Language as an oppressive device in Orwell’s *1984*

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Abstract

This paper is a critical study of “1984”, a novel by George Orwell. It specifically aims to study how language is used by the dominant authority in the fiction to oppress and to exert power over the population in the country. The analysis focuses on how the totalitarian system limits conversations and prevents freedom of speech through imposing on the characters to speak a language which is strange to them and very limited in terms of vocabulary. To achieve this objective, the study will focus on the sentences and paragraphs which show how language is used to frighten and oppress people. In certain cases, the dialogues which occur between the characters will be explored so as to clearly manifest the role of language in controlling the actions and the minds of the population.

To manifest the relationship between language and power, the analysis is conducted within the framework of stylistics and critical discourse analysis. The researcher explores the linguistic features in some paragraphs and dialogues selected from the entire text so as to show how the government of Oceania controls the minds and actions of its inhabitants. Through such a framework of analysis, the thesis concludes that the totalitarian government manipulates language to dominate people, and language is not a social practice but it has political dimensions and regarded as a threat to the government if people can use it freely.

Keywords: 1984, stylistics, critical discourse analysis, language, power
Introduction

1984 is a fiction written in 1948 by George Orwell. The writer creates a fictional country reigned by a totalitarian government which tries hard to impose power and to remain in power for good. The system applies various methods to limit the freedom of the people and to always keep them tamed. They obviously use physical torture to intimidate the opponents or the thought crime, as the party describes. The physical torture the detainees receive can be obviously imagined in O’Brien’s speech when he talks to Winston, “You have been kicked and flogged and insulted, you screamed with pain, you have rolled on the floor in your own blood and vomit” (P. 273), but the aim of this study is to focus on psychological torment which is mainly implemented through the use of language.

In 1984, language is deployed as a device to discipline the people through spreading fear and narrowing freedom of speech, and O’Brien confirms that, “The party is not interested in the overt act; the thought is all we care about” (P. 253). The regime achieves these aims by changing the documents to erase past and to create a history which glorifies Big Brother and the government and by inventing a new language (Newspeak) through reducing the number of the words used by people to replace the Oldspeak (English language). The author presents that language can traumatize, frighten and drive people to insanity; it makes them hate each other and betray each other and it even compels them to lie and accept lies as truth. Porcheddu (2009) emphasizes that language acquires its importance in the novel and adds “By controlling language and information through a complex coercive apparatus, the Party realises a mind control of its subjects that is “total” in both extension and intensity. In extension, because the totality of the subjects is dominated; in intensity, because any individual thought is totally dominated”. This view clarifies that the government of Oceania controls mind and body of the people through language which is used as an effective weapon.

Method

Norman Fairclough in “Language and Power”, published in 1989, states that he has written the book for two purposes. The first is more theoretical: to help correct a widespread underestimation of the significance of language in the production, maintenance, and change of social relations of power. The second is more practical: to help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation. The second purpose is exactly related to the aim behind writing this paper.

To show how language is used to dominate the people of Oceania including the members of the party, discourse stylistics is implemented through which the linguistic features such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation points, turn-taking and types of speech act and the non-linguistic textual features such as gestures or visuals are explored. These levels of discourse are
analyzed in the dialogues which occur in the novel and in some statements or descriptions that are purposefully arranged to show the danger which the people face if they dare to oppose the government’s tyrannical principles or if even they think of their own existence outside the world created and totally occupied by Big Brother, the inner party members and the junior spies. People should learn to use language and think properly in a way which keeps the system in power and thus language is utilized to oppress and silence a nation.

**Curtailing individual freedom through language use**

The use of language to restrict individual freedom in Oceania takes two forms: First in written texts and secondly in discourse. In this section, the focus will be on some of the extracts which show the cruelty of the system toward the people and how their freedom is limited and how they live in constant fear.

From the very beginning of the novel, Part One; Chapter 1, this statement is written in capital letters, “BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU” (P.2). This is the caption written beneath a big poster, “one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move”. The load of this statement is rather heavy on the inhabitants since the picture is everywhere and the eyes follow them. Nobody is free because the pronoun “you” is the one who reads the script or hears it on TV and in radio. Even if they draw the curtains, turn off the lights and sit in a secure corner, they do not feel safe because the junior spies who are the daughters and sons become the eyes of Big Brother and spy on their own parents.

The script is written in capital letters to warn the people that nobody can hide from the eyes of the regime and it spreads fear to tame the opponents. Winston realizes that there is no escape

> “On coins, on stamps, on the covers of books, on banners, on posters, and on the wrappings of a cigarette packet—everywhere. Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed—no escape” (P. 27).

Winston knows these facts but he makes a big mistake when he thinks that he can run away from the agents and trusts Mr. Charrington who is the inner party member. The word “watching” in the caption simply means “spying” and the one who performs this action is not necessarily to be Big Brother, but it can be any faithful member of the party who has become the eyes of Big Brother. The party uses every possible way to control the mind of the people through accepting self-contradictory statements such as the three slogans of the party: *War is Peace; Freedom is Slavery; Ignorance is Strength.* Every day, the three slogans are read and presented several times on the telescreen which will never turn off; they are written everywhere and even inscribed in “tiny clear lettering” on the coins. The aim of the slogans is not only to distort the facts but to psychologically prepare the people to accept lies as truth. In his essay *Politics and the English*
Language, Orwell says, “Political language... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind”. In this regard, the inhabitants lose the notion of truth and cannot distinguish between truth and lies and thus they accept what the party says as mere facts.

In the novel, these lies are obvious and mainly reflect in the names of the ministries. For example, the Ministry of Truth is concerned with the falsification of records, the Ministry of Peace deals with warfare, the Ministry of Love is a place for the questioning and torturing of opponents, and the Ministry of Plenty makes up economic figures to convince the public that the state has a strong economy and people live a luxurious life.

Spreading lies in the interest of the party may not be fruitful if the people know about their past which is based on truth. Thus, the party has already planned to change past since, as the party slogan reads, “Who controls the past, controls the future: who controls the present controls the past” (P. 248). Quinn (2009:56) states, “The use of language to convey untruths in the service of the state forms a prominent role in Nineteen Eighty-Four”.

Utilizing language to control the mind of the people of Oceania reaches its peak when the state invents a new language “Newspeak” to replace “Oldspeak”. Myers (1986: 353) states that “to expand language is to expand the ability to think”. To limit the ability of thinking and to isolate the inhabitants of Oceania from the outer world, Newspeak as the official language of the state does not develop at all. Contrary to the nature of any language in the world, Newspeak’s vocabulary decreases in number every year. The state believes that people should only know the words which can be used in routine or daily conversations because some words will rouse thoughts which are dangerous to the state. To express ideas related to freedom or to communicate thoughts which awaken people against the totalitarian system, people need certain words and expressions. The existence of such lexis certainly endanger the reign of the state. To avoid this risk, the government excludes them in the dictionary of the Newspeak. This act saves the government because people cannot express disgust and hatred against it since words to express such feelings are totally absent from the language imposed by the state. Berks (2000) writes, “By design, Newspeak narrows the range of thought and shortens people’s memories. It is therefore ideal for a totalitarian system, in which the government has to rely on a passive public which lacks independent thought and which has a great tolerance for mistakes, both past and present”.

The second way in which language is utilized to suppress the people is in the dialogues that occur between Winston and O’Brien during the investigation process. O’Brien who represents the state is in power and thus he gives orders and wants to hear what pleases the state not what Winston himself wants to say. Though Winston speaks out his heart and utters what he thinks to be true, power does not shift between them. Winston is badly punished whenever his answers do not comply with the wishes of the government. To show how language is
manipulated to coerce Winston and to force him to deviate from his beliefs or from the facts, some excerpt from the arguments happen between Winston and O’Brien will be explored according to the principles of discourse stylistics.

After he was arrested, Winston was tortured inexorably and in fact the physical torture is enough to compel the prisoners to confess, to humiliate them and destroy their power of arguing and reasoning; but the party agents are not satisfied with this; therefore, they use their ultimate weapon which is the merciless questioning that went on and on, hour after hour to damage their morale and ruin their guts. In the extracts, it can be easily noticed how O’Brien tries to make Winston slavish in his obedience to Big Brother and to the principles of the party.

“You are afraid,” said O’Brien, watching his face, ‘that in another moment something is going to break. Your especial fear is that it will be your backbone. You have a vivid mental picture of the vertebrate snapping apart and the spinal fluid dripping out of them. That is what you are thinking, is it not, Winston? Winston did not answer. O’Brien drew back the lever on the dial. The wave of pain receded almost as quickly as it had come.

‘That was forty,’ said O’Brien. ‘You can see that the numbers on this dial run up to a hundred. Will you please remember, throughout our conversation, that I have it in my power to inflict pain on you at any moment and to whatever degree I choose? If you tell me any lies, or attempt to prevaricate in any way, or even fall below your usual level of intelligence, you will cry out with pain, instantly. Do you understand that?

‘Yes,’ said Winston.

(Orwell, 245)

This dialogue occurs after Winston was tortured and the electric current passed through his body for a moment. The pain is strange and Winston was really frightened. O’Brien understands the feeling; therefore, he uses it against Winston himself to control him mentally and physically. O’Brien directly talks about Winston’s feeling and asserts that his view is quite correct; hence, he utters a declarative sentence “You are afraid”. He does not give any option to Winston, for instance to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’, and he also does not wait for him to say anything and thus he continues.

In the second part of the utterance “that in another….”, O’Brien gives more information about Winston’s inner feeling to assure Winston that he knows what is happening to him. O’Brien’s aim in portraying the danger which Winston faces is to make him collapse and surrender. O’Brien’s description ends with a less common tag-question “is it not?”. By using this uncommon form, it can be concluded that the tag is with a rising tone which “invites verification, expecting the hearer to decide the truth of the proposition in the statement” (Quirk et al., 1985: 811). O’Brien does not ask a real question, but he wants Winston to confirm the veracity of the new information. O’Brien is sure about the truth of his statement “That is what you are thinking…” because he was also arrested before and passed through the same experience and he also used this method against other prisoners after he has become a faithful inner party member.
O’Brien already knows the answer is “yes”; therefore, there is no need for Winston to utter the word and thus he remains silent “Winston did not answer”.

O’Brien does not wait to hear Winston’s answer since he already knows it and he in fact did not ask a real question; it is rather a rhetorical question. O’Brien goes on his speech, but in the second segment of the utterance the mood changes from description to threats. He starts with “That was forty”, and he also adds “the numbers on this dial run up to a hundred”. Giving this information is crucial for O’Brien since he wants Winston to compare between the pains he has received at “forty” and the pains he will receive if the number of the dial runs up to a higher degree. The illocutionary act attached to the statement is a threat and the perlocutionary act behind it is to frighten Winston and compel him to cooperate. O’Brien intensifies the threat through some other utterances such as “I have it in my power to inflict pain on you”, and “if you tell me any lies…., you will cry out with pain, instantly”. It seems that O’Brien achieves his aim in frightening Winston because his “manner became less severe” after Winston says “yes” to reply to O’Brien’s “Do you understand that?”

This conversation occurs at the beginning of the investigation process. O’Brien knows to destroy someone physical torture alone is not enough, thusly; he uses language to impose psychological torture. The party can control the opponents physically by putting them into jails, but it can occupy their mind only through altering their thoughts which may be carried out through constant and boring investigations. O’Brien’s words have great effects on Winston because he chooses the words and utters them so explicitly that Winston really feels the pains connotated in them.

This conversations marks the beginning of a long investigation through which O’Brien wants to tame Winston and turn him to a faithful member to the party; in other words to cure him or to purify his mind from the thoughts which are harmful to the party. O’Brien clearly explains the goals and the intentions of the Party as he says, “We do not destroy the heretic because he resists us; so long as he resists us we never destroy him. We convert him, we capture his inner mind, we reshape him. We burn all evil and all illusion out of him; we bring him over to our side, not in appearance, but genuinely, heart and soul….” (Orwell, 255).

O’Brien is successful in persuading Winston to agree to what he says and to accept lies as truths such as (Oceania has always been at war with Eastasia; eleven years ago he created a legend about three men who had been condemned to death for treachery: he sees five fingers while the thumb is actually concealed behind). The investigation does not end here. Winston argues with O’Brien about the perfect world that the party tries to build for itself. This extract shows that Winston’s mind has not been cured yet.

‘You could not create such a world as you have just de-scribed. It is a dream. It is impossible.’
‘Why?’
‘It is impossible to found a civilization on fear and hatred and cruelty. It would never endure.’ ‘Why not?’

‘It would have no vitality. It would disintegrate. It would commit suicide.’

‘Nonsense. You are under the impression that hatred is more exhausting than love. Why should it be? And if it were, what difference would that make? Suppose that we choose to wear ourselves out faster. Suppose that we quicken the tempo of human life till men are senile at thirty. Still what difference would it make? Can you not understand that the death of the individual is not death? The party is immortal.’

As usual, the voice had battered Winston into helplessness. Moreover he was in dread that if he persisted in his disagreement O’Brien would twist the dial. And yet he could not keep silent. Feebly, without arguments, with nothing to support him except his inarticulate horror of what O’Brien had said, he returned to the attack.

‘I don’t know— I don’t care. Somehow you will fail. Some-thing will defeat you. Life will defeat you.’

‘We control life, Winston, at all its levels. You are imagining that there is something called human nature which will be outraged by what we do and will turn against us. But we create human nature. Men are infinitely malleable. Or perhaps you have returned to your old idea that the prole-tarians or the slaves will arise and overthrow us. Put it out of your mind. They are helpless, like the animals. Humanity is the party. The others are outside-relevant.’

‘I don’t care. In the end they will beat you. Sooner or later they will see you for what you are, and then they will tear you to pieces.’

‘Do you see any evidence that that is happening? Or any reason why it should?’

‘No. I believe it. I KNOW that you will fail. There is something in the universe—I don’t know, some spirit, some principle— that you will never overcome.’

‘Do you believe in God, Winston?’

‘No.’

‘Then what is it, this principle that will defeat us?’

‘I don’t know. The spirit of Man.’

‘And do you consider yourself a man?’

‘Yes.’

‘If you are a man, Winston, you are the last man. Your kind is extinct; we are the inheritors. Do you understand that you are ALONE? You are outside history, you are non-existent.’ His manner changed and he said more harshly: ‘And you consider yourself morally superior to us; with our lies and our cruelty?’

‘Yes, I consider myself superior.’

(P. 268-270)

This extract is a severe argument between Winston and O’Brien on founding the ideal state the party has planned it. Winston believes that it will not succeed, but O’Brien sees no reason for its failure. To prove the invalidity of Winston’s justifications and accusations, O’Brien asks 13 questions; five of them are rhetorical questions (3, 4, 5, 6 and 12). Black (2006: 26) writes, “Rhetorical questions often generate implicatures, and tend to involve the maxim of manner”. O’Brien uses this strategy to abort the force of Winston’s views and to imply that nothing can hinder the success of establishing such a government especially when he repeats “what difference would that make?”
O’Brien disappoints Winston “As usual, the voice had battered Winston into helplessness”, but it is temporary since Winston refuses to accept the government and thus he continues on his attacks. Winston’s speeches do not have great effects on O’Brien because O’Brien is a faithful member of the party and mainly because Winston cannot support his ideas with proofs. For instance, when O’Brien says the party is immortal, but the individuals are mortal, Winston says, “I don’t know- I don’t care. Somehow you will fail. Some-thing will defeat you. Life will defeat you”. If he really wants to persuade that the government will not live long or at least to show that there a little truth in his speeches, he must not say (I don’t know- I don’t care) and he also adds (some-thing will defeat you). Winston is not sure what that (something) is, and when he says (life) he himself feels that (something) is not practical and must be replaced with a more concrete word.

O’Brien ensures Winston that that thing he depends on for overthrowing the government is completely under their control “We control life, Winston, at all its levels”. O’Brien talks powerfully and self-confidently and asserts that the proletariats are so weak that they cannot rise against them. Winston always tries to escape from O’Brien’s counter-attacks, but his plan is weak. His answers (I don’t care; I don’t know) do not have any value and will change nothing. Winston mostly uses future simple because he is not certain about what he says, whether the government will collapse or not. The modal verb ‘will’ combines the meaning of volition and prediction and this type of modal verb belongs to the types “which do not primarily involve human control of events, but do typically involve human judgment of what is or is not likely to happen” (Quirk et al., 1985: 219). Contrary to this uncertainty, O’Brien uses present simple and expresses his beliefs as facts; he is confident about the survival and the immortality of the party. The present simple tense gives force to O’Brien’s belief that the party controls past, present and future and Quirk et al (Ibid: 175) writes, “Something is defined as ‘present’ if it has existence at the present moment, allowing for the possibility that its existence may also stretch into the past and into the future”.

O’Brien has answers for Winston’s comments, but Winston mostly says “I don’t know” when O’Brien asks him to recite the identity of that thing which will defeat them. Finally, Winston answers O’Brien but this time he utters a different word ‘yes’ to reply O’Brien’s question “do you consider yourself a man?”. O’Brien does not like this daring and concrete answer; therefore, he molests him with a series of harsh and insensitive utterances. He begins with a conditional sentence (if you are a man, ...). This style of speaking simply shows that O’Brien does not agree with this and it is Winston’s personal view about himself and thus he terminates this view by emphasizing that he is ‘the last man’, his kind is ‘extinct’, he is ‘alone’, he is ‘outside history’ and he is ‘non-existent’. O’Brien does not like Winston’s manner of speaking and thus he speaks roughly to hush him.

Throughout the conversation, the struggle between O’Brien and Winston to control the situation continues. Although O’Brien has power and he speaks harshly and more confidently, he cannot completely control the situation because Winston takes his turns and tries to answer his
opponent’s questions and abusive remarks. Winston cannot take power, but he resists and he does not yield easily. Both of them use language as the ultimate weapon to attack, defend and perform counter-attacks. O’Brien manipulates offensive and insulting words and sentences but cannot alter Winston’s disbelief in the invalidity of the state that the party wants to establish. On the contrary, Winston speaks calmly and avoids using rude words because he knows that he will face physical torture.

The final extract which is explored here in this study is a conversation between O’Brien and Winston which occurs during the last stage of the investigation. The physical and the psychological tortures Winston received have weakened him as O’Brien says, “You are improving” (Orwell: 282), but O’Brien believes that they should take some other steps to completely control Winston’s mind especially when he says he hates big brother when O’Brien asks him, “What are your true feelings towards big brother?” (Ibid). This conversation takes place in Room 101. The final stage of the interrogation is carried out in this inexplicable room. Something strange and horrific will happen to the prisoners in it; therefore, only mentioning its name is enough to crumple the opponents of the party. This dialogue shows how Winston is defeated and obliged even to betray his beloved, Julia, without inflicting physical torture on him.

‘In your case,’ said O’Brien, ‘the worst thing in the world happens to be rats.’
A sort of premonitory tremor, a fear of he was not certain what, had passed through Winston as soon as he caught his first glimpse of the cage. But at this moment the meaning of the mask-like attachment in front of it suddenly sank into him. His bowels seemed to turn to water.
‘You can’t do that!’ he cried out in a high cracked voice. ‘You couldn’t, you couldn’t! It’s impossible.’
‘Do you remember,’ said O’Brien, ‘the moment of panic that used to occur in your dreams? There was a wall of blackness in front of you, and a roaring sound in your ears. There was something terrible on the other side of the wall. You knew that you knew what it was, but you dared not drag it into the open. It was the rats that were on the other side of the wall.’
‘O’Brien!’ said Winston, making an effort to control his voice. ‘You know this is not necessary. What is it that you want me to do?’
O’Brien made no direct answer. When he spoke it was in the schoolmasterish manner that he sometimes affected. He looked thoughtfully into the distance, as though he were addressing an audience somewhere behind Winston’s back.
‘By itself,’ he said, ‘pain is not always enough. There are occasions when a human being will stand out against pain, even to the point of death. But for everyone there is something unendurable — something that cannot be contemplated. Courage and cowardice are not involved. If you are falling from a height it is not cowardly to clutch at a rope. If you have come up from deep water it is not cowardly to fill your lungs with air. It is merely an instinct which cannot be destroyed. It is the same with the rats. For you, they are unendurable. They are a form of pressure that you cannot withstand, even if you wished to. You will do what is required of you.’
‘But what is it, what is it? How can I do it if I don’t know what it is?’

(Orwell, 283-284)
O’Brien explains to Winston that the captives will face the worst thing in Room 101 and it varies from one person to another. In Winston’s case, as O’Brien says, it is rats. He already knows that Winston has musophobia (phobic fear of mice and rats). O’Brien uses the rats to frighten Winston, but he does not really inflict physical punishment on him. In fact, the presence of the rats and the way O’Brien describes what the rats can do to Winston completely ruin him.

O’Brien, in his first utterance, employs present simple tense to indicate a future action. For instance, he says (….happens to be rats). This utterance is related to the first part of the sentence (in your case). If he simply says (is rats), it may mean Winston is afraid of rats and it is a fact, but he says (happens to be) which surely means that using rats is among the methods that the party intends to exploit against Winston. Winston understands this implication and now he knows the mysterious creatures hidden in the cage are rats. Thinking of the rats, he shakes involuntarily (A sort of premonitory tremor, a fear of he was not certain what, had passed through Winston as soon as he caught his first glimpse of the cage).

Thinking of the dreadful creature, Winston cries out hysterically (You can’t do that!’ he cried out in a high cracked voice. ‘You couldn’t, you couldn’t! It’s impossible). Winston, at first, does not want to believe that O’Brien may punish him so mercilessly and thus he uses (can’t) which contains a kind of positivity that the punishment will not happen in the future. This positivity is followed by a hypothesis. Although he is totally confused at the sight of the cage, his repetition of (couldn’t) twice indicates that the party can do anything to control the opponents and thus the torture is hypothetical. Finally, Winston utters (It’s impossible) to invalidate the hypothesis and also persuade himself that such kind of torture cannot be imposed to him. Of course, O’Brien understands this feeling very well and he produces a series of utterances reminding Winston that he cannot endure rats even in his dreams. O’Brien psychologically tortures him when he mentions this dream; he tells him that his dreams will come true. In his dream, a man told him that they will meet in a place where there is no darkness and in another dream he meets a woman in his golden country and they make love and stand against the party. These dreams have come true; he meets O’Brien in Ministry of Love, a place without darkness, and he also meets Julia and falls in love with her. Now it is time for the other dream which is related to rats to come true. The distance between Winston and the rats is only one meter. If Winston puts his face in the cage, in that part designed for this purpose, and O’Brien opens it and sets the rats onto him, this dream will also come true.

Winston sees seriousness in O’Brien’s speech; therefore, he attempts to avoid the risk by talking to him and showing willingness to do anything that the party wants him to do. With great difficulty, he could control his panic and speak. His utterance starts with citing O’Brien’s name “O’Brien!” His is too confused to continue without a break. The name is followed by an exclamation mark obviously for two purposes: first he tries to recollect his courage and speak firmly lest his shaky voice should reveal his inner feeling, and secondly he wants to draw O’Brien’s attention and to persuade him to listen to him as he will say something significant. He
achieves his first aim since he utters two sentences fluently without hesitation, a statement and a question, “You know this is not necessary. What is it that you want me to do?” Regarding the second aim, he fails as O’Brien is in power and he decides what is necessary and what is not, and he senselessly ignores Winston’s question because it does not show his total readiness to do whatever the party tells him and he said that due to his fear. O’Brien realizes that Winston is too weak to resist, but he wants him to surrender to the Party’s wishes willingly not out of dread as he says, “When finally you surrender to us, it must be of your own free will” (Orwell: 255).

O’Brien does not tell Winston what the Party wants from him since there is not a certain task that Winston should perform. In fact, the Party attempts to own Winston and thus he will be a submissive member and a slave who only knows “yes, sir”. In the previous extract, Winston had self-confidence and argued with O’Brien about the failure or success of the Party, but now he gives in and he is waiting for O’Brien to inform him his duties. O’Brien feels this change and realizes that the final stage of the remedial treatment has been carried out successfully as he previously told Winston that there are three stages in his reintegration “there is learning, there is understanding, and there is acceptance” (Orwell: 260).

Speaking in a “schoolmasterish manner”, O’Brien indirectly tells Winston that even if he can endure pains and torture, they can get him since they know that there is something that he cannot endure. He clearly refers to the rats and he also implies that the Party has complete knowledge and awareness about its opponents; therefore, it knows how to control them. Again Winston asks what he should do “But what is it, what is it? How can I do it if I don’t know what it is?”. As usual, O’Brien does not answer because he believes that the faithful and obedient party members know their duties very well. Instead of replying the question, O’Brien brings the cage closer and Winston loses his mind and cries out “Do it to Julia! Do it to Julia! Not me! Julia! I don’t care what you do to her. Tear her face off, strip her to the bones. Not me! Julia! Not me!” (Orwell: 286).

This result is satisfactory for O’Brien and thus he ends the process. Previously, they punished him and degraded him as O’Brien says, “You have been kicked and flogged and insulted” (Ibid. 273), but Winston still resists saying, “I have not betrayed Julia” (Ibid.). He was proud of this since it meant, for him, that his mind was still his own and the party did not have power over it. But now he has done it; he betrayed his most beloved and dearest mate and hence no pride has left in him. In Part Three, Chapter 4, Winston states that he hates Big Brother and this statement ends him in Room 101, and O’Brien emphasizes that he must love Big Brother. Although Winston does not say this, O’Brien is certain that if Winston betrays his beloved, he will do anything he is required of. In this way, he achieves his aims and cures Winston from any fatal ideas which can harm the Party.
Conclusions

In a totalitarian system, people should be either with the regime or against it. The supporters become obedient members and the opponents are the threats which should be wiped out. The regime believes that such inhabitants are like harmful weeds and thus they must be picked up. To get rid of the individuals who reject the system’s reign, the regime takes several dangerous steps and uses various methods of torture.

Beside exploiting technologies and training the juniors to spy on people and inflicting fatal physical torment on the thought to be enemies of the state, the totalitarian system which rules Oceania practices severe psychological torture through language. Language is directly used as a device to oppress the individuals in that state created by Orwell. In 1984, the regime has invented Newspeak; a language should be spoken by the people for communication. This language limits thinking and disables argument over crucial social and political issues since it has a very limited number of words. The minds of the people are locked up as they cannot find words to express their real feelings towards the terrible conditions they live in.

Another form of coercion performed by language becomes apparent in the dialogues occur between O’Brien and Winston during the investigation process. If physical torture destroys the body, the regime needs to impose psychological ordeal to ruin the spirit and morale of the opponents and in this regard language serves the system best to achieve this aim. O’Brien utilizes certain dictions to offend and humiliate Winston who represents the minds and the voices that refuse to carry the yoke of Big Brother. O’Brien’s speeches have great negative effects on Winston since he must say what pleases the government not what he believes to be the truth, he must speak only when he utters for the good of the system; otherwise, he will be rigorously beaten and he must answer every asked questions, but he may not get answers for his questions because “the question of what mankind wants, needs, or deserves is irrelevant to the members of the ruling party in 1984; all they care about is preserving and increasing their own power” (Horan, 2007). Winston endures the pain of the broken bones, the kicks and the punches, but he cannot bear the fears felt in the words articulated by O’Brien and thus he collapses and surrenders.
References


