



ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEXICOLOGY IN LITERATURE OF XXth CENTURY

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Abstract: This article investigates the role of religious lexis in twentieth-century literature and its contribution to literary expression. The study explores the semantic, stylistic, and communicative functions of religious vocabulary in literary texts, with particular attention to its influence on characterization, thematic development, and artistic representation. It also examines how religious lexical units enable writers to communicate philosophical, moral, and cultural perspectives while strengthening the symbolic dimension of their works. The findings suggest that religious vocabulary serves as more than a reflection of faith; it functions as a versatile literary resource that enriches narrative meaning and deepens readers' interpretation of twentieth-century literature.

Keywords: religious lexis, twentieth-century literature, literary language, semantic analysis.

Introduction

Twentieth-century literature reflects significant changes in human thought, moral values, and social life. The political, cultural, and philosophical transformations of this period greatly influenced literary language and artistic expression. Within this context, religious lexis continued to play an important role in literary works, serving not only as a means of expressing religious ideas but also as a stylistic resource for conveying symbolic meanings, developing characters, and exploring ethical and philosophical issues. Religious lexis includes words and expressions associated with religious beliefs, sacred traditions, and spiritual culture. In literary texts, these lexical units frequently extend beyond their literal meanings and acquire broader symbolic and cultural functions. Writers employ religious vocabulary to enrich the thematic structure of their works, create emotional depth, and establish stronger connections between the text and the reader.

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of religious lexis in twentieth-century literature by analyzing its linguistic and literary functions. Particular attention is given to the semantic, stylistic, and symbolic characteristics of religious vocabulary and its contribution to characterization,



thematic development, and artistic expression. The study also investigates how religious lexical units enhance the cultural and philosophical dimensions of literary texts and influence readers' interpretation of literary works. This research is based on a qualitative analysis of religious lexis in twentieth-century literary works. A selection of novels, poems, and plays written during the twentieth century was used as the primary source of data. The selected texts contain religious words, expressions, and symbolic references that contribute to the interpretation of literary meaning. The study combines lexical-semantic, contextual, and stylistic methods of analysis. First, religious lexical items were identified and grouped according to their semantic characteristics. Their meanings were then examined within the context of each literary work to determine how they function in shaping characters, conveying symbolic messages, and supporting the author's thematic intentions. A comparative analysis was also conducted to observe the use of religious vocabulary across different literary genres and writing styles. In addition, theoretical sources from linguistics, literary criticism, and religious studies were consulted to strengthen the analytical framework of the research. The integration of these methods provides a comprehensive understanding of the linguistic, stylistic, and cultural significance of religious lexis in twentieth-century literature. The findings of this study suggest that religious lexis continues to occupy a significant place in twentieth-century literature, even in works that are not primarily concerned with religion. Writers frequently employ religious vocabulary to explore universal themes such as morality, suffering, hope, identity, and the search for meaning. Consequently, religious expressions function as literary tools that extend beyond their traditional theological associations. The analysis further reveals that the meaning of religious lexical items is shaped by their textual and cultural context. Rather than conveying fixed definitions, these expressions acquire new interpretations according to the narrative situation, the author's perspective, and the reader's background knowledge. This contextual flexibility enables religious vocabulary to perform multiple stylistic and semantic functions within literary discourse.

Another important observation is that religious lexis strengthens the artistic structure of literary works by enriching symbolism and thematic development. Biblical references, sacred images, and spiritual concepts often create additional layers of meaning, allowing readers to interpret texts from different cultural and philosophical perspectives. In many cases, religious vocabulary serves as a bridge between historical traditions and contemporary literary expression. Overall, the study confirms that religious lexis is not simply a collection of specialized religious terms. It represents a dynamic linguistic resource that contributes to the aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual value of



twentieth-century literature. Its continued presence demonstrates the lasting influence of religious language on literary creativity and on the interpretation of human experience.

Conclusion

This study confirms that religious lexis remains a valuable element of twentieth-century literature despite the social and cultural transformations that characterized the period. Religious vocabulary is employed not only to express beliefs and spiritual traditions but also to explore ethical questions, human emotions, cultural identity, and existential concerns. As a result, these lexical units contribute significantly to the richness and complexity of literary language. The research demonstrates that the functions of religious lexis are closely connected with the context of the literary work. Rather than carrying a single fixed meaning, religious expressions often acquire new semantic and symbolic interpretations depending on the narrative, the author's creative intention, and the cultural background of the reader. This characteristic increases the expressive potential of literary texts and supports multiple levels of interpretation. The findings also indicate that religious vocabulary plays an important role in shaping imagery, symbolism, and thematic development. By integrating traditional religious concepts into modern literary discourse, twentieth-century writers establish meaningful connections between historical heritage and contemporary human experience. Consequently, religious lexis becomes an effective instrument for communicating both personal and universal ideas. Overall, religious lexis should be viewed as a dynamic linguistic and literary resource that enhances the aesthetic and cultural value of literary works. Its continued presence in twentieth-century literature reflects the lasting interaction between language, religion, and artistic creativity. Further studies may expand this research by examining the use of religious vocabulary in different national literatures or by comparing its functions across various literary movements and genres.

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