

**T.C. KOCAELİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
BATI DİLLERİ VE EDEBİYATLARI ANABİLİM DALI
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI PROGRAMI**

**LANGUAGE AS A TOOL FOR MANIPULATION IN
DYSTOPIAN NOVELS**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

ZİŞAN ARKUT

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KOCAELİ, 2019

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To my beloved family

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ÖZET

Dilin toplumu manipüle etmek için bir araç olarak kullanımını uzun süredir tartışılabilen bir konudur. Bu tezin amacı, yapısalılık ve özellikle de post yapısalılık kuramları ışığında bu konuyu ele alıp, Kuzey Amerika ve Türk edebiyatlarından birer roman ile örneklendirip söz konusu manipülasyon yöntemlerini açığa çıkarmaktır. Dilin toplumdaki bireyleri ne şekilde etkileyebildiği ya da aynı şekilde güç sahiplerinin insanların kullandığı dili nasıl yönlendirdiği ve bunların iki farklı kültürden gelen eserlerde ne tür paralellikler çizdiğini göstermek amaçlanmaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, Kuzey Amerika'dan Margaret Atwood'un *Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü (The Handmaid's Tale)* ve Türkiye'den Zülfü Livaneli'nin *Son Ada (The Last Island)* romanları üzerinden inceleme yapılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Yapısalılık, Post-yapısalılık, distopya, dil, manipülasyon*

ABSTRACT

Usage of language as a tool for manipulation has been subjected to many debates over the years. The aim of this thesis is to handle this issue in the light of structuralism and poststructuralism while giving examples from two different worlds of literature namely, North American and Turkish literature. The possibility of language affecting the human thought as well as powerholders' manipulations on language in order to control people will be studied while drawing parallels in between two novels. For this purpose, *The Handmaid's Tale*, written by Margaret Atwood on the North American front will be studied, while *The Last Island (Son Ada)* by Zülfü Livaneli will be looked into as the Turkish counterpart.

Keywords: *Structuralism, poststructuralism, dystopia, language, manipulation*

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INTRODUCTION

Several arguments about the use of language as a means of manipulation both in literary works and in real life have been made for years. It is an undeniable fact that when there is manipulation, there is a lack of freedom. And when freedom is restricted by language, it mostly means freedom of thought is compromised, enabling those in power to lead people into believing what they normally wouldn't thus, to support and obey the ideas that they normally would oppose and stand up to. When one talks about freedom or lack of it, literature comes up with a great variety of options. Humans usually fail to give a proper definition of freedom and yet it is one of their most valued assets. For this reason, it has become one of the most commonly observed themes in literary works, dating all the way back to the first examples of literature. But taking a closer look to more contemporary, thus, more relatable examples would provide with better results. Therefore, the best way of analysing and exemplifying this effect would be through the works of literature that brings our worst fears forward; Dystopias. Since the structure of most dystopias depends on high levels of manipulation, oppression, and control, it is only natural that language comes forward as a very commonly preferred tool that is easily integrated into every inch of society. As to analyse how it is done, post-structuralism could be pointed out as the theory that took the lead to be known as a proper and systematic way of dissecting the structure of said language(s). Therefore, aim of this study is to establish a broad analysis of the ways and instances language is used for the said purpose in dystopian novels as well as putting forward the globality of the issue through two novels coming from two different countries with quite different literary backgrounds and cultures: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood and *The Last Island* by Zülfü Livaneli.

In order to properly understand the place of post-structuralism in this thesis, a general outlook towards the movement must be conveyed. There are several philosophers who are thought to establish the basis of post-structuralism including Michael Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes and so on although many of them refused or were unaware of belonging to the movement. Post-structuralism emerged from opposing to the claim of structuralism that believes in a coherent system upon which meaning is constructed in a similar fashion for most individuals, thus, limiting all thought, meaning and truth for the majority. This point of view in

structuralism lead to the belief of a universal truth that would help us explain and understand everything. Especially Althusser's claim that regardless of the individual characteristics such as race, class, gender, sexuality or age, all of the truth in society was constructed by ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses gathered a lot of attention and criticism. Post-structuralists, on the other hand, suggested that our ideas and reality depend on the constructed discourse on society. And standing close to relativists, they believed that universal truth may not exist and even if it does, it is unknowable. Moreover, the existence of multiple truths and/or realities is considered to be a fact each within its own discourse. This constant change in meanings causes ambiguity and tension and that leads post-structuralists to consider the polysemic nature of media artefacts in which a given artefact such as a novel, a poem or a piece of music has multiple meanings depending on the motives of the producer and reception of it by various audiences. Therefore it is possible to say that post-structuralism developed and added a new perspective on truth and meaning through observing the difference between social and cultural phenomena. This approach also led to discussions about hegemony and the possibility of resistance towards dominant meaning.

Considering this resistance could lead to challenging the institutionalized ways of thinking and acting, post-structuralism once again proves itself as a must to consider while analysing dystopias. Unlike structuralists who looked for overlapping systems that bind people together, post-structuralists believed in flexibility and room for improvement within human existence and how differences between individuals account for new ways of looking at social and cultural formations as well as bigger institutions in society. These issues are handled in many dystopian novels in which power-holders are strict representatives of structuralist point of view as they try to uniform the society under their rule with the help of certain formulas or propagandas. Most of the heroes or heroines of dystopias, on the other hand, prove poststructuralists right by their questionings towards the system they are living in and their failure to follow the rules or fall for manipulations. Although the systems that power holders build might be effective on the majority, they never work on every single individual and mostly the protagonists in these works take on the role of proving that. Considering the main aim of post-structuralism is returning agency to the subject who actively takes part in the existing structure while also acknowledging

the great power that ruling institutions hold over the society at the same time, it must be also pointed out that this aim is completely in alignment with what dystopias do as they focus on the individual while trying to place it within the society.

Taking the doubtful approaches of post-structuralists towards the search for a single truth and ultimate power of ruling institutions into account, dystopias turn out to be quite the fruitful genre in order to analyse the aforementioned struggle between the power holders and individuals forced to obey them on literary grounds. Unlike utopias in which language is allowed to develop naturally, dystopias are known to present language strictly under the influence of authorities. This control over the language mostly provides a way of stopping the development of any unwanted thoughts in the society since any way of conveying them to any other person is made almost impossible with the artificial boundaries set by different figures of authority. Therefore, it would be possible to say that language control comes with the power of shaping the reality and as Barnes stated, “All dystopian languages technically belong to Whorf” (Marcus qtd, 1999: 1). According to the Whorf hypothesis, language moulds the perception of the world around us, thus, shaping language would be like shaping the real world, all compatible with the post-structuralism's doubtful approach to the classical notions of truth and reality. Some critics claimed that when reality or the meaning is expressed by unreliable words, the truth would be impossible to find out and if reality is simply the outcome of the discourse, then all that can be known would be the discourse itself. However, it must be also noted that this point of view was found to be extremist by some other post-structuralists and was called “prison of discourse” (Marcus qtd, 1999: 1). Therefore, it must be kept in mind that although effects of language on the reality are undeniable, it may not be right to claim that it has a complete rule over it, but possibly it does mediate it.

Even the dystopian writers themselves tend to show the limitations of control over the thought and always seem to leave a loophole in the face of oppressors for the sake of hope. The most outstanding way of doing this seems to be proving that there are other ways of expressing and experiencing reality than language and to point out that while the language has a big effect on reality, it cannot completely change it. For example, in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, language is one of the control mechanisms of big brother but by no means, it is the only one. It is mainly used to describe other state tools of oppression, thus, as Marcus stated, “What is

regulated is less language in its abstract form than the language in actual usage -- that is, discourse” (“Language and Dystopia”). Therefore, it would be possible to claim that Orwell chooses to shape the language in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in order to establish a proper discourse for such a thorough dystopian work and even the mere existence of certain “non-words” proves that although the language can be limited to save appearances within the discourse, it is impossible to shape the thoughts in human mind altogether. Instead, every government in power needs to limit and harness the best they can out of language and that is usually done through constantly imposing glorifying words for an artificially produced common figure of power such as “Big Brother” in Orwell’s novel, so that at least some people can be affected and turned into fanatic supporters of the system. Through these fanatics and a conscious effort to keep the language from developing new expressions for unwanted thoughts, people are kept within the patterns of the desired behaviour by the government.

In parallel to the example of Orwell’s novel, Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* apparently has similar qualities. Deliberate manipulation of the spoken language seems to appear as a recurring pattern in this work as well. In the fictional country of Gilead, the choice of words is able to affect the characters’ fate within the strictly supervised order of society. In different layers of the society, each member has a role to play and a certain type of vocabulary they must follow. The disobedience to these predestined choices of manners and vocabulary could easily end up with the demise of the person who fails to follow the rules. This threat is thoroughly and repeatedly described in the novel. In Gilead’s society, the Handmaids are the most oppressed and the most strictly regulated group in which every word uttered and every greeting they make could be their last unless it is in the way of “preferred” speaking. In addition to this strictly structuralist approach that tries to control the daily speech, these preferred ways of speaking are built in a way to comply with the roles within the society that not only protects but also strengthens their part in it. The Handmaids are responsible for bearing a child for the important families, wives of which don’t seem to be able to give birth to a child. They are burdened with the reproduction of the upper parts of the social ladder and they have to obey their role regardless of their consent. In such an environment of heavily oppressed groups, it wouldn’t be wrong to assume that having thorough control over every single one of them is close to impossible. Individuality and different point of views threaten the fabric of this

dystopic system and Atwood does not fail to point out such an important part language has in order to maintain the balance within it. With their choice of words, handmaids are supposed to interact in a careful manner with others, including each other and they must not leave the path of the “righteous” ways that are imposed on them. Thanks to this closely governed system, they cannot form a group, resist or go against anyone, since they cannot even share their misery and struggles with their own friends since going out of the predetermined way of speaking is heavily frowned upon. Also, it must be pointed out that language is not the only pillar keeping this structure in place, there are heavily used ideological state apparatuses, but Atwood’s choice of the first-person point of view narrative helps show that they do eventually fail to limit the flow of free will and thought at some point. If they were successful, this thesis would be built upon the structuralist point of view which suggests language and ideological state apparatuses shape the thought. However, with the little rebellions of our main character, Atwood supports the poststructuralist beliefs and gracefully pictures the impossibility of completely taming a human mind through outer forces, even if the said mind is on the verge of breaking down.

The Last Island, on the other hand, handles the issues of dictatorship through a utopian society turning into a dystopian nightmare. The story does not start with a nightmare society, actually it is exactly the opposite. The transformation of this little community is reflected in the microcosm of a little island that used to be long forgotten by the mainland residents of a country in turmoil. The island with a limited number of residents living in peace experiences a drastic turn in its fate when the forcibly retired President of the mainland country decides to spend his retirement days in this peaceful piece of land. At first, this newly arrived neighbour is nothing but a means of excitement and a change of routine for the residents of the island, however, it quickly turns into an illogical nightmare which includes anything from declaring war against seagulls to blaming their fellow neighbours for being terrorists and capturing them. The arrival of the merciless reality that seems to be ruling over the rest of their country happens through the careful, systematic but low-profile manipulations of the retired prime minister. Livaneli weaves through this story in an almost scary realistic manner that shows off his incredible observation skills with the way he reflects human nature. Although certain manners of speaking and action are not as heavily imposed on the islanders as it was for the citizens of Gilead in

Atwood's book, their fate ends up in the same point of any oppressed dystopian society: either stay alongside the powerful and be safe, or go against them and face with severe punishment.



1. POSTSTRUCTURALISM: THEORY AND HISTORY

Poststructuralism is a way of critical reasoning rather than a protest or an organized movement. It focuses on the loopholes in structuralism's system of forming a meaning, the moment that people lose footing during the process of attributing meaning to everything, trying to make ethical choices before the moment of choice to move from this indecisiveness to a result with the help of our system of meaning. While trying to understand the world around us and act on our pre-knowledge, a point when we hit a dead-end about what the social norms or rules expect us to do or think is inevitable. Thus, the point when we enforce a meaning which is not shaped by the general system of society and the general structure of meaning is exactly what poststructuralism tries to figure out. When we do not know or understand what those in control of us expect us to do, how do we get out of this dead-end and make a decision that we believe in and stand up for? In poststructuralism, this stage of decision making is believed to be guided by our own conscious and the self instead of political or moral basis that is shaped by the world around us.

At this point, it would be possible to say that poststructuralism is all about breaking free of the famous "self-incurred immaturity" that Kant identified as "the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another"(Harcourt qtd, 2007: 1). In other words, self-incurred immaturity means letting outer forces and other people dictate one's own understanding without implementing any self-sourced logic. With this approach, Kant took a big role in the philosophical discourse of modernity (Harcourt, 2007:1). However, it must be kept in mind that Kant doesn't have the last say in this issue. As one of the most outstanding names in poststructuralism in addition to feminism, Judith Butler places roots of poststructuralism on Foucault's work while placing its other end just before the discovery of deconstruction while following the work of Jacques Derrida closely. Butler defines poststructuralism as the rejection of "the claims of totality and universality and the presumption of binary structural oppositions that implicitly operate to quell the insistent ambiguity and openness of linguistic and cultural signification"(Harcourt qtd, 2007: 2). As it is stated in the previous pages, this understanding of poststructuralism stands against the perspective of structuralism that dictates the universal truth and binary structures that define everything as black

and white to avoid the ambiguity and the fact that messages of signifiers are open to interpretation. Butler further makes criticism of structuralism for focusing on the equation of the linguistic system while sacrificing the momentary gap and difference between the signifier and the signified. Poststructuralism, on the other hand, focuses on the aforementioned "moment of difference", which opens up the language to a limitless number of possibilities of meaning and interpretation.

Even though contributions of Butler to poststructuralism is undeniable and quite important, it would be impossible to have a true understanding of the movement without Michel Foucault's reflections that were based on Claude Levi-Strauss's structural linguistics. Since roots of poststructuralism lie upon the analysis and criticism of structuralist approach, Foucault's engagement with the issue seems to follow the same pattern as he stated in *Discipline and Punishment*: "... by an analysis of penal leniency, as a technique of power, one might understand . . . in what way a specific mode of subjection was able to give birth to man as an object of knowledge for a discourse with a 'scientific' status." (Foucault, 1995: 24). Based on these words, in which we can see the Foucault's desire to understand the systematics of oppression and man's place within it as an object of knowledge, understanding the strictly systematic approach of structuralism is proven to be necessary.

1.1 Claude Levi-Strauss and Basic Tenets of Structuralism

Structuralism is known to be a quite the popular movement among intellectual circles during the sixties, however, merely four of these intellectuals were commonly considered as actual structuralists: Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, and Claude Levi-Strauss while only the latest stuck with it. Levi-Strauss built his structuralist approach on the basis of Saussure's linguistic theory and centred it on several principles.

The first tenet of structuralism is built around the idea that language is formed unconsciously. It suggests the relations in human perception are nothing but second nature to man. And again, for this reason, they are usually taken for granted. This principle can be named as the least controversial and the most widely accepted one as it emerged from Saussure's suggestion: "People use language without conscious reflection, being largely unaware of the laws which govern it"(de Saussure, 1989: 72-73). In other words, language is produced neither consciously nor intentionally and it is a product of man's unconscious systems and mechanisms.

Levi-Strauss supported this understanding of the unconscious and claimed that the essence of culture is nothing more than an expression of universal laws on the individual level. Levi-Strauss believed that language can be used to study other social facts since it is formed unconsciously and is a part of the universal laws and truths.

The second principle of structuralism is probably the most relatable one in the contemporary world of intellect since it aligns with the contemporary understanding of "otherness" and building meaning through differences. To elaborate, this tenet suggests that all meaning in language is formed through the relationships of similarity and difference among the terms and not from direct meanings of the terms themselves. As Saussure explained: "In the language itself, there are only differences. Even more important than that is the fact that, although a difference presupposes positive terms between which the difference holds in general, in a language, there are only differences and *no positive terms*"(118). As one can derive from Saussure's explanation, we identify and understand terms by differentiating them from others, by defining what they are *not*, rather than what they are. When applied to social sciences, this tenet would come to suggest that behaviours and choices of people cannot be understood or judged separately, it can only be understood through a thorough analysis of their differences and relations to others. Moreover, it must be emphasized that this understanding forms the heart of linguistic structuralism. so when applied to linguistics, it is possible to say that while speaking a common language with somebody, the meaning is derived not from the words of the objects themselves, but from the relations of difference between the terms and this is how the meaning is formed.

The third tenet of structuralism is built upon the second one. it suggests the idea that all of the aforementioned relations of difference between the terms come together to form a whole system. As Saussure explains, they fit together in such a way that each one of them depends on the simultaneous coexistence of the others (113). However, it must be considered that these relations and variations are far from being infinite. Duncan Kennedy explains that " the power of structuralist methodology is that it shows what at first appears to be an infinitely various, essentially contextual mass of utterances is, in fact, less internally various and less contextual than appearance"(Harcourt qtd,2007: 5) considered within the context of

social sciences, this quotation can bring about the understanding of this tenet as one that suggests relations of difference is, in fact, far from being unlimited and less variable even though they are formed unconsciously as the first tenet suggests.

The fourth tenet is the belief that structural analysis can be used to discover universal laws. This tenet is also the most controversial one by far so much that it caused the emergence of the poststructuralist way of thinking.

As it is observed in the Levi-Strauss's general understanding of structuralism, this tenet shows a strong turn towards binarism and universalism. This emerged as a result of the attempt to find a pattern by which people behave. Especially Levi-Strauss was quite determined to find these patterns through entirely scientific methods. As he explained in *Language and the Analysis of Social Laws*:

We shall be in a position to understand basic similarities between forms of social life, such as language, art, law, and religion that on the surface seem to differ greatly. At the same time, we shall have the hope of overcoming the opposition between the collective nature of culture and its manifestations in the individual, since the so-called "collective consciousness" would, in the final analysis, be no more than the expression, on the level of individual thought and behaviour, of certain time and space modalities of the universal laws which make up the unconscious activity of the mind. (Levi-Strauss, 1967: 64)

As it can be seen on this statement, Levi-Strauss clearly goes after proving that all and all aspects of social life share a common ground and that the individual does not actually conflict with the collective culture, just interpret things differently. As it is mentioned before, he wanted to follow a concrete scientific approach that would be impossible to deny or ignore. In his attempt of doing so, Levi-Strauss studied the way North and South American natives classified plants and animals. Through this analysis, he tried to uncover the qualities of "untamed" way of thinking only to compare it to European scientific modes of thought later on. (Harcourt, 2007: 7)

Despite his clearly scientific approach and attempts to formulate the way the human mind works, many later structuralists insisted Levi-Strauss was not "delusional" enough to completely believe in this tenet or the possibility of getting binary results. However, as he clearly emphasized in *The Raw and the Cooked*: "Starting from ethnographic experience, I have always aimed at drawing up an inventory of mental patterns, to reduce apparently arbitrary data to some kind of

order, and to attain a level at which a kind of necessity becomes apparent, underlying the illusions of liberty”(Harcourt qtd Levi-Strauss, 2007: 7). Therefore, there can be no point in denying what Levi-Strauss himself clearly stated as to what he was originally trying to do.

Structuralism was meant to provide the scholars with a more scientific understanding of human behaviour but the very attempt of formulating it shattered the union. Although poststructuralists do not go against the Levi-Strauss’s claims that suggest freedom is an illusion, they do not accept the possibility of finding a general law or formula for it.

It is also worth noting that while standing strongly against its predecessors; structuralism is not completely unrelated to them. The aforementioned rather radical stance of structuralism was very distant from the leading philosophical approach that preceded it, which was phenomenological existentialism, being led by Jean-Paul Sartre. In order to understand the relation and the differences between the two, an interview during which Sartre pointed out his stance on the issue must be taken into consideration. When he was asked if he drew a distinction between two central terms of linguistic structuralism, namely signification and the signified, Sartre responds:

Yes, for me signified is the object. I define my own language, which may not necessarily be the same as linguists: this “*chair*”, it is the object thus it is the signified; then, there is signification, it is the logical set that will be constituted by words, the signification of a phrase. If I say “This table is in front of the window,” I am aiming at a signified that is the table by significations that are set of phrases that are constituted, and I consider me, myself as the signifier. The signification, that is the noema, the correlate of the set of vocal elements proffered. (Harcourt qtd, 2007: 8)

In opposition to structuralism, existentialism takes the agent, which is the individual as the meaning giver as the starting point of forming a meaning. Sartre thinks our ability to make nothingness and negate a situation through our own will and power of thought is what defines our being as humans. Unlike inanimate objects, humans have the ability to alter things around them through imposing meaning onto the world. Sartre believes “man is the being through which nothingness comes to the world” (Sartre, 1992: 59). This nothingness is what provides humans with many opportunities. Thus, it is possible to conclude that Sartre believes situations do not give meaning to subjects; it is the subjects who give meaning to situations. This is

how an individual creates meaning for everything around him, including himself. Therefore, from the existentialist point of view, humans give meaning and define themselves at any given moment by their acts and signification. This approach seems to be very bold and quite different from the idea of structuralism that was meant to point the philosophers, thinkers, and scholars towards social science and attempts of prediction.

However, structuralism has apparently failed to fulfil its promise of prediction and finding a scientifically acceptable pattern in human actions. Therefore, it proved to be impossible to anticipate future choices. Linguistically speaking, the structure of a language might restrain the way agents talk about it but it cannot possibly control the content of what is said. Thus, it must be accepted that limitations of a language coexist with free will and the patterns that seem to keep emerging are merely coincidental repetitions and not in any way concrete formulas.

1.2 The aftermath of Structuralism: Pierre Bourdieu and the "Practice Theory"

This inability to fulfil its promise of formulating human choices led many thinkers to try and move on from structuralism. One of these attempts was made by Pierre Bourdieu with his approach that is called “practice theory” which was, in essence, a synthesis of structuralism and existentialism. He claimed that neither pure subjectivist perspective of existentialism nor strictly objectivist stance of structuralism would be enough to truly understand cover all layers of social practices.

According to Bourdieu, from the structuralist point of view, it still must be considered that agents may choose to act upon and internalize certain formulas that Levi-Strauss laid out, thus forming a repetitive set of actions that become habits. This would affect not only their actions but also the way they think of and perceive the world around them. In his work *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu claimed: “The social world may be the object of three modes of theoretical knowledge, each of which implies a set of anthropological theses” (Bourdieu and Nice, 1977: 3). This classification was meant to organize the modes of thought and clarify his theory properly. The first approach of this theoretical knowledge was attributed to phenomenologists and ethnomethodologists and, most of all, to Jean-Paul Sartre. He handled this model with the aim of bringing out the truth behind the

social human experience. The second method, however, was attributed to structuralists who were represented by Claude Levi-Strauss. Bourdieu considered this group as strict “objectivists” who focused on the linguistic structures and connections that form the pre-knowledge and conditioning of social life. Although he defined these two views as opposing to each other, instead of pushing them aside, he believed both must be benefited and learned from. Thus, he formed his own mode of knowledge as the third one.

In order to understand Bourdieu's approach first, it must be understood that he believed it is a part of the human nature to classify and put everything into groups in mind and act on assumptions derived from these. Secondly, the concept of agency is considered to be the ability of individuals to act independently from the boundaries of set structures. Bourdieu revealed the connection between agency and structures by introducing “habitus” which could be defined as the set of attitudes that are internalized by the conditioning of past experiences and applying them to current situations. However, this conditioning does not necessarily limit freedom, at least not completely (10). Therefore, Bourdieu's point of view could be defined as a synthesis of the existentialist and structuralist way of thought. It aims

...to make possible a science of the dialectical relations between the objective structures to which the objectivist mode of knowledge gives us access and structured dispositions within which these structures are actualized and which tend to reproduce them. (3)

Thus, it is possible to say that actors are not only immersed in some structures that are usually taken for granted but they also occasionally manipulate these rules in their own way. That is why this mode of knowledge incorporates both the view of Levi-Strauss that focus on the moment of unconscious structures and views of Sartre that takes the moment of subjectivity into the centre to have a better understanding of human actions.

Bourdieu has believed he was the one to have found the main problem with the contemporary world of thought: the absence of a proper theory of human agency. For this reason, he pointed out how Sartre and Levi-Strauss have missed out that the practice is intertwined with theory. Despite this insightful approach, Bourdieu was not a poststructuralist. He merely moved from structuralism and existentialism and built his aforementioned theory on top of them.

1.3 Beginning of Poststructuralism

Both structuralism and poststructuralism refer to the expansion of a philosophy that went hand in hand with the developments of analytic philosophy of the time. Poststructuralism, in particular, puts a lot of effort into making a critical review of what is considered to be normal in classical philosophy with the help of phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches. As it was mentioned before, poststructuralism actually emerges from within structuralism and is built upon its first three tenets. These three tenets suggest that meaning is formed through relations of difference and that this formation is created subconsciously and at last, they come together to form a structure. Poststructuralism agrees upon these ideas and accepts them but it refuses the fourth one which suggests the existence of a universal truth that could be applied to any context and formulates any action that could be taken or any choice that could be made beforehand. This leads structuralists, especially Levi-Strauss as far as claiming that freedom is an illusion that we would like to believe we have. This claim is what causes poststructuralism to emerge through thinkers who rather focus on the blank parts during the process of decision making which structuralists have failed to explain. This search actually approaches the 4th tenet on the flip side: instead of finding a pattern, poststructuralism looks for answers to another question: How can we possibly assume that there is a complete semiotic structure while completely ignoring the missing points and uncertainties inside it? This question moves thinkers from studying pure ideology towards discourse in terms of social theory while forming critical discussions of structuralists.

The most outstanding representatives of poststructuralism can be listed as Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, and Slavoj Žižek and his school. These theorists, although they are mostly French in origin, influenced and are recognized all over the world with their theories, especially in philosophy of language, literary theory and ethics. All these philosophers have their differences in terms of their approaches with some taking a historical one while others preferring to build their work upon discourse or a combination of critical theory and psychoanalysis. However, regardless of their approach, all these thinkers seem to unite on the usage of a linguistic turn (Finkelde, 2013: 1245).

To begin with, one of the most celebrated one of these philosophers; Jacques Derrida developed the theory of deconstruction based on the necessity of destroying

the traditional approaches of philosophy, which was an idea inspired by the works of Martin Heidegger. In his *Being and Time*, Heidegger makes a critique of philosophical realism. The philosopher questioned the notion of truth that could be determined by universal rules and patterns. He believes truth is misinterpreted when it is judged as a combination of meanings that remain the same over time. Moving from this point of view, he attempted to handle the truth as a phenomenological journey based on experience instead of fixed, prearranged concepts. He went on emphasizing demolishing the traditional ways of philosophical thinking and returning to the “initial experiences”. This return, Heidegger believes, would be able to make individuals understand and detect the origins of their thought as well as discovering the fact that philosophical thinking carries its own answers within.

Derrida followed through Heidegger’s system of questioning the traditional classifications and claimed that this was a method already applied in every part of philosophy. This statement is what forms the basis of his theory of deconstruction. Derrida advocates that since authors put forward several remarks about truth in their texts, contradictions within the context are inevitable, thus have to be suppressed constantly. Considering the compatibility of this idea with the poststructuralist view that there are more layers of truth in between the lines than the structuralists tried to formulate, it does not come as a surprise that deconstructivism was placed within the poststructuralist movement and has pioneered to many important developments not only in philosophy but also in many social and cultural sciences including literary theory and criticism (1246).

In addition to Derrida’s deconstructivism, Richard Rorty’s pragmatist approach that was fed by European poststructuralism and analytical philosophy is considered to be the American counterpart of the poststructuralist movement. Because of the fact that poststructuralism is so closely related to the structuralism has caused several inconsistent categorizing of the philosophers and thinkers in between these movements as well as the boundaries of the movements themselves. Although structuralism is mostly laid out in between the works of Saussure up until Derrida’s, whether poststructuralism is against or merely a branch of structuralism is still up to debates. Moving from this ambiguity, certain German philosophers including Manfred Frank has preferred to use the term “new structuralism” over poststructuralism. There is also no agreement upon whether outstanding philosophers

such as Barthes, Lacan and Foucault are structuralists or they moved onto poststructuralism later on. However, for the sake of clarity as well as being in accordance with the more common approach, these thinkers will be studied under the poststructuralist group in this work.

In order to understand the true essence of what these thinkers claimed and the poststructuralism itself, one must understand its two main inclinations: textuality and discursivity. Textuality emerged as a result of trying to understand the relationship between the reader and the text. This movement suggests an analysis of a text as nothing more or less, just a text. It takes the language into the centre as the producer of meaning unlike those who take it as a mere reflection of reality. Textuality is often accepted to be pioneered by Roland Barthes (Sayegh, 2019: "Poststructuralism"). In addition, Jacques Derrida straight away declines the existence of the concepts of translation and summary, claiming it is not possible to convey a text's true meaning through any other medium and that these can only be considered as different texts. What's more, as long as there is logic, a known source and a system any writing can be evaluated as text, each different from the other. In accordance with this perspective, anything from legal papers to medical records is a text that needs to be studied as what it is instead of looking at what counterpart it has in real life.

Discursivity, on the other hand, puts context in an important position while analyzing a text. Discursivists try to understand how a text is produced rather than trying to dig out the reason behind it. This leads them to analyze social hierarchy and power relations that go into the process of the production of a text. The next step of understanding this would require knowledge of Foucauldian discourse analysis. In his essay "What is an Author?", Foucault attributes a whole new meaning to being an "author". moving on from the commonly known definition of the author, Foucault claims we actually mean many different things when we refer to someone as the author and this meaning has evolved, expanded and transformed throughout the ages (Fendler, 2014: 102). However, Foucault's effects on poststructuralism are not limited to discursivity. Considering there are many more outstanding and remarkable contributions of Foucault to the poststructuralism, it seems inevitable to take a closer look at the philosopher and his poststructuralist works.

1.4 Poststructuralist Approach to the Language

According to the poststructuralist view, it is impossible to find a single truth, a universal code or a concrete meaning in anything. This perspective leaked into the understanding of language, literature, philosophy and even politics. There are many poststructuralist scholars denying the existence of any kind of truth, objectivity and this has blurred the lines of even the discourse itself. There are no longer any distinct separations between the categories of discourse such as philosophy, sociology or language, so everything is considered to be an amorphous universal text. Hence, this whole thesis is also a mixture of an analysis conducted in literature, politics, and human psychology at the same time. Even the contemporary culture is fragmented and it is almost impossible to draw any lines between different fields of study. Even the new literature is “a celebration of shapelessness and formless stream of consciousness”(Ellis, 1991: 213). Therefore, one could claim that poststructuralism does not hesitate to test boundaries of the language only to come to the conclusion that a concrete truth or meaning is impossible to achieve. And that is why the poststructuralist approach makes it possible to have an analytic base for the argument presented in this thesis as it is the case with any other critical theory fields.

The actual power of poststructuralism lies within the phonetics as well, which can be defined as the most basic system of the language. The way a word is pronounced or sounds can depend on several variables depending on the region, society or ethnicity but the mental counterpart that the sound of that word creates is even more challenging to list. At this point, it is possible to point out the legitimacy of Saussure’s system of binary oppositions which can be summarized as understanding the words presented to us as what they are not instead of what they are. However, this system is strictly limited to phonetics and even though some thinkers including Barthes tried to apply this structuralist view to every social arena, it proves to be inadequate. The main problem with this approach is that it handles the text as an autonomous being, unrelated to any kind of human interpretation starting from the author as the creator of it to the reader who is the receiver. The fact that this system depends on a mechanical reception of the text, ready to untangle any meaning easily, completely ignoring the imperfections of human perception makes it unrealistic and impractical since it is impossible to bring out the same meaning from the signifier in any given context. Since human consciousness is inseparable from the

way we use the language, it would be illogical to completely ignore it in the process of understanding what is given to us. At this point, poststructuralism enters the stage pointing out the importance of the contributions of human behaviour. It also says that the language or more specifically, the words and the message itself are not all there is to the communication; there are many psychological and personal realities involved. These realities are inseparably related to the process unlike the structuralist belief that takes the language only as an object to be studied on its own. Therefore, in opposition to the structuralist approach to the language analysis that looks for precision and exactitude, poststructuralism takes this approach and turns it completely upside down and counteracts this scientifically (216).

In other words, poststructuralism states that the binary relationship laid between the signifier and the signified is completely subjective and the message that is conveyed can mean several things depending on the concepts signifier has in mind. It is true; however, words take on meanings through how they are different from other words. The word “dog” for example, acquires its meaning through not being the word “cat” or “mouse”. But this also causes the meaning to not be acquirable right away due to the presence of a limitless thread of signifiers and signifieds. So, the meaning can be found in the semiotic space somewhere in between what is there and what is not. Therefore, even the existence of poststructuralism can be seen as a means of justification for the postmodernist wave of decentralized and uncertain themes and lack of rationality because meanings cannot be fixed. The main problem with the poststructuralist point of view is this main focus upon the connection between the language and the thought. The movement is so fixated with human nature and thought that it leaves little space or other aspects of the movement to be developed. The effects of language upon human psychology are not denied by structuralists either, with Saussure acknowledging it in the first place as he “argued that particular language use resulted in particular thinking” (217). This claim brings about the famous Sapir-Whorf thesis which was formed by two outstanding linguists: Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf. This hypothesis has two layers the more popular one being the one with a milder approach. The sharp version of the theory suggests that human understanding and actions are completely restricted by the language they use or receive while the milder one suggests this effect is limited, only somewhat shaping our thoughts (Kay&Hempton, 1984: 65). However, this hypothesis

encountered several criticisms because of issues like translatability which brings down the Sapir-Whorf claims that suggest each language contains a complete distinct reality in it while several types of texts, including novels, poems or even user manuals are being translated every day. Another aspect of the hypothesis that was discussed is centred on Whorf's argument a certain tribe had a completely different terminology for time and this created a unique understanding of it for them. Later anthropological studies proved, however, that the said tribe's concept of time was not so different from ours either (76). All these criticisms aside, poststructuralists usually focused on being more creative rather than being accurate which resulted in complete dissociation from anything happening outside their own circle. Their focus stayed upon the impossibility of achieving a single truth or a single meaning within the language which resulted in an endless cycle between the inability of completely dissecting the language with millions of variables like the deconstructionists aimed to and the strict formulating approach of the structuralists.

1.5 Poststructuralism and Foucault

After structuralism, a shift which has started with Bourdieu's practice theory has taken place from ideology towards discourse. Thinkers started leaving trying to put the thinking process and communication into certain borders and formulas and focused more upon their content, how and under what conditions they were conceived. Within this wave of reconfiguring the way a text is studied, those who followed textuality singled out the text as the studying material in the process of analysing it while discursivists included the context as well. Foucault, on the other hand, comes forward with his discourse analysis which could be put next to discursivity. While discursivists tried to figure out an incredibly complex mechanism of hierarchy, subordination and rulers that control the meaning, Foucault is said to set the rules of this process. Therefore, there is no possible way of going through poststructuralism without going through and exploring the lines that Foucault has set for the movement.

The very first line of thought that puts Foucault with the poststructuralists is his rejection of objective truth, especially the claims that were done by Marxism based on economic determinism. He believed the strictly economic perspective of Marxism has put many other means and impositions of power in darkness. In his essay "Panopticism" in *Discipline and Punishment*, Foucault lays out three types of

power first of which is built on classical discipline and punishing principles. The second type of power, on the other hand, is what gives the essay its name: Panopticism. Foucault took inspiration from Jeremy Bentham's famous prison design called "Panopticon". This system of prison is built in such a way that prisoners are always in plain view of a tower placed in the middle of the building, but there is no way of telling if they are being observed since they have no view of the guardians with them being in a tower that is invisible from the outside. This constant fear and expectation of being observed become a part of life for those in custody and they start acting like someone is always watching them 24/7 and never try to leave or act in any unruly manners. Foucault applies this system to the society and claims that in the liberal society there is no need for chains, people already act as if they are constantly being observed (Foucault, 1995: 201). Foucault believes this system to be one of the most important aspects of the modern-day society since it makes the system self-sufficient to maintain and takes the power away from any specific individual since it works through the internalization of the fear of being watched. The third type of power, on the other hand, is based on controlling any individual through a strict record-keeping of information about them. Their records and the past are used as a means of proof against them in case they try to take any unwanted actions (206).

Taking all these types of power explained by Foucault into account, it is obvious that individual forms the centre of his research unlike the Marxist ideology that sees humans merely as a means of production, or a type of productive resource. To Foucault, the subject is something that is constituted rather than given. This approach proves to be way broader than other theorists since this tendency of Foucault to focus on the subject is based on each and every possible discourse. For this reason, his methods are preferred by many organizations and movements that defend minority, socially disadvantaged and oppressed groups. However, it must be noted that Foucault was not a social theorist. He did not try to develop theories of power to interpret western history, nor did he act as a historian of ideas. He introduced himself in his works as an "archaeologist" whose main aim was to describe the cultural formations that were behind his literary and social materials that were subjects of his work. He tried to figure out the web of connections that formed the discourse and ruled the way people lived. For the sake of understanding true

content of these theories and their relations to poststructuralist view as well as the theme of power and manipulation in this thesis, a closer look upon his three main concepts, namely; power, knowledge and subject, will be studied.

Foucault has tried to bring clarity to three main concepts in the history of ideas; power, discourse and knowledge. As it was mentioned before, with his explanations and commentaries on these three concepts, Foucault went beyond the mainstream methods of his time which were structuralism and hermeneutics. He conflicted with the structuralists mostly in the sense that he claimed it was not possible to ignore local and particular variables holding an important and non-negligible part in studying human thought unlike the structuralist method of reduction which downgraded any given situation or thought to universal patterns and formulas. However, it must also be noted that Foucault does not go to the other extreme side directly moving onto the phenomenological point of view claiming reality is purely a product of human mind, instead he simply suggests that human nature is a variable that must be kept in mind at all times while studying system of thought. This point of view belongs to the hermeneutics and they have an approach based on interpretation with the help of methods taken by phenomenology. Phenomenologists are the ones who believed that the objective world that structuralists believed in is the production of their mind and this goes in parallel to hermeneutic belief in the interpretive process which is based on specific acts of consciousness and highly subjective readings of texts (McHoul and Grace, 1992: 1).

Foucault, however, takes a different approach from both these sides and goes on stating that ideas are neither the base of the reality nor the simple outcomes of what is real. Instead, he states in *The Order of Things*: “if there is one approach that I do reject...it is that (one might call it, broadly speaking, the phenomenological approach) which gives absolute priority to the observing subject” (McHoul qtd, 1992: 3). It could be concluded from this statement that he stands rather close to structuralists believing in the need for looking for structures and patterns within texts, however, he insists upon the necessity of studying the subject and taking the discourse into consideration while interpreting them. Despite this could be the point where Foucault ended up in terms of his intellectual views, Johanna Oksala notes in the 48th chapter of *The Routledge Companion to Phenomenology* that he started off his journey heavily affected by existential phenomenology as it can be observed in

Mental Illness and Personality or in his introductory writing to the Ludwig Binswanger's *Dream and Existence*. For example, in *Mental Illness and Personality*, he argues that a patient's experiences need to be taken into consideration which means a phenomenology of mental illness is required. These ideas were put forward in the first edition of the work dated 1954 only to be rewritten in 1962 in accordance with the widely known Foucauldian claim of necessity to study the history of madness. Therefore, the 1960s mark the transformation of Foucault's thoughts on analysis as they moved from studying the experience to a more general and inclusive historical and political analysis which meant drifting away from phenomenology (Luft, Sebastian, et al, 2014: 529). The primary problem with the phenomenology to Foucault was how it handled the subject. While in his time many thinkers like Sartre were promoting phenomenology as it was the popular view at the time in Parisian intellectual circles, Foucault has launched a series of attacks with *The Order of Things* which brought him great popularity while putting out his views about the phenomenologist views. He claims the main turning point for him was reading Nietzsche which led him to think the unavoidable existence of the history of a subject just as there is a history of reason. This approach is actually what put Foucault into the poststructuralist group which, in accordance, does not accept subject as the centre of research and claims the necessity for social, linguistic and unconscious influencers of thought.

In addition to all his views on discourse and power, Foucault believed the society had a tendency to punish those who go against its norms. He studied the ways of punishment in his series of lectures at Collège de France in the early 70s, later collected under the title *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*. In the work, Foucault touched upon different ways of punishment imposed on the outcasts of society. The first one of these punishments is the method of exile. This method includes destroying homes of people, confiscating their possessions which push them into moving out of their homeland as well as being banished forcefully. This method of punishment for the unruly can be observed in *Last Island*, with the seagulls. These poor animals were subjected to constant disturbance in their natural habitat and was tried to be annihilated when other trials of banishing from the island failed. The second type of punishment as laid out by Foucault is enforcing compensation. This way requires a thorough system of making people pay for the damage they have caused. This

usually includes making the offenders pay fines and turn their sentences into debts. The third way, however, includes a more physical form of punishment. This could go as far as wounding, amputating and permanently marking the criminals. The example of this method can be observed in the Handmaid's Tale. In the novel those who commit a crime were hung at worst and displayed on a wall. But the more indispensable ones like the Handmaids were dismembered, got their eyes gauged out and whipped. All these physical punishments were considered okay as long as it did not affect their fertility. The last and the most common form of punishment is confinement. There are many different systems to effectively confine a person, including the Panopticon system that was also studied by Foucault. All these ways of punishment can be observed separately as well as they can be intertwined with one another. They pose a great importance in the process of establishing and maintaining power in the society which makes it a must to take them into consideration while analysing the issue of power.

Considering all of the above, Foucault has definitely had work which has pointed him out as a structuralist but with his later works and theories, he held a more poststructuralist stance. While he started off his theoretical life under the influence of phenomenologists, and later on the structuralists, he went on to form his own commentary upon many issues including human thought (madness), communication (language) and manipulation (power). He denied the Catholic approach of structuralists towards forming a theory and he has pointed out the necessity of considering many other variables that affect human thought and communication. With his progressive ideas, Foucault has undoubtedly caused a tidal wave in the criticism environments.

2. DYSTOPIAS

Dystopias are futuristic imaginary worlds in which the illusion of a perfect society is established through oppressive, mostly totalitarian control over people. Probably, for this reason, they are considered to be successors of utopias in which the perfect society is built upon the perfect system that everybody should follow suit. Therefore, in order to understand the development of dystopias, one should understand how its predecessor came into being in the first place since the first dystopia has not emerged until centuries after the first utopian proposal, which is Plato's *Republic*.

2.1 Utopias

Before evolving into literary pieces of work, utopias were first meant to be frameworks for a social order that would eradicate all unhappiness, injustice and conflict. The earlier examples of utopias pictured an order of perfection while also expressing the feeling of the difference between the ideal world and the real one at the same time. Despite the challenge and almost discouraging effect of these models, they were meant to make people realize what could be possible if people were to comply with the rules set by the utopia's author and create the perfect society. Although each piece of utopian work had its own schematics and system, they all shared the common ground of impossibility. They also take place outside the present human history in the golden age of humanity. The term "utopia" itself comes from Greek words *ou-topos* which means "nowhere". Therefore, while they are set as ultimate goals for humanity, even the name itself suggests the impossibility of it. The factors of human nature and history are great obstacles on the way of creating a utopia in real life, and since they are stamped with impossibility even in its name by the very creators of it, it emerges the question if they are deliberately formed in an impossible manner or what purpose do they serve if not to be realized. If a utopia is not meant to be real, what purpose does this piece of fantasy serve and made so many analyse, study and criticize it? Gregory Claeys brings a very enlightening explanation to these riddles as well as its basic systematics:

In all forms of ideal societies, the problem of wants or needs is central. The utopian tradition has tended to accept the central tension between limited resources and insatiable appetites, neither ignoring the problem nor assuming any essential change in human nature. [...] Most utopias attempt instead to control the key forms of social malaise (crime, poverty, vice, war, etc.) which result from human frailty, giving greater stress to the best organization of social institutions rather than idealizing either nature (as in the Land of

Cockayne) or man (as does the perfect moral commonwealth), and relying upon designs fostered by human ingenuity rather than those derived from divine foresight. In economic as well as other aspects, utopias seek the perfection of a completely ordered and detailed social model rather than an interim solution to or partial reform of present disorders (Claeys, 1991: 694).

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It would be safe to assume that Claeys's assumptions are quite in place and covers the most of the facts of utopian perfectionism despite the changes over the centuries since Plato has written *Utopia* in circa 360 BC. In this work, Plato formed a community in which the ruling "guardians" shared the property in order to ensure the public order and equality. Following Plato's work, there are many works that stay close to utopian tradition, however, while studying the history of the literary genre many scholars prefer to date it back to Thomas More's *Utopia* since the others were merely works that looked for solutions to economic disorder. In More's work, he opted for a society in which every system and rule was placed in order to ensure the well-being of its residents. These rules included rotation of houses every ten years, public markets that provided free food for everyone, public hospitals to take care of the sick for free and compensating distribution of goods in order to clear away any inequalities that might occur (696). At this point, it must be remembered that although these systems sound very fair and take human nature into consideration, it fails to consider the true essence of being a human: free will.

This neglection brings us to the point where it went all wrong, or as Claeys questions in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*:

When did the vision of heaven on earth become anticipation of hell? In many accounts, we emerge from the hopeful, dream-like state of Victorian optimism to pass through what H.G. Wells called the age of confusion into nightmarish twentieth century, soon powerfully symbolized by the grotesque slaughter of the First World War (Claeys, 2013: 107).

This transformation from the bliss and naive approach towards humanity which shattered the social optimism into pieces happened with the blows of two world wars at the beginning of the 20th century. The main reason behind utopian tendencies turning into dystopia could be pointed out as the fact that utopias did not offer much choice and dystopias reflected the desperation of the time a lot better. Regardless, this lack of choice is the main common point between the two genres. Utopia set out with the motivation to provide an alternative to the downsides and unjust parts of the society with the precise planning and ultimate grouping in the name of happiness and equality. This strict approach that ignores the freedom of

choice and values is the exact point that turns utopia into a nightmare, thus creating the dystopian grounds (Bezel, 1984: 7).

2.2 Dystopias

Mainly for these reasons, although historically the roots of dystopian works are assumed to lie within Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* which dated as back as the 18th century, the popularization of dystopias as a genre had not happened until the 20th (Toprak and Şar, 2019: 15). The scientific leaps that followed the age of enlightenment and reason caused mankind to discover its greedy and destructive nature with the coming of the advanced weaponry as well as with the fear of its inability to know where to stop destroying. The inevitable mood of depression and hopelessness caused by the painful atmosphere of the era has taken its toll in the literary world as well, giving dystopian literature a boost and popularity it has never seen before. *Gulliver's Travels* was meant to be a subtle criticism of the English society while dystopian works of the 20th century tend to make criticisms of anything from a current trend to a political system in a much more striking, cruel and, sometimes, grotesque ways.

The aforementioned ways of criticizing usually manifest themselves in certain patterns in the dystopian works. The examples of the genre come forward with certain traits when it comes to distinguishing them from other literary genres. One of the main characteristics of the genre is the usage of propaganda to keep citizens of society under control. Propagandas are widely used and hold an important place in dystopian works since there is no way of establishing such a thorough system without the cooperation of every single individual within the society. Through propagandas, the need for repressive state apparatuses that would force people into would decrease, if not totally eliminated. Propagandas make people believe in what the ruling party does and makes them not just follow them but also do their deeds willingly and without hesitation. Language comes in as the most important way of creating propaganda that would make the necessary manipulations in the way of thinking. The language used by the ruling class as well as the one that is imposed on the society to be used affects people's way of thinking, thus leaving them open for even further puppeteering (Chung, 2011: "Dystopias").

This puppeteering brings us to the second typical feature that is commonly observed in dystopian works, namely; the restriction of information, independent

thought and freedom. When one is asked about human rights, the right of accessing the information freely is the one that first comes to mind right after the basic survival needs like shelter, food and security. Alas, the whole point of dystopias is to show how easily people can be stripped off their most basic rights when given the right circumstances and lack of access to information is one of them. When people cannot receive real information, they cannot have a true grasp of what is going around them nor can they gather enough data to what can be done to overthrow the oppressing force lurking over their heads. This strips away the ability of people having things their own way and forces them into the maze of a system that they are properly controlled and made use of. This restriction is usually followed by limitation of independent thought which can be obtained in several ways including constant exposure to subliminal messages, threat or belief of hegemonic powers being able to read into people's minds and even the implication of undesirable thoughts posing a threat to the individual. And finally, the restriction of freedom could appear in many forms starting from prisons to impenetrable country borders. Besides, it must be pointed out that freedom is not always restricted to physical restraint, it also could come up as the inability to perform certain acts, to say certain things or even read certain books (1).

Another trait of dystopias is a symbol that could be a figurehead or a concept on condition that it is worshipped and glorified by society. This is usually supposed to serve as a unifying force around which the ruling powers build their propaganda while serving as a totem within the society that its values are built upon. For example, "big brother" in *1984* is nothing but a straw boss that is used as the frontman of the party whose mere existence is open to debates. He is given credit for even the most humanly impossible so-called heroic acts, used in every propaganda as a figure of control that is both loved and praised by people through intimidating threat of always watching them. In Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano*, on the other hand, this symbol appears as the concept of "progress" that represents the desire of mankind to build machines in a more and more effective way. In Vonnegut's dystopian society, progress is what everybody strives but it is also the downfall of humanity with the cost of it being super-machines taking over every job mankind can possibly keep. Despite the problems it causes, it is still the main concept that everybody comes together around to the point of looking for a god, a messiah that

“will come among us one day” in a machine because “when he comes, there will be no more suffering on earth”(Vonnegut, 2009: 122). Even the assumption of a god walking among people could be a machine made in the name of progress show us how deep the commitment of the society in *Player Piano* is for progress.

The fourth distinctive quality of dystopias is a society in which citizens feel like they are always under surveillance. As it was mentioned before, one of the most outstanding examples of this trait is observed in Orwell’s *1984*. In the book, the fear of being watched is constant a regularly reminded: “On each landing, opposite the lift shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran” (Orwell, 2000: 3). This pattern of surveillance is emphasized many times in many ways and it creates a panopticon effect on characters which helps keep them in check at all times, even in places that are not humanly possible to observe them, including their own brains. Thus, with the belief that big brother knows everything, they regulate their behaviours constantly which provides those in power with a quite strong hold over people regardless of time and place.

In addition to the matter of surveillance, there is another distinctive trait of dystopias which is picturing citizens of the society living in a dehumanized state. Everybody in the society, unless they are high up on the social ladder, goes through several inhuman treatments may it be their living conditions or the way they are treated. This state is one of the most aspects of dystopia since this despair and unhappiness is what makes a work truly part of the genre with its necessary evils. As it is supposed to be in a dystopia, people live and work under very harsh conditions which could include hunger, lack of proper housing or overworking. However, it must also be noted that it does not necessarily have to be about physical conditions as the citizens could be exposed to heavy psychological pressure or downgrading lifestyles in the name of being “normal” as it is apparent in Huxley’s *Brave New World* in which everybody is forced to take a medicine called soma as long as they did not want to commit social suicide. This pressure also connects to the next attribute of dystopian words that suggest the lack of individuality.

When one considers the very roots of the dystopian genre, it is inevitable to see the element of conforming to uniform expectations as it was the case in its

predecessor, utopias. As in utopias, everyone is supposed to comply by certain rules and ways of living in the name of order; it is the same in dystopias although the motivation of imposing sameness is more sinister in the latter. Frowning upon individuality and pushing people into certain frames of characteristics and lifestyle is what ensures that they are under control and working in the name of power holders. Those who have to act like the rest cannot possibly form unconventional ideologies and if they are not able to form concrete ideas of their own, they cannot go against or help anyone to rebel the system even if they do not like it. Therefore, it is inevitable for hegemonic powers to try and destroy individuality as it brings about free will and a great threat to the system, namely, thought.

Another component of dystopias that go along with all these traits mentioned above is the artificially created illusion of society as a utopian world. As it was the case in the historical development of the genre, dystopian societies are established and ruled with the propagandas and conditionings that suggest they are living in a dream-like world. This could be provided through deception like in *1984* where everyone believed the rest of the world was suffering from several problems including hunger, injustice and death while those in the country of Oceania lived in supposed prosperity with an ever-growing economy and bettering living conditions. The repetitive propagandas and false news engraved the belief that they were in better conditions than the rest of the world, or at least they tried to do so. Another way of creating the illusion of perfect order could be observed in *Brave New World* in which people were drugged and bribed into this belief through youth and better standards of living. Constant reminders of what a beautiful order living them put aside, the past is used as a common enemy and used as a threat that would ruin their perfect system. These claims of living in a utopian society are one of the reasons the society hesitated to ask for more than what they have or go against what is imposed on them (1).

The last distinguished trait of dystopias is about nature. In some of the most well-known works of dystopia, nature is distrusted or completely banished. In these works, nature works against humanity and is one of the destructive threats aimed at people. When this is the case, usually the threat is towards all of humanity rather than a certain group or country. Mainly because of irresponsible usage and extreme contamination, nature finally turns it back against humanity, emerging as a force that

is not nurturing but murdering humans to the point of extinction. This is usually followed by extreme precautions that were had to be taken by people and this brings the story back to the corruption of society. When their lives are under threat, humans become one of the most vicious creatures and naturally dystopian writers have not missed the opportunity of picturing it. This trait could also be pointed out as one of the most feared one among the dystopian fiction because it has such a high probability of becoming reality. Every dystopian work is built upon and emerges from the fear of these scenarios becoming real but the threat of nature stays as the most horrifying thus, the most striking one.

At least some of these characteristics, if not all, are visible in dystopian works and they are used to establish and maintain the order of society represented in the work. It must be also mentioned that some of these characteristics are traits that can also be observed in the utopian genre, the only difference being whether power-holders mean well or not. Such a slight difference as this can take a written work from the utopian genre to dystopia and change the whole mood of the work as well as its characters. The fact that such a little detail can have such an enormous effect on the outcome makes one wonder whether utopias are truly ideal but that is a topic for another discussion. Each of these aforementioned ways manifested themselves in different styles at the hands of different writers, which brings about the necessity of taking a look at different types of dystopia.

2.3 Types of Dystopian Controls

The matter of control is handled within the genre in several ways at the hands of different authors. Although the agent through which the power is established may change, the matter of control and manipulation remains a recurring pattern in all works. In order to be able to have complete rule over people, may it be a small group or the whole world, certain measures that would assure the complete obedience are inevitably needed. The most preferred ways of establishing dominance over society in dystopian works could be grouped into five distinct categories.

The first model of control is done through bureaucratic channels. This type is usually marked with a mess of red tape, pointless rules and inadequate government officials. The whole system of the government seems like a big mess that no one that is not a part of the ruling party can get through which makes it impossible to have any real social progress. In addition, there is usually a very strict class system in

which it is either impossible or at a great price to move up the social ladder. Another distinctive feature of the model is stripping down people's individuality through taking away the most personal features including names, families and even preferences of what to wear. A great example of this can be observed in *Brave New World* in which the concept of family is completely got rid of and people are cloned, not bred and raised in standardized institutions under the strict surveillance of the ruling class. In the book, even people's IQ levels are artificially constructed through adjusting oxygen levels that reach their brains while they are still in the tubes that serve as artificial wombs, and they get separated into social classes in accordance with their abilities, thus determining their fates way before they are born (Toprak and Şar, 2019: 192). For this reason, Huxley's work is a great example of building up a bureaucratic system that assigns people to places since the moment of their birth, building up to deciding who belongs to which class that is separated in concrete impenetrable walls.

Secondly, building authority through social groups that are philosophical or religious is another approach. In this type, religious or philosophical ideologies are used to manipulate people and this is usually imposed through a theocratic government or dictatorship. People tend to follow the ideology imposed on them blindly, either because they are brainwashed and conditioned into believing in them or just because it is too painful to see the truth. Philosophical versions usually include a twisted ideology as it is the case in Stanley Kubrick's *Clockwork Orange* in which the main mood of the society seems to revolve around the idea of "ultraviolence" which emerges as a result of freedom of the people doing whatever they would like to do. The book has been subject to many heated debates since the day it was printed and even more so when its movie was released. Its bold approach to the issue of free will and human nature has struck many people including scholars and politicians alike. In the story, after the main character Alex's capture, he is subjected to a so-called treatment programme by the government the result of which made Alex sick to his stomach in the face of any kind of violence. But the treatment raised further questions regarding the place of the governments within the justice system as well as making one wonder if artificially secured good behaviour can actually be considered good. Therefore Kubrick's work could be pointed out as

another outstanding example of the power of manipulation and control through ideological channels.

Another commonly preferred way of building a dystopian world is through destruction of nature. In these types, nature is either completely destroyed and made unfit for humans to live in or is seen as an enemy that is waiting to take lives. The inability of humans to live in the natural environment usually pushes them into living in artificially created places like domes, cubicles or machines which easily turn out to be faulty or problematic just like its makers. One of the best examples of this type of dystopian world is E.M Forster's story, "The Machine Stops". In this story, the outside world is considered to be deadly for people and they live in their own rooms from which they never have to leave since all their needs are met by the system that is called the machine. Whenever they need something, all they have to do is press some buttons and their demands are instantly met by the completely automated machine, may it be doctor assistance, food or a hot bath. It is repeatedly pointed out in the story that the outer world is deadly for these weak, toothless humans and the ones that are strong in nature are got rid of upon birth. All these weak people have to do is live in their rooms and form ideas. The whole society is formed upon never seeing each other in real life while constantly communicating through the machine to share and form ideas together. The idea of travelling is frowned upon and seen very primitive since it is pointless to go anywhere when you can get whatever you want from where you stand and everywhere else you can go is exactly the same. Even when they do want to travel, they can simply use the airway system which is something considered to be very primitive and unnecessary but just there because it was easier to maintain it than to remove it. Any kind of obstacle that nature may put in front of them during these travels including earthquakes, storms or winds were tamed by humans and any kind of literature or artwork that was written to praise or complain from nature has lost its value. Despite this, fear of the earth's surface is observed on many occasions especially with the main character - Vashti's decision to visit her son on the other side of the world. Even seeing a single star or the dawn seems to terrify people to the bone and considered as an unwelcome experience (Forster, 1909: 1-12). This point of resentment and fear towards the nature in Forster's work poses the perfect instance of the nature-oriented type of dystopian works and carries on the legacy of the ages-old conflict: man vs. nature.

The fourth type of control in the genre is set through harsh economic conditions. In these types, the ruling class consists of business people and those who have money keep the power and maintain it through the sufferings and hunger of the others. Needless to say, these corporations are highly corrupted and leech off the hard work of the less fortunate groups in the society. No matter how hard the people in these lower classes work, they never make any real profit or progress. In this system, the main issues are built upon issues of hunger and inability to meet the most basic human needs and the moral and ethical problems that emerge from them. One of the most outstanding examples of this issue is undoubtedly Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games*. As Rena Nyman explains:

The Hunger Games features several themes of dystopia, the most prominent likely being the metonymy bread and circuses (from Latin panem et circenses, which is referenced in the name of the country in the series), a concept originating in ancient Rome describing government control via the providing of enough food and entertainment for the people to be content in passive obedience (1).

Collins forms her own version of dystopia by bringing out the issue of hunger and poor economy. In the book, the country is divided into districts each of which has its own place within the economy in accordance with what is produced in the area. Most of these districts are full of people dying from overwork and hunger, while the power holders are living in prosperity. The order is usually provided through armed forces although most of the citizens are usually too tired and too poor to go anywhere else. Therefore, Collins's work stands out as the perfect example of establishing a nightmarish system through the manipulation of the economy.

In conclusion, there are more than one ways of practising power over society in dystopian works. Each of them forms a different type of misery in its own way and on several occasions, more than one of these types can be observed in the same work. They shape the way the story unfolds and set the scene and the background for the dystopian world. However, no matter what way of control is preferred by the author, there is always an exception in which these control mechanisms don't work and this directly leads us to the matter of protagonists in the genre.

2.4 Protagonists in Dystopia

In a dystopian setting, the protagonist usually has an extremely important role in the conditions of the system. Dystopias are formed to warn people as to what could happen to the society given the right circumstances or at least to show them the

possible extents of humankind's cruelty, greed, ignorance and obedience. Even though these primary aims are important, they merely scratch the surface of the true aim of dystopias. As to another aim of the dystopian writer, the protagonist holds the utmost important role in achieving it. This aim usually turns out to be turning the order of the society upside down, or creating great conflict within their social environment or at least in literary circles (Chung, 2011: "Dystopias").

Protagonists of the dystopian genre usually stand out with several recurring traits. The first one of these is feeling trapped within their lives. Many protagonists in the genre tend to see themselves stuck within the system and they struggle to at least get out of it, if not completely destroy it. Besides serving as the backbone of the plot, this trait goes hand in hand with the poststructuralist understanding that standardized ways of manipulation for masses do not always work out because these "universal" approaches to human psychology tend to ignore the discourse every individual is living in. This destroys the structuralist claim that suggests any human behaviour can be pre-calculated and controlled. Probably the most outstanding example of this situation is observed in the character of Winston Smith in Orwell's *1984*. Winston Smith is a lonely man who is working at an average job in the country of Oceania in which he could consider himself lucky for what he has compared to "proles" who form the lowest class of the society and completely excluded from any privileges any party member might have. Although he is a member of the party, Smith does not receive much and is subject to many limitations and restrictions that are set by the party. Within this system, he struggles with chronic little health problems like the itchy swollen ulcer on his leg which later turns out to be mostly psychological after he yanks himself out of the orderly life he was living and throws himself to the arms of a rebellious woman, Julia. Throughout the book, Smith's struggle with abiding the rules and his hate towards the system can be observed. Any kind of getaway or any little treat of some private time with Julia seems to only strengthen these feelings up until his capture. He finds these little rebellions as a hope for the change of the system and seems to improve his health greatly. Although he fails to fulfil his aim of seeing a better future in the end, he stands as one of the best examples of dissatisfaction and not yielding to the system's manipulations.

Another trait of dystopian protagonists which is not that far from the first one is questioning the existing social and political systems. The protagonist tends to

serve as the critic of the system and conveys their feelings about it with the help of the first-person point of view which is usually the preferred way of narrating in dystopian novels. Although Orwell's Winston Smith is again a more direct an outstanding example of the issue, there is another character that does this in the other way round, through constant repetition of the admiration for the system and his wishes for people to be more like the machines: D-503 in Zamyatin's *We*. D-503 is an architect that lives and sees the world through numbers, obsessed with their balance and certainty at least until he gets thrown off balance upon meeting I-330. His serious obsession with rationality and science goes to the point of irritating the reader which makes it easier to understand how, in reality, he is the irrational one. Zamyatin manages to picture the cruelty of the system and wrongdoings of the Well-Doer through the microcosm of D-503's point of view. Therefore, it is possible to say that Zamyatin has chosen a more concrete but longer way around in order to criticise the system itself.

The third type of protagonists is the one that believes something is seriously wrong with society itself. Here, the protagonist goes for criticising the society rather than putting the blame on hegemonic powers that rule it. In this type, the main aim could be pointed out as how people themselves are able to corrupt the way of living and turn their world into a nightmarish one. In *Fahrenheit 451*, we see a society that holds relatively fair elections and people choosing their own way of living rather than someone imposing on them. A society in which everybody lives in fireproof houses, Montag is a fireman with an odd job description. They have no house fires to put down, instead, they set the houses that contain books on fire. Although this system is regulated by the government, it is the people who report each other to the firemen for keeping books in their houses. In this frenzy, Montag takes interest in the books he is supposed to burn away and is reported by his own wife for keeping them in their house. He burns his own house with a somewhat joy since he is able to destroy the corrupt modern-day "senseless problems" including parlour television screens that his wife loved so much (Bradbury, 2013: 137). Throughout the book, his hate for the senseless hustle of their lives visibly bothers him, which causes him to flip out in the end. In addition to all this hate, with the harassment of fireman Captain Beatty, Montag sets him on fire and goes off to find the other book people. As it

turns out later, Montag did the right choice because the insane society he used to live in destroys itself with its corruption.

All these aspects mentioned above are basic traits of dystopian protagonists that seem to emerge in almost every example of the genre. It must be noted that more than one characteristics can be true for a protagonist while there might be cases that none of them is. Nonetheless, all these traits come together to form the world of dystopian fiction. As to motivation behind creating these fictional worlds of chaos and misery, one can take a look at what Neil Gaiman has to say about it as he stated in the introduction he has written for 2018 edition of *Fahrenheit 451*:

Sometimes writers write about a world that does not yet exist. We do it for a hundred reasons. (Because it's good to look forward, not back. Because we need to illuminate a path we hope or we fear humanity will take. Because the world of the future seems more enticing or more interesting than the world of today. Because we need to warn you. To encourage. To examine. To imagine.) The reasons for writing about the day after tomorrow, and all the tomorrows that follow it, are as many and as varied as the people writing (...) People think—wrongly—that speculative fiction is about predicting the future, but it isn't; or if it is, it tends to do a rotten job of it. Futures are huge things that come with many elements and a billion variables, and the human race has a habit of listening to predictions for what the future will bring and then doing something quite different. What speculative fiction is really good at is not the future but the present—taking an aspect of it that troubles or is dangerous, and extending and extrapolating that aspect into something that allows the people of that time to see what they are doing from a different angle and from a different place. It's cautionary. (“Introduction”)

Although the motivation behind writing a dystopian novel has a great variety, its striking effect on readers remains stable. All these great writers have had their own version of the completely apocalyptic world revolving around a few common themes one of which is the tendency of people being manipulated easily. Even though these horrifying worlds tend to leave their readers in shock and despair, they also function as reminders of humanity's weak points, allowing us to keep them in check. One of the weakest points of humankind which leaves us open for being directed towards our doom is language and the next chapter of this thesis will focus upon the usage of this asset for this purpose through examples of two great dystopian novels from two different regions that are culturally worlds apart: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood on the North American front and *The Last Island* by Zülfi Livaneli as the Turkish counterpart.

3. ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE AS A TOOL FOR MANIPULATION IN TWO DYSTOPIAN NOVELS

As utopias emerged in order to show people that the current limitations and understandings established in the society are not ultimate and is open to change in a better way, dystopias took on the role of showing that the same kind of change is possible in the opposite direction as well. In order to dire these warnings, dystopias choose to form a fictive but prophetic picturing of the future. To be able to successfully portray this kind of believable and consistent scenario, one of the main aspects that one would expect to be studied is the language since it is the perfect means of reflecting the ideology of that projected future. Language is a strong means to power through which people can be controlled not only in terms of their actions but also in terms of the way they form their thoughts. Beauchamp assesses this situation in a very effective manner:

Two problems, then, confront the dystopian novelist with regard to language: to convey the stultifying effect that the rigidly controlled society would have on how its citizens think and speak, and to create an imaginatively valid language reflecting the specific social and technological realities of the projected future. (Beauchamp, 1974: 464)

This challenge, however, did not go unnoticed by Orwell, since the language in Oceania is in a state of constant change and shrinking in *1984*. Even though the language of the characters has not changed as dramatically, the state is putting in never-ending efforts to create a language that future citizens of the society will use. Thus, it could easily be claimed that Orwell has found a way of reflecting that the changes in the ideology and lifestyle of the people would affect the language itself sooner or later (466). Although completely formulating ways of manipulating people through language is not possible as some structuralists might suggest, its importance in the issue is undeniable. One could go as far as stating that dystopia as a genre is full of examples as to which structuralists are wrong while poststructuralists got it closer to the truth. As it was mentioned before, in most of the examples from the genre, there is a hegemonic power which rules and controls people through an established system and even in some cases with brute force. However, one of the most recurring patterns is that the ruling class establishes rule over people through systematic brainwashing and there is always a protagonist who does not bow down to this, sees all kinds of things that are wrong with the system and goes unaffected by those manipulations. Even the existence of a horrifying dictatorship, whether it be in

a small community or worldwide, could supposedly suggest the righteousness of structuralists since it means exposing everyone to the same propaganda and getting what they want out of it. And yet, as it was mentioned in the previous section, there is the recurring variable of a protagonist who does not abide by their rules and sees through this artful management which is the exact point the poststructuralist perspective comes in. Poststructuralists believe that all those codes that are supposed to have the same kind of calculated effect on people are useless in the face of several variables including people's backgrounds, conditions they are living in and even their characteristic traits. Therefore, dystopias do give people hope in the face of absolute oppression while managing to warn and scare everyone out of their wits at the same time. Hence, in the following section, two different instances of these hellish scenarios will be studied in regard to the handling of language in an attempt to hold people in check.

3.1 *The Handmaid's Tale*

Following the path Orwell has laid out, Atwood shows similar concerns in regards to totalitarian control over the people in the near future and successfully portrays it in her feminist dystopian work, *The Handmaid's Tale*. In the novel, the theocratic rule of Gilead controls every aspect of human life with its constant supervision provided through both peer pressure and undercover agents. Each individual basically has two options in this society: either complete obedience or their doom. Taking place in the near future in which the majority of the population is unable to have babies, a group of religious radicals takes over society through a coup. Afterwards, a new order is founded and it does not give the citizens of the country much of a choice but to abide by the rules that are set by them. In the new arrangement, the citizens are separated into groups, each with its own role to play. The *commanders* form the top of this pyramid and they lead a seriously twisted system to the point of legitimizing rape in the name of the continuation of human species. Their power is ensured by armed forces, namely, *Guardians of the faith* as well as the *Eyes* who are undercover agents responsible for reporting any unwanted behaviours among the citizens. Second to the commanders are the *Angels* that are military men serving in the front lines in opposition to the guardians of the faith that serve in the cities for routine policing. Women, on the other hand, have a much lower and detailed type of categorizing among them. On top of this part of the food chain

stand the wives of the commanders who are served by *Marthas* as their housekeepers and the *Handmaids*, if they are incapable of having children themselves. Relinquished of their rights as human beings, handmaids are one of the groups that are most oppressed in this order and they are responsible for bearing children of high-class families that cannot naturally have children on their own. In this male-oriented society, it is considered heresy to claim a man is sterile and it is always the women's fault if a couple cannot have babies hence their mentality of using other fertile women to bear babies. Econowives, on the other hand, are responsible for fulfilling the Handmaids', Marthas' and Wives' at the same time since they are married off to the lower-ranking man. At the bottom of the food chain is the *unwomen* who are mostly excluded from the society for being sterile, unmarried, feminist, and homosexual or even a nun. Along with the handmaids who are incapable of having children after three different assignments, they are usually sent off to the colonies to work in inhumane conditions since they do not comply with the strict gender norms of Gilead. The last group of women are the *Aunts* and they have a rather high ranking in the society as they are responsible for overseeing, educating and overseeing the births of the handmaids.

3.1.1 Dystopian Elements in *The Handmaid's Tale*

As to why this novel is considered to be a dystopia, other than its obviously frightening setting and the mood, there are several elements that the novel complies with the specific characteristics of the genre. The first element that is observed in the novel is the effective and repetitive usage of propagandas. Since Atwood chooses to use Offred's first-person narrative, most of the propagandas are observed through the teachings of Aunt Lydia. On several occasions, we see Offred remembering her lectures, which are meant to shape her identity as a handmaid:

He isn't supposed to speak to me. Of course, some of them will try, said Aunt Lydia. All flesh is weak. All flesh is grass; I corrected her in my head. They can't help it, she said, God made them that way but He did not make you that way. He made you different. It's up to you to set the boundaries. Later you will be thanked. (Atwood,2017: 55)

Since not many people are allowed to interact with handmaids, most of Offred's- and therefore the reader's- impressions and the knowledge about the order of the society she is living in is provided by Aunt Lydia and others responsible for her education in Red Center. Aunt Lydia is a devoted member of the system and she

uses her position to thoroughly impose its propaganda onto the handmaids. However, she is not the only source of propaganda in the novel. The specific parts from the bible, especially the ones that are chosen to be read before the ceremonies are also repeated on several occasions, putting forward the grimness of the situation while solidifying the handmaid system they are using: “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. Give me children or else I die. Am I in God’s stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? Behold my maid Bilhah. She shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her” (99). These words are taken directly from the bible and used as a justification of the ceremonies they are conducting to impregnate the handmaids, and are meant to be read before each ceremony, even further engraving what they are doing into everybody’s minds.

The second dystopian element observed in the novel is the restriction of information, independent thought and freedom. “Knowing was a temptation. What you don’t know won’t tempt you, Aunt Lydia used to say” (144). All kinds of scientific knowledge that do not comply with the values of Gilead are considered heretic and most of them are punishable by death. What’s more, many sources of information including magazines, newspapers and books are under the strict surveillance of the government and are accessible to only a selected few. Although this aspect is mostly applied to women within this system, there are also obvious indications that the media is manipulated, the news is artificially manufactured and even an implication of a thought that goes against the rules of Gilead is deadly to anyone that manifests it. “We lived, as usual by ignoring. Ignoring isn’t the same as ignorance; you have to work at it” (42). Each and every individual in the society is forced to follow their duties and act in accordance with what they are supposed to do. It is not only about how they behave or what they know, what they think also carries great importance. The fact that Atwood managed to grasp the strong bond between freedom and knowledge puts forward her great understanding of power and rule over people which makes her an outstanding dystopian writer. As the best way to explain the relationship between power and knowledge that Atwood so skilfully crafted and to answer the question of why knowledge is withheld from people, one must turn to Foucault:

We should admit that power produces knowledge; that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. (Foucault, 1995: 27)

Thus, it is clear that in order to keep people in check and have control over them it is necessary to be the ones to have the knowledge and that is exactly what the government of Gilead does since women are not allowed to read anything or have any sorts of knowledge as to what is really going on around them. Compared to these heavy limitations on thought, physical restrictions imposed on them seem almost trivial, after all, “a rat is free to go anywhere, as long as it stays inside the maze” (Atwood, 2017: 121).

In addition to limitations over several types of freedom and the propaganda, *The Handmaid's Tale* counterpoises yet another aspect of the dystopian genre which is attaching importance to a concept to the point of obsession. The main concept that is the whole system of Gilead is built upon could be pointed out as producing children. The motivation to have more children affects every aspect of life in Gilead, hence the necessity of forming the handmaid system and even forming other social groups like Aunts to ensure the system's maintenance. Every individual in the society is responsible for having or helping raise children if. In a world that has gotten pretty unusual to see a healthy child is born, every child is considered to be extremely precious, abortions are out of the question, homosexuality is considered as gender treachery and no woman has an option but try to give birth if she can. “Lots of women do it,” he goes on. ‘You want a baby, don't you?’ ‘Yes’, I say. It's true, and I don't ask why because I know. *Give me children or else I die*. There is more than one meaning to it”(45). Despite this obsession being the centre of the Republic of Gilead, it is not the only concept that is worshipped. Religion is the other strong element that hangs above this system and every action the government takes is legitimized through some supposed quotations from the Bible. Anything that they think must be taken from the Bible becomes the law in the country and it is in every aspect of people's lives. Any piece of memory that Offred narrates about something that has happened in the Center includes some Biblical context, one way or the other. “Not every Commander has a Handmaid: some of their Wives have children. *From each*, says the slogan, *according to her ability; to each according to his needs*. We recited that three times, after dessert. It was from the Bible, or so they said” (127).

However, it must be also noted that these references are twisted manipulated and changed most of the time and for Offred, there is no telling which one is true since women are not allowed to read anymore.

The third dystopian trait in the novel that could easily be pointed out is the matter of constant surveillance. Every character in the book has to act in a certain way and they are living under the constant fear of being caught in an undesirable situation, saying something that they are not supposed to although the Handmaids feel this pressure the most. This surveillance is provided through several channels in Gilead including miked places or the Eyes who are undercover agents responsible for reporting any type of unwanted behaviour. Atwood provides the reader with the chance of witnessing this panopticon way of living through Offred's fears while trying to meet up with Moira and trying to communicate with Ofglen. The main source of her anxiety which occasionally builds up to the point of paranoia is the fear of getting caught by Eyes and being subjected to "Salvagings" (Reesman, 1991: 12). Offred takes this threat very seriously, as she should, and tries to act cautious, at least most of the time. "Perhaps it was a test, to see what I would do. Perhaps he is an Eye"(Atwood, 2017: 28). This constant fear creates the panopticon effect and keeps everybody in check at all times.

The fourth feature that proves the novel is an incontrovertible dystopia is the presence of the characters that are living in a dehumanized state. Although Commanders and their families as the highest-ranking members of the society have it easy, there are many others who have to go through inhumane conditions. The Handmaids, obviously, are one of those who have it the worst with their strictly controlled lives and falsely legitimized oppression upon them. They are forced to give birth to children they are not allowed to keep, go through rape "ceremonies" every month, are not allowed to even take a step outside on their own, and even what they wear is determined by rules and not up to them. The only aspect of them that the society cares about is their fertility and nothing else: "Remember, said Aunt Lydia, for our purposes your feet and your hands are not essential" (68). As this quotation suggests, they do not hesitate to severely punish the handmaids as long as what they do does not hurt their productivity. However, Handmaids are not the only ones who are suffering from the rule of Gilead. While it is true that there are severe punishment and merciless treatments for anyone who breaks the rules, there are a few groups

who are constantly suffering from inhumane treatment. The most outstanding group out of those would be the Unwomen, living in the colonies. Colonies are where people are put to work to “clean up” and while what Unwomen are doing there is called work, in reality, it turns out to be nothing but a slow execution:

In the Colonies, they spend their time cleaning up. They're very clean-minded these days. Sometimes it's just bodies, after a battle. The ones in city ghettos are the worst, they're left around longer, they get rottener. This bunch doesn't like dead bodies lying around, they're afraid of a plague or something. So the women in the Colonies there do the burning. The other Colonies are worse, though, the toxic dumps and the radiation spills. They figure you've got three years maximum, at those before your nose falls off and your skin pulls away like rubber gloves. They don't bother to feed you much or give you protective clothing or anything, it's cheaper not to. Anyway, they're mostly people they want to get rid of. They say there're other Colonies, not so bad, where they do agriculture: cotton and tomatoes and all that. But those weren't the ones they showed me the movie about(183).

As it can be observed in the quotation above, Unwomen working in the colonies are subjected to every kind of inhumane treatment possible including hunger, poisoning, working till death and doing the dirtiest work for nothing in return. The government also apparently does not hesitate to use them as a way of threatening others into being in their best behaviour.

Uniformity is another dystopian quality that is observed in the novel as every individual has to abide by the rules of their own class, which are set for them by the government in the name of order. These rules range from which job they take to what colour of clothing they will wear. As an illustration, Wives are supposed to wear blue clothes; they are responsible for the maintenance of the household and take on little chores like gardening or knitting scarves for the Angels and so on. Similarly, Marthas wear dull green dresses and are responsible for doing household chores. Each group of the nation is assigned with uniformed tasks and they act within the same codes of behaviour in every corner of the country. These coding and groupings serve a very essential purpose: it makes everyone expendable, they could be switched with someone else as soon as there is a problem and moreover, it eradicates the individuality. Therefore, this homogeneity they are trying so hard to achieve is an essential part of maintaining a forceful totalitarian rule and Atwood definitely does not miss this point.

Yet another element on the list of dystopian traits in Atwood's novel could be pointed out as the illusion of a utopian dream-like society. It is repeatedly claimed in

the novel, especially by the Aunts, that the brand new Republic of Gilead is a perfect place for people to live in and it is this exact system that would provide the maintenance of the new generations in a healthy way even though they never care to mention the lack of basic human rights:

Now we walk along the same street, in red pairs, and no man shouts obscenities at us, speaks to us, touches us. No one whistles. "There is more than one kind of freedom," said Aunt Lydia. "Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from. Don't underrate it." (34)

It is quite clear that Offred has also been heavily exposed to these propagandas and it seeps through her ideas about the new clean streets, lack of catcallers. What's more, Aunt Lydia also claims that they were "a society dying of too much choice" (34). This constant propaganda claiming that they are living in an ideal social order is repeated several times in the work and it is not only full of assumptions about how ideal current state of the society is despite all the suffering but also declare that it will only get better for the following generations:

You are a transitional generation, said Aunt Lydia. It is hardest for you. We know the sacrifices you are being expected to make. It is hard when men revile you. For the ones who come after you, it will be easier. They will accept their duties with willing hearts. (171)

As can be seen from the quotation above, the propaganda of such an ideal order they are living in and that everything will keep going, in the same way, is imposed on them. Their sufferings are pictured in a heroic way and served them as a great thing to do just so that nobody could even imagine having it in another way.

The last and one of the most outstanding dystopian elements observed in the work is the betrayal of nature. In Atwood's universe, with the help of the humans, nature is destroyed; full of toxic waste and the air is infected because of constant nuclear accidents which resulted in the lowest fertility rates in human history. The damaged nature is blamed for low fertility rates, yet, it was taken out on women and this situation helped the government forge and sell this new system to the citizens. Mother Nature turning its back on humankind is not an uncommon theme among dystopias but rather than dealing with what actually happened to nature, Atwood chose to focus on the main outcome of it. As Indu stated:

Nature in Gilead is oppressed due to the repeated use of pesticides and nuclear accidents, where men rape and destroy living nature and women for their own sake. Likewise, most women in Gilead are infertile after repeated exposure to nuclear waste, pesticides and leakages from chemical weapons(...). Often the offspring born were deformed ones due to the ecological degeneration. The birth rate is dangerously low among the ruling elite. And with a view to increasing the population fertile women are

taken to camps and trained to become handmaids. Male infertility is unthinkable in that society. (Indu, 2013:7)

Therefore, it is possible to say that nature is used merely as a means to an end but it must be also pointed out that it does not mean it is any less important element in the novel. It serves as one of the pillars upon which the story is built since if the healthy childbirth rates did not go down, there would be no need for any handmaids or no punishment for those who refused to reproduce.

3.1.2 Types of Dystopian controls in *The Handmaid's Tale*

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, in accordance with the other examples of the genre, the issue of control is handled in several ways and Atwood employs almost every way of establishing authority that is observed in dystopian works. Among the four ways of establishing authority mentioned before in this thesis, the first and one of the most outstanding ones is bureaucratic channels. The book offers the perfect example for this control system observed in also many other examples of the genre. Republic of Gilead consists of all elements found in this type: pointless rules, inadequate government officials, red tapes. Although it is the case for most of the rules in this country, some of the rules specifically come forward as having no meaning or serving any purpose other than ensuring the current government's place in power. On top of this, these rules mostly consist of prohibitions and bans rather than bringing forward any improvements. For instance, people are not allowed to get married without a throughout investigation on both parties and special permissions, women are not allowed to read, and anything outside the arranged ways of speaking is frowned upon. Inadequate government officials, on the other hand, are ruling all over the country. Although limited because of the way the novel was constructed through the first-person narrative of a Handmaid, the Commanders are mostly selfish and by no means qualified to be on top of the society. Their little expeditions to hotels with sex workers inside or Offred's commanders little gifts are great examples that shows how even the rulers of Gilead fail to follow the rules they created: "He must have come by this [dress] in the same way he came by the magazines, not honestly: it reeks of black market"(Atwood, 2017: 242). All these little glimpses into things people do behind closed curtains come together to form a picture of perfect corruption. Bureaucracy holds a very important place in the Republic of Gilead and it constitutes the essence of its rule and horror.

The second model of control observed in the novel is a social group which helps build authority. In Gilead's case, these are religious-based extremists who took over the country through a coup and formed a theocratic government. In this case, religion forms the basis of their arguments and although on the surface they were by no means the majority at first, they forcefully seized the power and transformed society by creating new groups and dividing it in accordance with their beliefs. People are expected to abide by their rules and those who fall out of desired behaviour are immediately labelled as heretics and most of the time, go missing. For this reason, this social group did not only take over the rule of the country, it also altered the fabric of the whole society. Their extremism is reflected in every part of the system and their distrust towards those who do not think alike is a reflection of "the party" in Orwell's *1984*. However, as opposed to the party they take religion as their base of philosophy and the concepts like gender equality and nationalism do not exist for them.

The third system which is pointed out as the destruction of nature is not something Gilead caused but it is rather something that triggered the rise of it. In the book, nature is full of toxic waste and many other problems caused by the prior irresponsible treatment towards it, high infertility rates being one of them. As it is the case in many other dystopian works, these toxic areas pose a great threat to humankind and used as a means of both intimidation and punishment for the country's citizens. Heretics, gender traitors and any other unwanted group of labelled people are sent to these sites to clear them up, simply in the place of a direct death sentence. In addition to this, the problem of the fertility rates dropping to a minimum apparently threw people over the edge and caused the creation of the handmaid system, just for the sake of being able to breed. Even though there are many individualistic and selfish motivations behind wanting to have children one way or another, the system itself requires a means of pushing people to reproduce so that the humankind itself could continue to exist. All these issues stand out as the classical destruction of the nature theme within the novel, and they show how the problems with nature are capable of changing the whole structure of the way people lives. However, it must be noted that in this particular case it is not the dystopic system that destroys nature but it is the decaying of nature that causes the birth of a dystopic system.

The fourth and the last way of establishing control is the economy. As it is the case in not only in dystopian works but in every work that is not utopian or even the real-life itself, the power holders are also in control of the money and wealth. Most of the resources are centred on the very upper class of the society while the rest is living in poverty and hunger. In *the Handmaid's Tale*, Commanders and their families live prosperous lives even though it is not the most glorious ones in existence. The rationing and coupon system is applied all over the country but it is no secret that they occasionally get special treatment:

“A chicken,” She says, almost with delight.

“Tall”, says Rita “ but bony. You should speak up,” she says to me, looking directly at me for the first time. “Ain’t like you’re common.” She means the Commander’s rank.
(58)

In addition to these differences, Econopeople, as their name suggests, work long hours and have very limited incomes. It is close to impossible for them to climb up the social ladder and have anything better than the little they already have. Econowives have to carry out all the tasks that are distributed among three people in Commanders houses; Wives, Marthas and Handmaids, hence their striped clothes in blue, green and red. In addition to Econopeople, there are also those in the colonies, who have it much worse with inhumane working conditions and no economic independence whatsoever. All these considered, economy also plays a great part in the rule of Gilead. People are not capable of being economically independent and this extends the control of the government over their lives.

All these different means of control come together and are heavily employed in the novel to display how the rule over people is established in the country of Gilead. Disregarding more indirect ways like subconscious manipulations, these ways have a more direct and threatening effect on people with each one of them in their own ways.

3.1.3 Language in *the Handmaid's Tale*

To the structuralists’ dismay, in the world we are living in, which is full of people coming from different socio-cultural backgrounds, it may not be possible to calculate how they are going to react to certain situations, what they will think or what they are going to say next on their own, but it is definitely possible to force them into staying inside certain boundaries of these reactions with the help of a little oppression and threat. Atwood is most definitely aware of this and she does not

hesitate to reflect this onto her Republic of Gilead. Undoubtedly there are many ways to establish control over the people including the army, police or even torture but one of them usually goes overlooked: language. In opposition to the physical threats of the armed forces, language creates a much scarier dominance which is the dominance over the thought. Although this claim seems to go hand in hand with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, there is much more to it than that. The names that are used for places affect people's perception of those places, and the honorifics of the people change the way others approach them and a certain way of speaking can manipulate what one feels about them. This is exactly why rulers use language to distinguish themselves from others while subduing them so that they can maintain and even strengthen their place and the Republic of Gilead is no different. As Pelliccio states:

Atwood uses word choice and sentence structure in *The Handmaid's Tale* to expose that the shocking structures of Gileadean society were built upon foundations of gender inequality found in the authoritative language of modern American culture. The repercussions of gendered language are taken to the extreme in her dystopian novel, implying that the sexist structure of Gilead that seems so different and distant came out of the oppressive language modern Americans accept and use every day. By skimming over Atwood's paragraph structure and use of punctuation or failing to understand the narrator Offred's word choice and puns, the reader proves that people tend to readily accept potentially sexist and controlling language because much of it goes unnoticed. (Pelliccio, 2019: Language of Oppression)

Therefore, it is possible to say that among all the ways of oppression, with its subtlety and commonness, language is one of the most dangerous ones. It is embedded into daily life which usually makes it untraceable; however, Atwood outstandingly reflects that in her work in several ways including the absence of freedom of speech, common usage of religious language, keywords and phrases and even Offred's choice of words. The first one of these methods which is the lack of freedom of speech is limited to only some of the characters belonging to certain groups. Commanders and their Wives, for instance, are not as restricted in terms of the language they use and this provides them with a certain amount of power in a society in which some individuals have to watch out what they say at the risk of their lives. Nevertheless, there are numerous ways of speech that are forbidden to everyone:

Sometimes I sing to myself, in my head; something lugubrious, mournful, Presbyterian:
Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
Could save a wretch like me,
Who once was lost, but now am found
Was bound, but now am free

I don't know if the words are right. I can't remember. Such songs are not sung anymore in public, especially the ones that use words like free. They are considered too dangerous. They belong to outlawed sects. (Atwood, 2017: 64)

Songs that do not comply with the theocratic atmosphere of Gilead are obviously considered to be dangerous and therefore forbidden by the government. In an order that even a song that implies freedom and denounces slavery is considered dangerous must reflect how fragile that system actually is. But that does not change the fact that ruling class, no matter how small in numbers they are compared to the ones they rule over, is able to limit even the choice of songs people sing and announce those who do as outlawed. This is one of their biggest tools of establishing dominance and they cannot afford to have anything that does not adhere to their system and rules. The concepts they do not accept and conflict with them cannot exist, not even in words.

Religious language is another repeatedly used apparatus on the way of forming the language in the Republic of Gilead. The religious phrases are used as a means of cultivating the theocratic dictatorship even though only certain people are forced to use it as a part of daily language. The most outstanding one of these groups is undoubtedly the Handmaids. They are pushed to follow certain dialogue patterns and even the way they greet each other is prescribed: “‘Blessed be the fruit,’ she says to me, the accepted greeting among us. ‘May the Lord open,’ I answer, the accepted response” (29). Throughout the novel, it is repeatedly shown that Offred is very careful about her choice of words with the fear of punishment. This kind of limitation marks the borders of what one can do on a stone and it undoubtedly creates the atmosphere of fear and alienation that is needed to keep the Handmaids in check. Also, repeating what they have been taught as a way of speaking could easily create the same effect on anyone; after a while, they just become mindless puppets of the rulers without any ideas or desires of their own. When they are not allowed to utter a certain group of words, after a while it starts feeling pointless to think about those concepts and eventually they stop thinking about it altogether. At least, that is what the power holder would like to believe in. However, the influence of religion over language is not limited to certain phrases. It is also observed in many other areas including names. For example, “Martha” is a direct reference to Bible story in which Jesus visits two sisters, Martha and Mary. In the story, Martha is the hardworking and caring sister who takes on the responsibilities of the household.

(*Bible Study Tools*,1985: Luke 10:38-42). Therefore, women who are responsible for domestic help are named after the said sister, conveying the message that serving the house is what they are supposed to do while also giving them a saint-like identity for the devotion expected from them. Naming the group as Marthas, like Handmaids, Angels or even Jeezebels, provides the government with the ability to take away the feelings of identity from the individuals, turning them into perfect citizens of the state. Especially the Handmaids who lose their birth-given name and called after their Commanders' first name, is even more effective than just belonging to a group with a certain name. They take their commanders' first names preceded by "of" at the beginning which indicates ownership as it is the case with the name "Offred". Thus, Offred is belonging of her commander, Fred, the same way other Handmaids belong to their commanders. They are not allowed to use their own names, hence they cannot possibly be their old selves anymore, their identities are defined by those superior to them. Moving from this example, one can easily to put forward that even these names provide the government with power.

In addition to these attributes of the language that are forced on the citizens by the government, there are also the variables of the language that they use with each other and that causes waverings in the power balances both in between them and in the environment they are living in. Aunts are one of the best examples of this issue since they both represent the authority over handmaids but they are also women who are automatically inferior to men at the same time. Especially Aunt Lydia keeps showing up in Offred's memories with her propaganda as she was the one responsible for Offred's education. She has a certain authority over the Handmaids and is allowed to dictating them even about their feelings: "'Love' said Aunt Lydia with distaste. 'Do not let me catch you at it. No mooning and June-ing around here, girls'. Wagging her finger at us. 'Love is not the point'" (Atwood, 2017: 232). Aunts can take any concept, good or bad and promote it the way they want. A truly positive concept like love can be turned into something distasteful with their judgemental and threatening approach towards it hence it could easily be claimed that they are in charge of brainwashing the Handmaids with their propaganda. As Offred points out: "We are hers to define. We must suffer her adjectives (114)". Aunts are able to call them whatever they want, and they order them around however they like. It must be also noted that this way of manipulating them with language is merely an alternative

to their threats and torture. However, even a group as fanatic as the Aunts tend to discriminate between the Handmaids. They are supposed to treat and educate all of them equally and make them identical to each other if possible so that they would fit in their roles in the system. But they occasionally take a different approach as it was the case with Janine and Aunt Lydia when she broke the news about Moira's escape to ask Janine if she knew anything about it. By sharing the details of her escape, Aunt Lydia gives Janine a kind of power, the power of knowledge which Janine shares with other girls in the Red Center. This little demerit affects the power balance established by knowledge or lack thereof between Handmaids and Aunts.

Moira and Offred, on the other hand, have a different type of relationship between them, hence the different language they use towards each other. Close friends from "before", Offred and Moira meet at the Red Center again and start on a ritual of secret meetings held in bathrooms, from stall to stall which, although in secret, gives them a certain amount of power with their usage of a much freer language between them and makes them feel like in control of at least a little part of their lives (83). This little illusion of freedom and power is actually what makes them go through their lives. In addition, after her assignment to the Commander's house, Offred gets the same kind of break during her little scrabble sessions with the commander. She cherishes every minute of these games and sees them as a little break from the misery she lives in: "I hold the glossy counters with their smooth edges, finger the letters. The feeling is voluptuous. This is freedom, an eye blink of it (...). What a luxury" (149). This little game of scrabble means a lot to Offred considering her position in a society in which she is not allowed to read or write. Precisely for this reason, this could be interpreted as a share of power between the Commander and Offred since what they are doing is strictly forbidden. They are doing something they are not allowed to. They became each other's confidants at the risk of their lives which means now Offred has some power or at least an ace in the hole against the Commander.

Among all these things, the strongest language element that affects the meaning in the whole novel is, of course, Offred's narration. Although her narration does not have any effect on the story itself, it changes the perception of the reader completely. Also, it allows the reader with a chance of comparing and contrasting the differences between life before Gilead and after. While her conversations with those

around her on a daily basis present an example for the current state of the society, her memories and little breaks with Moira gives the reader a glimpse into what it was like before this totalitarian rule took over. She effectively points out and plays with certain words to demonstrate the power of the theocratic government of Gilead. “I wait, for the household to assemble. *Household*: that is what we are. The Commander is the head of the household. The house is what he holds. To have and to hold, till death do us part”(91). As it can be observed in this quotation, Atwood chooses to define the power and subversion in the smallest unit of the society, a household, through the subjective lens of Offred’s narrative and uses this lack of objectivity to her advantage. She draws the focus upon commonly used words, digging into their actual roots and pointing out their patriarchal power-related sub-meanings and how actually they are used and internalized in the current state of English language (Pelliccio, 2019: “Language of Oppression”).

Overall, through creating a comparison in between pre-Gileadean and Gileadean language through Offred’s memories and current experiences, Atwood shows us not only how changes in the language affects the whole world of thought and manipulates people, but also how the already-existing male-oriented language grows people accustomed to male domination and makes such a transition as Gilead’s much smoother. In other words,

Even in pre-Gilead America, women were prepared to have their information filtered through men in an accepted social structure because of male control and domination of language. There are certain situations women could not describe for lack of words which relates to the handmaids being unable to speak to each other beyond rehearsed pleasantries. In both systems, language is a vehicle that strips power from women (“Language of Oppression”).

To have a more thorough look into the similarities and differences between the two versions of the language, one must start by looking into what the language was actually like in Pre-Gileadean society. One of the most outstanding differences is that swear words and a foul language were commonly used: “Moira laughed. Listen to us, she said. Shit. We sound like your mother” (Atwood, 2017: 181). As well as this free usage of curse words, conversations are quite informal unlike the prescribed dialogues of the Gilead. Not unlike our society today, every individual was encouraged to use their freedom of speech. The condition in the Gileadean society, however, is quite different. The reader is able to make the comparison in between with Offred’s memories and interpretations in the book as well as the language she is

pushed to use as a Handmaid. In the country of Gilead, people are not able to speak their minds freely nor can they use any way they like to express themselves. Especially in the more supervised groups, conversations tend to revolve around biblical references and full of religious expressions. Even the way people address each other is quite formal and full of formulaic expressions as it was aforementioned in the way the Handmaids greet each other. Therefore, needless to say, free speech is out of the question for most members of society just like freedom of actions is a long-forgotten memory. All these restrictions and usage of language are present all throughout the novel and perfectly picture several cases in which language intertwining with thoughts. Therefore, it is safe to say that taking all these attributes of language in the novel into consideration, *The Handmaids Tale* serves as the perfect example of usage of the language as a tool for manipulation in a dystopian version of western discourse.

3.2 *The Last Island*

The Last Island is quite a contemporary novel written by a Turkish author, Zülfü Livaneli. Although there are several arguments about the genre of the book, its dystopian attributes are quite undeniable. However, in contrast to *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Last Island* does not picture a dystopian society with its misery and suffering, instead, the story starts up with a little group of people living on an isolated island in perfect harmony and peace and builds its way up to a social nightmare. Livaneli takes the reader and introduces them to this dream place and starts telling the story of how this perfect little society turned into a group of cruel, judgemental and greedy people with a little push from a single man with a twisted mind. Since Livaneli opted for telling the chain of events that leads to a dystopia instead of describing the life in that dystopian system, the elements that point out to the genre stay limited compared to Atwood's novel. However, this different point of view provides the reader with a fresh pair of eyes towards the alarming signals that can be observed in real life.

3.2.1 Dystopian Elements in *the Last Island*

The narrator of *the Last Island* starts with the description of the island that the story takes place in as “the last shelter, last humane corner of the earth”. It is a picturesque society in which everybody works and contributes as much as they can or at least as much as they would like to. They live in a constant state of peace and relaxation, nobody tries to impose or achieve anything. They have no careers, no distinct ideologies that they actively fight for and no conflict between each other. Up until the appearance of the President, they'd never pushed anyone into doing anything they did not want to and did not even use each other's names since they were free from all those formalities of the mainland, they called each other by their house numbers. However, the transformation of this island into a dictatorship inevitably happens through many dystopian elements coming into the scene or at least, them being brought forward by a new resident, the retired President. The retired President who has been forced to retire in the mainland country takes this little island and shapes it in accordance with his understanding of order and civilization as a kind of retirement project. Naturally, the first step of this transformation would be forming alliances and win the residents over in order to ensure his control over the island. This manipulation is made possible through his

consistent propagandas and well-practised speeches as it is the case with many other examples of the genre.

The usages of said propagandas in this work; however, manifest themselves in a different way from Atwood's universe. Here, the President approaches the islanders in a friendlier, stealthier manner with the fear of scaring them away at first. He sounds almost grateful to make acquaintances with the islanders and portrays himself as a merely retired man in hopes of having a peaceful time on the island. Although his propagandas take a rather aggressive tone afterwards, when he first moves in, he sounds sincere and as if he is well-meaning: "From now on, we are one of you. We are on the same boat. We are honoured to be accepted as your neighbours!"(Livaneli, 2018: 29). What's more, he is not the only one who uses a certain way of speech to make him look friendlier, as the nameless narrator of the book states, his reputation was built up for him even before he showed up on the island:

In the newspapers, we have always read about the President with the adjective of "father of the nation", as a saviour. He held foreign powers and espionage activities of the enemy states responsible for the on-thin-ice state of the country and stated that they have arranged the coup in order to reunify the country, to ensure national unity and solidarity. (37)

Although this quotation shows that these propagandas were already in action in the mainland, their real-life usage creates a bigger impact on the residents of the island. Thus, in no time they begin to shape their views, lifestyles and even their clothing rather quickly with the influence of the retired President. The laid-back inhabitants of the island who used to live together in harmony, spending all day drinking, eating and chatting with friends, usually being too lazy to change into anything other than their shorts and swimsuits evolves beyond belief: "I've realized number 1 was wearing trousers. But he used to go around in shorts, never wearing trousers before" (42). In addition to these little side effects he has on people and his attempts at receiving their friendship, the President evokes curiosity and attracts attention through more repetitive and militarist sayings as well and these are definitely done to ensure his authority over the residents:

Based on my years of governorship experience and the years I've spent at the service of the state, I am honoured to declare that I am always ready to be at service for my islander neighbours with my love of serving and experience. Duty is duty, there are no big or small ones. Everything is for our island! (48)

As it can be observed in this quotation, he puts forward his previous experience and title to make his statements more striking which is quite far away from the

jargon they are used to using on the island. All these methods show effect in no time and put the president at a high place on the island. He does not hesitate to use any means of acquiring power and one of his strongest tools is, undoubtedly, his words. With the changes appearing in the microcosm of the island's society, and the President's ensuring his place on the throne more and more every day, his sayings, as well as his actions, acquire a more hostile tone as well:

“Sir, Sir! What are you trying to do? What kind of dead-end are you trying to put such a serious security investigation in? Answer me. What kind of person walks around a terrace without any evil intent? What kind of person does not answer my warnings of opening fire?” He stopped, looked at us and laughed angrily. (58)

First signs of all the slogans and the propaganda he keeps putting forward paying off and the President starts establishing dominance over the islanders can be seen from the way he talks to the Writer in such an accusing and confrontational way. It must be also kept in mind that he utters all these words just because the Writer did not agree with him. Each of the residents of the island starts getting affected by this attitude except for the narrator and his little group which consisted of his girlfriend, Lara and the Writer. The fact that they do not fall for his elaborated speeches turns them into criminals in the eyes of the other residents in accordance with the President's accusations and, in the end, they all meet the end of their peaceful lives on the island and get sentenced to prison.

In addition to all his propaganda and ornate speeches, as another dystopian trait, the President turns into a figure on who people start worshipping. While the President himself chose to influence people by using excuses for his actions like civilization and money, he eventually manages to notionally enthrone himself on the island so that everybody listens to whatever he says without any questioning or giving it a second thought. In their eyes, he becomes their idol, a fatherly figure, their hope for a better future and a wake-up call from the slumber they have been living in. However, it must be also noted that this worshipping started off as mere admiration as it can be said for any kind of fanaticism:

I thought the President would start the meeting but first, number one has stood up. “Our honourable President has come to this island with the ideas and experience derived from years of governorship. He showed us some setbacks that we were not aware of before and the ways to get rid of them. For this reason, I, personally extend my gratitude once again and applaud him” Once Number 1 has started giving him a standing ovation, the other neighbours got up as well and joined the round.

At first, all the islanders did was appreciating his deeds, even though they had not liked what he has done in the first place. But because of being so open to manipulation through persuasiveness skills of the President, they turn into fanatics who could go as far as massacring innocent seagulls or poisoning foxes no matter what their more reasonable neighbours tell them. And this is exactly why it is different from *The Handmaid's Tale's* totalitarian universe. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, there was a totalitarian rule and serious threats and consequences for those who act outside the norms in a bells and whistles government. Here, on the last “humane” island, people are under the illusion of being free and living under a democratic system. To their dismay, what they are doing in reality is nothing but worshipping a dictator in disguise and his mask does not fall off way until the end. Even when Lara stands up to him and calls him out on his lies, he has a good defence: “All of the decisions on this island are taken in accordance with democracy. We have done whatever the majority pointed us towards. In this way, the decisions that are taken are signed by everybody” (178). Even when he is unmasked he does not back off on his claims and keeps referring to terms like democracy or civilization, no matter how much of a failure he goes through. What is more, there is nobody changing their minds in the face of the truth. Therefore, it can be claimed that the President uses his influence over people to do as he likes on the island and most of the residents do not hesitate to follow him till the end. For this reason, along with the repeatedly used terms such as civilization, prosperity or democracy, the President stands out as the main worshipped figurehead on this society that is slowly evolving into a dystopia.

In addition to these two dystopian elements, the third one is probably the most outstanding one: nature. Livaneli uses nature effectively as a tool to point out the downwards spiralling into the collapse of this beautiful society. On the way of building a dystopia, the natural environment of the island which was admired and lived together in harmony gets disturbed. At the beginning of the story, the President cuts down trees in the name of gardening and claims it was the civilized thing to do. Afterwards, he unleashes a ridiculous war against the seagulls after they have given him quite a good but harmless scare one night. This prideful man becomes a laughing stock for a second for getting scared of the birds walking on his roof at night, and this little event that would be deemed harmless by any others is enough for him to try and kill every single seagull on the island. Seagulls stand as the strongest

and the most important element of nature on the island and destroying them results in nothing but the whole balance of the natural habitat turning upside down which leaves the residents in a horrifying life-threatening situation. First, the President tries to hunt the seagulls with the help of his men and some islanders claiming that they are occupying the best parts of the islands and are a threat to well-being of islanders. At this stage, he also threatens the islanders by reminding them they are actually guests of the real owners of the island and also feed the islanders some lines stating that they could make money off the beaches which are currently occupied by these birds. When he gets the majority on board with his agenda, he throws a hunting party to kill the seagulls. When this attempted massacre fails to get rid of the birds and in return people get attacked by them, he goes onto ordering some foxes from the mainland so that they could eat seagulls' eggs. In the end, they do succeed in reducing the number of birds on the island at a great cost, which is the appearance of venomous snakes at people's houses. With a new enemy on sight, despite the protest of the few remaining sensible islanders, they continue their fight with trying new strategies to get rid of the snakes including building up nests for migrating storks, using snake repellents and hunting down the foxes, all of which to no avail. In the end, they try to burn off a certain area to get rid of the snakes but they end up burning away the whole island, destroying their own houses as well. Therefore it is safe to say that nature wins this war: "Seagulls were flying over our heads as if they were mocking us, watching the burned down and blackened island, as well as the people left with no shelter(...) We, the losers, were sleeping in the open-air, eating fish caught on the only boat left and waiting for help" (176). With no accommodation or shelter and no hope on sight, the last step for forming a perfect dystopia is established in Livaneli's work which is distrusted, destroyed or banished nature. As it was mentioned before, *The Last Island* stands slightly different from other generic dystopian works in the sense that it describes how a perfectly good society is capable of turning into a dystopian catastrophe instead of trying to portray the ways an already-existing dystopian system works. This brings the topic back to an important element in manufacturing a dystopia which includes the ways of establishing control.

3.2.2 Types of Dystopian Controls in *the Last Island*

The first type of dystopian control that comes forward in *the Last Island* is the bureaucracy. Compared to a full system of government, the bureaucracy in the island is naturally much more subtle and maybe even less complex, nonetheless just as effective. At first, the narrator explains how people are used to living without any obligations, any responsibilities for the rest of the world or any system of rules in the island:

The matter of fact is, we did not want people to go around talking about here and kept it to ourselves as a secret. Because in a world that was getting crazier every day, it was no good for anyone else to learn about us. We were forty quiet families who somehow found each other in this place. We were living in peace, everybody minded their own business. (16)

The fate of this dream island changes with the arrival of the President and his tendency to bring about new bureaucratic systems and rules to be able to impose what he wants. He begins with forming a new committee and gets elected as the head of it right away. They take no time to distribute leaflets regarding the new rules they have put in the island, limiting how close people can get to each other's houses and so on. What has begun as a series of seemingly innocent regulations continues throughout the whole story and goes as far as declaring war against seagulls and dictating how people are supposed to act. Although the case on the island is slightly different from a full-sized government's red tape system, it is still different than how people lived before and creates a cold and pretentious atmosphere. In addition to his strong will and methods to manipulate people, he successfully makes everyone believe that they are doing everything for the sake of the island and in democratic ways. All these rules disturb the island's peaceful way of living and are in total opposition to what people are used to. Therefore, all residents of the island go through a drastic transformation and the way of living on the island changes.

The second mode of control in dystopian works which is done through ideological or religious groups is not a strong element in Livaneli's work. The main theme that the President's ideology revolves around could be pointed out as money and well-being of the islanders. The President tries and convinces people to follow his lead using these as a tool, making them believe that what they had before is unacceptable and insufficient; therefore they should be asking for more. Thus, the true ideology of the president could be summarized as greed. However, unlike the more common examples of usage of ideology-based social groups that rule over the

rest of the society is not found in this novel. There is no specific group that rules over the island, there are just the President and his followers, and those who go against them, including the narrator and his friends. And since there is no clear line between these two sides because of people who change their minds depending on the development of the events, it does not seem reasonable to call them a ruling social group. There is only one ruler on their island and that is the President's greed.

The third way of control, however, is much more elaborately studied and has much bigger importance in the story, the destruction of nature. The whole story is built upon the chain of events caused by the President's declaration of war to the virgin nature of the island. Right upon his arrival, he orders the "domestication" of the trees on the main road, which in itself was a very disturbing occurrence in the eyes of the islanders: "Even though nobody admitted to it, the tension was becoming discernible every day and especially the road that looked like a violated virgin once it was shaved from the top, lying under the sun, created feelings of an amazing amount of distress upon all of us" (54). As it can be observed in the quotation, the islanders who were used to living in complete harmony with the island's nature gets absolutely horrified in the face of any alterations. The President, on the other hand, stands his ground claiming that he is doing all these changes in the name of civilization and development, and accuses them of "getting used to unruly, disorganization and chaos that has been happening in front of your eyes"(41). The fight against nature does not end with trimming some trees. Next victim of this twisted understanding of civilization turns out to be the seagulls. Having been scared out of his wits because of some seagulls walking on his roof, the President starts provoking people against seagulls claiming they are wild creatures taking over the best beaches on the island, limiting people's living space. Taking extra measures including threatening people with losing their houses and then promising them wealth through the profit they can get from renting away the beaches the seagulls are currently occupying, the President successfully convinces people to go hunting for seagulls in the hopes of driving them away from the island. However, this plan turns out to be a mistake when the residents first get attacked by seagulls after the massacre. People start living in constant fear of these huge birds and readily agree when the President wants to order some foxes from the mainland so that they would hunt down and eat the eggs of the seagulls to thin out their population. When they finally do, nature strikes back in no

time: with snakes. The snakes which were hunted by the seagulls before emerge and start showing up at people's houses and even cause the death of an islander. As a next step, the President and his men with some islanders try to attract storks in the place of seagulls. When this and many other attempts to get rid of them do not work, they finally try to build a controlled fire which ends up burning away the whole island. In the end, the nature that people has been fighting against gets to say the last word and the whole island burns away. Considering this essential role nature plays in the novel, it would not be wrong to claim that it is one of the most important control mechanisms employed by the President, even if it leads him to his own destruction in the end.

The last control mechanism is economic conditions that make sure people stay under control making them impossible to climb up the social ladder as long as they cannot acquire the economic strength to buy some power. In the island in which people live off the pine kernels they collect, the economic differences do not exist until the president comes up with the idea that they could be making much more money if they promoted and rented out the island for touristic purposes. He also manipulates the resident number one, the son of the original owner of the island, claiming;

As the son of a respectable and wealthy family, you are meddling with the flotsam of the island. Because in time, they have acclimatized you to the ideas of equality, laziness, not defending what is yours. However, people are not equal. You should take your side among the powerful. In an age in which tourism is booming and millions of dollars are spent on beaches and the islands, can you estimate the true worth of such an island? (72).

As it can be observed in the quotation above, the President does not hesitate to utilize the one true thing he believes in, which is the power of money, to manipulate him into doing what he wants. Once he wins him over, it is only a matter of a few threats and promises to the rest of the islanders that were mentioned above that provides the President with the upper hand over the rest of them. Therefore, although it is much more subtle compared to Atwood's work, the economic conditions do not fail to serve as a means of establishing control.

3.2.3 Language in *the Last Island*

As another outstanding author of the contemporary Turkish literature, Yaşar Kemal states in the preface of the 2018 edition of the novel:

It is the language in the novel that shows us the whole richness. (...) If a novel is going to be a permanent one, it will create its own language. Zülfü has created a language in this novel that is compatible with this novel, and this is the reason why this novel is going to be a permanent one. (12)

The mastery of using language to manipulate both the characters and the reader is one of the main aspects that make this novel an outstanding example of its kind. However, for the sake of sticking with the main theme of this thesis, function and the place of language within the story will be studied in the novel. In this respect, it would be the sensible way of analysing it by first starting with the narrator's language and his interpretations.

Even at the beginning of the novel, the narrator himself points out that he is trying to form a diary or a kind of letter for his friend, the Writer, and that he is not an actual author, therefore, the narration of the story would be quite an informal one. One of the most outstanding qualities of the narrator is that he occasionally gives out clues as to what will happen in the end, and keeps putting an emphasis upon the validity of foresight: "I've spent that night quite restless. I guess this thing called intuition is real, sometimes one can feel the possibility of some bad things happening"(166). In addition to this slightly mystical or emotional approach to the issue, the narrator also has great importance to the story with the occasional commentary he puts forward in the story. He clarifies the setting as well as the mood throughout the unravelling of the story and helps the reader to have a more proper understanding of the situation:

All these were showing that the President was living in a horrible fear and that he was keeping guards in the garden of his house even in our peaceful, far from sight island. We were quite surprised by it. (...) Even though nobody admitted to it, the tension was becoming discernible every day and especially the road that looked like a violated virgin once it was shaved from the top, lying under the sun, created feelings of an amazing amount of distress upon all of us. (53-54)

With the help of the storytelling of the narrator, which is ornate with striking adjectives and metaphors despite his claims, the reader is capable of having a true grasp of the situation which makes it unnecessary to learn all the details of the story. Also, the fact that the narrator is a part of the group who are not in agreement with the ways of the President and does not yield to his administration provides a broader perspective as to how people are actually being turned around merely with words.

Although the narrator himself as a character does not necessarily have strong views and at first he does not even understand why his friend the Writer hates President so deeply, he is still capable of seeing through his redirecting and acts. Thus, this point of view is inevitably reflected on the reader which makes the building up tension and every step of manipulation is perceptible to them. This strategy is used by Livaneli all throughout the novel and is one of the strongest language aspects that makes this novel such a unique one.

Another character whose use of language must be analysed is the President, as it was mentioned before, the President establishes and holds the authority in his hands with the strategic and effective usage of the language. He introduces himself to the residents of the island in a very friendly and approachable manner with very kind words which are followed by concrete statements.

This is a serious situation but as you see, thankfully no terrorist or terrorists could harm us. They have tried to annihilate me many more times before but with the help of the glorious God, they have failed each time. I am used to it by now, I see it as a price for serving my country, but I must admit, these incidents leave terrible marks on my family, especially my grandchildren. Now I must regretfully announce that every point on this island, every tree root, every hollow, every cave - and unfortunately- every house will be searched. (55)

This strong stance provides the President with the aura of the authority he craves for and even provokes those who do not agree with him in a subtle way while leaving others in awe of him. He also opts for a more humble, patriotic, even slightly religious language which pushes those around him into being a lot more sympathetic towards him. Considering the fact that especially in Eastern cultures, religious people have increasing levels of sympathy and acceptance from the society in general, utterance of a few words that suggest he might be a devoted believer easily turns him into a more trustworthy person in the eyes of many people. What is more, within a few sentences, he conveys a fatherly figure by mentioning his family which makes his later proclamation of searching people's houses more acceptable. The president uses the sympathy of the residents to his advantage through portraying a concerned father. He wants to legitimize what he is doing out of a whim, and he is very successful at it. However, when these techniques do not work, he uses more alienating and hostile expressions towards those who do not see eye-to-eye with him. As the narrator conveys his reaction on the matter of hunting down seagulls:

He started tearing his heart out. He went on and on about how much the seagulls were harming the island, scaring the people, almost mutilating his granddaughter. The best beaches of this island couldn't have been handed over to these wild creatures. Seagulls

were everyone's enemy. For this reason, a seagull mobilisation had to be arranged and these creatures had to be banished from this island forever. (72-73)

It must be also noted that the President's aggressiveness towards the seagulls derives from merely a few minor incidents. Also, he takes his personal grudge against these poor animals and makes them sound dangerous so that everybody would join him on his crusade. His tendency to take drastic action towards any inconvenience seems to affect the islanders quite easily. The main reason behind this could be pointed out as its contrast to the life they were leading before. In this isolated island, these timid people were strangers to any kind of conflict or warfare, but the President being no stranger to conflict, does not hesitate to get ugly really quickly. In order to make everybody string along with his desires, the President feels the need to act tougher and establish dominance over them in the hopes that this contrast will shock and catch them off guard.

His hostile manner towards the unaware seagulls; however, turns its direction towards the narrator's group in no time. He first announces the Writer as a terrorist and makes sure the islanders feel under threat by his presence so that he can get rid of him any way he wants:

Friends, you remember I chose this island so that I could live in a remote place, away from terrorists(...) The enemies of the state and the government also have found me here as well. (...) This person is a political prisoner who has escaped from the military prison, an enemy of the state, changing his name and taking refuge in our island while fooling all of us. (167)

These accusations as the last step in changing the minds of the residents of the island altogether, the President finally achieves to get what he wants and drives enemies of his own making away. With his skilful juggling of the language, he threads his mentality little by little throughout his stay in the island. Although taking place in a much smaller scale compared to standard examples of the dystopian genre, Livaneli manages the show each and every stage of forming a horrifying dystopian system and authority while providing a closer look into the dictatorship with the help of first-hand interactions and experiences of the narrator with a dictator at the same time. The chance of face to face interaction with a dictator on a daily basis, the narrator lets the reader see through every stage of brainwashing and tricking people into obedience, especially with the help of the language. Every word being chosen with care, the President does not fail to keep a close track of the whole atmosphere on the island, including how people feel and what are they afraid of or what can they possibly desire. He uses all that information in his speeches for threatening, giving

powerful promises or pushing people towards acting in accordance with what he calls a “civilized” society. Therefore, even the character of the President himself stands as an outstanding example of the power of words, how they affect people, and how they can change the destiny of a whole community without much difficulty.

The characters of the narrator and the Writer, on the other hand, are the proof that although language might have a lot of effect on people when carefully used, it is impossible to use the same formula on everyone and treat them in a single way to get the same result. There are and always be the ones that come from different backgrounds, grown up in different environments, had different experiences in different discourses and they will always destroy the mainstream flow and stand out. They are the main elements in the novel that destroys the structuralist approach believing in universal ways of conveying the same message to everyone through the same signifiers. In their case, the signifiers that could be identified as the appeals of the President do not convey the same message to them as they do to most of the islanders. This is mainly because the Writer has a rather different past from the rest, he has had the opportunity to experience what the seemingly idealistic speeches of the President could mean and that he cannot be trusted. This insight into the President’s methods makes the Writer immune to his propaganda hence making the dream of an ultimate way of control unachievable. Therefore, one could easily claim that poststructuralist way of thinking that insists upon taking the element of human nature and discourse into account would be the wise choice.

CONCLUSION

Over the years, there have been several debates about the language's position in human life as a means of manipulation. There is no doubt that manipulation is the most essential part of forming a dystopia and language is the most effective way of achieving it. As our main source of communication, language seeps through every part of our lives, it is constantly used everywhere and we hear it all the time. Considering all our thoughts and actions are shaped by the input we receive from the world, it is the easiest way to control our minds while staying under our radar. We say what we believe in, and we believe in what we say or hear if repeated often enough, sooner or later. Therefore, it would be naïve to believe even for a second that this great tool would not be put to use by power seekers. They try to do so through a very structuralist approach; by formulating how to affect people and convince them to do things to their own liking. To their dismay, unlike what structuralists believe, it is not possible to make spreadsheets and create formulas of people's reactions and thoughts, however with the help of a little bit of threatening and tyranny, people can be moulded into whatever shape necessary. Therefore, it could be said that it is still possible to turn our greatest tool of communication can easily be turned into the greatest weapon for manipulating us, taking our free will away from us, usually even before we realize it. What must be kept in mind while doing that, as Foucault says, is the discourse, or in other words, as Offred says: "Context is all" (Atwood, 2017: 154). Context can change the meaning of certain words or can alter human perception. Accompanied by some brainwashing, it could be possible to partially control people. However, it must be noted that by creating a proper restrictive environment in which people are under constant surveillance and not even allowed having unruly thoughts, one could have control over them only to a certain extent. Offred, for example, displays these limits through her memoirs in which she confesses to every unruly thought she has with her full sincerity and these eventually get to be studied by a group of scholars in a symposium, centuries later, at a time in which Gilead is no more. This is yet another proof of the righteousness of poststructuralists who support the impossibility of having complete control over human nature or situations.

Having been built upon the three tenets of structuralism, poststructuralism suggests that meaning is shaped through differentiating things. People tend to put

meaning into everything through what they are not unlike the common perception of direct definitions. We know the dark as the absence of light. In the same way, we define and understand white as the opposite of black. Therefore, people's minds attribute meanings to everything around them by determining how they are different from other things instead of defining each and every quality of them. This claim, however, merely forms the first tenet of structuralism that has directly affected poststructuralism. The second tenet suggests that this process of eliminating and attributing meaning is formed subconsciously. People are not able to form these meanings consciously, rather it is a mechanism that is not subject to our conscious mind. It does not work under our command and this is exactly why it leaves us vulnerable towards redirecting coming from outside. The third tenet, on the other hand, unites the first two by explaining how they come together to form a proper structure of thinking and meaning. In other words, our subconscious works through a system of elimination and differentiation to form meaning and to understand concepts. Eventually, all of these elements form a whole semiotic structure of meaning.

Up until this point, the two movements seem to agree upon this system and have similar claims as to how we understand and interpret the world around us. Yet, the fourth tenet of structuralism is what sets them apart. In the fourth tenet, structuralism claims it is possible to find an ultimate system that would make it possible to decode every situation and process. Although it is quite a complex structure and requires a thorough analysis of immense amount of data, which is humanely close to impossible, structuralists still believe in a universal truth that could be applied to any kind of circumstance, thus, going as far as saying that the thought and decision process of humans could be decoded, and actions could be predicted. Many structuralists, including Levi-Strauss, deduced that with the possibility of such a formula, one of our strongest assets, our freedom is nothing but an illusion. If it is possible to know what decision we will make using our "free will" or how we will understand and react to a situation at hand, then maybe it is not really possible to call it "free". This is the element that sets poststructuralism apart from structuralist view. Poststructuralism brings forward a rather important piece of a variable to this formula: discourse. The poststructuralist view puts forward certain gaps and unexplained variables that tend to emerge in these semiotic formulas. Thus,

it would be unreasonable to talk about a semiotic pattern if there are many missing points and uncertainties. This process could be exemplified with two different people with seemingly same qualities and conditions understanding and reacting to the same situations differently. Discourse, according to poststructuralism, is what creates this difference. People coming from different backgrounds, raised in different conditions think differently even if they end up in the same situation. This is what invalidates the fourth tenet and requires a much deeper study of social theories instead of pure ideologies. But for the sake of a clean and untangled argument, only the possibility or impossibility of controlling human thought process through language is studied over the discourse of dystopian literature.

Emerging from a longing for a better life for everyone, utopias have emerged as the way of many philosophers expressing their opinions and schematics for the sake of good. They fed on the misery and everything that is wrong with the world they are living in and tried to use them to come up with a proper system as to what is to be followed and what is to be implemented. They aimed for finding perfect ways to rule human mind individually and the society altogether. Thus, they came up with many different systems that could make everyone be in their best behaviour, live in a peaceful environment with equally presented opportunities. However, despite these well-meaning attempts, the impossibility of achieving such perfection and coming up with the perfect system to have the ultimate good, philosophers and thinkers have started looking for other ways to push humanity into being a better version of themselves. Therefore, many have chosen to try to warn people about things they should avoid or the paths they should never go down and this resulted in the birth of another genre, namely dystopias. Unlike the dreamy images of utopias, dystopias portray the worst scenarios that the authors can possibly come up with and they highlight and amplify every bad trait of human nature. Most of the time they picture what is opposite of everything good about the society including freedom, individuality, justice and goodness of the heart. They are responsible for telling us what could possibly happen in the absence of these good things and it is possible to say that most of the time they manage to scare us into sticking to them, heart and soul. Although it is easy to say that dystopias are made of nightmares of humanity, the tendency of dystopian writers to leave some room to breathe within all that cacophony is undeniable. Almost in every one of these dark stories, there is always a

stream of light that seeps through, may it be presented as an outcast character or a loophole in a dictatorship. Dystopian writers always believe in and account for an element of hope and it could be claimed that most of the time this hope is what makes the readers able to read and endure through such hellish scenarios. However, the motivation behind this tendency to create a loophole in the said stories is not limited to comforting the readers. It also draws attention to the variability of personalities and futility of trying to fit everyone into the same mould. As no person is completely the same as the other, it would be naïve to believe that the same system would keep everyone under control without any exceptions.

Works that were analysed in this thesis helped to prove the validity of poststructuralist view over structuralism on this matter. This approach further assisted answering the critical question of whether it is possible to completely control and manipulate us humans and make our worst fears come true. Studying structuralism at this point sheds light on the possibility of executing that through language since it lights up the way how communication works as well as the systems of power relations and hegemony. It also goes hand in hand with the general attributes of the dystopian genre most of which is built upon establishing control upon the masses. In both works, several methods of control are imposed on people including bureaucracy, social class division, destruction of nature and economy. In *the Handmaid's Tale*, social classes and bureaucracy stand out among these. Especially ideologically shaped social class divisions are done through the language, with several types of propaganda distributed throughout all layers of their society. These religion-based propagandas also serve as the rules that the society lives by and shape characters' actions and roles throughout the whole story. In *the Last Island*, on the other hand, destruction of nature forms the basis of the whole story and it is crafted that way thanks to propagandas concerning economic issues and the claims of the President that say all those actions are taken in the name of progress and civilization. Most of the people believe in those tales and take part in destructing their own land little by little. They accept the President as their leader and let themselves be swept by his good talk. All these manipulations, however, succeed only to a certain point. In neither one of the books do all of the characters fall into the traps laid by power holders. Some of them see through all their lies and try not to fall into their traps. As poststructuralism does not hesitate to test boundaries of the

language and comes to the conclusion that a concrete truth or control is impossible to achieve, these novels stand in agreement to this view. Poststructuralism questions the effect of the language on human mind and that is why this approach allows us to have an analytic base for the argument presented in this thesis. But it must be also noted that the movement does not neglect the recurring patterns in human behaviour as it is a successor of structuralism. However, it believes in the variety of their reactions that are shaped by the discourse. Therefore, it could be said that if it were written from a structuralist point of view, this thesis would possibly take the side of dictators and oppressors, claiming that with true identification of the said systems it would be possible to use them to the advantage of power holders, manipulating and shaping the society as they see fit. However, this is the point the two movements differ from each other as the element of human nature comes into scene. Structuralists believed in the similarity of one person to the other while poststructuralism does exactly the opposite: It puts emphasis upon the differences between every individual and the importance of the discourse in the making of these differences.

What is important at this point is the fact that all of the aforementioned redirections and manipulations are made possible through shaping the language that is being used in both works but it must be also kept in mind that in neither of the cases the control is ultimate. Thus, even the dystopian writers, who are the scaremongers of the literary world, show us limitations of the said control, especially over the thought and they point us towards a ray of hope, usually in the form of a protagonist with an unruly mind amongst all that cacophony. They remind us of our ability to find a way out of the most difficult situations, getting free of the most powerful oppressions even in the most difficult of times. The most common way of doing this seems to be proving that there are other ways of expressing and experiencing reality than the language that is being regulated and to point out that while the language has a big say in the formation of reality, it cannot completely alter it. This is why we get heroes that stand up against tyranny, protagonists that are not perfect but able to gather up courage to step outside the boundaries, and most importantly we get individuals that cannot be programmed or controlled completely. But since there is no denying of the power language has on us, most of the time

dystopia writers tend to leave us with a sour taste of victory because through better or worse, there is always a way out even if it is never easy.



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