cuisine using a combination of elements of linguistic and culturological approaches can open up new perspectives for considering linguistic facts and phenomena in the light of their cultural conditioning. The study of linguistic phenomena in correlation with social and cultural factors provides a broader understanding of their nature and contributes to a deeper understanding of these phenomena. Based on the study, it can be established that the terms of traditional cuisine, considered on the example of Japanese and Russian cuisine, are interlingual gaps in English, which currently serves as the language of international and intercultural communication, and also acts as an intermediary language. This may mean that familiarity with the components of traditional cultures (such as Japanese and Russian cultures) can occur through the English language, accepted as a global international language. The presence of lacunae denoting elements of traditional culture, in particular, the traditional cuisine of different peoples (names of food products, dishes, kitchen utensils, etc.) can impede adequate understanding on the part of a foreign language and

foreign cultural recipient. In this regard, the correct and understandable translation of missing concepts into another language is an essential task in the communication process. Based on the practical experience of intercultural contacts and translation of foreign language texts, in particular, English-language texts of websites on culinary topics, it can be argued that translated transcription, combined with notes, comments and explanations, allows one to convey an authentic name and reveal the meaning of the missing concept so that the recipient has a more or less clear understanding of the meaning of the perceived text. As can be seen, these difficulties in intercultural communication are basically surmountable. The results of this study open up prospects for further study of the terms of other components of traditional cultures in the context of their lacunarity, other combinations of languages and cultures different from ones in this study, as well as the effectiveness of various methods of eliminating interlingual gaps depending on the cultural distance of the communicants. Research in these areas will help improve the practice of intercultural communication and translation and will contribute to increasing mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures.

References

- Asimeng, E., & Zhang, S. (2020). Exploring the differences, similarities and the effect between Chinese and Ghanaian traditional cuisines towards a better appreciation and consumption. In book: J. H. Abawajy et al. (Eds.): *ATCI 2019: International Conference on Applications and Techniques in Cyber Intelligence* (pp. 1459-1467). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25128-4_178
- Belikova, G. V. (2019). The epistemological phenomenon of the interlingual gap in cross-linguistic research (exemplified by the French and Russian languages). *Bulletin of Northern (Arctic) Federal University. Series: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5, 80-90. <https://doi.org/10.17238/issn2227-6564.2019.5.80>
- Bereznitsky, S. V., Kashtanyuk, V. A., Primak, P. V., & Titova, E. V. (2020). The ethnocultural specificity of traditional cuisine in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast. *Tomsk State University Bulletin*, 453, 135-141. <https://doi.org/10.17223/15617793/453/16>
- Cooks (2021). Recipe search and more. Retrieved 15th April 2021 from: <http://www.cooks.com>
- Denisova-Schmidt, E., Markovina, I., & Nicolas-Kryzhko, L. (2020). The lacuna model: A new approach to cross-cultural management research. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 20(3), 329-344. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470595820973448>
- Fais-Leutskaja, O. (2019). Vulgar language in the realm of Sicilian traditional cuisine. *Ethnographic Review*, 2, 61-77. <https://doi.org/10.31857/S086954150004880-8>
- Kim, J. H. (2014). The reinvention of traditional cuisine as counterculture. *The Journal of the Korea Contents Association*, 14(11), 944-954. <https://doi.org/10.5392/JKCA.2014.14.11.944>
- Lin, H. Y. (2019). The transmission of traditional cuisines: a review. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 08(02), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.35248/2167-0269.19.8.400>
- Liutianska, N. I. (2019). On translating linguocultural lacunae in English media discourse. *Science and Education a New Dimension. Humanities and Social Sciences*, VII(33), 35-36. <https://doi.org/10.31174/SEND-HS2019-199VII33-08>
- MyRecipes, (2021). World Cuisine. Retrieved on 15th of April 2021 from: <https://www.myrecipes.com>
- Onyshchuk, M. I. (2015). Linguocultural approach to interlingual lacunarity research. *Scientific Bulletin of Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University. Philological Sciences Series. Linguistics*, 3, 206–211.
- Recipe Goldmine (2021). Recipe Goldmine LLC: Recipes. Retrieved on 15th of April 2021 from: <http://www.recipegoldmine.com>
- Shaymardanova, A. (2020). The role and position of lacunas of cultural location in the process of communication (Can the word “yanga” be thought to be a lacuna in Uzbek language?). *Theoretical and Applied Science*, 92(12), 322-325. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15863/TAS.2020.12.92.61>

- Shchitova, O. G., & Shchitov, A. G. (2020). Interlingual phraseological equivalence and gaps: an ethnocultural aspect (based on the Russian and Chinese languages). *Bulletin of Tomsk State University. Philology*, 65, 158-179. <https://doi.org/10.17223/19986645/65/10>
- Tanjung, N. N., Manugeran, N., & Purwarno, P. (2020). Philosophical meanings of traditional cuisine Rendang Minangkabau as a cultural heritage of Indonesia. *AICLL Annual International Conference on Language and Literature*, 2(1), 70-81. <https://doi.org/10.30743/aicll.v3i1.80>
- Terziyska, I., & Georgiev, G. (2014). Linking traditional cuisine and tourism. *Conference: Smart specialization of Bulgaria, Sofia, Bulgaria*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262724311_Linking_traditional_cuisine_and_tourism#fullTextFileContent