

Order and Chaos in Young Adult Science Fiction: A Critical Stylistic Analysis

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Abstract

With the challenges and revolutionary changes in the world, it is essential that the sources of social power direct the communities towards the right path that leads to a brighter future, especially when it comes to young adults. Young adults represent a critical social group that needs special attention. Therefore, the present paper tackles one of the fascinating literary genres to young adults; young adult science fiction. The paper attempts to investigate how the social themes of order and chaos are delivered to young adults in young adult science fiction through conducting a critical stylistic analysis of certain extracts in selected young adult science fiction novels. The linguistic tool employed for the critical stylistic analysis is negation for its prevalent use in the discourse, in general, and for its textual effectiveness in rendering hidden ideologies, whether intended or unconscious.

Keywords: chaos, critical stylistics, dystopia, Ernst Cline, James Dashner, negation, order, science fiction, young adults

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1.0 Introduction

Critical linguists have built on systemic functional linguistics (SFL) to draw the ideology of the text or the producer of that text. SFL is a field of study that has evolved since the 1960s. Social construction is an essential issue, and style has a significant function in the social process. It describes language use in context, and shows how settings and language have a historical and cultural manifestation of meaning. SFL concentrates on the functional part of the initial communication process, and the way the language functions in a different context (Young & Harrison, 2004, p.2). Halliday (1994) has focused on the idea that language cannot be isolated from meaning. SFL shifts the interest from structural analysis only and mixes the social context with the linguistic features of a clause or a sentence. SFL has added the social dimension and focused on the way language affects individuals in a particular context. Halliday's (1994) theory of SFL depends on three primary language metafunctions. Metafunction is a means of echoing experience as well as expressing this experience. Halliday (1994) categorizes them into ideational and interpersonal, which lead to the textual function that paves the way for the former two metafunctions. Ideational meaning refers to the experience of the world, and it expresses actions, events, processes of consciousness, and relations. Interpersonal sense occurs when a speaker or writer uses language to perform something. The act of the clause represents the process of interaction, such as offers, commands, etc. The third metafunction represents the textual meaning that is related to the preceding and the following context as well as the context of the situation (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999).

The linguistic behavior of language users can reveal the relations of power by discursive practices (through which ideological power occurs) to discover social critique (Young & Harrison, 2004, p. 3). For establishing the ideological assumption of the text, Fowler et al. (1979) suggest a practical analysis. The first way to such analysis is the grammar of transitivity, which provides particular characteristics to show the semantics of the text. The second one is the grammar of modality, which reveals the linguistic structures to examine the writer's attitude about the world. The third way is the syntactic transformation that consists of nominalization and passivization. The fourth one is classification, which produces the linguistic arrangement of the world. The fifth one is composed of coherence, order, unity, and it is related to discourse (Fowler et al., 1979).

Within the domain of critical linguistics, the theory of critical discourse analysis (CDA) has appeared with principles and aims that abide by the essential principles of critical linguistics. CDA is an approach that analyzes the interrelations between the exploitation of language and the political or social context. It focuses on cultural aspects of society like gender, the prejudice of particular people, problems of identity, etc. These topics and others exist within the social process and the way they occur in language. In such a way, CDA explores language construction and communication through the social process (van Dijk, 1998). In CDA, the linguistic structure occurs in the textual analysis. It also exposes the ideology hidden within the social practices. It reveals linguistic characteristics and discovers the extreme ideologies of a particular group over the other. All this happens through the text that exhibits human experiences. There are particular relationships among powers through which, ideologies can reflect themselves in discourse

(Paltridge, 2012, p. 186). The primary practitioners in the CDA field are Norman Fairclough, Tuan Van Dijk, Roth Wodak, and others (Waugh et al., 2016, p. 75).

Critical stylistics is a method of analyzing texts to reveal the ideological construction depending on transitivity as well as other textual practices. Jeffries (2010) has tried to set tools to give an overall model of analysis within critical stylistics. In that way, critical stylistics tries to link CDA, the critique of ideology, and stylistics that is mainly interested in literary texts. In the same manner, critical stylistics brings together the essential functions that a particular text adopts to show reality (Jeffries, 2010, p. 14). Critical stylistics does not support a political view. It shows that most documents are ideologically written whether the author has intended them to be so or not (Jeffries, 2016, p.160). Jeffries has proposed ten tools as textual- conceptual functions to set her model of critical stylistics. They include the following: (1) “Naming and Describing”, (2) “Representing Actions/Events/States”, (3) “Equating and Contrasting”, (4) “Exemplifying and Enumerating”, (5) “Prioritizing”, (6) “Assuming and Implying”, (7) “Negating”, (8) “Hypothesizing”, (9) “Presenting the Speech and Thoughts of other Participants” and (10) “Representing Time, Space and Society” (Jeffries, 2010).

The present paper attempts to investigate negating as a critical stylistic tool for ideology extraction in the young adult science fiction novels. Of the ten tools of Jeffries’ essential model of critical stylistics, negating is used for its ideological significance. A great deal of communication occurs through “constructing and interpreting non- existent versions of the world which are created for many different reasons” (Jeffries, 2010, p. 106).

Young adult science fiction is a sub-genre of science fiction of a specific age- group; from 13 to 19 years old. It has appeared due to different factors in history. These factors have led to advances in science and futuristic speculations. Among these factors are the industrial growth and globalization. Publishing houses have contributed to flourishing the genre. In that way, young adult science fiction has become a matter of trade. Besides, some of these novels have been part of the material studied in schools due to their educational aims. Young adult science fiction has always addressed human moral issues (Coats, 2011, p.317).

Young adults represent a susceptible age group with highly receptive minds. Their future doctrine, beliefs, ideologies, attitudes, and ways of conduct exist within the frame of their adolescence. Science fiction stories represent the most exciting genre for young adults. This genre enables them to indulge in a world, different from their own. They can see new and extraordinary events and creatures. Thus, science fiction genre takes part in shaping their future visions depending on the ideologies embedded in the story texts. In the present time, the world is going through a critical time of order and chaos. Therefore, one of the most valid young adult characteristics is rebelliousness. Order, for example, is only obeyed by the sever force of law. Therefore, the present paper tends to conduct a critical stylistic analysis to investigate the ideologies embedded in the texts of the young adult science fiction stories towards order and chaos.

Young adult science fiction genre has social power that might affect and shape the ideologies of the society in general and the young adults in particular. Science fiction is usually studied and analyzed from a literary point of view. It means that critics and reviewers read such genre from a literary perspective. The linguistic perspective of this genre has not received its due importance yet. Therefore, the present paper tries to bridge the gap between literature and linguistics within the domain of young adult science fiction texts.

The data selected for analysis are James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* (2009) and Ernst Cline's *Ready Player One* (2011). Both of these novels are dystopian young adult science fiction that criticize the world of the young adults and that what makes them fall prey in their struggle in the stories. Besides, both of these novels were presented as movies, and this has raised their social effect and prevalence.

In *The Maze Runner*, Thomas, the protagonist, awakes in an elevator. He has lost the memories of his past. There are other boys, and all of them do not have any memories. The boys have managed their lives in that they have built a society in which order should prevail to lead healthy life. The boys live in The Glade, and hope to discover a way to escape through the Maze, which encloses their living community. The Grievers guard the maze. There are two groups of boys. Some want to challenge the risk, and the others want to stay as they are. Finally, Thomas and another boy manage to escape through learning the codes. However, some lose their lives, and the protagonist meets the Wicked, who has designed the Maze. Then, after killing the wicked, a leader gives an account about the world outside the Maze, and he tries to save the children from the Wicked's idea. The boys receive a letter from the Chancellor of the Maze telling them to be ready for another Maze in the future.

Ready Player One revolves around a teenager, James Halliday. He lives in a virtual world in the form of a video game that he has created to overcome the chaos and difficulties in the real world. Many people try to live in a virtual world to escape such circumstances. Wade (Halliday in reality) becomes one of the Gunters in the game. He hunts inside the Oasis (the game, which is a virtual program system) to find the key for the Easter egg. James Halliday has designed The Oasis before his death. The one who finds the key will get Halliday's estate, and gain power by getting Halliday's company (Gregarious Simulation Systems). It is not easy to find the clue for the key. Wade enters the Oasis by the help of his school. Finally, Wade manages to get the third gate and have Halliday's Easter egg. Wade's life has changed forever, and he wins a significant amount of money in that fake world.

The analysis tackles certain extracts in the novels. The extracts carry the themes of order and chaos. The aim is to see how both themes act as social principles through critical stylistic analysis. For this study, order and chaos are general themes that can be detected by objective linguistic tools. They are not ordinary specific literary themes that a literary genre may elicit. As for order, it includes all aspects of healthy, secure, and satisfying way of living that occurs through

law, love, support, reality, and humanity in general. Chaos is associated with crime, injustice, escape from facing serious situations, hatred, and negative actions and feelings that could harm humanity in general. The semantic macrostructure and the semantic microstructure are the detecting linguistic tools for finding out the themes of order and chaos. These linguistic tools are linguistically efficacious for such a purpose. They help to make clear the essential and global gist of discourse (van Dijk, 1980).

1. 1 The Method

1.1.1 Critical Stylistics

Critical stylistics, according to Jeffries (2010), analyzes texts in terms of textual conceptual meaning to uncover the ideological aspects of a text. It aims to analyze both literary and non-literary texts to reveal how texts show the reality to the reader or the hearer. Jeffries has identified some defects in adopting the CDA approach for analysis. Therefore, she has tried to set a comprehensive method by constructing a systematic model of analysis that combines tools from stylistics as well as critical linguistics. Jeffries attempts to exhibit the linguistic features of the text to show the workings that show the ideology of a text (Jeffries, 2010, pp. 13-14). Jeffries (2016) demonstrates that critical stylistics depends on textual conceptual functions that reveal a level of meaning between linguistic structure and its use in context. Halliday's ideational metafunction is the focus of Jeffries' critical stylistics. It elucidates how language is part of creating world-views. The textual conceptual functions assist in exposing the ideology hidden in a text by linking linguistic structure to higher-level conceptual meaning (Jeffries, 2016, p.160). The textual conceptual functions proposed by Jeffries (2010, 2016) are as follows:

a) Naming and Describing

Names can call and name things in different ways. A name is not limited to the reference of the noun. It also includes the words that accompany the nouns, the co-texts like adjectives, postmodifiers, clauses, and the nominalized verbs (Jeffries, 2016, p.164).

b) Representing Actions/Events/States

This textual- conceptual function represents the selection of transitivity. It shows the semantic function of a noun phrase concerning verbal elements. It reveals how a speaker or a writer expresses the situation according to actions, events, or states. In such a way, it aims to show who shoulders the responsibility of the resulted action (Jeffries, 2016, p.164).

c) Equating and Contrasting

Jeffries (2010) sets syntactic triggers to create equivalence and opposition. It is one way to explain a text by different words, and it is a way to find out peculiar work in context (Jeffries, 2016, p.164).

d) Exemplifying and Enumerating

Exemplifying and enumerating are related and hard to differentiate. Therefore, the readers need to employ "pragmatic inferencing" to identify them. The difference between them is that when exemplifying occurs in a text, the list is indicative. With enumerating, the list in a text is comprehensive (Jeffries, 2016, p.164).

e) Prioritizing

Prioritizing is found when text producers prioritize parts of the content of the utterance. It occurs in subordination, information structure, cleft constructions, and some other syntactic clues (Jeffries, 2016, p.165).

f) Assuming and Implying

It is associated with presupposition and implicature. There are some features of implicature, which fit into the interpersonal (pragmatic) level of meaning. Besides, there are textual triggers of presupposition (assuming) and implicature that are not contextual (Jeffries, 2016, p.165).

g) Negating

It is the way of building non-existent worlds (specifically narrative) to promote and enhance an ideology, like fearing, desiring, or believing, for a reader. It evokes positive and negative reality (Jeffries, 2016, p.165).

h) Hypothesizing

Presenting hypothetical reality can be shown by adopting the modality system. Halliday (1994) thinks that the modal system fits in the interpersonal metafunctions of language. However, Jeffries (2016) thinks that modality is ideational in its textual conceptual meaning. It can show the impact on the reader or hearer in different ways (Jeffries, 2016, p.165).

i) Presenting the Speech and Thoughts of other Participants

This tool shows others speech and thought through the division of direct and indirect speech and direct and indirect thought. According to Jeffries (2016, p. 166), it is related to the textual function.

j) Representing Time, Space and Society

It shows how the text organizes its deictic center and draws the reader's attention towards that deictic center. In that way, a reader or hearer takes a view situation from within the text, and so they become more sensitive to textual ideology (Jeffries, 2016, p.166).

In the present paper, the tool selected for analysis is the textual conceptual metafunction of negating. It attempts to show a non-existent world that fits the imaginary and inspirational world most usually created in the stories of science fiction, in general, and those directed to young adults, in particular.

1.1.2 Negating

According to Jeffries (2016), Negating can portray mental images of the negated ideology. Negating works on the textual level between the semantic and the pragmatic meanings. Texts exploit syntactic triggers like the particle *not* with the dummy auxiliary verbs *do*, *does*, *did* and other auxiliaries, or *no* as a modifier of nouns and the adverbial *never*. Negating occurs in the morphological usage of *un*, *in*, *im*, etc., and lexical verbs like *fail* and *lack* (Jeffries, 2016, p.165).

1.1.3 The Semantic Macrostructure and Semantic Microstructure

The process of detecting the extracts (where the themes of order and chaos exist) has mainly relied on linguistic bases. The first-level analysis depends on the application of the semantic macrostructure and semantic microstructure. Both semantic macrostructure and semantic microstructure have a significant role in different domains of human studies, and social sciences. They are associated with studying discourse interaction and cognition.

Semantic macrostructure refers to *global semantics* or *global topics*. It is vital for communication and interaction and aims at discerning how people, consciously or unconsciously, comprehend the structures by explaining them or showing their behaviors towards them. Moreover, people display their reactions toward these structures depending on social manifestations. This way, people rely on cognitive aspects to understand the discourse of the semantic macrostructure (Van Dijk, 1980, p. 1). It is concerned with what discourse is globally about making clear the global coherence in a text or talk. Semantic macrostructures “define what speakers, organizations, and groups orient towards and that has a great impact on further discourse and action” (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 102). In a way, “they are often expressed in discourse, for instance in titles, headlines, summaries, abstracts, thematic sentences or conclusions” to arrive at the intended semantic macrostructure (intended theme) (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 102). The semantic macrostructure is an essential general introductory manifestation in any analysis. It gives a general overall idea of what a text is all about and dominates many other domains of discourse and its interpretation (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 102).

The semantic microstructure refers to *local meaning* or *local topic*. It is recognized by “the meaning of words ..., the structures of propositions, and coherence and other relations between propositions” (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 103). Analysis of semantic microstructure comes next to the review of semantic macrostructure. The investigation occurs in examining the words and modes of expressions since the selection of words is vital in distinguishing the text, which transfers specific meaning to actions and subjects. The vocabulary chosen to convey ideas, concepts, and meanings is dealt with in semantic and linguistic analysis (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 103).

For the importance of semantic microstructures in making thematic inferences and ideology deduction, Van Dijk (2002) states:

[A]nalysis of local meanings will try to relate the selection of propositions expressed in text and talk to underlying event and context models as well as socially shared (group) representations such as knowledge, attitudes and ideologies. Thus... local meaning ... will typically be a function of the ideologically based event models (p. 231).

As is mentioned earlier, the idea of semantic macrostructure is relative and exists only in term of the idea of semantic microstructure. The semantic structure of complicated information must be

described relatively to other semantic structures that are ordinary or local level like the meaning of words, phrases, clauses, and simple actions. Therefore, the local information represents microstructures, and the analysis requires the microstructure to understand the macrostructures that are global semantic information and linked relatively to microstructures of discourse, cognition, and interaction. It might be then that the same type of information may work as microstructure or macrostructure; they depend on the contribution in the text (Van Dijk, 1980, p 13).

1.2 Analysis of Data

1.2.1 The Theme of Order

Extract 1

Alby spoke in a loud, almost ceremonious voice, looking at **no one** and everyone at the same time. “Ben of the Builders, you’ve been sentenced to Banishment for the attempted murder of Thomas the Newbie. The Keepers have spoken, and their word **ain’t** changing. And you **ain’t** coming back. Ever.” A long pause. “Keepers, take your place on the Banishment Pole.” Thomas **hated** that his link to Ben was being made public—**hated** the responsibility he felt (Dashner, 2006, p. 93).

In the extract above, the theme of order is entailed in the semantic macrostructure manifested by the propositions of:

- “Ben of the Builders, you’ve been sentenced to Banishment for the attempted murder of Thomas the Newbie”;
- “The Keepers have spoken, and their word ain’t changing”;
- “And you ain’t coming back. Ever”;
- “Keepers, take your place on the Banishment Pole”;

On the semantic microstructure level, the order exists in the lexicalization of “ceremonious”, “sentenced to Banishment” and “Keepers have spoken”.

Both the semantic macrostructure and the semantic microstructure suggest the meaning of order through the execution of law and banishment of guilty people to achieve order and stability.

As far as negation is concerned, there is lexical negation in the use of “no one” (indicating the eyesight direction of Alby). He was announcing the judgment and banishment of Ben. This event leads to the ideology of **indiscrimination** when it comes to law to achieve order. Another lexical negation is the use of “hate” to emphasize sympathy with the supposed criminal (Ben) and hatred towards maintaining justice and law execution, which could lead to torture and misery of the loving ones. Thus, the ideology of **torment** towards order is inferred. There are, also two cases of grammatical negation “their word ain’t changing” and “you ain’t coming back” referring to the firmness of the judgment made leading to the ideology of **fortitude**.

Extract 2

He backed against the tree, trying to get away from Alby, who stayed right in his face. “**No interruptions**, boy!” Alby shouted. “Whacker, **if** we told you everything, you’d die on the spot, right after you clunked your pants. Baggers’d drag you off, and you **ain’t no** good to us then, are ya?” “I **don’t** even know what you’re talking about,” Thomas said slowly, shocked at how steady his voice sounded. Newt reached out and grabbed Alby by the shoulders. “Alby, lay off a bit. You’re hurtin’ more than helpin’, ya know?” Alby let go of Thomas’s shirt and stepped back, his chest heaving with breaths. “**Ain’t** got time to be nice, Greenbean. Old life’s over, new life’s begun. Learn the rules quick, listen, **don’t** talk. You get me? (Dashner, 2006, pp. 10-11).

From a semantic macrostructure viewpoint, order entailed from the propositions of:

- “No interruptions, boy!” Alby shouted”;
- “Alby let go of Thomas’s shirt and stepped back, his chest heaving with breaths”;
- “Old life’s over, new life’s begun”;
- “Learn the rules quick, listen, don’t talk. You get me?”

More precisely, on the semantic microstructure level, the theme of order is also established in the lexicalization of “how steady his voice sounded”, “let go”, and “stepped back” which show how the situation in the extract inclines towards firmness and order.

Grammatical negation is found in “ain’t no” (doubled), “don’t” (twice), and “Ain’t”, in the speech of Alby (the leader of the situation) when he gives instructions to Thomas. Close observation of the co-text surrounding this negation, the ideology of **harshness** towards order is spotted. As for Thomas, his reply to these firm instructions (rules) came with the grammatical negation surrounded by the co-text of “I don’t even know what you’re talking about” revealing the ideology of **ignorance** for the order. Grammatical negation is also found in the conditional *if* in “Whacker, if we told you everything, you’d die on the spot” uttered by the leader Alby directing Thomas and indicating that order exists regardless of the general circumstances. Accordingly, the ideology of **ignorance** appears for the second time.

Extract 3

Every lovin’ second of every lovin’ day we spend in honor of the Maze, tryin’ to solve somethin’ that’s not shown us it has a bloody solution, ya know? And we want to show ya why **it’s not** to be messed with. Show ya why thembuggin’ walls close shut every night. Show ya why you should **never, never** find your butt out there. (Dashner, 2006, p. 38).

Order is manifested on the level of the semantic macrostructure only as it is clear in the proposition of the following sentences:

- “[I]t’s not to be messed with”;

- “walls close shut every night”;
- “you should never, never find your butt out there”.

There are three cases of negation; a grammatical one, “it’s not to be messed with”, and a lexical one, “you should never, never find your butt out there”. Integrated with the theme of order and supported by the linguistic environment, negation entails the ideology of **fortitude**.

Extract 4

People **rarely** used their real names online. Anonymity was one of the major perks of the OASIS. Inside the simulation, **no one** knew who you really were, unless you wanted them to. Much of the OASIS’s popularity and culture were built around this fact. Your real name, fingerprints, and retinal patterns were stored in your OASIS account, but Gregarious Simulation Systems kept that information encrypted and confidential. Even GSS’s own employees **couldn’t** look up an avatar’s true identity. (Cline, 2001, pp. 28-29).

This extract represents the narration of the novelist himself describing a set of rules for the virtual world of the video game (the OASIS) that Halliday, the main character, has designed. This game represents the shelter from the miseries of the real world because they can create their dream avatars in the game and live their dream life. The semantic macrostructure is the leading linguistic tool for theme extraction since order mainly exists in the propositions of almost all of the sentences in the extract. Two cases of grammatical negation, “no one” and “couldn’t”, and lexical negation, “rarely”, have existed within the enumeration of the rules that actually exist in a virtual world, which is a replacement of the real world. Thus, these are unreal rules and the order they lead to is illusory. Therefore, the ideology of **illusion** toward order seems so apparent. However, this illusory order is still providing the players with the psychological relief they miss in the real world. They can portray their avatars in the way they like. They can live the life they long for. Thus, negation can also lead to the ideology of **satisfaction**.

Extract 5

And since the buildings were just pieces of software, their design **wasn’t** limited by monetary constraints, or even by the laws of physics. So every school was a grand palace of learning, with polished marble hallways, cathedral like classrooms, zero-g gymnasiums, and virtual libraries containing every (school board-approved) book ever written.... Best of all, in the OASIS, **no one** could tell that I was fat, that I had acne, or that I wore the same shabby clothes every week. Bullies **couldn’t** pelt me with spitballs, give me atomic wedgies, or pummel me by the bike rack after school. No one could even touch me. In here, I was safe. (Cline, 2011, pp. 31- 32).

This extract indicates order that is embedded in certain propositions on the semantic macrostructure. Wade describes the ideal system and setting of his new school in the virtual world of the video game:

- “[T]heir design wasn’t limited by monetary constraints, or even by the laws of physics”;

- “[E]very school was a grand palace of learning, with polished marble hallways, cathedral like classrooms, zero-g gymnasiums, and virtual libraries containing every... book ever written”.

The two sentences above contain a set of propositions that entail the perfect design of a school in an organized, orderly secured world.

As for negation, there is grammatical negation in “their design wasn’t limited” indicating the ideology of **phantom satisfaction** since it describes a fake world. Grammatical negation also occurs in “no one could tell that I was fat” and “Bullies couldn’t pelt me with spitballs”. It indicates the ideology of **phantom security** since it eliminates social harm from a fake world but not from the real world.

Extract 6

My avatar materialized in front of my locker on the second floor of my high school—the exact spot where I’d been standing when I’d **logged out** the night before. I glanced up and down the hallway. My virtual surroundings looked almost (but **not quite**) real. Everything inside the OASIS was beautifully rendered in three dimensions. **Unless** you pulled focus and stopped to examine your surroundings more closely, it was easy to forget that everything you were seeing was computer-generated. And that was with my crappy school-issued OASIS console. I’d heard that if you accessed the simulation with a new state-of-the-art immersion rig, it was almost **impossible** to tell the OASIS from reality. (Cline, 2011, p. 27).

The semantic macrostructure representation of order is reflected in the perfection of the virtual world created in the video game, OASIS, as seen in the sentence of:

- “Everything inside the OASIS was beautifully rendered in three dimensions.”

Order also exists in the semantic microstructure employment of the sentence, which indicates the perfection of the virtual surroundings inside the OASIS:

- “My virtual surroundings looked almost (but not quite) real”;
- “[I]t was easy to forget that everything you were seeing was computer-generated”;
- “[I]t was almost impossible to tell the OASIS from reality”.

In addition, order is also expressed in “the exact spot” as a semantic microstructure representation indicating how organized that world is and one cannot go astray in it.

Lexical negation in the verb “logged out” is mainly associated with software systems; it indicates the way Wade (the speaker) gets in and out of that fake virtual world. Therefore, the ideology of **illusion** becomes clear. The other three cases of negation (“not quite”, “unless” and the lexical negation in “impossible”) have all denied truth realization that Wade is in unreal world,

when he gets rid of “focus” and stops to “examine” his surroundings. This case, he is going to get indulged in that perfectly bogus world. This way, the ideology of **reality denial** is achieved.

1.2.2 The Theme of Chaos

Extract 1

He let go of Chuck, slumped backward, trying not to look at the boy’s shirt, black with blood. He wiped the tears from his cheeks, rubbed his eyes, thinking he should be embarrassed but **not feeling** that way. Finally,...Once he was up, she **didn’t** let go, and **neither did he**. He squeezed, tried to say what he felt by doing so. **No one** else said a word, most of them staring at Chuck’s body without expression, as if they’d moved far beyond feeling. **No one** looked at Gally, breathing but still. (Dashner, 2009, p. 360).

This extract represents the killing of Chuck. He is one of the young runners and Thomas’ first friend in the Glade. He had sacrificed his life by jumping in front of the knife that Gally threw at Thomas.

Chaos exists in the semantic macrostructure in the collaboration of the propositions of most of the sentences in the extract. Chaos is in the topical meaning level of a young person, with childish amusing behavior and love of practical jokes, who was, accidentally, slaughtered by a knife that is not meant to be directed to him. This mistaken killing of an innocent, loving person portrays how chaotic the situation is.

The grammatical negation in “he should be embarrassed but not feeling that way” indicates the ideology of **denial**. Thomas is supposed to feel embarrassed by the chaos, but he is not. The two cases of negation in “she didn’t let go, and “neither did he”, show the ideology of **human correlation** in the chaotic and disastrous times. Such a relation can soothe the bitterness of chaos. In “No one else said a word” and “No one looked at Gally”, negation shows the ideology of **subservience** when nobody reacted to show the refusal of killing.

Extract 2

The woman almost seemed in a trance as she spoke, **never** taking her eyes off an indistinct spot in the distance. “The sun flares **couldn’t** have been predicted. Sun flares are normal, but these were **unprecedented** massive...**countless** miles became wastelands. Then came the sickness.” She paused, took a breath. “As the ecosystem fell apart, it became **impossible** to control the sickness— even to keep it in South America. The jungles were gone, but the insects **weren’t**.... Only the richest can be treated, **no one** can be cured.... First the delusions start, then animal instincts begin to overpower the human ones. Finally it consumes them, destroys their humanity.... (Dashner, 2009, pp. 361-362).

Chaos is embedded in the semantic macrostructure of the following:

- “The sun flares couldn’t have been predicted”;
- “Sun flares are normal, but these were unprecedented massive....”;
- “[C]ountless miles became wastelands”;
- “[I]t became impossible to control the sickness”;
- “The jungles were gone”;
- “Only the richest can be treated, no one can be cured”;
- “[T]hen animal instincts begin to overpower the human ones”;
- “[I]t consumes them”;
- “[D]estroys their humanity”.

This extract is rich with propositions that entail chaos through the portrayed chaotic situations indicated in the sentences above. Besides, chaos also exists in the lexicalization of “trance”, “indistinct spot in the distance” (inspiring a feeling of being lost) and “delusions”.

When “never” and “couldn’t” are integrated with their co- text shown above in the extract, the ideology of **being lost** becomes so apparent. The lexical negation of “unprecedented”, “countless”, “impossible” and the grammatical negation in “weren’t” and “no one” show the ideology of **hopelessness** since man does not have cure for diseases and clean and decent place for living.

Extract 3

“Order,” Newt continued. “Order. You say that bloody word over and over in your shuck head. Reason we’re all sane around here is ’cause we work our butts off and maintain order. Order’s the reason we put Ben out—**can’t** very well have loonies runnin’ around tryin’ to kill people, now can we? Order.**Last thing we need** is you screwin’ that up. (Dashner, 2009, p.102).

This is an interesting and special extract that carries the theme of chaos but on the semantic microstructure level represented by the word “order” that has appeared four times to mean the opposite (chaos). It is a far- fetched kind of order that is described as “bloody word” that made them do lots of bloody deeds to get it maintained. However, they were just trying to find the map of an illusionary maze. They were in the Maze to perform an extraordinary scientific experiment. The grammatical negation of “can’t” and the lexical negation of “last thing we need” show the ideology of **misunderstanding**. The pursue of order is pursue of chaos instead.

Extract 4

At first, I **couldn’t** understand why the media was making such a big deal of the billionaire’s death. After all, the people of Planet Earth had other concerns. The ongoing energy crisis. Catastrophic climate change. Widespread famine, poverty, and disease. Half a dozen wars. You know: “dogs and cats living together . . . mass hysteria!” Normally, the newsfeeds **didn’t** interrupt everyone’s interactive sitcoms and soap operas unless something really major had happened. Like the outbreak of

some new killer virus, or another major city vanishing in a mushroom cloud. (Cline, 2011, p. 1).

The primary manifestation of chaos is lexicalization (the semantic microstructure) represented by the expressions of “ongoing energy crisis”, “Catastrophic climate change”, “Widespread famine”, “poverty”, “disease”, “Half a dozen wars”, “mass hysteria”, “outbreak of some new killer virus” and “major city vanishing in a mushroom cloud”. The two grammatical negation cases of “couldn’t” and “didn’t” are employed to negate figuring out the way society, in general, and media, in particular, is careless of all the chaotic miseries and prefer not to “interrupt... sitcoms and soap operas” to warn people and inform them of critical issues. Thus, the ideology of **underestimation** is apparent here.

Extract 5

[H]onesty **isn't** the best policy after all. Maybe it **isn't** a good idea to tell a newly arrived human being that he's been born into a world of chaos, pain, and poverty just in time to watch everything fall to pieces. ... Luckily, I had access to the OASIS, which was like having an escape hatch into a better reality. The OASIS kept me sane. The OASIS is the setting of all my happiest childhood memories. When my mom **didn't** have to work, we would log in at the same time and play games or go on interactive storybook adventures together. She used to have to force me to log out every night, because I **never** wanted to return to the real world. (Cline, 2011, p. 18).

Chaos, here, exists through the SMA of the propositions entailed from:

- “[H]onesty isn't the best policy”;
- “Luckily, I had access to the OASIS, which was like having an escape hatch into a better reality”;
- “The OASIS kept me sane”;
- “The OASIS is the setting of all my happiest childhood memories”;
- “I never wanted to return to the real world”.

“OASIS” is a video game that has been created by the main character, Halliday, to create a perfect virtual world that is miseries free and pure. The sentences above praise game, which is a safe haven where the characters have always found the peace of mind. However, this is delusionary since it is just an escape from the real world, and the chaotic world is ironically even more highlighted when its miseries are neglected to be aggravated. There are also lexicalization entities on the semantic microstructure level that carry the theme of chaos: “world of chaos”, “pain”, “poverty” and “everything fall to pieces”.

The grammatical negation in “honesty isn't the best policy” shows how the young have the tendency of denial towards the principles of a rational world. The other three cases of negation

also deny the importance of facing reality and encourage escaping the bitter truth and hiding behind illusion leading to achieving the ideology of **reality denial**.

Extract 6

I created the OASIS because I **never** felt at home in the real world. I **didn't** know how to connect with the people there. I was afraid, for all of my life. Right up until I knew it was ending. That was when I realized, as terrifying and painful as reality can be, it's also the only place where you can find true happiness. Because reality is real. Do you understand?" ... Good," he said, giving me a wink. "**Don't** make the same mistake I did. **Don't** hide in here forever. (Cline, 2011, p. 364).

The semantic macrostructure indications of chaos are found in:

- "I never felt at home in the real world";
- "I didn't know how to connect with the people there";
- "I was afraid, for all of my life";

The propositions of the sentences above entail alienation and fear from a chaotic world where true identity and safety are lost. Moreover, the expression "terrifying and painful as reality can be" is the semantic microstructure representation of that chaotic world.

The first two cases of negation, "never" and "didn't", lead to fulfilling the ideology of **alienation** towards that uncertain real world. The other two instances of negation, "Don't" and "Don't", fulfill the **back to right** ideology when the creator of the game himself advises others not to be misguided by the illusionary perfect world.

Putting the analysis of the ideologies rendered from the two themes in a totalitarian form, the following table results:

Table 1. *The ideologies associated with the themes of order and chaos*

Order		Chaos	
Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
indiscrimination	torment	human correlation	denial
satisfaction	fortitude	back to right	subservience
	harshness		being lost
	ignorance		hopelessness
	fortitude		misunderstanding
	illusion		underestimation
	phantom satisfaction		reality denial
	phantom security		alienation
	denial		
	illusion		
	reality denial		

Conclusions

The analysis of negation as a critical stylistic device in the two young adult science fiction novels of *The Maze Runner* and *Ready Player One* has led to the following conclusions:

1. As a critical stylistic device, negation is a dutiful linguistic tool. It steers the texts in a flexible way to portray people, places, times, actions, entities and the world in general in one way rather than the other.
2. The young adult science fiction represents an ideology rich discourse that forms a two-edged sword. It deals with all aspects of life, but it mainly focuses on the digital side of life that has become a vital, fascinating issue for young adults. This digital aspect represents the gate through which writers can deeply penetrate the young adults' minds to form certain ideologies in an effective way. The unique aspect of this process is that it all happens through language that can create extraordinary worlds to attract people in general because of the uniqueness and perfection of these worlds.
3. Table (1) shows that the majority of the ideologies associated with order are negative. Fortitude, harshness, ignorance, illusion, phantom satisfaction, phantom security, denial, and reality denial are severe and critical ideologies which need attention. Young adult science fiction makes reality, law, humanity, and other domains of ordinary, secure life negative for the young adults. Dealing with such receptive minds, one needs to be so cautious that every word counts. The only two positive ideologies found are indiscrimination and satisfaction as two aspects that order provides for humanity.
4. The table also shows the considerable number of negative ideologies associated with chaos; denial, subservience, being lost, hopelessness, misunderstanding, underestimation, reality denial, and alienation. It is worth mentioning that these ideologies do not criticize chaos in a direct way. Instead, they criticize the life issues associated with the chaotic situation. These ideologies produce a dark view of life. They deliver the message that Chaos is part of the real world rather than the virtual or fake world in which the writers have usually put their characters. In other words, young adult science fiction stories employ negative ideologies to criticized many domains in the real world (in comparison to the virtual world of, for example, video games) rather that criticizing the chaotic situation itself.

This paper is a call to young adult science fiction novelists to start a new turn and redirect the tendency of the plot, characters, settings, and events. Our world is suffering from increasing rates of autism cases, suicide, ingratitude towards parents and family, crime, and many other adverse devastating social problems. Thus, let us use this young adult fascinating literary genre to

steer the social situation towards a positive direction and try to portray good deeds and genuine emotions in bright images.

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