

## LACUNA AS A PHENOMEN OF CULTURE

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The article deals with the theory of lacunas in the frame work of culturology. The culturological aspect of lacunas consists in a polyvariety of approaches to lacuna studies. Lacuna as an ethnopsycholinguistic phenomenon shows how languages and cultures differ in their cognitive structures. To overcome these differences a linguist and a culturologist have to apply some philosophical basis of intercultural communication.

As Igor Panassiuk points out, the Lacunae Theory is the main area of research of Russian ethnopsycholinguistics and as part of it could be capable of comprehending intercultural differences. The founder of this theory is Yuri Sorokin, who derived the term “lacuna” from Contrastive Linguistics (Lexicology) (Y.S. Stepanov) and developed it into an ethnopsycholinguistic research category. Thanks to Irina Markovina, it took the shape of the lacunae model as a method for the analysis of artifacts from foreign cultures [1, p.43]. According to Irina Markovina lacunae are gaps on the “semantic map” of a certain ethnic verbal consciousness that can be identified only by comparison of two national cultures.

Igor Panassiuk analyses lacuna in the theory of translation taking into consideration a structural approach to the definition of the term of Roman Jakobson’s equivalence. He defines the lacuna in the following way: “a lacuna is a signal or a marker of presence of an intercultural or interlingual difference in the meaning and the starting point for the semantic assessment of an equivalence relation” [5, p. 44].

The lacuna appears to be based on Ertelt-Vieth’s and Grodzki’s researches: Lacunas are elements or aspects of texts including cultures that do not correspond to the experiences of individuals of another culture. They might hamper or prohibit understanding of that text but they also motivate towards intercultural communication. Culture specific connotations and evaluation are called axiological lacunas. Such characteristic feature leads to the establishment of two main advantages of the lacuna model to intercultural communication by Ertelt-Vieth: it is a store of categories enabling to scientifically register, classify and analyze the immense diversity of cultural peculiarities [1, p. 6]. According to Grodzki, the lacuna model can be beneficial by promoting mutual understanding [2].

The definitions quoted above let Jens Olaf Jolowicz define the possible three areas of application of the lacuna model in intercultural communication: 1) discovery and analysis of critical incidents in face-to-face situations or in medially mediated intercultural encounters; 2) reconstruction of problematic confrontations of even long-lasting relations; 3) preparing intercultural encounters [3, p.9]. This proves the postulate of functioning of a lacuna as a silence in the communication which arouses conflict, misinterpretations and puzzles the interactants (the situation seems “strange” or “awkward”). It also theoretically grounds the fact that a lacuna being “missing” cultural specific information serves as a *linguculturema* for non-members of the given culture.

Then to avoid misunderstandings a non-member uses the equivalents of these things, hence a lacuna has a form of derivatives in intercultural communication.

T. Danilchenko proposes the more precise or more adequate definition of lacuna. In Danilchenko's opinion, the term "lacuna" covers meaning differences which applied to oppositions. This circumstance leads the discussion about cultural distance between communicators [1, p. 11].

Thus, the phenomenon of lacuna gives us the possibility to have a look at the process of intercultural communication from a new perspective. So, the determination of the lacuna becomes the starting- point for the culturological and philosophical aspects. This confirms the culturological postulate about a possibility of lacuna to be a silence and a derivative in intercultural communication. Such functions of lacuna, in their turn, are based on the polyvariate character of cultures.

To sum up, the lacunized character of communication makes it possible to speak about lacuna as a phenomenon of culture. As Igor Panassuik and we conclude: "Lacuna is an invisible witness" and we add to this, the phenomenon of culture as a result of the communication.

### References

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