
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Dialogic, Unfinalizable, and Heteroglossic in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954): A Bakhtinian Reading

Lect. Abbas Murad Dohan

Al-Imam Al-Kadhimi University College for Islamic Science, Iraq

Corresponding Author: Lect. Abbas Murad Dohan, **E-mail:** Abbas.murad@alkadhumi-col.edu.iq

| ABSTRACT

As a persistently profound source of inspiring ideas, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954) continues to attract researchers with novel concepts and notions to be addressed. Whenever researchers seem to have exhausted the text in critical writings and used up its possible subjects, the novel's supply of ever fresher and more original ideas seems to keep flowing. Therefore, the current research study intends to examine certain concepts such as dialogism, unfinalizability and heteroglossia in *Lord of the Flies* from a Bakhtinian perspective, which is a new approach to the novel. No research study before this one has—to the best knowledge of the researcher—addressed *Lord of the Flies* or these concepts from such an angle. As the title suggests, the present study explores the concepts mentioned earlier by examining the diversity, difference, and variety of characters in the novel, their views and ideas on numerous issues such as leadership, survival, rescue, fire, hunting, masking and the like. It employs Bakhtin's views and theorizations as a theoretical reference outline for its main argument. The analysis of the paper will address the diversity, variety and multiplicity of different views, plural opinions, and assorted narrative voices as demonstrated by the novel's characters to show their dialogic, unfinalizable and heteroglossic nature.

| KEYWORDS

Dialogism, Unfinalizability, Heteroglossia, Changing, Becoming.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 02 October 2023

PUBLISHED: 29 October 2023

DOI: 10.32996/ijts.2023.3.3.6

1. Introduction

Dialogism, unfinalizability, heteroglossia, polyphony, and carnival are the major concepts Bakhtin introduces through his theorization of language. Language is Bakhtin's main concern in which he differs from and disagrees with Saussure, formalists, and other precedent linguists. Bakhtin brings to the spotlight certain negative aspects of Saussurian linguistics, more particularly in what he calls 'abstract objectivism'. In his concept of dialogism, Bakhtin vigorously rejects the Saussurian linguistics on the grounds that it "treats language as a pure system of laws governing all phonetic, grammatical, and lexical forms that confront individual speakers as inviolable norms over which they have no control," (Holquist 41). Such an approach to language, Bakhtin further argues, "denies pre-existing norms and holds that all aspects of language can be explained in terms of each individual speaker's voluntarist intentions" (*ibid*). Bakhtin criticizes the Saussurian focus on the structure of language, the formalists' attention to form, and the traditional linguistic treatment of language as an abstract notion. His main criticism is that those traditional views and treatment of language have ignored the content of language, separated it from its context, and disregarded how people use it in social interaction.

Bakhtin opposes Saussure's and other traditional linguistic approaches for isolating language from its context—social, cultural, and the like. He argues that social, historical, or "cultural specificity is able to penetrate the otherwise abstract system of language because utterances in [language, and in] dialogism are not (as in Saussure's parole) unfettered speech" (Holquist 62). A word or an utterance is an indicative expression of a variety of contextual particulars. To quote Bakhtin, "every word gives off the scent of

a profession, a genre, a current, a party, a particular work, a particular man, and a generation, an era, a day, and an hour" (Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 354-55). Likewise, he further argues, "every word smells of the context and contexts in which it has lived its intense social life. When a writer uses language, s/he necessarily engages or responds to past and present discourses" (*ibid*). The context thus becomes an inseparable component of a word's meaning and, in broader terms, the meaning of language as well.

Bakhtin further affirms that all spoken and written forms of language are "always a dialogue, which consists of at least one speaker, one listener/respondent, and a relationship between the two" (Dobie 38). Hence, any linguistic utterance, spoken or written, "makes response to something and is calculated to be responded to in turn. It is but one link in a continuous chain of speech performances" (Farmer 3). In other words, language is characterized by dialogism and performs within a context of continuous responses, communications and interactions.

Dialogism is then an intrinsic aspect of language; it is a broader and all-inclusive characteristic of language and linguistic activity. With its "intimate relation to language" and the "epistemological claims it makes", we could say that Dialogism is necessarily a "philosophy of language" (Holquist 21, 40). That is probably why it is a central concept in Bakhtin's theories of language. Dialogism is widely recognized as the term Bakhtin uses "to designate the relation of one utterance to other utterances" (Farmer 226). In its literal meaning, dialogism means dialogue, an interaction between two speaking agents, whether in actuality or in the world of fiction. However, dialogism, as Bakhtin meant it to be, is more than a usual dialogue; it is a dialogue but one that "is a cooperative and constructive activity that leads to a new and heightened understanding of the issue at hand" (*ibid* 56). In that sense, we come to realize that dialogue and linguistic dialogic activities are what eventually create knowledge.

Hence, contrary to some misconceptions, dialogism should not be mistaken for ordinary dialogue because it is "not dialogue in the usual sense of the word, but is the context, which necessarily informs utterance" (*ibid* 226). Likewise, an utterance in a Bakhtinian sense is also "dialogic precisely in the degree to which every aspect of it is a give-and-take between the local need of a particular speaker to communicate a specific meaning, and the global requirements of language as a generalizing system," (Holquist 58). Therefore, dialogism goes beyond a written and spoken utterance. It even reaches far beyond a linguistic text as it is "not simply a textual or even an intertextual phenomenon: it reaches beyond the text as such to embrace the social world as a whole," (M. Gardiner 31). Dialogism has thus reached out to social and historical contexts. For one thing, we could now realize that "what are now engaged in the novel are diverse forms of life that are realized in competing and conflicting words," (Dentith 196). Such diverse forms of life the novel presents are nothing more than social, historical, and cultural contexts reflected through and by language.

In that vein, language is not monologic; it is dialogic. All forms of speech are dialogic, and all forms of writing are dialogic as well. They result from people's interaction in various social contexts. Within that dialogic and contextual nature, dialogism "conceives history as a constant contest between monologue and dialogue, with the possibility of reversions always present" (Holquist 72). Therefore, in language and in its aspect of dialogism, "the dialogue attains its importance because of Bakhtin's assumption that the acquisition of language is, in fact, the acquisition of the ability to think" (*ibid* 140). Such dialogic nature of language and its forms is what interests the researcher and motivates the idea of the current research paper, for language is, essentially, what defines and delimits an individual.

This dialogic nature of language and its forms not only extends to individuals but also characterizes literary works. According to Bakhtin, literary writers and works of literature beyond space and time demonstrate a state of constant dialogue and communication. Similarly, we could also say that "each monument [written utterance] carries on the work of its predecessors, polemicizing with them, expecting active, responsive understanding, and anticipating such understanding in return" (Farmer 3). Moreover, as the chief quality of language, dialogism indicates that "it is true all texts must be assumed to be interrelated" (Holquist 86). Accordingly, such polemicization between written utterances would assumingly establish a kind of communication between them that can apply to works of literature, for they are written texts, after all.

Dialogue and communication between literary works manifest themselves in the forms of shaping, influencing, and adding to one another, or they contribute to establishing a more comprehensive understanding of one another. On balance, the very existence of language necessarily entails a response to something already said and an expectation of something yet to be said. Additionally, in the context of language and dialogism, literature is commonly "seen as an activity that plays an important role in defining relations between individuals and society" (Holquist 83). Since societies and individuals are dynamic and changing, language, too, and all its forms enjoy a dynamic, growing and changing nature with each linguistic manifestation. Thus, as the best and most archetypal illustration of language, literary works, in their relationship to one another, add, respond, modify, illuminate, enlighten and become enlightened by one another.

In that order, literary works are dialogic, and literature is always in the process of changing and becoming just as people are. Hence, works of literature are unfinalizable; they are not closed or finalized but open to interpretations, meaning and understanding. Language, dialogism and literature represent a triangle of vital significance to one another. In a dialogic unfinalized context, literature is deemed valuable and important "because it affords opportunities of a unique power to explore, to teach possibilities of authorship, where authorship is understood as consummating or 'finalizing' the unsigned world into an utterance in a manner that least restricts the world's possible meanings," (Holquist 82). Whereas other understandings of literature might tell us that a literary work is finalized and unchanging, dialogism and/or unfinalizability tell us otherwise.

Unfinalizability is then another term that Bakhtin uses in relation to dialogism and the notions of changing and becoming. Bakhtin asserts, "Everything requires change and rebirth. Everything is shown in a moment of unfinalized transition" (Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* 167). I could add everyone requires change and rebirth, and everyone lives and grows through constant moments of unfinalized transitions.

Moreover, language functions within a heteroglossic nature and scope of all-inclusiveness despite any defining terms of culture, race and geography. Heteroglossia, in Bakhtin words, is "the internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups" (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 262). Bakhtin further asserts that a group of words or even a single word "in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention" (*ibid* 293). Others building on Bakhtin's theory would comment on heteroglossia further defining it as "a way of conceiving the world as made up of a roiling mass of languages, each of which has its own distinct formal markers," (Holquist 67). In other words, an individual changes the ways and manners of their speech so far as the context changes, the nature of the purpose of speaking changes, and the people to whom an individual speaks change. Therefore, whenever a listener, reader and/or context changes, such an individual not only demonstrates a variation of languages but also presents an assortment of selves. In that respect, whereas a context produces meaning, language builds relationships and influences their direction as well.

This kind of interaction and interchange of people and language in various forms of social speech is what Bakhtin calls heteroglossia. Bakhtin employs this term to indicate the way in which people mix and involve a diversity of speaking ways, different words, accents, expressions, and rhetorical strategies with one another. Such characteristics could be deemed as "the living concrete environment in which the consciousness of the verbal artist lives is never unitary" (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 288). Yet, Bakhtin highlights the importance of a unifying force working in language. In fact, Bakhtin speaks of two internal forces of language in any particular utterance: "centripetal forces" and "centrifugal forces" (*ibid* 271). The centripetal force attracts things towards a central point, whereas the centrifugal force drives them farther away from the center, out in all ways. Within a heteroglossic context, I could maintain that in *Lord of the Flies*, Jack and Ralph might indicate the two operational forces of language standing for the centripetal and centrifugal forces, respectively. The comparison between Ralph and Jack would thus resemble the case of the heteroglossic language that is centrifugal and the monologic language that is centripetal.

Further explaining the heteroglossic aspect of language, Bakhtin states, "at any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word, ..., but also into languages of social groups, 'professional' and 'generic' languages, languages of generations and so forth," (*ibid*). This heteroglossic quality of language is more like a "living language because it features multiplicity and variety; it carries suggestions of different professions, age groups, and backgrounds that intersect and shape each other, generating meaning", through what Bakhtin labels "the primacy of context over text," (Dobie 38). In view of that, it could be assumed that in *Lord of the Flies*, Jack might have acted savage within an understanding of a dedicated primacy to the context of an isolated and impoverished island. To survive in such a primitive context would perhaps require a primitive philosophy and savage measures.

Besides, Bakhtin has obviously indicated his preference of the novel to poetry and its suitability to the utility of his concepts of dialogism, unfinalizability and heteroglossia. He argues that "all languages of heteroglossia dialogically interact with each other and constitute the heteroglot world in the novel, which deliberately intensifies difference between them, gives them embodied representation and dialogically opposes them to one another in unresolvable dialogues" (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 291). With relation to the novel genre, heteroglossia would also be deemed as reflection of "the fundamental other-languagedness or 'doublevoicedness' of human experience," (M. M. Gardiner 197). I could thus venture arguing that Ralph and Jack would represent such double-voicedness and the heteroglot world in *Lord of the Flies*.

2. The Primacy of Context over Text: Dialogism, Unfinalizability, and Heteroglossia in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

Dialogism is primarily an epistemology; it is not just a theory of knowledge. Rather, it is, in its essence, a hybrid: dialogism exploits the nature of language as a modeling system for the nature of existence and thus is deeply involved with

linguistics; dialogism sees social and ethical values as the means by which the fundamental I/other split articulates itself in specific situations. (Holquist 31-2)

At any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These 'languages' of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying languages. (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 291)

Since any utterance always exists in a relationship with other utterances, then all linguistic discourse, whether spoken or written, is dialogic in an existential nature. Such dialogic interaction of an utterance would also involve social, ideological, literary, historical and other aspects of it as well. Then, we would assume that no one could ever escape "this dialogic inter-orientation with the alien word that occurs in the object" simply because "concrete historical human discourse does not have this privilege" (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 279). As mentioned earlier in the introduction, an utterance also manifests a heteroglossic aspect in the form of double-voicedness or, as they call, a variety of languages. Such dialogic and heteroglossic qualities of language would, according to Bakhtin, best demonstrate themselves in the novel.

For Bakhtin, the novel through language best reveals its "dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgments and accents that form complex, ever shifting patterns" (Dobie 39). For the purposes of the study at hand, it is argued that *Lord of the Flies* assumingly entertains Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism, unfinalizability and heteroglossia through its language, the multiplicity of its characters and their experiences, their opinions and the diversity of their dialogically narrative voices presented in it. Besides, utilizing and referring to such concepts in studying the novel can also be extended to the investigation and analysis of human nature. In their multiplicity of experiences, variety of languages and diversity of views in the novel—argues the researcher—Jack, Ralph and the other boys, especially Piggy and Simon, would best demonstrate the dialogic, unfinalizable and heteroglossic aspects of the novel, and hence the nature of human beings as presented in it.

Once dialogism and heteroglossia come into the novel, they become "another's speech in another language" (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 324). However, we should not be deceived into understanding that all novels demonstrate dialogic and heteroglossic qualities. Some novelists might/could not do that. Thus, the writer who "is deaf to organic double-voicedness and to the internal dialogization of living and evolving discourse" will, in Bakhtin words, "never comprehend, or even realize, the actual possibilities and tasks of the novel as a genre" (*ibid* 327). *Lord of the Flies*, it is argued herein, demonstrates dialogic and heteroglossic qualities through its narrative dialogues and characters.

William Golding has written several narrative texts. Each fictional text uniquely stands in scope and perspectives as a "singular, original" and as "a condensed version of human experience compressed into distinctive form" (Gindin 7). Almost all critics would agree that fictional narratives written by William Golding "are dense, difficult", but they "can appeal in ways that are simpler than the complexities they reveal" (*ibid*). In *Lord of the Flies*, we could argue that the novel's characters—more particularly Ralph, Jack, Piggy and Simon—best illustrate dialogism in the novel. The novel's characters present a dialogic mosaic through their constant dialogues and through their difference and diversity in opinions, views, beliefs and backgrounds over almost every issue.

Through these characters, the novel presents a multiplicity of narrative voices that are plural, diverse and different. It does not offer one version of truth or one possibility of meaning. The novel also provides no conclusions or final rulings. In *Lord of the Flies*, the narrative closes with Jack and Ralph surviving, though at a cost for Ralph. Although others recognize the differences and diversity of the novel's characters, this recognition assigns each character a particular adjective. For them, "Ralph stands for civilization and democracy; Piggy represents intellect and rationalism; Jack signifies savagery and dictatorship; Simon is the incarnation of goodness and saintliness" (Wu 119). However, the researcher of the current study argues that the diversity of the characters' symbolic indications had better demonstrate a dialogic, unfinalizable context than just symbolic references.

The novel's characters reflect a multiplicity of narrative voices and engage in constant dialogues. Each character provides a different voice, communicates a different expression and upholds a different version of truth, reality and meaning. Jack, Ralph and the other boys apparently convey through constant dialogues "the sense of a special dialogic mode of communication with the autonomous consciousnesses of others, something never before experienced, an active dialogic penetration into the unfinalizable depths of man" (Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* 68). Their endless dialogues are primarily a response to and an anticipation of one another. In addition, such unbroken lines of dialogue produce a diversity in opinions, beliefs, backgrounds and worldviews.

In that order, Ralph signification of civilization, Piggy's indication of intellect and reason, Simon representation of religion, and Jack's embodiment of savagery all have been generated as responses to and anticipations of one another and to their immediate

context. Within dialogic perspectives, we could also assume that everything is “best understood in the context of dialogism’s emphasis on addressivity” (Holquist 47). In this case, we would suggest that the boys’ response to their context does not just come in the form of dialogues but also materializes in views and positions intended to counter-argue their addressee’s stance. Addressivity as such entails understanding existence, and understanding it “as addressed to me does not mean I am a passive receptacle into which events fall, as letters drop into mailboxes. Addressivity means rather that I am an event, the event of constantly responding to utterances from the different worlds I pass through” (*ibid*). This is how a dialogic context develops in the novel between the boys. It starts with constant dialogues in response to one another and to their context, and it concludes with shaping events.

Linking dialogism, context and addressivity together, we could realize that such a combination indicates that since consciousness is always conscious of something, existence is always the existence of something as well. More particularly, Ralph, Piggy, and Simon’s positions would not have surfaced had Jack not embraced a primitive stance. They seem to have responded to and anticipated Jack’s standpoint. They have that kind of consciousness, which is conscious of Jack’s change. They also understand that Jack’s change implies the existence of something different, something savage, as it opposes any sense of civility. Hence, when they first arrive at the island, neither Ralph nor Jack nor Piggy or Simon—or other boys for that matter—has dialogized anything on civilization or savagery, reason or religion. Their initial dialogic exchange of views begin to emerge as a response to their predicament on the island and as an anticipation of their survival and ultimate rescue. Nevertheless, as soon as they become conscious of Jack’s views and position, they begin responding to that standpoint in particularly different dialogues, views and stances.

Moreover, a dialogic novel, in Bakhtin’s words, offers “two voices, two meanings and two expressions” in its narrative discourse (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 324). *Lord of the Flies* assumingly presents the existence of two stark disparities of voices, expressions and meanings, which makes it a dialogic novel. Through the characters of Ralph and Jack, the novel communicates the starkly different voices, meanings and expressions of civilization and primitiveness, democracy and dictatorship and of the self and the other. Through their constant dialogues and ultimately practical stands on leadership and the strategy of running things on the island, for instance, Ralph and Jack clearly convey the two different voices and expressions of a dialogic narrative in the novel.

As two different expressions, Ralph indicates civilization in leading, whereas Jack endorses primitiveness. In terms of approach, Ralph upholds a democratic line that empowers them all to “assemble meetings in which all boys express their ideas by taking turns and share the responsibility by taking on different chores like building huts, hunting, gathering consumable water and kindling fire,” (Mazhar 32). Adopting such an approach, Ralph does not run things through dictating but through counseling and sharing. He leaves room for the other boys to discuss, disagree, opionate and protest. Ralph also does not center matters around himself. Rather, he “prioritizes the members’ common interests over the personal interests of any single individual” (Farhoudi 194). Jack, on the other hand, maintains a tyrannical method of leading his boys and running things. From the very start, when the boys intend to nominate a leader and plan to “have a vote”, Jack deems the whole process as a “toy of voting” (Golding 15). He expresses a model that deems leadership as “an effort of influence and the power to induce compliance” (Wren 13). Jack’s group thus “consists of an absolute central figure and his complying subordinates” (Farhoudi 194). For him, there is no room for counseling, sharing or voicing opinions. Jack has to lead, and the boys have to obey and follow.

Jack and Ralph continue to reveal two vividly different voices, meanings and expressions. In their dialogic interaction over the conch, Ralph respects the conch and assigns significance and value to it. He considers it a symbol of discipline, order and even dignity. To the contrary, Jack disparages the conch and ascribes no value to it altogether: “We don’t need the conch anymore” (Golding 89). Jack holds neither respect nor dignity for the conch or what it agreeably stands for. While Ralph understands that the conch holds no true value in itself, he recognizes its symbolic worth and the risks of taking it lightly. Therefore, he expresses a different voice than that of Jack’s and attempts to convey a different meaning, too: “If I blow the conch and they don’t come back, then we’ve had it. We shan’t keep the fire going. We’ll be like animals. Well never be rescued,” (80). Ralph knows that respecting the conch means unifying the boys, discipline, survival and possibly rescue. The dialogic contention over the conch indicates a “conflict between the social and the primitive instincts” (Bloom 7). The conflict between Ralph and Jack is thus a conflict between two different voices, meanings, and two different expressions that are constantly dialogizing over the conch as they are over other issues.

Further standing for two meanings that are dialogic and different, Jack and Ralph would indicate the difference between “the brilliant world of hunting, tactics, fierce exhilaration, skill; and the world of longing and baffled commonsense” (Golding 60). Therefore, hunting for Ralph is necessary only as long as they need food to survive. In contrast, hunting for Jack is a ritual and a communal code of significance and of survival. He even sees himself as a hunter and suggests that what he does and how he should pursue with the other boys “is a hunter’s job” (89). Hunting seems like a fundamental activity in Jack’s version of truth and

meaning and of life and survival: "We hunt and feast and have fun" (125). Such two expressions of the same concept is a further illustration of the dialogic quality of *Lord of the Flies*.

Besides, the novel presents Ralph and Jack expressing their different voices over hunting through constant dialogizing. Ralph perceives hunting as an organized activity, whereas Jack expresses a view of hunting as a ritual: "which is better—to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill?" ..., "which is better, law and rescue, or hunting and breaking things up?" (162). Basing his entire philosophy "on savagery, hunting, and primal drives" seems like a unanimous observation all critics and researchers have made (Crawford 64). However, what the argument of the current research study makes is that it suggests that Ralph and Jack's difference is nothing but a constant dialogue between two different voices, meanings and expressions. In masking, as in hunting, Jack dialogizes a different meaning for masks and paints. He sees in them a liberation "from shame and self-consciousness", while Ralph understands that masking is a "liberation into savagery" (Golding 53-155). The mask for Ralph is a dispossession of "sensitivity" (162), whereas, for Jack, it is an expression of "the greatest freedom" (Bender 161). In an endless dialogism between Ralph and Jack, each makes a different voice, each presents a different meaning; each conveys a different expression.

Likewise, perceiving things within Bakhtin's concept of unfinalizability would make us realize that meaning, man and reality are never finalized or finalizable; that man is always in the process of changing, of becoming. We would thus propose that as long as man "is alive, he lives by the fact that he is not yet finalized, that he has not yet uttered his ultimate word" (Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics 59). Similarly, civilization and primitiveness—just like other concepts—are unfinalizable; they are in the process of changing and in the process of becoming. Such an assumption might justify the heated, long-held and supposedly never-ending debate over this subject. One side of the debate argues that civility is a descendent of savagery. The other side contends that savagery is a descendant of civilization: "civilized races, say we, are the descendants of races which have risen from a state of barbarism. On the contrary, argue our opponents, savages are the descendants of civilized races and have sunk to their present condition" (Lubbock 330-1). According to this debate, primitiveness and primitive peoples or races could become civilized and even could manifest acts of civility. In comparison, civilized nations and races could exercise acts of atrocious savagery and even could turn into primitive people. According to Bakhtin's concept of unfinalizability, both civilization and savagery are relative concepts like any other that keep changing and becoming. The argument of the current research study adopts this line of interpretation and addresses these concepts as changing and unfinalized, thus running in the light of Bakhtin's theories.

In *Lord of the Flies*, it is obvious that many critics and researchers have addressed the concepts of savagery and civilization. They have mostly interpreted Jack's conversion to primitiveness and savagery on the grounds of existing innate instincts of savagery and primitiveness in man, distance and isolation from culture and civilization, absence of law and various other things, which might all possibly be feasible. Others have approached such concepts in the novel on the assumption that "savagery [is] in all of us" and "civilization is a thin and fragile veneer" (Dalrymple 26). However, the argument advanced here maintains that Jack's adaptation of savagery and primitiveness on the island is yet another feasible interpretation and meaning of Bakhtin's concepts of changing, becoming, and unfinalizability.

In that order, it is beyond contestation that the novel introduces Ralph, Jack, Piggy, Simon and all other boys as young, educated, and civilized English schoolboys. They are taken out on a flight as a school activity, but unfortunately, their plane falls down, and they become stranded on an isolated and uninhabited island. They come from "the heart of civilization" (Golding 161). This statement should have drawn their finalized state of being as such. However, Jack, with some boys, turn primitive and leave civilization behind. They change; they become savages. In so doing, we would suppose that those boys have a "consciousness of self" that, in Bakhtin's words, "lives by its unfinalizability, by its unclosedness and its indeterminacy", and whose "profound consciousness of their own unfinalizability and indeterminacy is [to be] realized in very complex ways, by ideological thought, crime, or heroic deed," (Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics 53, 59). Therefore, we could probably suggest that those young English schoolchildren—and, by extension, the totality of humanity—cannot be completely known, revealed or finalized. Jack and the boys with him seem to "acutely sense their own inner unfinalizability, their capacity to outgrow, as it were, from within and to render untrue any externalizing and finalizing the definition of them" (*ibid* 59). Hence, they embody an unfinalized, dialogic state of being, or they live in a state of unfinalizability, in Bakhtin's words. They themselves are unfinalizable not as schoolchildren but as human beings.

In other words, Jack, Ralph and the other boys are English schoolboys; they come from and belong to a civilized society. They have known and absorbed civilization for generations, and they have lived by its codes and principles for decades. They are thus supposed to live and act just as civilized people do, even on a deserted island. Nobody would have expected Jack to become savage or imagined that some of his schoolmates would follow him. No one would have predicted the boys to change so dramatically or become anything other than young, cultured and civilized schoolboys, which conforms with the view that man is finalized. However, we could assume that judgments on Jack—just like the judgments on Dmitry in Dostoyevsky's work—are destined to be "devoid of a genuinely dialogic approach to him, a dialogic penetration into the unfinalized core of his personality"

(*ibid* 62). Such assumption could as well hold because these judgments “seek and see in him only the factual, palpable definitiveness of experiences and actions, and subordinate them to already defined concepts and schemes” (*ibid*). Therefore, the true judgment on Jack might come only from Jack onto himself.

Respectively, Jack contradicts the finalized/finalizable view and proves otherwise; he proves such views and perceptions wrong. Jack is changing from a civilized to a primitive individual. Instead of being a civilized schoolboy who is supposedly a finalized product of civilization, Jack becomes a different person altogether; he becomes a savage individual, living and leading in line with the rules and creeds of primitiveness and savagery. Jack is an embodiment of Bakhtin’s notion of unfinalizability, that man is unfinalizable, that man is always on the process of changing and of becoming. Jack then represents a person who is “on the threshold of a final decision, at a moment of crisis, at an unfinalizable—and unpredeterminate—turning point for his soul”, and as such, he is “unfinalized, eccentric, [and] full of unexpected possibilities,” (Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* 61, 171). After all, Bakhtin asserts, “a true dialogic position is one that affirms the independence, internal freedom, unfinalizability, and indeterminacy of the hero” (*ibid* 23). Therefore, Jack’s discourse in the novel is apparently dialogic and unfinalizable. As a hero, he is free, and in order to free himself from preset definitions of others, Jack projects an unappealing image of himself as a savage.

Further theorizing on language, Bakhtin moves from verse to prose and eventually settles on fiction (the novel in particular). Although Bakhtin studies both verse and prose languages, he favors fiction over poetry, arguing that fiction language better demonstrates such qualities of language than poetry language does. Contrasting the historic preference for poetry and verse language, Bakhtin favors fiction and prose language. In his argument and analysis, Bakhtin approaches poetry and fiction differently because he further asserts poetry and fiction have different purposes, thus employ language and produce meaning differently. Bakhtin states:

The artistic image presented in the novel is based on heteroglossia and the interanimation of intentionally impelled words, while the poetic image naively presumes only the interaction of word and object. Where in poetry, ‘the word forgets the history of the contradictory verbal recognitions of its object, as well as the heteroglossia of its present recognition’, in the novel, ‘the dialectics of the object are interlaced with the social dialogue around it. (Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel,” in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 277-8)

In that respect, the purpose of poetry in using language is nothing more than fulfilling an esthetic task. Poetry shows an awareness of itself only, exists in the independence of its context and thus operates as a self-sufficient whole. Hence, poetry represents a centripetal force. Also, as a monologic genre, it does not concede room for its respondents or acknowledges them.

Prose, on the other hand, uses language differently and for a different purpose. Prose fiction employs language for a social purpose, to do something, and uses it to convince and persuade. In that order, prose language is dialogic and thus signifies a centrifugal force. Besides, fiction language enjoys and demonstrates a diversity of voices, which makes it not only dialogic but heteroglossic as well. Bakhtin argues:

In the novel, literary language possesses an organ for the cognition of its own heteroglot nature. Heteroglossia in itself becomes, in the novel and thanks to the novel, heteroglossia for itself: languages are dialogically correlated and begin to exist for each other (like rejoinders in a dialogue). It is precisely thanks to the novel that languages mutually illuminate each other; literary language becomes a dialogue of languages that know about and understand each other. (Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel,” in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin 400)

Hence, prose fiction language presents an ongoing dialog, generates a variety of interactions, and hence establishes a multiplicity of experiences and worldviews. In fictional as well as in actual settings, the dialogized heteroglossic language of prose—the novel in particular—in establishing that multiplicity of experiences and worldviews and variety of interactions rejects standardization that the monologic language of verse—poetry—endorses.

Major characters in the novel (Ralph, Jack, Piggy, Simon) can be observed to demonstrate the dialogized heteroglot aspect of language by using a variety of languages: Ralph speaks civilization, Piggy speaks intellect, Simon speaks religiosity, and Jack speaks savagery. In a heteroglossic novel like Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, “all languages of heteroglossia, whatever the principle underlying them, are specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing the world in words, specific worldviews each characterized by its own meaning, objects, and values,” (*ibid* 292). In addition, Ralph’s civility, Piggy’s intellectuality, and Simon’s religiosity coexist with one another and with Jack’s savagery and encounter it as well. These heteroglot languages “encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people” too, (*ibid*). This vivid encounter and expressiveness of the boys’ heteroglot languages in the novel complies with Bakhtin’s view of them. For Bakhtin, heteroglot languages are “incapable of neutrality: all words are shot through with intentions and accents and every word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged

life," (*ibid* 293). The context on the island and Jack's turn to savagery has required Ralph, Piggy and Simon to encounter that with their own contextual languages.

Moreover, Ralph and Jack would arguably stand for language's two central forces: the centrifugal and the centripetal force, respectively. In *Lord of the Flies*, it could be argued that Jack exemplifies the centripetal force and monologic quality of language and all that it entails. In contrast, Ralph and the boys with him—more particularly Piggy and Simon—would epitomize the centrifugal force and dialogized heteroglossic characteristic of language and all that it requires. The centrifugal language is dynamic and relative, while the monologic language is center-oriented and absolute. Ralph assumingly represents a centrifugal force; he reveals dynamism and relativism in his leadership and assessment of the overall situation. He accepts differences and diversity, takes everybody in, and shares with them in counseling, voicing opinions and decision-making.

Jack, on the other hand, represents a centripetal force, a single authority that forces everything and everyone into a polarized uniformity of a single form or statement. A centripetal force "standardizes language and rhetorical forms, ridding itself of differences in an effort to establish a single way of speaking and writing that is a pure, regimented discourse cleansed of differences that interrupt the accepted way of using language" (Dobie 39). Jack establishes the standards of his leadership and coerces other boys to accept it. He refuses difference and diversity and forms his boys into a single tribe of a polarized uniformity of savages that reject any different discourse.

3. Conclusion

The argument has explored and shown the dialogic characteristic of *Lord of the Flies* by examining the multiplicity of experiences of its characters, the dialogic nature of their relations and worldviews, and the unfinalizable state of their being as they always live in the process of changing and of becoming. It has also addressed the novel's heteroglossic quality and heteroglot languages by investigating the characters' heteroglossic languages and the diversity of their voices and views over the various issues of leadership, hunting, the conch, masking, and other issues.

Hence, the current research paper concludes that just as a linguistic utterance is the product of an interaction as it responds to another utterance, an individual lives in a process of interaction with other individuals, thus always being in a state of changing and becoming. Accordingly, it has revealed that we cannot claim to recognize a human being entirely, decide that any human being is wholly revealed, or assume that s/he is fully finalized. Jack has best demonstrated Bakhtin's concepts of changing, becoming and unfinalizability through unpredictably turning savage. Man, truth, reality and life itself are all unfinalizable concepts, always changing and always becoming. Besides, Jack, Ralph and all the other boys have all demonstrated the dialogic and dialogizing heteroglossic aspects of *Lord of the Flies*. They have shown that through their constant dialogues, multiplicity of narrative voices, variety of languages—leadership, intellect, religion and savagery—and through manifesting two generally different voices, meanings and expressions.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

References

- [1] Bakhtin, M (1981). "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981. PDF.
- [2] —(1971). *Creation of a Prosaics*. Trans. Gary Saul Morson & Caryl Emerson. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971. PDF.
- [3] —. (1984) Ed. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. C. Emerson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984. Print.
- [4] — (1986). *Rabelais and his World*. Trans. Helene Isowlsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. Print.
- [5] — (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Ed. Michael Hloquist. USA: University of Texas Press, 1981. Print.
- [6] Bender, K (2010) *An Ethical Compass: Coming of Age in the 21st Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. PDF.
- [7] Bloom, H (2008). *William Golding's Lord of the Flies: Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations*. New York: Infobase Publishing, 2008. PDF.
- [8] Brandist, C (2002). *The Bakhtin Circle: Philosophy, Culture and Politics*. London: Pluto Press, 2002. PDF.
- [9] Crawford, P. (2002) *Politics and history in William Golding: The World Turned Upside Down*. Missouri: University of Missouri Press., 2002. PDF.
- [10] Dalrymple, T (2005). Desert-Island Reading." *New Criterion* 6 (2005): 21-27. PDF.
- [11] Dentith, S (1995). *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader*. London: Routledge, 1995. PDF.
- [12] Dobie, A B. (2012). *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2012. PDF.
- [13] Farhoudi, S B & Fatima. (2015) Lord of the Flies and Implications of Tutelage." *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences* (2015): 189-199. PDF.
- [14] Farmer, F, ed. (1998) *Landmark Essays on Bakhtin, Rhetoric, and Writing*. New Jersey: Hermagoras Press, 1998. PDF.
- [15] Gardiner, M (1998). Mayerfeld Bell and Michael, ed. *Bakhtin and the Human Sciences: No Last Words*. London: Sage, 1998. Print.

-
- [16] Gardiner, M (1992). *The Dialogics of Critique: M. M. Bakhtin and the Theory of Ideology*. London: Routledge, 1992. PDF.
- [17] Gindin, J (1988). *William Golding*. London: MacMillan, 1988. Print.
- [18] Golding, W (1954). *Lord of the Flies: A Novel*. New York: The Penguin Publishing Group, 1954. Print.
- [19] Holquist, M (1990). *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World*. London: Routledge, 1990. PDF.
- [20] Jones, M V. (1990). *Dostoyevsky after Bakhtin: Readings in Dostoyevsky's Fantastic Realism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. PDF.
- [21] Lubbock, J (1868). On the Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man. *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* (1868): 328-341. PDF.
- [22] Mazhar, S., Malghani, M., & Khan, F. R. (2020). The Hallmark of Civilization: A Psychoanalytic Study of Ralph in Lord of the Flies. *Global Regional Review* (2020): 31-39. PDF.
- [23] Tuglu, U. (2011). *A Bakhtinian Analysis of William Golding's Rites of Passage: Heteroglossia, Polyphony and the Carnavalesque in the Novel*. MA Thesis. N. p.: Graduate School of Social Sciences, Middle East Technical University, 2011. PDF.
- [24] Tyson, L (2015). *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. Third Edition. London: Routledge-Taylor and Francis Group, 2015. PDF.
- [25] Wren, J. T (1995). *The Leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership Through the Ages*. New York: The Free Press, 1995. PDF.
- [26] Wu, X L & Weihua. (2009). On Symbolic Significance of Characters in Lord of the Flies. *English Language Teaching* (2009): 119-122. PDF.