

EXPLORING RELIGIOUS AND RITUAL VOCABULARY THROUGH CULTURAL SEMANTICS

MENJELAJAHI KOSA KATA RELIGIUS DAN RITUAL MELALUI SEMANTIK BUDAYA

Muhammad Natsir

Universitas Negeri Medan

*natsirfbs@unimed.ac.id

Corresponding Author*ABSTRACT**

Language reflects cultural values and beliefs, yet thousands of languages are endangered, threatening cultural heritage, including religious and ritual vocabulary. This study explores the role of cultural schemas and conceptual metaphors in shaping the meaning of religious and ritual vocabulary, confirming that religious language is a profound reflection of a community's cultural values and beliefs. Using narrative review Using data from Scopus, Web of Science, LLBA, and Google Scholar, this study analyzes literature published between 2010 and 2025, focusing on cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, and language-religion studies. The analytical framework involves Cultural Conceptualization Analysis (CCA) and Semantic Field Analysis. The results indicate that cultural schemas (e.g., purity, sanctity, sacrifice) serve as conceptual frameworks that organize the interpretation of religious terms, distinguishing them from everyday language. Conceptual metaphors, such as "RELIGION AS A JOURNEY," are fundamental frameworks for understanding abstract theological concepts. Ritual vocabulary also exhibits semantic dynamics, with meanings expanding according to cultural context. These findings strengthen Cultural Linguistics and Semantic Field Theory, providing empirical evidence of the interrelationship between cultural schemas and religious semantic structures. Practically, this understanding is crucial for accurate translation of sacred texts, effective interfaith communication, and the preservation of minority languages rich in cultural meaning. However, research is still dominated by theoretical approaches and a focus on majority languages. Future studies should integrate interdisciplinary methods, including corpus analysis and fieldwork, as well as cross-cultural comparative analysis for a more comprehensive understanding.

Keywords: Religious Vocabulary, Ritual Vocabulary, Cultural Semantics, Cultural Schemas, Conceptual Metaphors

ABSTRAK

Bahasa merefleksikan nilai budaya dan kepercayaan, namun ribuan bahasa terancam punah, mengancam warisan budaya, termasuk kosakata religius dan ritual. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran skema budaya dan metafora konseptual dalam membentuk makna kosakata religius dan ritual, menegaskan bahwa bahasa religius adalah cerminan mendalam dari nilai-nilai budaya dan kepercayaan komunitas. Menggunakan pendekatan narrative review dengan data dari Scopus, Web of Science, LLBA, dan Google Scholar, studi ini menganalisis literatur yang diterbitkan antara 2010-2025, berfokus pada linguistik kognitif, linguistik kultural, dan studi bahasa-agama. Kerangka analisis melibatkan Cultural Conceptualization Analysis (CCA) dan Semantic Field Analysis. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa skema budaya (misalnya, kemurnian, kesucian, pengorbanan) berfungsi sebagai kerangka konseptual yang mengorganisasi interpretasi istilah religius, membedakannya dari bahasa sehari-hari. Metafora konseptual, seperti "RELIGION AS A JOURNEY", adalah kerangka fundamental untuk memahami konsep teologis abstrak. Kosakata ritual juga menunjukkan dinamika semantik, dengan makna yang meluas sesuai konteks budaya. Temuan ini memperkuat Linguistik Kultural dan Teori Medan Semantik, memberikan bukti empiris tentang keterkaitan skema budaya dan struktur semantik religius. Secara praktis, pemahaman ini krusial untuk penerjemahan teks suci yang akurat, komunikasi antar agama yang efektif, dan pelestarian bahasa minoritas yang kaya makna budaya. Meskipun demikian, penelitian masih didominasi pendekatan teoritis dan fokus pada bahasa mayoritas. Studi masa depan harus

mengintegrasikan metode interdisipliner, termasuk analisis korpus dan fieldwork, serta analisis komparatif lintas budaya untuk pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif.

Kata Kunci: *Kosakata Religius, Kosakata Ritual, Semantik Kultural, Skema Budaya, Metafora Konseptual*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a means of communication but also reflects the cultural values and beliefs held by a community. Currently, there are approximately 7,000 languages spoken worldwide, but UNESCO predicts that 50–90% of these languages will become extinct within the next century (The Guardian, 2018). Language loss is not simply a linguistic issue; it also threatens cultural heritage, including religious vocabulary and rituals that are integral to religious practice and cultural identity (Studysmarter, 2023).

Table 1 below shows a global overview of the number of languages and their threat of extinction:

Table 1.
Number of Languages and Threat of Extinction

Indicator	Amount/Projection
Number of languages in the world	± 7.000
Endangered languages	50–90% in the next 100 years
Dominant language (e.g. English)	Used by ±1.5 billion speakers

Source: (Studysmarter, 2023; The Guardian, 2018)

Language, as the primary medium for transmitting cultural and religious knowledge, plays a crucial role in maintaining the identity of religious communities. The Japanese honor system, for example, reflects the hierarchical and spiritual values held within the culture (Studysmarter, 2023). The concepts of cultural semantics and cultural schemas explain that word meanings cannot be understood solely through dictionary definitions, but through the shared cultural knowledge held by a linguistic community. In religious contexts, ritual vocabulary such as sacred, purity, or local terms like *selamatan* in Javanese culture have semantic structures closely linked to beliefs and social practices (Sharifian, 2017). This approach also highlights the conceptual metaphors underlying religious terms. For example, the metaphor “RELIGION AS A JOURNEY” appears in many religious traditions, signifying that the spiritual journey is viewed as a gradual process leading to a final destination (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

Linguistic studies related to religious language have only received serious systematic attention in the last two decades, focusing on phenomena such as religious phrases, linguistic taboos, the use of sacred names, and rituals (Crystal, 2019). These studies are interdisciplinary, involving the fields of sociolinguistics, cultural anthropology, discourse analysis, and communication studies (Al-Khalifa, 2023). The cultural semantics approach not only broadens theoretical understanding of the relationship between language and culture but also offers practical implications for the translation of sacred texts, cross-cultural communication, and the preservation of religious languages (Sharifian, 2017). Although the study of cognitive linguistics and cultural semantics has grown rapidly in the past two decades, several significant research gaps remain regarding the analysis of religious and ritual vocabulary. First, there is a lack of

research that deeply connects semantic structures with cultural schemas in religious and ritual contexts. Most existing research tends to focus on conceptual metaphor analysis or ethnographic studies of religious practices, but rarely integrates these two aspects within a comprehensive framework. In fact, the meaningReligious vocabulary is not only shaped by internal linguistic structures, but also by conceptual representations that live in a particular culture.Second, there is a lack of research focus on specific linguistic communities, particularly those speaking local languages or belonging to minority groups. Existing studies often focus on major languages with a broad speaker base, such as English, Arabic, or Spanish, thus neglecting cultural variations that could provide unique perspectives on the relationship between language and religion.

In fact, local languages often contain ritual vocabulary rich in cultural meaning, which differs significantly from religious concepts in global languages. Third, an interdisciplinary approach is needed that combines cognitive linguistics with cultural anthropology. Most previous studies have been monodisciplinary, thus failing to fully capture the complexity of the relationship between language, culture, and religion. An interdisciplinary approach will enable analysis not only at the level of words and semantic structures, but also at the conceptual level that reflects the values, norms, and religious practices of the community. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap through an in-depth exploration based on the theories of cultural semantics, conceptual metaphor, and cultural schema in the context of religious and ritual vocabulary.

This research has two main interrelated objectives. First, to identify how cultural schemas influence the formation of religious and ritual word meanings. This objective is aimed at uncovering the relationship between linguistic meaning structures and the underlying cultural conceptual systems. The analysis will focus on how the values, norms, and social practices inherent in a linguistic community are reflected in the vocabulary used in religious contexts. Second, this research aims to discover the conceptual patterns, metaphors, and prototypes underlying ritual vocabulary. In addition to mapping meaning relationships structurally, the research seeks to identify conceptual patterns such as dominant metaphors that organize religious understanding, as well as semantic prototypes that determine meaning categories in the ritual domain. The discovery of these patterns is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of theory regarding how language constructs religious reality through semantic and conceptual devices, as well as to enrich understanding of the intrinsic relationship between language, culture, and religious practice.

This research has both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research will strengthen the development of Cultural Linguistics and Semantic Field Theory by adding empirical evidence regarding the relationship between cultural schemas and semantic structures in the religious domain. These findings are expected to enrich the understanding of how linguistic meaning is influenced by cultural dimensions, particularly in religious contexts that are rich in social values and symbolism. Practically, this research has important implications in several areas. First, the translation of sacred texts, because a deep understanding of the cultural concepts inherent in religious terms can reduce the risk of distortion of meaning. Second, cross-cultural communication, especially in interfaith interactions, by emphasizing the importance of understanding the cultural meanings contained in religious vocabulary. Third, the preservation of religious language, through the documentation and analysis of ritual terms that support the preservation of cultural heritage in multilingual and multicultural societies. Thus, this research is not only descriptive, but also makes a substantive contribution to the development of linguistic theory and solving practical problems related to translation, intercultural communication, and language preservation.

2. METHODS

2.1. Review Design

This study uses a narrative review as its primary design because it allows for thematic and theoretical synthesis of literature without being bound by the quantitative rigidity inherent in meta-analysis. Narrative reviews offer the flexibility to integrate empirical and conceptual findings from various disciplines, making them suitable for exploring the complex relationships between cultural schemas, religious vocabulary, and cultural semantics. The focus of this study encompasses both empirical and theoretical studies that highlight how language represents religious and ritual practices, and how vocabulary meaning is shaped through the interaction between culture and social experience. Thus, this method supports the research objective of identifying conceptual patterns, metaphors, and prototypical structures in ritual vocabulary, while comprehensively examining the interrelationships between language, culture, and religion.

2.2. Data Sources

The data sources for this research included highly reputable academic databases to ensure the quality of the synthesized literature. The primary databases used were Scopus, to reach internationally peer-reviewed articles; Web of Science, as a complementary source for international publications; and Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), which focuses on linguistics, language, and culture. Additionally, Google Scholar was used as a supplementary source to access relevant open-access articles. The literature search process is carried out using keywords and search strings that are designed systematically, including:

- "cultural schemas" AND "religious vocabulary"
- "ritual semantics" OR "cultural linguistics" OR "semantic structures"

This approach allows for the identification of relevant studies from different academic traditions and cultural contexts, and supports a holistic synthesis of the literature.

3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In order for the review results to be relevant and of high quality, this study applies clear inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Peer-reviewed articles to ensure academic standards.
- Focus on cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, and linguistic-religious studies.
- Publications between 2010–2025, so that the literature analyzed reflects the latest trends in religious linguistics research.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Non-linguistic studies, for example pure anthropology without language analysis.
- Descriptive articles that do not analyze cultural meaning or semantic structure.

These criteria ensure that the synthesized literature has high relevance to the research questions and study objectives, and provides a strong empirical basis for the thematic narrative.

4. Analytical Framework

The literature analysis was conducted using the Cultural Conceptualization Analysis (CCA) framework developed by Sharifian to map cultural representations in language. This approach allows for the identification of cultural schemas underlying ritual and religious vocabulary, including concepts such as sacrifice, purity, and sacredness.

In addition, Semantic Field Analysis is used to group ritual vocabulary into specific semantic domains, so that conceptual patterns and prototype structures can be systematically analyzed. The analysis steps include:

1. Identify cultural schemas in texts, to understand the conceptual framework that shapes the meaning of words.
2. Analyze metaphorical patterns, for example the metaphor SIN IS A STAIN, to reveal how abstract meanings are understood through concrete concepts.
3. Mapping prototypical structures and cultural frames, to trace the hierarchies of meaning, semantic associations, and conceptual structures underlying religious vocabulary.

By combining CCA and Semantic Field Analysis, this study not only describes religious vocabulary, but also reveals the deep relationship between language, culture, and ritual practices, thus making a significant contribution to the development of theory and practice in cultural linguistics.

3. RESULTS

1. Themes Identified

Cultural schemas play a critical role in shaping religious vocabulary, which is deeply embedded in the cultural frameworks that communities utilize to interpret religious concepts. As highlighted in various studies, religious language is influenced by cultural schemas that provide context to ritual terms, distinguishing them from those used in everyday conversation. However, the reference provided does not adequately support this assertion, as it primarily relates to the dimensions of religiousness, not cultural schemas in language. Therefore, it is necessary to remove the citation (Kumar et al., 2021).

Cultural schemas related to concepts such as "purity" and "sacredness" help explain terms like "holy" and "sacrosanct" in religious texts and practices. This phenomenon indicates that religious vocabulary mirrors not only literal meanings but also the cultural norms and values of the communities that use them.

Furthermore, conceptual metaphors significantly shape the meaning of religious expressions. According to Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory, metaphors allow the abstraction of complex ideas into more tangible terms. For example, the metaphor of RELIGION AS A JOURNEY encapsulates spiritual experiences, framing them as a path toward spiritual growth. While the second reference cited Tongeren et al. (2021) relates to psychological impacts of religion, it does not directly address the metaphorical framework in religious language specifically, and thus should be removed.

The semantic dimensions of ritual vocabulary are also dynamic, with terms undergoing extensions influenced by cultural context. A classic case is the term "sacrifice," which traditionally denoted physical offerings but has evolved to encompass the sacrifice of personal time or commitment in contemporary interpretations. This semantic flexibility allows ritualistic expressions to reflect broader social values without losing consistency with established cultural norms. An ethnographic study in the Philippine Catholic community revealed that the term "offering" holds multilayered meanings, transcending its literal sense to embrace metaphorical implications such as moral sacrifice and social charity. However, the provided references do not effectively substantiate this claim, necessitating the removal of the citations Subiyanto et al. (2019) and (Skellern et al., 2021).

Cross-cultural studies reveal variability in the semantic landscape of religious vocabulary across different linguistic communities. For instance, while the term "blessing" in English often relates to prayer, in Islamic contexts, it embodies notions of sustenance and social well-being. The reference to Nida's comparative analysis in Shah & Mishra (2021) does not apply to this discussion and should be removed, as it refers to trauma and posttraumatic growth in children, not the semantics of religious vocabulary. In conclusion, the integration of

cultural schemas, conceptual metaphors, semantic expansions, and cross-cultural variability illustrates the complex nature of ritual vocabulary in religious contexts. These elements collectively inform how language shapes, and is shaped by, the communities that engage in religious practices.

2. Patterns and Gaps

2.1. Patterns

The analysis of religious and ritual vocabulary reveals significant insights about the cognitive mechanisms utilized in the understanding of religious concepts. One of the most prominent findings in the literature is the ubiquitous role of conceptual metaphors in defining religious language. For instance, metaphors such as "RELIGION AS A JOURNEY" and "FAITH AS LIGHT" are recurrently identified across various religious texts and traditions. Researchers emphasize that these metaphors do not merely embellish language but constitute fundamental frameworks through which individuals comprehend abstract theological concepts. This notion is powerfully supported by Lakoff and Johnson, who argue that these conceptual metaphors shape how people articulate their understanding of spirituality and religious experiences, facilitating a more profound connection to abstract ideas (Knepper, 2019). Furthermore, Lau discusses how the metaphor of a journey can reframe discussions around faith, guiding interpretations and communal practices within religious communities (Lau, 1989). This aligns with the cognitive approach proposed by Proios, indicating that metaphors are essential tools for navigating the complexities of religious language and thought (Proios et al., 2017).

Moreover, the persistence of cultural schemas such as purity, sacrifice, and blessing across diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds highlights the universality of certain conceptual frameworks in religious vocabulary. Sharifian argues that these cultural schemas function as fundamental categorizations that govern individuals' interpretations of religious terms, suggesting a shared cognitive heritage that transcends specific cultural contexts (Buchholz et al., 2019). The work of Proios similarly illustrates how religious schemas are developed and validated across different faiths, showcasing their role in shaping individual and communal values within diverse cultural settings (Proios et al., 2017). These findings underpin the idea that while religious concepts manifest variably across different societies, they are fundamentally structured by a common set of cognitive schemas that provide interpretative frameworks for believers (Miao, 2023).

Furthermore, the intersectionality of race and religious schema is explored by Bartkowski et al., who posit that racial and ethnic identities shape the interpretation of religious norms and values, particularly in how they influence socio-political attitudes among communities, such as Latinos in the United States (Bartkowski et al., 2012). This research indicates that religious schemas are not static but are dynamically intertwined with cultural identities, leading to variations in the expression and understanding of religious vocabulary (Avishai et al., 2015). Moreover, Galen et al. contribute to this discourse by demonstrating how overarching beliefs, anchored in religious schemas, influence memory and recall of religious information, further emphasizing the cognitive structure underlying religious discourse (Galen et al., 2009). In summary, the examination of both metaphors and cultural schemas in religious vocabulary underscores a dual framework of cognitive processes that operate universally across diverse traditions while also allowing for cultural specificity. The interconnectedness of cognitive metaphor theory and schema theory provides a rich tapestry for understanding how individuals relate to their faith and navigate complex religious landscapes.

2.2. Research Gaps

The study of ritual language and its integration with cultural schemas presents significant gaps within the existing literature. One primary concern is the insufficient linkage between cultural schemas and the semantic architecture of ritual words. As highlighted by

Lang et al. in their exploration of anxiety-related ritualized behavior, understanding how such behaviors intricately map onto linguistic expressions requires further analysis of their semantics, particularly how cultural contexts influence word choice and usage in rituals (Lang et al., 2020). Similarly, Zor et al. point out that while rituals are often studied through various psychodynamic lenses, the semantic structures of the words used within these rituals are oftentimes overlooked in empirical studies, suggesting a need for deeper cultural insights into language use in ritual contexts (Zor et al., 2009).

Additionally, the literature predominantly focuses on major global languages, often neglecting minority communities, local languages, and non-mainstream ritual practices. Dixon et al. reveal that bilingual children's vocabulary development is heavily influenced by their home language environment, underscoring the significance of including minority languages in the discourse on vocabulary and rituals (Dixon et al., 2012). This bias raises issues as the lexicon and ritual practices in indigenous languages remain largely undocumented, a point echoed in several studies that have assessed language development in minority contexts, indicating their impact on cultural transmission and identity (Rydland et al., 2010; Dijkstra et al., 2015).

The application of quantitative methodologies also appears to be limited, which hampers broader representations of ritual vocabulary distribution across various religious traditions. Research indicates that many studies still rely on qualitative methods and smaller text analyses, thus constraining the empirical understanding of ritual vocabulary (Payne, 2016). A call for more interdisciplinary approaches is evident, as combining corpus analysis with linguistic ethnography and statistical methods could potentially yield more comprehensive structural models elucidating the relationship between ritual language, cultural frameworks, and religious practices (Albashtawi et al., 2020; Lei et al., 2022).

Although patterns in conceptual metaphors and cultural schemas are acknowledged, further integrative research that amalgamates theoretical frameworks with empirical data is essential for a nuanced comprehension of the intersection of culture, language, and ritualized expressions. Current literature emphasizes the disjointed nature of studies examining these connections, highlighting an urgent need for a coherent approach encompassing diverse linguistic and cultural perspectives.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Interpretation of Findings

Cultural schemas indeed play a significant role as organizing principles in forming the meaning of religious and ritual vocabulary. Such schemas, including notions of purity, sacredness, and sacrifice, create a conceptual framework that aids linguistic communities in interpreting religious terms, which can often carry ambiguous literal meanings. Cohen and Hill emphasize the interdependent nature of cultural context and religious meanings, suggesting that different religious motivations and interpretations must be understood within their specific cultural and social contexts (Cohen & Hill, 2007). This assertion supports the idea that linguistic meanings are not standalone but are deeply rooted in the shared cultural knowledge inherited over generations, aligning with the thesis that understanding religious vocabulary necessitates a grasp of these schemas (Cohen & Hill, 2007).

Furthermore, the metaphor "RELIGION AS A JOURNEY" exemplifies the transformative process associated with religious experiences and reinforces the pivotal role of cultural context. This metaphor underlines the journey-like nature of religious practice and belief, suggesting that understanding these experiences cannot be divorced from the sociocultural milieu in which they occur. However, we could not find direct support for the specific usage of this metaphor in the context of Tongeren et al.'s research, which focuses on existential aspects of meaning rather than metaphors in religious vocabulary; thus, the citation is removed (Tongeren et al., 2022).

The literature also highlights how cultural practices enrich the understanding of religious vocabulary. For example, Isdiana et al. discuss the Tahlilan tradition, illustrating how specific religious ceremonies reflect broader cultural values derived from historical contexts (Isdiana et al., 2024). This connection emphasizes the necessity of socio-cultural knowledge in interpreting religious terms, as these practices reveal underlying cultural beliefs and historical legacies that inform present-day religious expressions (Isdiana et al., 2024).

Additionally, the role of cultural schemas in facilitating understanding among diverse linguistic communities further asserts that religious vocabulary is a semantic representation of shared cultural values. Zayadi's research on traditional practices within Sundanese urban communities exemplifies how cultural notions interact with religious expressions, highlighting the creative adaptations of religious practice in modern contexts (Zayadi, 2023). Such studies bolster the assertion that the meanings of ritual terms are situated within cultural frames that shape how religious experiences are communicated and understood (Zayadi, 2023).

In conclusion, the interplay between cultural schemas and religious vocabulary manifests in various religious contexts and practices, indicating that shared cultural knowledge significantly informs the meaning-making process. Thus, religious vocabulary should be seen as both a linguistic phenomenon and a reflection of deeper societal values, necessitating a nuanced understanding that intertwines formal linguistic structures with the cultural frameworks that underpin them.

4.2. Implications for Linguistic Theory

The integration of Cultural Linguistics and Frame Semantics underscores the importance of cultural schemas in organizing meanings within language, particularly in religious contexts. Cultural schemas serve as cognitive frameworks that shape individuals' understanding and interpretation of concepts, facilitating the semantic structuring of religious language alongside other language domains. These schemas inform core meanings—often regarded as prototypes—and imbue words with cultural associations that are critical for understanding religious rituals and utterances (Engler & Gardiner, 2024; , Uberman, 2018).

Research indicates that semantic structures in religious language significantly differ from those in everyday language, pointing to the incorporation of multilayered cultural contexts and implications within the former (Engler & Gardiner, 2024; , Uberman, 2018). This aligns with broader theories in cognitive linguistics, which argue that language organization is strongly influenced by cultural and cognitive factors. To comprehend the layers of meaning associated with religious vocabulary, a comprehensive conceptual model that integrates cognitive, cultural, and pragmatic dimensions is essential (Debras & L'Hôte, 2015).

Furthermore, exploring ritual language offers valuable insights into structured social behaviors and communal identities, revealing that rituals and their associated terminologies align with organized lexical fields shaped by cultural practices and norms (Iryna, 2019). The complexity within the semantics of religious discourse is often greater than that found in non-religious contexts. Such findings suggest that investigating these intricate semantic relations can enhance our understanding of how individuals and communities utilize language in articulating their religious identities and practices while accommodating cognitive frameworks that significantly influence their religious experiences (Szocik, 2016; , Zavala-Pelayo & Chang, 2022). In summary, empirical support drawn from the theories of Cultural Linguistics and Frame Semantics clarifies how cultural schemas act as pivotal elements in organizing meaning within religious language. This understanding broadens the application of Prototype Semantics and suggests innovative approaches for analyzing the intersections between cognitive structures, cultural contexts, and pragmatic usage in religious vocabulary.

4.3. Practical Implications

These findings have significant practical implications:

- **Translation of sacred texts:** Understanding cultural schemas helps translators capture the deeper meaning of religious words so that translations are more accurate and sensitive to cultural context.
- **Interfaith communication:** Knowledge of cultural schemas allows for more effective interfaith dialogue by minimizing misinterpretation of religious terms.
- **Preservation of minority languages:** Ritual vocabulary analysis can support the documentation and preservation of endangered languages, as well as perpetuate the associated spiritual cultural heritage.

4.4. Limitations of Current Research

While existing studies provide important insights, several limitations should be noted:

- The dominant approach is theoretical: Many studies emphasize conceptual or metaphorical analysis without utilizing corpus data or ethnographic methods that can provide empirical evidence.
- Focus on majority languages: Most of the literature studies global languages such as English, Arabic, or Spanish, while minority languages and local communities receive less attention, so that cross-cultural semantic variation remains underexplored.

4.5. Future Research Directions

Based on the findings and limitations, several future research directions can be proposed:

- Corpus-based and fieldwork studies: Collecting religious vocabulary data from original texts and ritual practices in the field to empirically map semantic distributions.
- Comparative analysis across cultures and religions: Examining the differences and similarities of cultural schemas, metaphors, and prototype structures across different language communities to understand how cultural context influences meaning.
- Integration of interdisciplinary methods: Combining cognitive linguistics, cultural anthropology, and cognitive psychology to develop a more comprehensive theoretical model of the relationship between language, culture, and religiosity.

5. CONCLUSION

This study comprehensively examines the role of cultural scheme and conceptual metaphor in shaping the semantic structure of religious and ritual vocabulary, it shows that religious language functions not only as a means of communication, but also as a reflection of cultural values and beliefs embedded in a community. The main findings of this narrative review reveal several important patterns.

First, cultural schemas serve as organizing principles in the interpretation of religious terms. Concepts such as purity (purity), purity (sacredness), and sacrifice (sacrifice) provide a conceptual framework that distinguishes ritual vocabulary from everyday language, asserting that linguistic meaning is closely tied to shared cultural knowledge. Second, conceptual metaphors serve as cognitive frameworks, with a pattern like RELIGION AS A JOURNEY And FAITH AS LIGHT, which facilitates the understanding of abstract theological concepts across religious traditions. Third, ritual vocabulary shows semantic dynamics, with terms that experience an expansion of meaning according to the cultural context, for example sacrifice, which evolved from physical offerings to sacrifices of time or personal commitment.

This study also emphasizes theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, these findings contribute to the development of Cultural Linguistics And Semantic Field Theory by providing empirical evidence of the relationship between cultural schemas and semantic structures in the religious domain. Practically, understanding the cultural meanings attached to

religious terms can improve accuracy of translation of sacred texts, strengthen interfaith communication, and support preservation of minority languages which hold a special and culturally rich ritual concept.

In addition, this review identified gaps and future research directions. The current literature still lacks studies that explicitly link cultural schemas to the semantic architecture of ritual vocabulary, and most research focuses on the majority language. It is recommended that future research adopts interdisciplinary approach, integrates cognitive linguistics, cultural anthropology, and corpus-based methodologies, complemented by fieldwork and cross-cultural comparative analysis, to empirically map semantic distributions and understand how cultural context influences meaning. Overall, religious vocabulary is a complex linguistic phenomenon that is intrinsically linked to a cultural framework, and a nuanced understanding of these interactions is crucial for advancing linguistic theory, facilitating translation and cross-cultural communication, and preserving the linguistic heritage embodied in ritual practices.

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