

**VPS, GOODTHINK, UNWOMEN AND DEMOXIE:
MORPHOLOGICAL NEOLOGISMS
IN FOUR DYSTOPIAN NOVELS**

**SPV, BIENPENSAR, NO-MUJERES Y DEMOXIE:
NEOLOGISMOS MORFOLÓGICOS EN CUATRO
NOVELAS DISTÓPICAS**

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Abstract

In this paper I analyse the neologisms used in four dystopian novels —Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) and Dave Eggers’s *The Circle* (2013)— from a morphological point of view. Lexical innovation is accounted for in the light of three criteria: types of neologisms according to morphological analysis, fields of use, and motivations for their creation. It is concluded that the shared reasons behind the use of neologisms built by means of word-formation devices (derivation, composition and shortening) are basically pragmatic and manipulative, and that, as part of discourse, the new lexical items thus created become efficient tools, since they provide a hint of authenticity in the fictional worlds portrayed and contribute to the critical and didactic quality of dystopian narrative.

Keywords: dystopia, manipulation, morphology, neologisms, realism.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es llevar a cabo un análisis de los neologismos empleados en cuatro novelas distópicas —*Brave New World* (1932) de Aldous Huxley,

Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949) de George Orwell, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) de Margaret Atwood y *The Circle* (2013) de Dave Eggers— desde un punto de vista morfológico. La innovación léxica se estudiará teniendo en cuenta tres criterios: tipos de neologismos de acuerdo con su análisis morfológico, con sus esferas de uso y con las motivaciones para su creación. Se concluye que las razones que estas obras comparten para emplear neologismos contruidos por medio de mecanismos de formación de palabras (derivación, composición y abreviación) son básicamente pragmáticas y manipulativas, y que, como parte del discurso, los nuevos elementos léxicos se convierten en herramientas eficientes, ya que proporcionan autenticidad a los mundos ficticios que se presentan y contribuyen al carácter crítico y didáctico de la narrativa distópica.

Palabras clave: distopía, manipulación, morfología, neologismos, realismo.

1. Introduction

In an article on future languages in dystopian novels, Gorman L. Beauchamp accurately notes that

two problems 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. (1974: 464)

In his view, George Orwell manages to solve these problems successfully in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In his development of *Newspeak*, he provides “a convincing illusion of linguistic change that reflects the political/technological realities of [...] nightmare futures” (1974: 474). Language is simplified, regularised, deprived of all variety or richness and, in general, forced into a uniformity which parallels a rigidly controlled state. However, Beauchamp also remarks that most “dystopian fantasies” fail to create a future language, that is, a language that reflects “the specific reality of the projected future” (1974: 463). He mentions Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* as an example, a novel which is set about 600 years into the future but whose language is “indistinguishable from our own, and thus anachronistic” (1974: 463).

The present paper takes as its starting point Beauchamp’s remarks on the failure of most dystopian novels to create plausible languages that successfully embody human development, and concurs with Millward’s (2007) rejection of Beauchamp’s assertion in her dissertation on the language of dystopian narrative: Millward’s analysis of “speculative language” (the language of the future in dystopia) argues “not only that dystopia, as a genre, is remarkably successful in its attempts to create

elements of a ‘future language’, but also that, in doing so, it reflects the ‘specific reality’ of the future” (2007: 44). While it is agreed that most dystopian novels are anachronistic in their use of language, it can also be posited that a few of them actually try to reflect social, political, economic, scientific or technological changes by resorting to a fair number of neologisms,¹ and Millward (2007) actually states that dystopia succeeds in presenting a future language by resorting to neologising strategies. In Millward’s words, dystopia is “an accelerated microcosmic representation of the process of language change, presenting new language for novel concepts” (2007: 45).

Accordingly, this paper analyses the neologisms used in four dystopian novels covering a time span of approximately eighty years: Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) and Dave Eggers’s *The Circle* (2013). For the sake of simplicity, the following abbreviations will be used to refer to the novels: BNW (*Brave New World*), 1984, HT (*The Handmaid’s Tale*) and TC (*The Circle*).

These novels were selected firstly because of their treatment of topics of everlasting interest: language as an instrument to shape reality, totalitarian regimes, human life controlled by science and technology, women’s rights over their bodies, the tyranny of social media and the loss of privacy. Secondly, and most importantly, the choice was made on the grounds of the quantity of neologisms identified in the novels, the focus being on those new items created by means of productive word-formation devices. It is evident that traditional word-formation devices (affixation, compounding, and shortening devices such as blending or initialisation) are resorted to for practical reasons, since the new items must be understandable by the intended readers and the items thus built often preserve recognisable parts of already existing words, which eases interpretation. As Millward (2007: 114) notes, dystopian neologism maintains “a perceptible connection with [...] the world from which it extrapolatively emerges” and is never “completely detached from the language of base-reality (or, at least, the author’s historical space-time)” (2007: 117); therefore, it “closely mirrors the word-formation processes which occur in natural language” (2007: 112). At the same time, the introduction of “alien words” is an estranging strategy which emphasizes “the ‘otherness’ of the society that produces them” (Meyers 1980: 7).

Since what is intended here is a linguistic analysis of the word-formation devices used in the novels, the present study relates to a number of articles offering morphological accounts of the language of literary works or TV series (see, for instance, Mandala 2007; Li and Shi 2015; and Vincent and Clarke 2017, among others). Yet the objectives of this study rather go along the lines of morphological stylistics and Fowler’s (1986; 1995) “linguistic criticism”, which entails the view

of language as a tool that interprets reality, preserves the prevailing order and suits the needs of dominant groups. The analysis is carried out under the premise that the new items thus created provide a realistic and efficient touch in the authors' portraits of possible futures, following Britton's (1970: 342) remark that "new words normally emerge in response to the need for novel, precise and economical communication" and that "in most cases [...] words are formed by well-established means". Those "means" are also identified by Stockwell (2000) in his corpus-based analysis of the language of science fiction, which includes a classification of types of neologisms: creations, borrowings, derivations, compounds, shortenings and inflectional extensions.

Lexical innovation in the novels under study will be accounted for by considering the features they share with respect to three criteria: the types of neologisms according to morphological analysis (word-formation devices), their fields of use (advertising, entertainment, scientific and technological development, government and politics, etc.), and the motivations for their creation. A mainly descriptive section will comprise both morphological devices and their fields of use in the novels. It will be followed by an interpretive section devoted to the reasons for the use of the morphological neologisms previously described. The morphological analysis is comprehensive in terms of the types and subtypes of word-formation devices used in the texts analysed, and includes most of the examples that occur in the novels (only a few examples which illustrate types already exemplified have been left aside due to space limitations). The linguistic approach taken up here is somewhat different from the views commonly adopted in the literature that discusses these works. Concerning 1984 and BNW, numerous accounts of the novels are focused on what makes them illustrative examples of the dystopian genre (Hadomi 1987; Claeys 2010), embracing a philosophical view (Garrett Izzo and Kirkpatrick 2008) or highlighting their satirical quality (Fowler 1995; Seed 2005). The manipulative use of *Newspeak* to restrain thought in 1984 has often been examined in the light of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, according to which the structure of a language shapes the speakers' conceptions of the world (Chilton 1988; Fowler 1995). The use of *Newspeak* as a method of mind control through language and as an instrument for politics and the media to hide truths has been reviewed in the literature (Lewis and Moss 1983; Stansky 1983) and is also discussed in the present study, albeit from a morphological perspective. Babae et al. (2015: 66) referring to HT describe it as a "feminist satire of totalitarianism", and it has commonly been explored within the framework of women's studies (Ehrenreich 1986; Malak 1987; Freibert 1988; Howells 1996, 2006; Cavalcanti 2000). Lastly, TC is seen as a "satirical utopia" which tackles the issues of "the increasing corporate ownership of privacy" (Atwood 2013: par. 4) and "the tyranny of public opinion [...] amplified [...] via the Internet" (2013: par. 5).

Ullman (2013: par. 4) describes the novel as a “potential dystopia” about “the tyranny of transparency, personhood defined as perpetual presence in social networks” and “our lives under the constant surveillance of the government”. Centred on all-powerful social media and the Internet, the novel offers an accurate caricature of technological totalitarianism.

2. Dystopian Literature: Aims and Topics

The following section provides a brief framework for the account of newly coined words in the remaining sections. They offer an overview of the main objectives and themes of dystopian narrative and outline how language, and therefore new words, contribute to developing such aims and topics.

According to Baldick (2008: 100), dystopia is a term applied to fictional works depicting any “alarmingly unpleasant imaginary world, usually of the projected future”. Dystopian writing is described as a “significant form of science-fiction and of modern satire”. An outstanding feature of dystopian literature is its critical quality: dystopian authors exaggerate the future to denounce the present, and their aim is not plausibility but hyperbole intended to attack current tendencies (Weiss 2009). Accordingly,

dystopian literature [...] constitutes a critique of existing social conditions or political systems, either through critical examination of the utopian premises [...] or through the imaginative extension of those conditions and systems into different contexts that more clearly reveal their flaws and contradictions. (Booker 1994a: 3)

Dystopia is therefore “a critical genre that makes us aware of human manipulation through technological advances in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries” (Babae et al. 2015: 65). As noted by Booker (1994b), Huxley’s and Orwell’s novels are well-known examples of dystopian narrative in the twentieth century, both linked to the social and political issues of their time and critical in their approach to the societies they depict.

Another feature of dystopian literature which is closely linked to criticism is its didactic spirit: as Sisk (1997: 162) explains, when “a writer warns of a reality that may not necessarily exist, but which, the author fears, could come about if no action is taken, this fulfills the genre’s didactic mission”. Millward (2007) agrees with Sisk when she remarks that “these narratives unapologetically promulgate diverse warnings—cautions against rash and reckless continuance of present trends in numerous areas— yet have essentially one primal objective: to prevent their envisioned future from becoming a reality” (2007: 34-35).

In view of these main aims of dystopian literature (to criticise and moralise), the use of “anachronistic” language (or a language which is not as evolved as it should be in the future worlds depicted) can be regarded as a licence to help readers connect the realities portrayed with their own lives and appreciate the criticism of present situations. In those cases, neologisms appear as handy tools to provide a touch of verisimilitude: in agreement with Coupland’s (2007) multidimensional notion of authenticity, neologisms reflect how languages really are and their natural development, and are thus, like vernaculars, “the product of natural [...] linguistic change” (2007: 181), since new times call for new names.

Concerning the topics developed in dystopian narrative, Quinn (2006: 433) describes “anti-utopian” or “dystopian” novels as depicting the future “as a nightmare world of state or corporate control and of de-humanized mechanization”. Vieira (2010: 18) states that dystopian discourse focuses on two ideas: “totalitarianism” and “the idea of scientific and technological changes which, instead of impelling humanity to prosper, has sometimes been instrumental in the establishment of dictatorships”. Some common themes of dystopian fiction are summarised by Witalec (2003: par.1), and it is possible to see them all developed in the novels under analysis: “mastery of nature —to the point that it [nature] becomes barren, or turns against humankind; technological advances that enslave humans or regiment their lives; the mandatory division of people in society into castes or groups with specialized functions”. In dystopian fiction science and technology actually contribute to enslaving people instead of helping them and making them free. As will be seen, this tyranny of scientific and technological development is accurately shown in the ample number of neologisms related to those fields in the novels analysed.

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3. Non-Morphological Devices: Neosemy and Phonetic Respelling

Before starting the morphological account of newly coined words in the works under study, it must be noted that there are two devices which fall outside word-formation but which should be mentioned because they are also valuable linguistic resources in the novels: neosemy, or semantic neology, and respelling.

The term “neoseme” refers to “new meanings attributed to already existing words” (Munat 2007: 170-171). Neosemy is actually a process by means of which a word acquires one or several new meanings in the course of time. While it is true that new items arise to name new realities, it is also evident that old items can get given new meanings with the same aim. This process of semantic development which takes place in real languages also occurs in the works analysed, and provides

them with a tinge of realism. A few examples of old words acquiring new meanings in the novels are, for instance, 1984: *vaporize* (kill, or more accurately, erase from existence); TC: *clarification* (the process by means of which a politician agrees to wear a *SeeChange* camera that allows live-stream), *settlers* (Circle staff moving onto the premises permanently) and *retinal interface* (a device implanted in the eye to interact via the Internet); and HT: *Eyes* (government spies), *Angels* (the soldiers of the republic), *salvaging* (execution), and *Holy Rollers* (originally, members of religious sects who express their fervour in an emotional way; in the novel, a derogatory nickname for the cylindrical machines that print automatic prayers and say them out loud).

Examples of phonetic respelling can be found in 1984: *Miniluv*, *IngSoc* (see Subsection 4.3.1.), and in TC: *TruYou* (a system that combines users' profiles, payment systems, passwords, email accounts, user names and preferences into one single identity) or *LuvLuv* (a program that scans the net to find information about potential mates), both examples of a combination of reduplication (partial or total) and respelling. Reduplicatives,² as Mattiello (2013: 141) notes, are mainly used "for expressive, playful or aesthetic effects", while the device of respelling is useful in the world of advertising to provide names for consumer goods: it is designed to call attention to the items, avoid trademark problems, connect with vernacular languages (with the way people actually speak), and eventually connect with customers by showing proximity.

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4. Morphological Analysis of Neologisms: Devices and Fields of Use

As noted before, the use of word-formation devices to build neologisms is a resource of languages to adjust to the new times. A parallel with the items used in the novels can be established by looking at current examples of such newly coined words: for instance, the compound *FaceTime* is a trademark that names an application to make video calls using an iPhone or other Apple devices, and one example of innovative prefixation is *post-truth*, which denotes "circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief" (*Oxford Living Dictionaries*). The prefix *post-* here acquires a new nuance of meaning: 'belonging to a time in which the base has been left behind as unimportant or irrelevant'.

As will be seen in the subsections that follow, the novels analysed make use of these devices in a way that mirrors the real world, and they primarily do so in order to satisfy pragmatic needs. In Algeo's words, "when there are new things to talk about, we need new words to name them" (1991: 14). New denominations are

needed for new ways in which people socialise, communicate and entertain themselves, and also for new concepts related to political, scientific, technological and ideological changes. However, as will be explained later, at a deeper level new items are also used as instruments to build and maintain desirable states of affairs.

4.1. Derivation: Prefixation and Suffixation

Millward (2007: 116) notes that derivation is “particularly productive in the formation of Newspeak terms”. Accordingly, the addition of affixes is particularly resorted to when the new language (*Newspeak*) tries to simplify and regularise inefficient *Oldspeak*, eliminating redundant or dangerous words and therefore the unorthodox thoughts that lie behind them. The obscure ministerial jargon used for internal communication is an abbreviated form of *Newspeak* combining the use of affixes, written abbreviations, clippings³ and clipped compounds (see Subsection 4.3.1.). In this jargon the principle of narrowing thought by simplifying language is carried to extremes, but in the latest version of *Newspeak* gathered in dictionaries it is also possible to verify how *Oldspeak* is simplified in terms of affixation, with new affixes being added to all types of bases⁴ and old affixes replacing existing affixes and acquiring their meanings.

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Regarding prefixes, for example, the appendix of 1984 specifies that the new prefixes *plus-* (‘very’) and *doubleplus-* (‘extremely’) can be added to any base to strengthen its meaning. They are identified in items such as *plusfull*, *pluscold*, *doubleplusungood* or *doubleplusridiculous*. The prefixes *ante-* (‘before’) and *post-* (‘after’), and the new prefixes *up-* and *down-* are also made productive by being added to “almost any word” (1984: 315), as in *antefiling*: ‘before filing’, *antegetting*, or in the prefixed clipping *upsub*: “submit to higher authority” (1984: 47).

In BNW, the prefixes of degree or size *super-* (‘above, more than’) and *hyper-* (‘extreme(ly)’) in *super-cello* (where *cello* is also a clipping from *violoncello*) and *hyper-violin* underline the apparently superior quality of the instruments that produce synthetic music in contrast with standard music. The prefix *arch-* (‘chief, principal, highest’) occurs in *Arch-Community-Songster* (a parodic equivalent to Archbishop), and there are also the prefixes *pan-* (‘all, worldwide’) and *neo-* (‘new’) in *pan-glandular* and *Neo-Pavlovian* (the latter referring to the rooms where children are conditioned through electroshock to hate books and flowers, which fosters blind consumerism).

Concerning negative prefixes, *mal-* (‘wrongly, badly’) is used in 1984: *malreported* or *malquoted* (‘misquoted’), together with *un-*, which, in accordance with the regularising nature of *Newspeak*, is attached to adjectives, verbs and nouns (*ungood*, *unproceed*, *unperson*). In their treatment of the negative prefixes *a-*, *dis-*, *in-*, *non-* and *un-*, Bauer and Huddleston (2002) note that *a-* and *dis-* are rarely used to

create new words and *in-* is no longer productive, whereas *non-* is still fairly productive and *un-* is the most productive. They state, however, that *un-* is “rare with nouns” (*unease, unemployment, unrest*), while *non-* is “the most productive negative prefix for nouns” (*non-student, non-payment*). In spite of this, the prefix *un-* is registered in 1984 *unperson* and in HT it also occurs in the nouns *unbaby* and *unwoman*. Why is *un-* used instead of *non-* in these items? Bauer and Huddleston also point out that “forms with *non-* are emotively neutral and non-gradable” whereas “those with *un-* may convey [...] gradability” (2002: 1689). Besides, *un-* can provide the meaning of “removal” in verbs formed out of nouns (*unmask*). In the cases under study, *baby, woman* and *person* become gradable qualities, and *un-* adds an emotional sense of removal. In that way, *unbaby* is a person whose quality of being a baby has been removed because he/she is imperfect; *unperson* is a person whose existence is denied or ignored for political or ideological reasons, so the quality of being a person is removed; and *unwoman* is a person deprived of the quality of being a woman because she cannot be a mother, and motherhood is the only feature that defines a woman in the republic of Gilead. *Non-woman* (like *non-human*) would simply mean someone who is not a woman, but in *unwoman* we see women deprived of their womanhood by a theocratic government which identifies women with potential or effective mothers. As regards suffixation, several types of suffixes can be identified in the works under study:

- Suffixes to form denominal nouns, for example *-ship* (‘status, condition’) in BNW: *Fordship* (patterned after *Lordship*, since Ford is the new god); diminutive, affectionate or informal *-y/-ie* in TC: *Homie* (a program where a phone scans the house for bar codes and orders supplies if necessary), and BNW: *feelies* (patterned after *movies*), that is, feeling pictures, in which you cannot only see but feel the experience thanks to the tactile effects and the scent organs; *-er* (a suffix with several meanings, for instance, ‘inhabitant of the base’) in TC: *Circlers* (employees at the *Circle*: the denomination is quite convenient since a lot of them often sleep or actually live in the Circle’s premises); and *-(i)an* (‘related to, adherent to’), which is commonly added to proper nouns (Bauer and Huddleston 2002), as in BNW: *Fordian, Neo-Pavlovian* or *Malthusian*.
- Suffixes to form deadjectival nouns, like *-ness* (‘quality, state of being’) in BNW: *fordliness* (coined after *godliness*).
- Suffixes to form deverbal nouns, such as agentive *-er/-or* in 1984: *goodthinker* and BNW: *Assistant Predesignator* (someone in charge of assigning humans to castes), and *-(e)ry* (‘place of activity’) in BNW: *singery* (a place where people gather together in a pseudo-religious fashion to sing, take drugs and have sex).

- Suffixes to form denominal adjectives, such as *-ly* ('having the qualities of') in TC: *Circly* ('typical of the *Circlers*'), and BNW: *fordliness*. Also, in accordance with the regularising rules of *Newspeak*, in 1984 adjectives are created by adding *-ful* ('having, displaying') to nouns (*speedful*: 'quick').
- Suffixes to form denominal verbs, like *-ify* ('to make into') in BNW: *Bokanovskify*, a process by which identical human beings are obtained from a single fertilised egg, coined after Bokanovsky, the person who supposedly developed the process.
- Suffixes to form denominal adverbs: the suffix *-wise* in 1984 is added to nouns and adjectives to form regular adverbs replacing *-ly*, as in *speedwise* ('quickly') and *goodwise* ('well').

4.2. Compounding

Compounding is described by Bauer (1988: 239) as "the formation of new lexemes by adjoining two or more lexemes". Millward (2007) notes the occurrence of "multi-word compounds" in dystopian language, that is, "the combination of two or more known words into neosemic multi-word units" (2007: 122). She remarks that "these novel linguistic amalgamations do not exist outside of the text world", so they are "intimately bound up" with it. However, they are "constructed from linguistic tokens existing in the reader's reality", so they keep the connection with "the world beyond the text" (2007: 122). "Multi-word lexical items" like *tractor beam* are also mentioned by Stockwell (2000) under the category of compounds; he states that they are very common in science fiction because of their descriptive power and the reminiscence of a scientific register.

In 1984 there is an extensive use of compounding to name new realities and actions related to the political and ideological situation depicted. In fact, according to the novel's Appendix, the so-called "B vocabulary" of *Newspeak* contained words "deliberately constructed for political purposes" which "were in all cases compound words" (1984: 316-17). The resulting item must be easily pronounceable and can function indistinctly as a noun or as a verb if required, for example *goodthink* ("orthodoxy" or "to think in an orthodox manner", 1984: 317). Other examples of compounds are *Newspeak* (the new simplified language promoted by the government), *Oldspeak* (the old language: English), *doublethink* (to hold two contradictory beliefs simultaneously), *thoughtcrime* (a crime consisting in holding dangerous thoughts against the Party), *sexcrime* (any type of immoral behaviour), *ownlife* ("individualism", "eccentricity", "a taste for solitude", 1984: 85), *facecrime* ("to wear an improper expression on your face", 1984: 65), *crimestop* (the ability to prevent dangerous thoughts), etc. Some compounds are euphemistic (*joycamp*: forced-labour camp), and others can have contradictory

meanings (*duckspeak* means to quack like a duck, and it can be an insult or a compliment; when applied to Party members, *blackwhite* is the positive ability to believe that black is white, and applied to opponents of the regime it is the negative action of claiming that black is white). There is also a compound that incorporates a combining form:⁵ *telescreen*, an invention which is both a television and a surveillance camera. We come across different types of compounds regarding the category of the two bases involved: noun + noun (*joycamp*, *facecrime*, *sexcrime*); adjective + noun (*ownlife*, *goodsex*: morally accepted sexual behaviour); adjective/adverb + verb (*doublethink*, *Newspeak*, *Oldspeak*, *goodthink*, *oldthink*: to have old-fashioned ideas, probably contrary to the Party); and noun + verb (*duckspeak*, *crimestop*, *bellyfeel*: to believe something enthusiastically).

In BNW compounds name new appliances and forms of entertainment, for instance, *scent organ* (an organ that produces smells instead of sounds), and *electromagnetic golf* or *escalator squash*, complex sports requiring a lot of equipment which are made popular in order to increase consumerism. The term *hypnopaedia* (sleep-learning), a neoclassical compound⁶ formed by joining Greek *hypno* ('sleep') and *paideia* ('education') deserves special attention; it refers to the method of teaching children the principles of World State society (such as class distinctions) in their sleep.

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A few examples of compounds naming new devices or facilities can also be found in HT, for instance *Soul Scrolls* (the name of a store selling prayers printed to order on rolls of paper), *Emerge van* (a van carrying doctors and medical equipment to birthings), and *Red Centre* (a re-education facility which prepares Handmaids for their future role as child-bearers; the name is particularly suitable since Handmaids dress in red, which symbolises fertility). The last two items include shortened forms of 'emergency' and 're-education' (see 4.3.1. below).

Compounding is extensively used in TC to provide names of computer programs and inventions developed by the Circle staff, for example, *ChildTrack* (a system of chips embedded in children's ankles to prevent abduction), *SeeChange* (portable cameras that allow Internet viewers to see and hear things everywhere in real time), *fingerprint ink* (ink only visible on paper which is used to sign with fingerprints), and *YouthRank* (a score obtained by students based on tests, their school rank, etc.). There are also new inventions by people who expect to be hired by the Circle, such as *SeeYou* (a program that scans people and identifies those with previous convictions) and *SoulSearch* (a program to locate fugitives from justice). Other compounds name *Circlers'* routines, activities or facilities: *Borrow Room* (a department where the company staff can borrow items of equipment for entertainment), *Dream Friday* (the day new inventions are presented to the *Circlers*), and *Inner Circle* and *Outer Circle* (the social contacts of *Circlers* inside and outside the company).

As can be seen, life at the Circle fosters its own vocabulary, which sustains a private world (a utopian Silicon Valley) and reinforces the contrast between *Circlers* (the group in power) and outsiders. In the Circle everything is better; outside there is nothing but chaos and collapse: “outside the walls of the Circle, all was noise and struggle, failure and filth. But here, all had been perfected” (TC: 31). In line with this exclusivity nurtured by a privileged elite, in TC there are programs, services and routines which are named using compounds where the word *circle* is recurrently employed as a kind of pseudo-prefix meaning ‘belonging to the Circle’, for instance *CircleSearch* (a program to locate *Circlers* on campus), *CircleMoney* (a system to send online purchases through the Circle and avoid using paper currency), *CircleSurveys* (surveys answered by *Circlers* about their preferences, habits and buying plans), and *CircleJerk*, a dismissive term to describe *Circlers* which is used by a character who resents the intrusion of technology in his life. He sees *Circlers* as people who post comments on things and events instead of experiencing them. Similarly, in BNW there are quite a few compounds which include the word *surrogate* as if it was a pseudo-suffix with the meaning ‘substitute’ or ‘imitation’, as in *oboe-surrogate*, *champagne-surrogate*, *blood-surrogate*, *morocco-surrogate* (imitation leather), *beef-surrogate*, *Carrara-surrogate* and *Violent Passion Surrogate*. The recurrent presence of those compounds highlights the ironic contrast between living in an apparently perfect world and using artificial substitutes for true feelings, food or materials.

4.3. Shortening

4.3.1. *Blends and Clipped Compounds*

Blending is defined by Bauer and Huddleston (2002: 1636) as “the formation of a word from a sequence of two bases with reduction of one or both at the boundary between them”. Clipped compounds are a fuzzy category between blends and compounds, the dividing line between both being very subtle (Mattiello 2013: 116). Blends and clipped compounds result from simultaneously shortening and compounding with different degrees of abbreviation and phonic and graphic integration of their constituents. From this point of view, in prototypical blends the constituents overlap (*motel*: ‘motor’ + ‘hotel’), whereas in prototypical clipped compounds (*sitcom*: ‘situation’ + ‘comedy’) constituents are concatenated. Lehrer (1996: 361) identifies these constituents as “splinters”, and defines them as “parts of words in blends which are intended to be recognised as belonging to a target word but which are not independent formatives”.

The following are examples of blends identified in the novels under study: BNW: *zippyjamas* combines ‘zippy’ + ‘pyjamas’ to name one-piece pyjamas equipped

with a zip, ‘zippy’ being a derived word from British English ‘zip’ (from ‘zipper’) which is built after the pattern of ‘creamy’ (meaning ‘having a zip’); BNW: *taxicopter* (‘taxi’ + ‘helicopter’); BNW: *sexophonists* (‘sex’ + ‘saxophonists’, musicians at a synthetic music club); HT: *particicution* (‘participation’ + ‘execution’), an act of communal (participative) execution; and TC: *demoxie* (‘democracy’ + ‘moxie’, an informal American English word meaning determination, initiative or aggressive energy). The notion of active democracy becomes a goal for the Circle. They think that in order to improve democracy it is necessary to have easy and quick access to people’s decisions, and that they should directly vote on all the issues that affect their lives by setting up a Circle account.

Concerning clipped compounds, in 1984 it is possible to pinpoint a few examples, such as *IngSoc* (‘English Socialism’, where the first splinter is also respelled), and the names of different governmental departments, like *RecDep* (‘Records department’) and *FicDep* (‘Fiction department’). Less central cases of clipped compounds combine whole words or combining forms with splinters or clippings:

— Clipped compounds of word + splinter/clipping:

In 1984 we find *thinkpol* (the thought police, in charge of chasing people committing *thoughtcrimes*), *prolefeed* (entertainment for the *proles* supplied by the Party, where *prole* is an existing clipping from *proletariat*), and the names of the Ministries: *Minitrue* (the Ministry of Truth, concerned with hiding inconvenient truths), *Miniluv* (the Ministry of Love, respelled as *luv*, which encourages hatred of the enemy and of unorthodox beliefs), *Minipax* (the Ministry of Peace, which keeps the country in a permanent state of war) and *Miniplenty* (the Ministry of Plenty, which fosters scarcity). In BNW *zippycamiknicks* (one-piece female underwear) combines the derived word ‘zippy’ with ‘camisole’ and ‘knickers’. In TC we come across *face-rec* (‘to use a program which recognises faces’) and *PartiRank* (‘participation rank’, sometimes called “popularity rank”, a measure of the user’s activity in the *Inner Circle*. In HT we can see *prayvaganza* (‘pray’ + ‘extravaganza’), a lavish ceremony of common prayer; *economwife* (‘economy’ + ‘wife’: *economwives* are ‘economical’ wives because they perform several roles at the same time: domestic, social and reproductive); and *identipass* (‘identity’ + ‘pass’, a kind of identity card). Lastly, in HT there are also several items including the splinter ‘*compu-*’ (from ‘computer’), for example *compucheck* (a scanning device to read credit cards and prices), *compunumber* (a credit registration number), *compucard* (a credit card), and *computalk* (electronic communication), where ‘*compu-*’ becomes a kind of pseudo-prefix with the meaning ‘computerised’ or ‘mechanised’, in much the same way as the splinter *-holic* from ‘alcoholic’

provides the meaning ‘addict’ to items like *workaholic* or *shopaholic*. Items with recurrent splinters are actually described by Bauer (1998: 413) as “compromises between derivatives and compounds”.

- Clipped compounds of combining form + splinter/clipping:
In 1984 there is the item *Pornosec* (department in charge of producing pornographic material for the proles), where the combining form *porn(o)-* (from Greek *pornē*: ‘prostitute’) is joined to the splinter *sec* from ‘section’. In BNW we find *vibro-vac massage* (‘vibro-vac(uum)’ massage, from Latin *vibrare* ‘shake’), and in HT there is *Gyn Ed.*: education in womanhood, from Greek *gyne* ‘woman’.
- Clipped compounds of combining form + word:
In HT there are two items including the combining form *porn(o)-*: *pornomarts* (‘porn markets’, specialised stores selling pornography) and *pornicorners* (‘porn corners’, sex shops or brothels located on street corners). We also come across *birthmobile* (‘birth’ + ‘(auto)mobile’), a vehicle transporting Handmaids to birthings: the item follows the pattern of similar words containing the combining form ‘-mobile’ (from Latin *mobilis* via French), such as *Popemobile*, *Batmobile*, *snowmobile* and *bookmobile*, i.e., ‘a mobile library’.

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4.3.2. Initialisms: Acronyms and Alphabetisms

The term initialism here refers to those items built out of the initial letters of previously existing words, thus illustrating the maximum degree of shortening of a previous constituent. Bauer and Huddleston (2002: 1632) describe prototypical initialisms as “bases formed by combining the initial letters of a sequence of words”. Two types of initialisms can be distinguished: alphabetisms and acronyms. The former are “abbreviations using the initial letters of the words of an expression, pronounced by the alphanumeric names of the letters” (Algeo 1991: 9). The latter are words “coined from the initial letters of the words in a name, title or phrase” (Bauer 1988: 237). Acronyms are “pronounced like ordinary words” (Bauer and Huddleston 2002: 1633).

Examples of initialisation are only registered in *Brave New World* and *The Circle*. The following are instances of both alphabetisms and alphanumeric initialisms (combinations of letters and numbers): in *Brave New World* we come across *A.F.* (‘after Ford’, used with dates); *VPS* treatment (‘Violent Passion Surrogate’, an adrenaline treatment to prevent inconvenient bursts of feeling); *YWFA* (‘Young Women’s Fordian Association’ patterned after *YWCA* ‘Young Women’s Christian Association’); and *DHC* (‘Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning’); in *The Circle* we find *CE* (‘Customer Experience’, the company department dealing with advertisers’ queries); *CR* (‘Conversion Rate’: *Circlers* are expected to reach high

conversion rates by recommending goods for purchase); *AG* ('Additional Guidance', a system that gives directions to the users of *SeeChange* cameras); *T2K* (probably from 'top two thousand', a nickname for a selected group of *Circlers* with a *PartiRank* of 2,000; the letter *k* from 'kilo' is used as shorthand for 'thousand'); and *PPT* (a motto spread around the Circle premises meaning 'Passion, Participation and Transparency'). Concerning acronyms, there is one example in *The Circle*: *CHAD* ('Complete Health Data Program', a device that gathers real-time data on the *Circlers*' health). Following a trend in acronym formation, this acronym is purposely built so that it coincides with an already existing word (in this case a proper name, with a view to humanising the computer program).

5. Motivations

The reasons behind the use of neologisms built by means of word-formation devices in the novels under analysis are essentially pragmatic, euphemistic and manipulative. As already mentioned, these items provide a touch of verisimilitude: new times bring about new concepts and inventions (1984 *telescreen*, HT *compucard*, BNW *supercello*, TC *CHAD*). Shortened items are also convenient because they speed up communication saving time and space. These new items are handy tags that prevent long circumlocutions: thus in TC a system to prevent the abductions of children by embedding chips in their ankles is conveniently called *ChildTrack*, and in BNW the 'Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning' is just called *DHC*.

At a deeper level, however, we find euphemistic and manipulative motivations: new amalgamated items hide unpleasant truths and actually narrow thought; the speakers don't reflect upon the whole meaning or the connotations of the original items (which may be disagreeable, uncomfortable, improper or even forbidden) because the parts form a new solid block. The meaning is narrowed or subtly altered by physically reducing or compressing the constituents, thus also cutting out inconvenient associations. For example, in BNW the item *VPS* hides an illicit experience of violent passion, and the obscure combination *hypnopaedia* conceals indoctrination and blind acceptance of a caste system that keeps the scientific elite (*Alphas* and *Alpha Plus* intellectuals) in power. In HT *particicution* is a ceremony where Handmaids, who are seen as holy vessels, are duly avenged if one of them is profaned, but "participative execution" recalls a bloody event where a human being is mercilessly murdered by a frantic crowd. In 1984 *Recdep* is just a department in the Ministry of Truth, "short, quick, arising as few connotations as possible" (1984: 320). The "Records Department" keeps track of all events and people, and also alters them and makes them disappear if necessary. In TC a *SeeChange* camera allows you to see and hear things everywhere in real time. It's a

welcome change in how things are seen which springs from the belief that, for everyone's benefit, everything that happens must be known and that there must be total accountability and transparency. What lies behind the notion and the name is actually the end of privacy and freedom, and a tyrannical monopoly of a private company that controls all the information. *NeighborWatch* is a system that prevents crime with neighbours' assistance, but it also entails that nobody can enter a neighbourhood without being registered by the system. *PastPerfect* tracks information about a user's past on the web to fill in gaps in personal history and thus "perfect" the past. In fact, it is another way of controlling users' lives by getting all the data related to them, both pleasant and unpleasant. Even *Demoxie* (the Circle's plan for improving democracy, fostering people's participation in decisions that affect their lives by voting through a Circle account) actually conceals the totalitarian control of a private company which handles all the information and restrains people's freedom by forcing them to express their opinion.

Discourse is a manipulative tool that keeps elites in command, and neologisms contribute to the creation of that discourse. Moreover, in line with Foucault's (1980) tenets, elites possess the truth (the knowledge) and that knowledge keeps them in power. That power is maintained because it "traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse" (1980: 119). In 1984 *Newspeak* is artificially developed by the Party so that it can remain in control. In BNW the mantras conveyed through hypnopædia ensure the hegemony of privileged castes whose scientific and technological advances keep people content, surrounded by pleasure and oblivion. In HT a discourse nurturing religious despotism and the subjugation of women keeps the military elite in power. In TC dozens of inventions conveniently tagged with apparently harmless names (*PastPerfect*, *SeeYou*) pretend to benefit the population but actually deprive them of privacy and freedom, and maintain a corporation of science and technology nerds as a privileged elite that intends to control all the information and thus hold all the power.

Lastly, the recurrent use of the same device to create neologisms can also be interpreted as a contribution to the critical quality of dystopian narrative, that is, ample use is aimed at denouncing. Thus, for instance, the frequent use of respelled items and compressed compounds in names of products (*TruYou*, *TruYouth*, *LuvLuv*, *ChildTrack*, *SoulSearch*) in TC calls attention to the slavery of hi-tech consumerism; the repeated use of derivatives built out of Ford in BNW (*Fordship*, *Fordliness*, *Fordian*) and the initialism *A.F.* are reminders of the ubiquitous presence of Ford as the new mundane god in a hedonistic society; and the extensive use of compressed compounds (*doublethink*, *sexcrime*) and clipped compounds (*Ingsoc*, *Minipax*) in 1984 warns of the dangers of mind- and language-moulding dictatorships.

6. Conclusion

The language used in most dystopian novels set in future times can be described as anachronistic in the sense that it is too similar to the language of the intended readers, and therefore not sufficiently evolved considering the prospective worlds these novels depict. However, this anachronism can be regarded as an artistic licence which helps readers to connect the realities portrayed with their own lives and to appreciate the criticism of present situations. The language must be understandable for practical reasons but evolution must be noticed, and this is done by resorting to newly coined words, which name new concepts and thus satisfy pragmatic needs. As we have outlined in this paper, the creation of new words is an efficient instrument to cater for those needs, since neologisms name new realities: actions (HT: *prayvaganza*, TC: *Demoxie*, 1984: *doublethink*), objects (HT: *compunumber*, BNW: *feclies*, 1984: *telescreen*, TC: *CHAD*) and beings (HT: *econowife*, TC: *Circler*, 1984: *unperson*). Dystopian neologisms contribute to building an alternative reality in the text world while keeping the connections with the world beyond the text. This is in line with the didactic power of dystopian fiction, which lies in its ability “to enable the reader to make enlightening connections between the fictional world and his or her own base-reality” (Millward 2007: 105).

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At a deeper level, neologisms can also be used to mask inconvenient realities, to constrain and guide the thoughts of individuals or, in sum, to build and maintain a desirable status quo. In that way, languages (and therefore neologisms) can hide uncomfortable truths (1984: *joycamp*, HT: *particicution*) and even go one step further. The ministerial jargon of 1984 and the jargon of *Circlers* in TC (*PartiRank*, *CR*, *T2K*) keep groups apart, provide exclusivity and perpetuate a useful division of people. In HT, a totalitarian theocracy is reinforced by an oppressive language which debases women (*unwoman*, *econowives*, *Gyn Ed*) and which is permeated with biblical allusions (‘Blessed be the fruit’). In BNW the scientific and technological knowledge produced by the upper castes (*feclies*, *Bokanovskify*, *VPS*, *hypnopædia*) keep people satisfied and apparently happy, but actually enslaved. Neologisms complement the discourse of which they form part, a discourse that is taken as universal truth because, in Foucault’s terms, it is produced by the groups in power (the Party, the Alphas, the military elite, or the Circle), who, in turn, are maintained in control because they produce knowledge and discourse. When this role of newly coined words becomes apparent, it is possible to see how they add to the critical quality of dystopian fiction.

Languages can exert control over minds with political aims, guide people to orthodox states of mind or keep them appeased and content, and this manipulative

discourse is developed with the help of neologisms. As long as they form part of discourse, new lexical items created using word-formation devices become suitable tools that respond to the needs mentioned above, as well as providing a hint of authenticity in the fictional worlds portrayed and contributing to the critical and didactic nature of dystopian narrative.

Acknowledgements

Research funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, ERDF Funds and Xunta de Galicia (FFI2015-64057-P, ED431D 2017/09, ED431B 2018/05). These grants are hereby gratefully acknowledged.

Notes

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¹. Neologisms are described by Stockwell (2000) and Millward (2007) as “new words” or “new word forms”. Algeo (1991: 2) defines a new word as “a form or the use of a form not recorded in general dictionaries”. He therefore includes in his definition both neologisms and neosemes (see Section 3).

². Reduplicatives are regarded by Bauer and Huddleston (2002: 1666) as “phonologically motivated compounds”. Mattiello (2013: 141) classifies reduplicatives as instances of extra-grammatical morphology together with abbreviations or blends, and defines them as “words obtained by repeating sounds, syllables or words, either exactly, as in *boo-boo*, or with alternation of vowels (*chit-chat*), consonants (*teeny-weeny*), or groups of sounds (*creepy-crawly*)”.

³. Bauer and Huddleston (2002: 134) define clipping as an operation involving

“cutting off part of an existing word or phrase to leave a phonologically shorter sequence”, as in *lab* from *laboratory*.

⁴. A base is “any item to which affixes may be added” (Bauer 1988: 238), for example, *comfort* is the base for *comfortable*, and *comfortable* is the base for *uncomfortable*.

⁵. Combining forms are “allomorphs of full words that are used in neoclassical compounds” (Lehrer 1996: 362), such as *geo-* in *geology*. They are often elements of Latin or Greek origin. Neoclassical compounding is the process of forming words “where at least one of the component bases is a combining form” (Bauer and Huddleston 2002: 1661). These new combinations “are not attested in the original languages” (Plag 2003: 155).

⁶. See Note 5.

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Received: 3 October 2018

Accepted: 22 March 2019