



COMPARATIVE LEXICOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF NEOLOGISMS IN GEORGE ORWELL'S 1984 AND MARGARET ATWOOD'S THE HANDMAID'S TALE

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Abstract

This article examines the structural, semantic, and functional features of neologisms in George Orwell's 1984 and Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale from a comparative lexicological perspective. Although many scholars have explored the political and ideological dimensions of these dystopian novels, the role of neologisms as mechanisms of vocabulary expansion and lexical innovation has received less focused attention. This study aims to analyze how both authors use neologisms to construct dystopian realities, shape ideological discourse, and expand lexical systems within literary language. Through literary analysis, comparative analysis, semantic interpretation, and discourse analysis, the research identifies major patterns of word formation, semantic transformation, and stylistic function in both works. The results demonstrate that Orwell primarily employs compounding, abbreviation, and lexical reduction to represent political domination, while Atwood relies more heavily on semantic shifts, religiously redefined vocabulary, and socially constructed terminology to depict patriarchal oppression. Despite their differences, both authors use neologisms as powerful tools of social control and world-building. This research contributes to literary lexicology by showing that dystopian fiction serves as an important source of vocabulary expansion and conceptual innovation in modern English.

Keywords: Neologisms, lexicology, dystopian literature, vocabulary expansion, George Orwell, Margaret Atwood, 1984, The Handmaid's Tale, comparative analysis, linguistic innovation



АННОТАЦИЯ

Данная статья посвящена сравнительному лексикологическому анализу неологизмов в романах Джорджа Оруэлла «1984» и Маргарет Этвуд «Рассказ служанки». Исследование рассматривает структурные, семантические и функциональные особенности неологизмов как важнейших механизмов расширения словарного состава английского языка в антиутопическом литературном дискурсе. Несмотря на широкое изучение идеологических аспектов данных произведений, роль неологизмов как средства лексической инновации и формирования новых концептуальных систем остается недостаточно исследованной. В статье используются методы литературного анализа, сравнительного анализа, семантической интерпретации и дискурс-анализа. Результаты показывают, что Джордж Оруэлл преимущественно использует словосложение, аббревиацию и лексическое сокращение для создания системы политического контроля, тогда как Маргарет Этвуд чаще прибегает к семантическим сдвигам, религиозно переосмысленной лексике и социально маркированным неологизмам для отражения патриархального угнетения. Исследование подтверждает, что неологизмы в антиутопической литературе выполняют не только стилистическую, но и важную лексикологическую функцию, способствуя расширению словарного состава и развитию новых смысловых структур.

Ключевые слова: неологизмы, лексикология, расширение словарного состава, антиутопическая литература, Джордж Оруэлл, Маргарет Этвуд, сравнительный анализ, языковая инновация, семантическая трансформация, литературный дискурс.

ANNOTATSIYA

Mazkur maqola Jorj Oruellning “1984” va Margaret Etvudning “Cho‘ri qiz hikoyasi” asarlaridagi neologizmlarning qiyosiy leksikologik tahliliga bag‘ishlangan. Tadqiqotda neologizmlarning ingliz tili lug‘at tarkibini kengaytirishdagi muhim mexanizm sifatidagi strukturaviy, semantik va funksional xususiyatlari distopik adabiy diskurs doirasida o‘rganiladi. Mazkur



asarlarning mafkuraviy jihatlari keng tadqiq etilgan bo'lsa-da, neologizmlarning leksik innovatsiya va yangi konseptual tizimlar yaratishdagi roli yetarlicha o'rganilmagan. Maqolada adabiy tahlil, qiyosiy tahlil, semantik interpretatsiya va diskurs tahlili metodlaridan foydalanilgan. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, Jorj Oruell asosan qo'shma so'zlar, qisqartmalar va leksik reduksiya orqali siyosiy nazorat tizimini yaratadi, Margaret Etvud esa ko'proq semantik siljishlar, diniy qayta talqin qilingan leksika va ijtimoiy belgilangan neologizmlar orqali patriarxal zulmni ifodalaydi. Tadqiqot distopik adabiyotdagi neologizmlar nafaqat uslubiy vosita, balki lug'at boyligini kengaytiruvchi va yangi ma'no tizimlarini shakllantiruvchi muhim leksikologik omil ekanligini tasdiqlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: neologizmlar, leksikologiya, lug'at tarkibini kengaytirish, distopik adabiyot, Jorj Oruell, Margaret Etvud, qiyosiy tahlil, til innovatsiyasi, semantik transformatsiya, adabiy diskurs

INTRODUCTION

Language constantly evolves in response to social, political, and cultural transformations. One of the primary mechanisms of this development is the creation of neologisms, which introduce new lexical forms or meanings into a language system. Neologisms are particularly significant in literary discourse, where they function not only as stylistic devices but also as tools for constructing alternative realities, ideological systems, and conceptual frameworks.

George Orwell's 1984 and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* are two major dystopian novels that demonstrate the linguistic power of neologisms. Orwell's Newspeak presents an explicitly engineered system of lexical control designed to restrict freedom of thought, while Atwood constructs a socially oppressive lexicon through semantic transformation and ideological language restructuring. In both novels, language becomes a central instrument of social manipulation.

Previous scholarship has largely focused on the political, feminist, and philosophical dimensions of these texts. However, comparative lexicological studies of neologisms in these novels remain relatively limited. Specifically,



insufficient attention has been paid to how literary neologisms contribute to vocabulary expansion and lexical innovation within English literary discourse. The purpose of this study is to conduct a comparative lexicological analysis of neologisms in Orwell's 1984 and Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, examining their structural formation, semantic characteristics, and ideological functions. This research seeks to demonstrate that literary discourse serves as an important domain for vocabulary development and linguistic experimentation.

METHODS

This research is based on a qualitative interdisciplinary approach that combines literary analysis, comparative lexicology, semantic analysis, and discourse analysis.

The primary sources are George Orwell's 1984 (1949) and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985). Neologisms within both novels were identified and classified according to their structural and semantic features.

Lexicological analysis was used to categorize neologisms according to:

- compounding,
- abbreviation,
- semantic innovation,
- lexical redefinition,
- ideological terminology.

Comparative analysis was applied to reveal similarities and differences between the two authors' linguistic strategies.

- Semantic analysis focused on shifts in meaning, conceptual fields, and vocabulary expansion.

- Discourse analysis was used to interpret how neologisms function within broader systems of political, social, and ideological power.

This methodological framework allows for a systematic examination of literary neologisms as linguistic, stylistic, and cultural phenomena.



RESULTS

The analysis revealed significant differences in the formation and function of neologisms in the two novels.

In Orwell's 1984, neologisms are predominantly formed through compounding and abbreviation. Examples such as thoughtcrime, doublethink, crimestop, Miniluv, and Ingsoc illustrate deliberate lexical engineering. These forms simplify language while simultaneously embedding ideological control. Orwell's linguistic strategy focuses on vocabulary reduction, semantic restriction, and cognitive limitation.

The primary functions of Orwell's neologisms include:

- restricting independent thought,
- reinforcing totalitarian ideology,
- reducing semantic complexity,
- controlling political discourse.

In Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, neologisms emerge primarily through semantic transformation and social reclassification. Terms such as Handmaid, Unwoman, Econowife, and Salvaging reflect the ideological restructuring of familiar vocabulary. Atwood's lexical innovations are less morphologically radical than Orwell's but are deeply embedded in patriarchal and religious discourse.

The primary functions of Atwood's neologisms include:

- reinforcing gender hierarchy,
- legitimizing patriarchal power,
- restructuring social identity,
- naturalizing oppression through language.

Comparatively, Orwell relies more heavily on formal lexical innovation, while Atwood emphasizes semantic manipulation and ideological reinterpretation.

DISCUSSION

The comparative findings suggest that both Orwell and Atwood use neologisms as essential tools of dystopian world-building, though their methods differ significantly.



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Orwell's linguistic strategy represents direct lexical authoritarianism. Through morphological innovation and vocabulary restriction, Newspeak seeks to eliminate dissent by narrowing conceptual possibilities. Orwell's neologisms function as instruments of cognitive repression.

Atwood, by contrast, demonstrates how existing language can be reshaped through semantic and ideological transformation. Her dystopian lexicon reveals that oppressive systems may not require entirely new linguistic structures; instead, they can manipulate familiar vocabulary to normalize subjugation.

From a lexicological perspective, Orwell's innovations contribute primarily through morphological vocabulary expansion, while Atwood's contributions are largely semantic. Together, these novels illustrate that literary neologisms operate on multiple linguistic levels and can significantly influence conceptual and lexical development.

This study also confirms that dystopian literature serves as a productive site of lexical experimentation, where language reflects broader tensions between power, identity, and social control.

CONCLUSION

This research has demonstrated that neologisms in Orwell's 1984 and Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* are central to both linguistic innovation and ideological representation. Orwell primarily uses compounding, abbreviation, and lexical reduction to construct a system of political control, whereas Atwood relies on semantic transformation and social lexical restructuring to depict patriarchal oppression.

Both novels reveal that neologisms function not only as literary devices but also as mechanisms of vocabulary expansion, conceptual transformation, and ideological discourse. The comparative analysis confirms that literary language can significantly contribute to modern lexicology by generating new lexical structures and meanings.

Therefore, dystopian fiction should be recognized as an important source of lexical innovation and as a valuable field for comparative linguistic and literary research.



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