The Lexical-Semantic Field of Beliefs Associated with Good and Evil

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Abstract
This article aims to highlight, using the method of semantic and contextual analysis, the relationships that can be established within the paradigm of naming beliefs associated with good and evil. The lexemes subject to analysis are: FAITH, FAITHFULNESS, UNBELIEF, DOUBT, HERESY, HOPE. Being abstract terms, their features are of a higher degree of generality. Vocabulary segmentation was done taking into account the proximate gender /regarding beliefs/.

Keywords: lexical-semantic field, beliefs, context, semantic analysis, semantic features

JEL Classification: I20, I29

Introduction
The lexical field of good and evil also includes the paradigm that contains the names of the beliefs associated with good and evil. Some words have a special meaning in biblical theology, which is why, in addition to general dictionaries, we also use dictionaries that specialize in Bible study. The recurrence of lexical items is highlighted in several structures provided by the Bible, the 1988 edition, which I used as a corpus.

We oppose the lexemes FAITH, BELIEF, UNBELIEF, DOUBT, HERESY, HOPE and obtain the common value of the field: ‘beliefs’. Through the analysis, we notice the possible synonyms between the terms, as well as the antonymous relationship.
The semantic analysis

The lexeme FAITH has more than one meaning but for the studied paradigm the meaning of interest is “conviction about the existence of God; testimony of this conviction through observing church prescriptions”. In the Commented dictionary of words and expressions of biblical origin, Raluca Felicia Toma refers to some expressions about faith, like “the faith that moves the mountains” (Matthew 17, 20) or “to be like Thomas the Unbeliever” (John 20, 26-29). Some philosophers have been preoccupied by the faith-reason relationship and even proved their compatibility. Monica Timofte identified in the biblical text forms of expression for a semantics of units conformity. The stereotypical formula “as it is written” shows up under the form of “incident commentary of conformity”4: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ […] For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith” (Romans 1, 16. 17). The term FAITH with the meaning of “deep religious conviction, religiosity, sincere adhesion to a religious concept”, constructed with various prepositions, is attested in the old writings (The Voronet Codex, Dosoftei etc.)5. From the context in which the lexeme FAITH appears but also based on the lexicographic definition, we can consider that the semes of the FAITH lexeme are: /abstract/, /characteristic to man/, /conviction/, /about the existence of God/, /calls into action/, /positive/.

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1 “FAITH, faiths. 1. The act of believing in the truth of something; conviction, certainty. 2. Trust (that someone inspires). 3. Fidelity, devotion, steadiness for someone or something; Engagement. 4. Hope. 5. Conviction about the existence of God; testimony of this conviction through observing the church prescriptions; religion, cult” (DEX 2016: 269).

2 “The expression is used to describe a sceptic or excessively prudent person, which cannot be convinced by someone’s affirmations, but only through probation with facts that exclude the possibility of errors” (Toma 2011: 81).

3 Montaigne believed that “not with reason will the man be able to judge God”, and Pascal considered that faith is a gift from God: “You feel God with the heart, not with the mind. Behold, what faith means” (Toma 2011: 82).

4 Timofte 2016: 100

5 DLR: 891
FAITHFULNESS has many meanings: “1. Faith. 2. Devotion. 3. Fidelity. 4. Honor - Faithful” (MDA 2010: 543). This term is attested by Sincai⁶, it is archaic and belongs to the religious domain. In the current study what interests us is meaning 1. There are not many references to this term in the Bible, but it sometimes appears to refer to people, while in other cases it is a trait of God. The semic formula of the FAITHFULNESS lexeme is made up of: /abstract/, /the act of believing/, /steadiness/, characteristic of man/, /characteristic of God/. Barclay considers that in Gal 5, 22 the Greek term πίστη (pistis) should be translated to “loyalty” or “faithfulness”, as it refers to an ethical virtue, not a theological one.⁷

The term UNBELIEF develops two meanings: “UNBELIEF, 1. Dishonourable behaviour, deception, betrayal; lack of fidelity; infidelity. 2. Lack of religious faith; atheism; not observing the church dogma; wrong faith; heresy – Pref. un - belief” (DEX 2016: 771). In the paradigm of convictions associated with good and evil, the UNBELIEF lexeme is considered with the second meaning out of the ones listed. The semes of the UNBELIEF lexeme are: /characteristic to man/, /referring to religious faith/, /absent/.

The noun DOUBT has two meanings: “DOUBT, doubts 1. Disbelief, hesitance, reluctance; bending. 2. (Rarely) Bending of the body” (DEX 2016: 597). For the meaning of “distrust”, the semic scheme for DOUBT would be: /characteristic to man/, /the lack of conviction/, /process of thinking/, /accent on proof/. René Descartes evinced thinking and he used doubt methodically and in a controlled way, while having a positive purpose in mind, in order to establish the certainty of the basis of knowledge⁸. The antonym of the word DOUBT is TRUST⁹, which is found in the studied corpus.

The term HERESY is defined as: “HERESY, heresies. Faith in miraculous, supernatural forces; false concept (transformed into a habit); bias; superstition; error; Fig. What falls short from the

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⁶ In Sincai there is also the occurrence of the form “faithfulness” (DLR: 890).

⁷ By the term pistis, in this context, the author understands “the quality of being worthy of trust, that which makes a man one that which we can rely on fully and whose word we accept without reserve” (Barclay 1992: 113).

⁸ Descartes stated: “I doubt of the truth of all my beliefs. I think, hence I doubt. And hence I think it means I exist as a thinking being”. The Latin formula is: “Dubito, ergo cogito; cogito, ergo sum”

⁹ “You have put your trust in the Lord” (II Paral. 16, 8); “And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward” (II Cor 3, 4).
common concepts (of a society); p.ext. aberration, sin – From sl. *Eresi*” (DEX 2016: 390). This word is recorded in ancient texts. Its elements can be diverse. The semantic traits of the HERESY lexeme are: /characteristic to man/, /act of believing/, /faith in miraculous forces/, /teaching/, /act of the body/, /may spark opposition/, /can lead to error (death)/, /negative/. The lexeme HOPE has the following meaning: “HOPE, hopes Faith or conviction that what you do or what you wish will come to a realization; trust in someone’s or something’s support and help, certainty that someone or something will be favourable, helpful; (Concr.) What gives faith and certainty that someone’s wish will be fulfilled” (DEX 2016: 764). […] The antonym of the term HOPE is DESPAIR. The semic analysis proposed by R. Sirbu and taken over by Gabriela Bidu – Vrăceanu, referring to the discussed lexemes is the following: “Common seme – “referring to aspirations” and incompatible contrary seme – “present”: HOPE or combined with the incompatible contrary seme – “absent”: DESPAIR”. So, keeping in mind the occurrences in the studied text, the semes of the lexeme HOPE are: /characteristic to man/, /conviction/, /referring to aspirations/, /present/, /expectation/, /optimism/. The noun HOPE from the verse: “(That the one that ploweth should plow in hope) and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope” (I Cor. 9, 10) is considered “second order predicate”, because the complex phrase “(That one) that thresheth with hope will partake the fruits” might be analysed like this: That one thresheth. That one has a hope. That one will partake the fruits.

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10 With the meaning of “heresy; religious practice that goes against the dogma of the official Church”, the term *heresy* is attested in Coresi. I. Golescu, cited by Zanne, wrote: “The heresies which turn you away from the right path, making you wandering completely”. With the old, common meaning, today it means: “faith founded on ignorance or fear, which has its roots in the primitive religions and which attributes a sacred character to some supernatural forces and magical practices”, *heresy* is also found in Cantemir, Ghica etc. (DLR: 338-340)

11“false medicine, magical practices, heresies of the country hunters: the chanted bullet, the spelled greases, talismans, lucky and unlucky days” (DLR: 341).

12 “Clothes of despair” (Est. 3, 17); “Cries of despair” (Is. 15, 5); “place of despair” (Is. 61, 3); “day of despair” (Amos 8, 10).


14 “This predicate has as its arguments the main and the subordinate, from which comes the term second order predicate” (Gavriilidou 2002: 92).
The following table shows the common and variable semes for the lexemes under analysis. For S6 I included the semes from the Bible’s point of view.

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<th>Lexemes</th>
<th>Substantial common semes</th>
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**Table 1.** The class of conviction names associated with good and evil

S1 – Substantial seme  
S2 – Convictions (abstract)  
S3 – Type of conviction  
S4 – Characteristic to man  
S5 – Characteristic to God  
S6 – Virtue/ non-virtue/ (positive/negative)

**Contextual analysis**

In the Bible, the FAITH\textsuperscript{15} lexeme, in articulated and unarticulated form, used as meaning 5 in the dictionary as mentioned above, is found to be associated with verbs such as: *to be, to guard*

\textsuperscript{15} Here are some examples from the Bible: “For thou hast said, My faith is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.” (Job 11, 4); “And he said unto them, Where is your faith?” (Luke 8, 25); “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed” (Rom. 4, 16); “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Rom. 10, 17); “That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the
(through), to deceive, to deny, to disappear, to come back (to), to fall (from/through), to see, to save, to let, to increase, to die, to strengthen (through), to announce, to comfort (through), to come (through), to order (through), to live (from/in), to consider, to receive (for/through), to arrive, to keep (with), to have, to remain, to stay (in/through), to grow, to welcome, to believe (through), to straighten (from/through), to come, can, to need, to resurrect (through), to spread, to strengthen (in), to urge (in), to know, to caress (through), to praise (for), to choose (for), to exceed, to gain (in/from), to make (oneself) (an example/with), to trample, to follow (in), to overturn, to become wise (through), to hear (about), to bless (through), to show, to take (through), to live (through), as well as with the expression to have dominion or with the adjectives: big (Mat. 15,28), vain (1 Cor. 15,14), unfeigned (II Tim. 1,5), dead (James 2,17), tried (I Petr. 1,7), little (Mat. 17,20), unfeigned (I Tim 1,5), godly (I Tim. 4,7), good (Titus 2,10), most holy (Jude 20). Sometimes, the FAITH lexeme appears associated with nouns: “departing from the faith of God” (is. 59,13); “backsliding from the faith” (Jer. 2,19; II Thes. 2,3); “the door of faith” (Acts 14,27); “the return to faith” (Acts 20,21); “the obedience of the faith” (Romans 1,5); “the Law of faith” (Rom. 3, 27); “steps of faith” (Rom 4, 12); “the righteousness of faith” (Rom. 4, 13); “the word of faith” (Rom. 10, 8); “the measure of faith” (Rom. 12, 3); “spirit of faith” (II Cor. 4, 13); “the coming of faith” (Gal. 3, 23); “the hope of righteousness by faith” (Gal 5, 5); “the unity of faith” (Eph. 4, 13); “the shield of faith” (Eph. 6,16); “the joy of faith” (Phil. 1, 25); “the service of faith” (Phil 2, 17); “the basis of faith” (Phil. 3, 9); “steadfastness of faith” (Col 2, 5); “the work of faith” (I Thes. 1, 3); “the good tidings of faith” (I Thes 3, 6); “the lacking of faith” (I Thes 3, 10); “son in the faith” (I Tim. 1, 2); “charity out of faith” (I Tim. 1, 5); “the words of faith” (I Tim. 4, 6); “the fight of faith” (I Tim. 6, 12); “the faith of God’s elect” (Titus 1, 1); “the common faith” (Titus 1, 4); “the communication of faith” (Philemon 6); “full assurance of faith” (Heb. 10, 22); “sons of faith” (Heb. 10, 39); “the author and finisher of faith” (Heb. 12, 2); “the trying of faith” (James 1,3); “the prayer of faith” (James 5, 15); “the end of faith” (I Peter 1, 9); “the faith of the saints” (Rev. 13, 10). In the figurative sense, the FAITH lexeme is found in contexts such as the metaphors: “the breastplate of faith and love” (I Thes. 5, 8); “the mystery of the faith” (I Tim. 3, 9).

power of God.” (I Cor. 2, 5); “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.” (Heb. 11, 30); “Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Matt. 9, 22).

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Very often, the FAITH lexeme appears in relationship with verbs such as: to be, to have, to follow, to fall, to guard. In Paul’s letters there is frequent mention of the word FAITH, especially inside the phrase “faith in Christ Jesus”. Often it is associated with love (Philemon 5, Rev. 2, 19 etc.). Sometimes, the term FAITH appears in greetings, in the closing formulas of letters: “Peace to be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 6, 23). A well known definition of faith is the one in Heb. 1, 1: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”. Chapter 11 of Hebrews lists many persons which have been proven faithful. Mention is also made of the “faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14, 12) or the “faith in Jesus” (Phil. 3, 9). Faith leads to acts. Noah was saved because he had the faith that leads to doing what God said (Heb. 11, 7). In the verse: “And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.” (Luke 17, 6) strengthens the idea that true faith has great power, even if it is little, the mustard having the smallest seed (Mark 4, 31). The answer of the Lord Jesus to the demand of the disciples to increase their faith respects the semantic coherence of the dialogue. Faith is measured in quantitative terms, it can be small, or big, or nonexistent. People can be: “rich in faith” (James 2, 5); “steadfast in the faith” (I Peter 5, 9). Faith doesn’t mean sight (II Cor. 5, 7), proof, it means trust in the God that has power. Using Apresjan’s model, I created a few structural models: Conj. + Adj.1 + N1 + Prep. + Adj.2 + N2 + V + N3 (“But the fruit of the Spirit is […] faith” – Galatians 5, 22); Prep. + N1 + Pron. + V (“Through faith we understand […]” – Hebrews 11, 3). The syntactic functions identified for the FAITH lexeme are: subject (Romans 10, 17), direct object (Mat. 9, 2), prepositional object (Acts 3, 16), circumstantial object (II Tim. 1, 13; Jude 1, 3), attribute (1 Tim 4, 6). Syntactic differences are the reflection of semantic differences.


18 I used the following notations: V- verb, N- noun, Prep. – preposition, Conj. – conjunction, Adv. – adverb, Pron.-pronoun, Adj. – adjective.
With meaning 1 from the dictionary, the term FAITHFULNESS¹⁹ is found in various contexts, together with verbs such as: to keep (with), to be, to serve (with), to reward (with), to behave (with), to dwell (in), to swear (in), to boast (in), to engage (in), to obey (with). Faithfulness can manifest itself from man to God, but also in reverse, from God to man.²⁰ The syntactic realizations for the noun FAITHFULNESS are: direct object (Is. 26, 2), subject (Deut. 32, 20), circumstantial object (Zech. 6, 15). For the distributional analysis of the term FAITHFULNESS, I have identified the following variants: Pron.₁ + Adv. + V. + Pron.₂ + N (“He faithfully guards my laws” –Iez. 18, 9); Pron.₁ + V + Adv. + V + Adj. + N₁ + Prep. + Adj. + N₂ + Pron.₂ + N₃ (“ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God” – Zech. 6, 15). It is also used the derived form with the negative prefix: UNFAITHFULNESS²¹, being associated with the verbs: to drive away (for), to behave (with), to judge (for).

The term UNBELIEF²², the antonym of the word BELIEF, having meaning 2 from the dictionary mentioned above, “lack of religious faith”, is found together with verbs such as: to inherit (for), to look (at), to say, to know, to be (guilty through), to do (for), to repent (of), to die (for), to testify, to return (from), to stretch, to punish (for), to clean (of), to commit, to wonder (of), to rebuke (for), to kill, to behave (with), to fill (of), to lead (to), to doubt (through), to insist (in), to help and the verbal locution: to call to mind. As a determiner of nouns, we find the following: “in the time of their calamity” (Ez. 35, 5), “evil heart of unbelief” (Heb. 3, 12). The unbelief might be the cause of wonders not occurring in a certain place: “And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief” (Mat. 13, 58). Belief, as well as unbelief, can be

¹⁹ “And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.” (Deut. 32, 20); “I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.” (Hosea 2, 20).

²⁰ For the last situation I have extracted the following examples: “And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” (Is. 11, 5); “For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?” (Rom. 3, 3).

²¹ “And will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me.” (Ez. 17, 20).

²² “But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the unfaithfulness of my people Israel.” (Jer. 7, 12); “I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his unfaithfulness” (Jer. 8, 6); “How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the unfaithfulness of them that dwell therein? the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end.” (Jer. 12, 4).
persisted in. A possible scheme of syntactic organization which characterizes the UNBELIEF lexeme is the following: Pron.1 + V1 + Adj. + N1 + Prep.1 + N2 + Conj. + Adj.2 + N3 + V2 + Adj.3 + N4 + Prep.2 + Pron.2 + N5 ("I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity" – Jer. 25, 12).

The lexeme DOUBT, according to meaning 1 in the dictionary, that of “distrust”, appears associated with verbs such as: to put (to), to be (greater than), to do (without), to have, but also as a determiner of a noun: “spirit of jealousy” (Num. 5,14); “sons of doubt” (Heb. 10,39). It is not used with the plural form in the researched material. Among the combinatory possibilities of the term DOUBT the most important is the scheme: V1 + Adj. + N1 + Prep. + V2 + Conj. + N 2 (“Do all things without murmuring and disputings” – Phil. 2, 14) and the identified syntactic functions for DOUBT are those of circumstantial (Phil. 2, 14) or direct object (James 1, 6).

The verbs which have the status of centre of the verbal group that contains the term HERESY are: to name, to know, to be, to sneak. The author of the book of Acts of the Holy Apostles identified many types of heresy: “the heresy of the Sadducees” (Acts 5, 17), “heresy of the Pharisees” (Acts 15, 5), “heresy of the Nazarenes” (Acts 24, 5). In Acts 15, 5 a reference is made to the true faith and to a false faith, to heresy: “the heresy of the Pharisees which believed […]”. From the few cases identified in the Bible we mention two possible schemes: Pron.1 + V1 + V2 + Adv. + N + Prep. + Pron.2 ("[…] there must be also heresies among you” – I Cor. 11, 19), Pron. + V + N1 (“which are […] heresies” – Gal. 5, 19, 20). The syntactic positions occupied by the lexeme HERESY may be: subject (I Cor. 11, 19), direct object (II Peter 2, 1), prepositional object (Acts 28, 22), predicative name (Gal. 5, 19. 20), in the last case HERESY functions as a semantic predicate.

The lexeme HOPE, under syntactic aspect, is correlated with verbs like: to have, to strengthen (with), to arise, to be, to give, to catch, to wither, to crush, to place (in), to laugh (of), to live

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23 “Do all things without doubts and disputings.” (Phil. 2, 14); “But let him ask in faith, nothing to doubt. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.” (James 1, 6).

24 “But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy” (Acts 24, 14); “For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.” (I Cor. 11, 19); “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are […] heresies” (Gal. 5, 19, 20).

25 “Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.” (Ezrah 10, 2); “Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?” (Job 4, 6); “So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.” (Job
(in), to put (in), to teach (with), to end, to remain, to die, to kidnap, to go, to lose, to rest (in), to take, to boast (in), to bring, to shame, to save (through), to rejoice (in), to wait, to call (to), to keep. The verb to put is frequently used together with the term HOPE. People can put their hope in many beings and things such as: “God” (Prov. 3, 5; Is 49, 23), “strengths” (Prov. 21, 22), “his own heart” (Prov. 28, 26), “the many chariots and the power of the horsemen” (Is. 31, 1), “Egypt” (Is. 36, 6), “idols” (Is. 42, 17), “hills and mountains”(Jer. 46, 25), “multitude of mighty men” (Hosea 10, 13), “friends” (Mih. 7, 5), “graven image, teaching of lies” (Hab. 2, 18). Going through the analysis of the corpus, I have spotted the usage of the lexeme HOPE as a deputy of another noun: “sign of hope” (Jos. 2, 12), “place of hope” (Is. 22, 23), “gate of hope” (Hosea 2, 17), “the help of my hope” (Ps. 93, 22), “the God of hope”, “the testimony of hope” (Heb. 10, 23). The selected adjectives by the hope noun are: “one”, “good” (Col. 2, 16), “blessed” (Titus 2, 13), “better” (Heb. 7, 19), “lively” (I Peter 1, 3). In the midst of the woes directed at various nations, God gives an assurance to His people: “in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength” (Is 30, 15). HOPE acquires a concrete value when a reference is made to the person who provides the trust, the certainty of the fulfilment of the wishes. For the psalmist or for Paul, the Lord represents the supreme hope.26 We propose a few variants of schemes in which the term HOPE is found: Conj. + Pron. + Prep.1 + Adj.1 + N1 + V + Prep.2 + Adj.2 + N2 + Prep.3 + Prep.4 + N3 (“For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith” – Gal. 5, 5); Conj. + Pron.1 + V + Adj.1 + N1 + Conj. + Adj.2 + Pron.2 + N2 (“for this is all my salvation and all my desire” – II Kings 23, 5).

Conclusions

The characteristics of vocabulary, seen as a system, are also highlighted through the semantic and contextual analysis. The decoding the biblical text can also be done by highlighting lexical-semantic fields, including the one examined in the present research. We can consider the term CONVICTIONS as the hyperonym of the paradigm to which the analysed lexemes belong which

5, 6); “So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish” (Job 8, 13); “And thou destroyest the hope of man.” (Job 14, 19).

26 “Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1, 27).
are associated with good and evil. The semantic and contextual analysis for the discussed terms highlighted the meaning effects for the lexemes of the studied paradigm. The language units FAITH, BELIEF, DISBELIEF, DOUBT, HERESY, HOPE structure “the fact of believing” as a semantic substance. If we put in opposition the lexemes FAITH, HERESY, we get the distinctive features of each term in relation to “person in which one believes”: FAITH – in God; HERESY – in miraculous, supernatural forces. FAITH and HERESY are incompatible, from the point of view of the relationship of meaning. In general, all analysed terms can be in various syntactic positions, without the existence of restrictions from this point of view.

According to modern lexical semantics, in paradigmatic interpretation the relational approach to lexemes is of great interest. The relationships established within the paradigm are of quasi-synonymy between FAITH and FAITHFULNESS, terms of a specific spiritual nature, even if it also involves thinking, and of antonymy between FAITH and DISBELIEF. The opposing relationship between the terms is highlighted by the antonymic semantic axis between FAITH and DISBELIEF. The semantic values of the lexemes were highlighted by the identified semantic features. From an etymological point of view, the analysed terms are of the following origins: Slavic (ERES - HERESY, NĂDEJDE - HOPE), Latin (CREDINȚĂ – FAITH). The other terms are of internal creation (CREDINCIOȘIE – FAITHFULNESS, NECREDINȚĂ – DISBELIEF, ÎNDOIALĂ – DOUBT). From the perspective of the extralinguistic and linguistic relationship, the lexical-semantic field of beliefs associated with good, and evil is abstract. The study of the biblical lexicon seeks to discover the charm of the holy word, as well as its semantic subtlety.

References

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