

DISCURSIVE DYSTOPIAS: LANGUAGE, POWER, AND IDEOLOGY IN ORWELL, ATWOOD, AND EVANS

Author **Diana Alexandra Avram (Șandru)**

1 Decembrie 1918 University of Alba Iulia , diana-alexandra.avram@uab.ro [ORCID: 0000-0003-1688-2557](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1688-2557)

Abstract:

This article examines language as a mechanism of ideological control in George Orwell's 1984, Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale, and Vyvyan Evans' The Babel Apocalypse. Using a semantic-pragmatic framework, it explores how linguistic features, such as lexical innovation, naming conventions, ritualised speech acts, and silences, function as instruments of power, identity formation, and resistance within these dystopian societies. Through comparative analysis, the study identifies common strategies including vocabulary reduction, semantic narrowing, symbolic re-signification, and algorithmically mediated communication. These techniques not only uphold authoritarian regimes but also shape subjectivity by limiting what can be thought, said, or expressed.

Drawing on critical discourse analysis, speech act theory, and Foucauldian concepts of power/knowledge, the article reveals how language operates as an active site of control, coercion, and subversion. Despite reflecting distinct ideological and technological contexts, the novels converge in portraying language as paramount to sustaining and occasionally unravelling authoritarian power. Finally, the article advocates for integrative approaches that combine close textual analysis with corpus-based methods, offering new insights into the evolving relationship between fiction, discourse, and political reality.

Keywords: *Dystopian discourse; Semantic-pragmatic analysis; Language and ideology; Linguistic control; Orwell, Atwood, Evans.*