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**THE ABUSE AND MISUSE OF THE ENGLISH WORD
IN G. ORWELL'S DYSTOPIAN NOVEL
NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR**

George Orwell's novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" (first published in 1949) is a totalitarian dystopia in which the focus is on language as a political medium to conceal the truth from the public, to manipulate and brainwash people, to make them accept all propaganda as unmistakable. Orwell succeeds in demonstrating clearly that the modern use of English, more precisely the abuse and misuse of the English word, is a powerful mind-control tool able to destruct human will and spirit, destroy real beauty and happiness in the society. This is exactly done by the new words of the Newspeak language (created by Orwell) which is the object of a discourse stylistics case study in the present paper based on the qualitative stylistic method of analysis to highlight the linguistic features of Orwell's new words that evoke literary (and emotional) experiences for the readers, to reveal the stylistic peculiarities of Orwell's word of fiction, as well as the linguistic and extra-linguistic aspects conditioning the creation and functioning of the mentioned linguistic units.

Key words: "Nineteen Eighty-Four", Orwell's new words, language and thought, misuse of English, linguostylistic specificities

In his science fiction dystopia *Nineteen Eighty-Four/1984* (first published by Secker and Warburg in 1949) the famous British political writer and literary artist George Orwell does not describe the extinction of people through the use of weapons. "He is not interested in extinction weapons because, fundamentally, they do not frighten him as much as spiritual ones" /Wain, 1963: 343/. Orwell's belief that language is a spiritual tool in the hands of a totalitarian regime is based both on his sensitivity to language, his insight into its nature and his observations of linguistic scenarios imposed by Nazism and Stalinism – two systems that relied on the combination of violence, specific jargon and carefully contrived propaganda to spread their dogmas and justify their atrocities /Luchini, 2006: 97/, two systems whose political discourse is based on language that is defined and redefined "to fit a dominant ideology," that "confirms, reinforces or even directs people's attitudes and beliefs" /Chilton, 1988: 42, 70/. Orwell succeeds in demonstrating clearly that the modern use of English, more precisely the abuse and misuse of the English word, is a powerful mind-control tool able to destruct human will and spirit, destroy real beauty and happiness. However important the central themes of the dystopian novel, it is first of all a literary work, a fiction creation where the artistic style matters greatly. Orwell's writing style is a carefully constructed complex of various linguistic devices that contribute importantly to the central themes of the novel. Orwell has asserted himself that one of his primary motives for writing is aesthetic enthusiasm /cited from: Kies, 1992: 231/.

Orwell's *Newspeak*, the fictitious language of *Oceania*, devised to meet the ideological needs of *Ingsoc* (English Socialism) and make all the modes of human thought impossible, is the result of the author's most tragic imaginations. However, it directly relates to reality – it is devised by the *Party* and the *Big Brother (BB)* through modifying *Oldspeak* (Standard English) and limiting its vocabulary to serve the tyranny of the government and exert power over the populace. “Its goal is to make communication, exchange of ideas, preservation of knowledge, and exchange of human emotions impossible, or at the very least very difficult” /Reznikov, 2001: 56/. The *Newspeak* word facilitates deception and manipulation, and its purpose is to restrict the understanding of the real world /Berkes, 2000/.

Thus, by manipulating language, by abusing and misusing the English word, by terminating the usage of numerous words such as *honour, justice, morality, internationalism, democracy, science, religion, etc.*, the dictatorship deteriorates public mind, eliminates independent thought and makes it impossible for people to cognize both external and internal worlds. Words that realize communication of ideas, are modified to serve the aim of limiting human consciousness, of promoting disruption of language and thought. It is this disconnection of language and thought that has become a means of preventing socially unacceptable and thus punishable thoughts – *thoughtcrime* (*In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it.* Book 1, Chapter 5). It is again this separation of language and thought that is elaborated in highly fictitious words and unique style by George Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

According to Fairclough the role of language is significant in the production, maintenance, and change of social relations of power /Fairclough, 1989/. In addition, language contributes to the domination of some people by others.” Judging from the given statements, language is a powerful tool in the hands of politicians to manipulate people and history both in the past and present. I would add that language itself is caught up in domination and restraint when used by a ruling class as a punishment tool, as an oppressive device, which can reduce people's intellect and imagination to a minimum. Actually, as put in by Peter Stansky, *Newspeak* rather than torture is planned as the way to erase *thoughtcrime* /Stansky, 1983: 88/.

To show how linguistic units are utilized in Orwell's novel to dominate people's thoughts and make their minds cognitively banal, discourse stylistics is implemented through which the linguistic features, such as vocabulary, can be explored through the method of qualitative stylistic analysis, the goal of which is to highlight the linguistic features that evoke certain literary and emotional experiences in the readers /Kies, 1992: 242; Hama, 2015: 266/.

So as to manifest that the linguistic purpose of the *Newspeak* vocabulary is to control the actions and thoughts of the populace, we will focus on certain structurally condensed lexical units which, in the appendix of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), were named *the B Vocabulary* by Orwell himself, and which seem to be emotively and cognitively the most active layer of the *Newspeak* vocabulary. In

addition, these words act as stylistic markers both for Orwell's individual style and English language fiction.

While the first category (*the A Vocabulary*) includes a small number of *Oldspeak* words employed in everyday life and modifiable according to the word-formation norms of *Newspeak*, and the third category (*the C Vocabulary*) is supplementary to others and consists of scientific and technical terms applying to this or that speciality, the second category, i.e. *the B Vocabulary* realizes the function of making political discourse as independent of cognition and consciousness as possible. This layer of the vocabulary is in no way neutral and is mostly made up of euphemistic and stylistically charged telescoped (contracted) compound words which aim at imposing the desirable ideological impact upon the people who are using them. The condensed form and the rapid utterance of these words encourage a gabbling style of speech.

Characterising *the B Vocabulary* Orwell states that the *B words* are not constructed on any etymological plan. They consist of two or more words, or parts of words welded together so as to pack whole ranges of ideas into a few syllables, and are more accurate and forcible than ordinary words. The words of which they were made up could be any part of speech, and could be placed in any order and mutilated in any way which makes them easy to pronounce while indicating their derivation. Orwell brings the following example: *goodthink* (roughly *orthodoxy*) – a noun; *goodthinker* – a verbal noun, *goodthinkful* – an adjective; *goofthinkwise* – an adverb; *to goodthink* (*to think in an orthodox manner*) – a verb inflected as *goodthinked* – past tense and past participle; *goodthinking* – present participle /Orwell, 1990/. Some B words have highly subtilized meanings, barely intelligible to anyone who has not mastered the language as a whole (*Oldthinkers unbellyfeel Ingsoc* – *Those who have old ideas, and naturally cognize the world differently, cannot appreciate the emotive strength of English Socialism*). *Oldthink* (a verb and a noun) is the *Newspeak* word for all words grouping themselves round the notions of objectivity and rationalism. These are concepts which the government of *Oceania* is striving to do away with.

The examination of some *B Vocabulary* words, in which the connection between a word and the concept it denotes is blurred and the inherent constitution of a linguistic sign is twisted and distorted, shows that the stylistic value of these telescoped units is great in the formation of the English fictional language in general and Orwell's individual style in particular. ***Crimethink, thoughtcrime***: *Crimethink* describes negation of all concepts referring to liberty, freedom and equality. The act (*to commit crimethink*) is considered punishable. *Thoughtcrime* is the *Newspeak* word for such thoughts that are unorthodox and outside the government platform. Winston Smith, Orwell's main character, a ***thought-criminal***, is so convinced of the power of *the Party* that he cannot imagine hiding any thought or action as he writes in his diary: *Thoughtcrime does not entail death: thoughtcrime IS death*. After writing this, Smith's goal becomes not to stay alive (which he is

confident is not possible) but to stay alive a little longer: *Now he had recognized himself as a dead man, it became important to stay alive as long as possible* (Part I, Chapter II). **Goodthink** is the semantic antonym of *crimethink* and *thoughtcrime*. It entails thoughts that are approved by *the Party* and *Big Brother*, and follow the government policies, directives, ideals and interpretations. Other words related to *thoughtcrime* are **crimestop**, meaning ridding oneself of unwanted ideological thoughts, thus avoiding to commit a *thoughtcrime*. **Facecrime**, indicates that a person is guilty of *thoughtcrime* and is based on the facial expression.

Thinkpol/Thought Police stand for the secret police who are charged with uncovering and punishing *thoughtcrime* and *thought-criminals*: *He knew that for seven years the Thought Police had watched him, looking down on him like an insect walking along a path* (Part 3, Chapter 6). The *Thinkpol* use psychological methods and omnipresent surveillance (e.g. *telescreens*) to search, find and arrest those citizens who would challenge the status quo – the authority of *the Party* and *Big Brother* – even if only with a thought /Tailor, 2006: 21/.

Doublethink (a unique type of an oxymoron) is a key motif in the novel and a complex notion of accepting two contradictory parts as true. It is a psychological means fostering the diminishment of rational language and preventing individuals from imagining rebellious ideas. As human thought is affected by eliminating words, behaviour is modified towards a manifestation of *doublethink*. A vivid example of *doublethink*, which has become a stylistic marker for the novel, is the following recurring ideological slogan (repeated 5 times throughout the novel):

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

Another example of *doublespeak* is the Newspeak word **blackwhite**. Applied to an opponent, it means the habit of impudently claiming that *black is white*, in contradiction of the plain facts. Applied to a party member, it means a loyal willingness to say that black is white when the party discipline demands this. It also refers to the firm belief that *black is white* and has never meant anything else. The ability to blindly believe in anything, regardless of its absurdity, can have different causes: respect for authority, fear, indoctrination, repression of individual critical thinking.

Minitrue, Minipax, Miniluv are the “double-abbreviated” forms of *Minitruthful*, *Minipeaceful*, and *Minilovely* which in their turn derived from the names of ministries – *Ministry of Truth*, *Ministry of Peace* and *Ministry of Love*. The fourth important ministry – **Miniplenty** – stands for *Ministry of Plenty* (Economics and Industry). Like all the other words of *the B vocabulary*, these terms too are not ideologically neutral, and as many of the words of the same vocabulary, they are euphemisms. All four names mean almost the exact opposite of what they really should mean. *Ministry of Truth* is charged with falsification of facts; *Ministry of Peace* deals with warfare; *Ministry of Plenty* falsifies economic figures and symbolises food scarcity for the common people and abundance of it for the party

members; *Ministry of Love* is a place where people are interrogated and tortured. Winston (the protagonist) describes it as *the really frightening one*:

There were no windows in it at all. [...] It was a place impossible to enter except on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of barbed-wire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests. Even the streets leading up to its outer barriers were roamed by gorilla-faced guards in black uniforms, armed with jointed truncheons. (Part 1, Chapter 1)

Ironical though, the above names indicate to an extra-linguistic fact – language is used to mask the truth, and it is done by all totalitarian regimes. Suffice it to refer to the constant state of war in *Oceania* to understand that the above point is unquestionable. *Oceania* is permanently at war, who with – does not matter. The public should be “fed up” with patriotic sentiments not to resent poverty, shortage of food, degradation and corruption. The regime, therefore, distracts public attention away from war by using positive connotations when referring to it. The false sense of truth is generally produced by the *Ministry of Truth*, the institution where present and past records are purposefully demolished. Original documents are replaced with modified ones, after this – the originals are destroyed:

This process of continuous alteration was applied [...] to every kind of literature or documentation which might conceivably hold any political or ideological significance. Day by day and almost minute by minute the past was brought up to date. In this way every prediction made by the Party could be shown by documentary evidence to have been correct, nor was any item of news, or any expression of opinion, which conflicted with the needs of the moment, ever allowed to remain on record. All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and reinscribed exactly as often as was necessary. In no case would it have been possible, once the deed was done, to prove that any falsification had taken place. (Chapter 1, Part 4)

Sexcrime (sexual immorality) and **goodsex** (chastity) regulate all sexual life in *Oceania*. *Sexcrime* refers to all forms of sexual intercourse (punishable by death) with the exception of *goodsex* – the traditional intercourse between officially registered husband and wife for the sole purpose of begetting children who would become future devotees to the state.

Duckspeak meaning *to quack like a duck*, plays an important role in the *Newspeak* vocabulary which grows smaller and smaller instead of larger every year. Each reduction is supposed to minimize the involvement of the higher brain centres in the communication process making speech directed at only praising the policy of the state. It is this aim that is expressed in *duckspeak*. Thus, the expressions *to be good at duckspeaking* or *a good duckspeaker* are valued compliments.

Unperson is a negatively connoted word referring to a person who has been *vaporised* – who has been killed by the state and effectively erased from existence. Such a person is written out of existing books, photographs, and articles (the original copies are destroyed), so that no trace of their existence could be found in the historical record. The idea is that such a person would, according to the

principles of *doublethink*, be forgotten completely, even by close friends and family members. Mentioning this person's name is a *thoughtcrime*.

Depressing though, politicians have used and are using language to manipulate people. "Equally alive today is the fear that politicians and the media abuse language to hide truth" /Berkes 2000: 8/. This is the reason why *NewSpeak* with its unique linguistic style fictional vocabulary holds a dismal reputation.

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has become a common trope of the dystopian science fiction. The novel carries a warning about the power of the word. It shows how words that realize communication of thought are modified to serve the aim of limiting consciousness, of promoting disruption of language and thought and how language in general and certain words in particular that shape people's sense of reality, are abused and misused to conceal truths and manipulate history. Orwell's new words, especially the group of words named *the B Vocabulary*, play an important style-forming role in the novel. *The B Vocabulary* realizes the function of making political discourse as independent of cognition and consciousness as possible. This layer of the vocabulary is in no way neutral and is mostly made up of euphemistic and stylistically charged telescoped compound words which make a strong emotive impact on the reader. All the words of this vocabulary are stylistic markers for not only Orwell's literary work but also for the English fictional language.

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Գ. ՄՈՒՐԱԴՅԱՆ – Անգլերեն խոսքի աղճատումը Զ. Օրուելլի «Հազար ինը հարյուր ութսունչորս» դիստոպիական վեպում. – Անգլիացի գրող Զորջ Օրուելլի «Հազար ինը հարյուր ութսունչորս» դիստոպիական վեպում լեզուն ներկայանում է որպես բռնապետական համակարգի կողմից ճշմարտությունը քողարկելու, մարդկանց ուղեղները վանալու և վերահսկելու, միտքն ու ոգին ոչնչացնելու, իրականությունը աղավաղելու միջոց: Վեպում սույն գործառույթներն իրականացվում են Օրուելլի հեղինակած այն նորաբառերի միջոցով, որոնց լեզվաոճական ուսումնասիրությունը թույլ է տալիս բացահայտել ոչ միայն անգլալեզու գեղարվեստական ոճին և հեղինակային խոսքին բնորոշ այդ բառերի բոլոր հուզական նրբերանգները, այլև այն լեզվական և արտալեզվական գործոնները, որոնք պայմանավորում են դրանց կիրառության առանձնահատկությունները:

Բանալի բառեր. «Հազար ինը հարյուր ութսունչորս», Օրուելլի նորաբառերը, լեզու և մտածողություն, լեզվի աղճատում, լեզվաոճական առանձնահատկություններ

Г. МУРАДЯН – Искажение английского слова в романе Дж. Оруэлл «Тысяча девятьсот восемьдесят четыре». – Роман Оруэлл «Тысяча девятьсот восемьдесят четыре» является тоталитарной антиутопией, в которой язык представлен как средство манипулирования, сокрытия правды от общественности, промывания мозгов, искажения реальности и человеческого мышления. Эти функции реализуются с помощью неологизмов Оруэлл, лингвостилистическое исследование которых позволяет выявить не только языковые особенности английской художественной речи и специфику оруэльских слов, но и те языковые и внеязыковые факторы, которые определяют создание и функционирование указанных языковых единиц.

Ключевые слова: «Тысяча девятьсот восемьдесят четыре», неологизмы Оруэлл, язык и мышление, искажение языка, лингвостилистические особенности