

**CREOLISATION (PATWA) AND THE CARIBBEAN NOVEL: GRAMMATICAL AND
STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF SAMUEL SELVON'S *THE LONELY LONDONERS* AND V. S.
NAIPAUL'S *THE SUFFRAGE OF ELVIRA***

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Abstract

This paper examines the grammatical structures and literary stylistic manifestations, forms, and features of Creole in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* and V. S. Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira*. Though the identity of Creole manifests at all levels of language structure, using the functional theories of grammar with emphasis on the human need-contact theory, "Creole hypothesis", and Creolisation, an attempt is made to itemize the striking occurrences and usages of Creole in ways that differ in forms and functions from Standard English usage. Findings from extracts in the novels suggest that striking linguistic features such as lexicology, subject-verb and tense agreement, and other literary features, serve specific communicative roles that give insights into why Selvon and Naipaul have explored them as an indigenous style of writing in these texts.

Keywords: Creolisation, Caribbean Islands, Standard English, Communication, Grammatical Structures

1.0 Introduction

Variations exist in literature concerning what is acknowledged as *language*. This is basically because of possibilities of the primary meaning of language in reference to it as an abstract concept and as a specific linguistic system. This is partly because of the offshoots of academic debates between different linguistic schools of thought. Of significance to this study is the contribution of the Generative/formal theories of grammar and the functional theories of grammar. While the former emphasizes the view of studying language structure by identifying its basic elements and rules that govern their combination of forming words and sentences, and as a system of communication that enables humans to exchange verbal or symbolic utterances, the later stresses social functions of language and how humans use it to express themselves and to manipulate objects in their environment. This is partly responsible for the diverse definitions of language.

Robins and Crystal (2017: p.23) define language as "a system of conventional spoken, manual, or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves". While Edward Sapir (1921: p. 8) sees it as "a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols which are auditory and are produced by the organs of speech." Both definitions stress the importance of communication by humans using various symbols. Despite what seemingly appears to be a disparity in definitions, functional theories of grammar explain grammatical structures by their communication function. Emphasis is laid on understanding the grammatical structures of language to be the result of a continuous adaptive process by which grammar is tailored to serve the communicative needs of its users. This human need-contact theory could mean a representation of the living conditions of a people in a given

environment as explored in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* and Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira*.

Aschroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1989: p.6) argue that language is one of the key sites in which postcolonial writers express their cultural distance from the literature of the colonizing power. These two Caribbean writers have, in their texts, manipulated the linguistic forms to proclaim their sense of place and construct a distinct identity for themselves using a non-standard variation of the English language (creole). Selvon and Naipaul use many of the language strategies that Aschroft et al. identify as defining post-colonial abrogation, appropriation, the challenging of Western concerns with language authenticity and syntactic function. According to Selvon, his choice of using a non-standard English in *The Lonely Londoners* is a crucial and liberating stage for him to express the major concerns of the immigrants and it represents an empowering expression of collective identity, which rejects the norms of Standard English.

The authors use a language variety which is reduced in structure as compared to Standard English. The multidimensional characteristics of language reflecting the complexities in different societies and the networking of other variable factors, is perceived in the way different people use it in different situations. Selvon and Naipaul use the Creole language to introduce their characters and to express the living conditions of the West Indians in London and in the Caribbean Islands, exposing forms of racial segregation that exist between the whites and the coloured Indians. Languages differ widely in form and structure, but all variants exhibit similarities in terms of designed features that qualify them as a norm and the purposes users explore them for. Creole is not an exception to the rule. A brief historical background on the origin of the Creole language will enhance our understanding of the use of non-Standard English in these texts by the authors.

2.0 Historical Leanings of Creolisation

Creoles and Pidgins, according to Salikoko Mufwene (2010: p. 345), are new language varieties that developed out of contacts between colonial nonstandard varieties of a European language and several non-European languages around the Atlantic and in the Indian

and Pacific oceans during the 17th-19th centuries. These new languages, to him, "have reduced structures and restricted communicative functions" (p.368). In Africa for example, the Nigerian and Cameroonian Pidgins are as complex as creoles although they have different evolutionary histories.

The Creole language in the Caribbean Islands was because of the Slave Trade between the 17-19th centuries. The Chinese, Syrians and others later came to settle on the island either as coolies to work in sugar plantations or as regular immigrants. The first inhabitants of the island were the native Indians before Columbus' discovery of the island. The island was inhabited from the West by the Arawak family (Venezuela, Guinea Coast, Delta Amazon), to the East by the Carib Indians and the North and South by Tupi and Guarani. The Portuguese and the Spanish who first settled on the island borrowed a lot from the Indian language. The Spanish influence was largely felt because of employment with Jamaicans going to help in building the Panama Canal and to Cuba to work in sugar estates. The French and the Dutch influences were less felt since contact with the colonies speaking these languages was less while the English influence was the greatest because of employment offered to the Arawaks to help them in hunting down the Maroons after which some of the English people settled in Jamaica thereafter.

The two major early components of the Caribbean language were English of various kinds and assorted African languages. With slave trade which became the major trade in Jamaica, the Negroes came to have the largest population with Africans from different parts of the world. The largest number of slaves came from Gold Coast and Nigeria and their language of communication was their native dialects. It became necessary and advantageous for these slaves to learn English because without it, the slaves could not hope to improve their living conditions or get better job opportunities.

Mainly out of African and English languages, there emerged a blended language called 'Creole English' which means 'Island-born' because it refers to the usage of language by both slave and master in so far as it is different from the

Standard English. Closely related to the Jamaican creole are a number of English-based creoles like Sranan in Surinam, Krio in Sierra Leone and the Cameroon's Creole in Central Africa. These different types of creoles share not only lexical but phonological and grammatical forms and are syntactically related to the French creoles of Haiti, Dominica, Trinidad and other islands in the West Indies. These creoles have some striking common features, and the grammatical structures of these languages show similar traits and lexical differences. This is in line with DeCamp's (1971a: p.16) view that 'creole is the native language of most of its speakers whose vocabulary and syntactic devices are like those of any native language, large enough to meet all the communication needs of its speakers'. Creole words are invariable with no influential endings and the grammatical relations is by means of the syntactic system.

Apart from the common elements these creoles enjoy, the Jamaican, West Indian and Trinidad creoles differ in some ways from the English syntax. There is no subject-verb concord in the creole; the tense in creole is limited to the unmarked verb, the creole verb does not have a passive form, and the noun has no article while the English nouns require singular or plural forms without articles. There is also the absence of pronouns, no gender distinctions, elimination of agreement markers which reduces meaning, elision, repetition and a host of others (Meyerhoff, 2000: p. 218).

The creole language as a variety of English, is reduced in structure with many instances of deviation from the Standard English. It has been nativized and has become the mother tongue of a new generation of users. Trudgill (1974: p.27) sees language as "a very important factor in group identification, group solidarity and the signaling of differences". Basically, Creole identity is possible by historical criteria. This argument by Trudgill, possibly might have informed Selvon and Naipaul's attempts to reach their audiences in an accessible medium. While the natives of the West Indies and Trinidad will feel at home with the language of the texts, other readers may only applaud or enjoy the informality of the

texts in their own unique style. Theories of language structure and Creolization posited by Wardhaugh (2000: p. 222) will enhance our reading of the paper.

3.0 Theories of Language Structure and Creolization

The human need contact theory in grammar draws potentially from human needs theory in social sciences as it applies in grammatical or linguistic contexts. This theory relates to how language (specifically grammar) evolves or is structured to fulfill human needs for communication and social connection. Language helps humans make contact with each other, and grammar provides a framework to structure that communication clearly and effectively. In this case, grammar could be seen as a tool that facilitates human interaction, fulfilling a need for contact or connection. Language contact occurs when speakers of two or more languages or varieties interact with and influence each other. In some cases, a new contact language such as pidgin, creole, or mixed language is created. Although Creole has recorded different evidence of political and cultural influences due to geographical disparities, most English-based creole languages exhibit similar identity at all levels of language structure. This has given rise to a closely related family of languages in structures and idioms. Visible difference only manifests in accent and vocabulary or at words and discourse levels but disparities in grammatical features might not interfere with intelligibility.

Wardhaugh (2000) suggests that Creolization occurs only when a pidgin becomes the variety of language that children use in situations in which use of a 'full' language is effectively denied them. He posits that 'because Creole is traceable to some other superordinate language, the possibility of a creole continuum can arise, and the process usually occur over several generations' (p. 252). Although the ongoing debate on pidgin and creole is quite interesting, this study does not intend to delve into controversies of past theories but restrict the scope to the submission that, pidgin is a simplified language used for communication between speakers of different languages (such as between

speakers of European languages and African or Asian languages) for trading purposes. Baugh & Cable (2003: p. 78) observed that a language could be described as Creole if this simplified language is learned as a first language by a new generation of speakers who expand the structures and vocabularies to serve the needs of the community of speakers. Certain characteristic features of the Creole abound in these texts which make them distinct from those written in Standard English.

Characteristics of Creole

For the purpose of clarity, the paper outlines some observable features of Creole which may serve as a guide to the features identifiable in the selected texts. Creolists such as Stewart (1967), Dillard (1972), Rickford (1977), Crystal (1974) and Wardhaugh (2000) in their works have identified the features as follows:

- ✓ Morphological processes of assimilation and reduction expansion of vocabulary resources and new shorter words. Other new words are created using affixes, conversion, reduplication, doubling of grammatical items and repetition.
- ✓ Creole manifest variants in spelling depending on the context. Some are inconsistent with Standard English while others maximise difference between the two systems. This result in phonetic-like transcription and show difference between the Creole sound system and that of mainstream accent.
- ✓ Related to syntax are absence of concord between subject and verb in the present tense; no forms of *be* as copula or auxiliary; presence of serial verb, verb in front of sentence and avoidance of passive construction and the use of the adjective for an adverb function.
- ✓ Newly developed tense system in verbs such as past tense marker and future time marker.
- ✓ The verb does not indicate past tense as base forms without ending is used, 'did' is used as the past tense marker with stative verb; particles are used to mark continuous actions; complete actions are marked by 'done' and insertion of 'no'

negate a verb. Others are the presence of questions without auxiliary 'do' and past tense indicated by using, 'been', 'did', and 'was'.

- ✓ In Noun category, there are possibilities of no plural marker(-s), particles are used to mark plurality, and possession is indicated by juxtaposing the noun phrase.

The significance of the theory of language structure for instance in relation to the nature of meaning and the analysis of ambiguity in grammar is very central to the use of creole as a medium for writing these novels. The features of Creole identified above demonstrate Selvon's and Naipaul's preference for such condensed and Creolised forms to show their dexterity as writers of a class in their own style. Examples of such grammatical and stylistic structures abound in these novels.

4.0 Grammatical Structures in the Texts

Language and literature are inseparable. They are like Siamese twins which Eyoh (2005: p. 4) compares with a sheet of paper - "literature as the *recto* and language as the *verso* where both cannot cut in isolation. Oladimeji and Mbu (2018: p. 199) reiterate this relationship stating that "language is the raw material or pillar to literature, while literature is the cosmetics to language". This implies that there is a complementary or symbiotic relationship between language and literature. Activities in language and literature relate together in the domain of stylistics where "stylistics is a bride science that creates a bond between linguistics and literature" (Akwanya 2004: p. 163). Nowadays, style' does not only point to the instrument used by the writer but to characteristics of the writing itself. In language studies, style refers to the sum of linguistic features which distinguish one writer or text from another. In other words, it is "the whole gestalt or oeuvres of a person's use of language which identifies him" (Odeh 2010: p. 20). This implies that style is the stable mark of the writer himself or the linguistic fingerprint or thumbprint of the writer which marks individuality. This paper presents major features in stylistics from both the grammatical (linguistic) and literary perspectives in relation to

the events in the texts.

4.1.0 Lexico-Semantic Choices

There are no gainsaying that well-informed and experienced writers impress their readers with colourful expressions and carefully chosen diction. Selvon and Naipul unwittingly use colloquial forms of language expression in their novels. For example, the language used by Selvon's characters and the narrator contains a multitude of slang expressions. In *The Lonely Londoners*, Selvon makes good use of lexis whose meaning is a thing of concern to speakers of a different language. In the text, some words are used such that meaning can only be got from the context. For instance, the boys use clichés such as “the water” and “the Gate”, to refer to Bayswater and Notting Hill respectively.

Also, in this sentence, “... but one day a Jamaican **fellar** come in and get ignorant and start to make a **rab** (30), the word “**rab**” could mean trouble, noise, or violence, while “**fellar**” means Negro brother or stranger. Sometimes they refer to themselves and each other as “**spades**” (9), and “**test**” (11). In their spare time, they can be found “**liming**”- the Caribbean pastime of hanging around with friends, eating, talking and drinking. In another instance, Selvon refers to white girls as ‘**white pussy**’, “**a skin**”, “**a cat**”, “**a number**”, “**a chick**” etc. “Boy, it have bags of **white pussy** in London, and you will eat till you tired”. (74). Here, he refers to the number of white girls lining the streets of London (prostitutes).

Borrowing is another type of word derivation used by Selvon. Kenworthy (1991: p.25) states that, “This process is one of the most common”. He continued that words borrowed from another language other than English are not an exception. It is possible to trace the borrowing of words through the centuries as English speakers came into contact with native speakers whether through invasion or conquest, or from incidental contact. For example, the word **humbugging** which means ‘a person or thing that tricks or deceives, false pretense’. in this case, the word **hambugg** means “to be worried, troubled or disturbed”. This is seen when Cap(tain) catches a pigeon to salvage his hunger and his conscience begins to prick him and he says, “But when he

finish plucking the pigeon, conscious **hamburgging** him so much that he fling it in a corner ...” (109). From Cap's action, Selvon portrays the level of poverty, and hunger the blacks and Indians alike undergo in London and would go an extra mile to get something to eat. This is as a result of lack of good jobs and low wages, so most of these people live by ‘survival of the fittest’. Cap is a Nigerian from a rich family who dropped out of law school and squandered his money on booze and women.

4.1.1 Affixation

In English, affixation is the formation of words that occur through an addition of a basically separate morpheme before or after the root or base of the word. When affixes are added to words, roots or base, they usually result in a new form of word. There are several types of affixes, but this paper focuses on the two major types of affixations namely, prefix, and suffix. Prefixation is when a bound morpheme is added at the initial position of the base word to form another word while suffixation involves the addition of a bound morpheme at the end of the base word.

Selvon introduces many words into this language that are foreign to Standard English and because of this it abounds in morphological processes of word formation using prefixes and suffixes. This is evidenced in his opening sentence where Selvon says: “ONE GRIM winter evening, when it had a kind of **unrealness** about London... (7). **Unrealness** is a derivational method of word formation with the affixation of a prefix “**un**” with the negative form to the base “**real**” and the suffix “**-ness**” which is used to derive a noun from an adjective. “**Unrealness**” here projects the city of London in the eyes of the immigrants. It does not reflect a true picture of what it appears to be. The narrator muses on the working-class neighbourhood thus: “London is a place like that. It divides up in little worlds, and you stay in the world you belong to and you don't know anything about what happening in the other ones except what you read in the papers” (74). This acknowledges the fact that, within the ghettonised spaces of the city, there is indeed a transgression of racial barriers.

4.1.2 Double Negatives

Double negatives are also part and parcel of Selvon and Naipaul's style of writing which is inappropriate in Standard English, and they often occur when two forms of grammatical negation are used in the same sentence. Up to the 18th century, double negatives were used to emphasise negation an indication that the double negatives were present in colonial English and presumably English as a whole and were accepted at that time. Today, double negatives are seen as cancelling each other and often associated with being uneducated and illogical. Several examples abound in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*. "**Don't** forget **nothing**" (13), "**Don't** tell that man **nothing**" (14), "Cap **ain't** making **no** move to move" (42).

Like Selvon, Naipaul also employs double negation in *The Suffrage of Elvira*. Baksh interrogates Foam for making his mother angry and he insists that "I **ain't** tell she **nothing**. She was going to bless the boy, that's all", "I **ain't** got **no** spirit on me" (74). The use of "don't", "nothing", "ain't", "no" all connote one and the same thing. That is, negation, and when used concomitantly in one sentence, it becomes double negatives. In another instance, Chittaranjan accuses Ramlogan of having no conscience killing his chicken. "But **ain't** it make your heart satisfy, you wuthless beast? **Ain't** it bring peace and satisfaction inside your fat dirty heart to see the poor little chicken dead?" (109). Instead of the use of "doesn't", the characters employ "ain't" for a general negation.

The auxiliary "**do**" used in Standard English to introduce questions or to emphasise statements has neither of these uses with the Caribbean creole. The native speakers use '**ain't**' for '**don't**' as a general negation in various forms as evidenced in Naipaul's *The Suffrage of Elvira*. "You **ain't** shame? Are you not ashamed? I **ain't** know – I don't know, You **ain't** want no Muslim vote? – don't you want any Muslim vote?" (58). The voting patterns of Elvira as portrayed by Naipaul, are not a function of individual judgements, but are in terms of "blocks". Mr Baksh talks of the "Muslim" votes, Mr Chittaranjan the "Hindu" votes and "the Spaniards

of Cordoba votes" implying that the residents of Elvira are manipulated according to the whims and caprices of the politicians.

4.1.3 Lack of Subject, Verb and Tense Agreement

This is another characteristic of 'local forms of English' (creole) which does not always conform with the rule of grammaticality especially as they relate to number, tense and aspect. Selvon captures this in *The Lonely Londoners* thus: "... and all he **have to** do is to be in the station ... (7). "Everybody living **to dead**, no matter what they are doing while living, in the end everybody dead" (51). There is no agreement in number while the verbs are pluralized, the subjects are in the singular form and there is the lack of tense concord. The first statement is supposed to read, "and all he has to do ..." while the verb to die is constantly used in the past which shows lack of continuing or progressive present as is the case in Standard English. The second sentence also expresses the sufferings of the blacks and the futility of life. Despite all their struggles, death is inevitable whether you are rich or poor. This shows the state of despair in the minds of the Negroes. Also, when forms of '**do**' are adopted in imitation of Standard English, they are not emphatic but simply indicate past time from what Goldsmith says of Rampiari's husband in *The Suffrage of Elvira*, "When you does want money borrow, Rampiari husband, who you does come to? I does come to you Goldsmith" (78). Instead of using 'do' the speakers of this creole language use 'does' to indicate past tense.

Naipaul in *The Suffrage of Elvira*, infuses both the low-level diction and a combination of the high and middle-level diction to realize his artistic goal of reaching out to his audience. His choice of words from the total lexicon of the English language is informed by his satirical motives. Low-level diction is privileged for character speech while a combination of high and middle-level diction is for his authorial voice. Low-level diction which is our main focus here refers to the grammatically unfractured language which does not respect the grammatical norms of Standard English for there is a lack of subject-verb agreement in most of the characters' speeches which are characterized by defective grammar and

pronunciation. In the text, Mr. Harbans speaks in a defective English that helps to shed more light on his personality. When he almost knocks down the white evangelist women he says almost in a whisper, “Fust time it happen” (10). The reader is tempted to laugh at his pronunciation of the word “first”. His omission of the definite article is evidently telling as it probably exposes his incompetence as a prospective leader of society. Again, Mr. Harban’s grammatically fractured speech is seen when he is coaxing Mr Baksh and his son to support him. He states: “Is that self I come to talk to you about. The modern world Baksh. In this modern world everybody is one. Don’t make no difference who you is. You is a Muslim, I is a Hindu. Tell me, that matters?” (17).

The above speech defies the rules of English grammar as it clearly breaks the subject-verb concord. Mr. Harbans uses the wrong copulative verbs in most of his sentences. His speech elicits the reader’s amusement, thus the author’s technique of keeping his audience spellbound. His adulterated English is symptomatic of his shallowness of personality. Mr. Baksh just like Mr. Harbans breaks the subject-verb agreement in his speech where he says, “To be frank, boss, I ain’t want it so much for the elections as for afterwards. Announcing at all sort of things. It have a lot of money in that ...” (21). He uses the copulative verb “have” instead of “his”. Mrs Baksh’s superstitious sentiments are made more visible by her fractured speech when she says: “It aint gas. Is just the sort of gratitude I getting from my children” (64). She omits the copulative verb “am” before the gerund “getting”. Naipaul’s defective English is used not only as a device of humour and satire but a means to shape the reader’s attitude towards the characters and their social relationships.

Herbert also questions Foam in this manner; “Foam, Tiger going **to dead**? No. He not going **to dead**” (83). Here, there is no marking to indicate tense in the verb except by the use of a particle ‘**dead**’ specifying ‘past’ and sometimes specifying ‘continuous’ tense. In Standard English, the continuing or progressive present is often used with future force and there is less conjugation of the verb that follows but this is not

the case with Selvon and Naipaul in their works under study.

4.1.4 Clipping

The term clipping denotes the subtraction of one or more syllables from a word, which is also available in its full form. It is the shortening of an existing word of more than one syllable, generally to a single syllable. The clipped form is normally felt to be informal. Clipping may occur at the beginning of the word, at the end of the word, or at both ends of the word as indicated in the following phrase. “What the hell you doing in **Brit’n** boy”? **Brit’n** is the short form of the proper noun Britain which has undergone a morphological process of ‘clipping’. Beside the grammatical structures, the style of writing employed by these authors is unique and reflects the kind of life lived by the immigrants in London as illustrated in this paper.

4.2 Literary Stylistic Analysis

4.2.1 Repetition

Naipaul uses a lot of repetition in his text for emphasis. Though in most instances, it creates a humorous effect as is the case with Mr Baksh who narrates the sign he saw before the death of his father in the following passage:

Two weeks before my father dead,
was a night time. Did sleeping sound.
Sound sound like a top. Eh, I hear this
squeaky noise. Squeaky, squeaky,
like little mices... Three o’clock in
the morning. Moonlight making
everything look like a belly-ground.
Dead and funny. Squeak. Squeak.
Open a window. No wind at all. All
the trees black and quiet. Squeak,
Squeak. Road looking white in the
moonlight. White and long. Squeak.
Squeak. Lean out. No wind. Nothing.
Only squeak, squeak. (72).

This repetition of the words “Sound and “Squeak” and the consonant phoneme /s/ gives a poetic description of the passage, and the word “Squeak” is repeated about eight times in a short paragraph thus resulting to a reduction in the range of the required lexis. The repetition of the phoneme /s/ represents a voiceless fricative in the two words “Sound” and “squeaky” and it is also an alliteration.

In another instance, Naipaul describes the little puppy that Herbert brought home as “A tiny rickety puppy, mangy, starved; a loose, ribby bundle on the ground” (55). The consonant phoneme /y/ is visible here giving the sentence a more poetic rendition and description of the mongrel which is eventually seen by the people of Elvira as a bad sign at the approach of elections. In the eyes of Baksh, the dog has magical powers for which is regarded as *Obeah* by a community that believes so much in magic and superstitions. He does not understand how a big dog he saw last night has suddenly transformed into a small dog overnight. Rafiq narrates Baksh’s position about the dog thus: “It must be *obeah* and magic. Last night he tell me it was a big big dog. And he say it was a *bad* dog” (63). The emphasis here sounds sinister as the people are made to believe that the dog means a bad sign. Whether the repetition of a consonant or a vowel, as either alliteration or assonance, the point is that the effect it creates is not only emphatic but phonological.

4.2.2 Idiomatic Expressions

Selvon like Naipaul uses a lot of idiomatic expressions in the texts with the inclusion of words with special references whose meanings are not immediately detected. These idiomatic expressions are a form of condensed language coached in a deeper meaning. The sentences are short but elevated in style and meaning. In Selvon’s *Lonely Londoners*, Big City queries: “What is the trouble here? Big City say, coming from the Gent where he was **hitting an end** of weed that Five pass on to him” (30). **Hitting an end** of weed means smoking of Indian hemp which is believed to have a negative effect on the brain and health of a person but to the Negroes, it is a lot of fun and it makes them bold and courageous.

In another instance, Selvon tells his readers that, “Cap used to send she round by a fellar name Daniel to borrow and she would go there and **cry big water** and say how things hard ...” (37). **Cry big water** is an idiomatic expression for “shading of crocodile tears”, which is also hyperbolic in nature because the novelist tries to exaggerate the way this lady would cry just to enable her get some money for her boyfriend Cap, pretending that things are hard for them.

Like Selvon, Naipaul in *The Suffrage of Elvira* equally employs this form of idiomatic expression in his work. Mrs Baksh uses idiomatic expressions in a comic and derogatory manner where she describes her son’s huge appetite for food thus: “Is so hungry you was? Nobody ain’t have to tell me about you, Herbert. Of all the seven children God give me, **you have the longest tongue and your eyes always longer than your tongue**” (22). This shows how much Herbert cannot do without food. His mother sees him as a glutton since he is the only one that exhibits this character trait among her seven children. The author employs humour at his description of Herbert by his mother, as she exaggerates the boy’s interest in food through a comic lens as one imagines the boys long and watery tongue eager to swallow food and probably with his eyes bulging out as he watches with anxiety every spoonful of food from her mother’s plate to her mouth.

4.2.3 Stream of Consciousness Technique

Selvon uses the stream of consciousness technique to indicate the alienation of the Caribbean immigrants in London as well as the connection between the immigrants and their sub-cultural identity. Selvon describes Moses’ encounter with a test as if the whole event is told in one breath.

One summer night one splendid
simmer night with the sky brilliant
with stars like in the tropics he was
liming in green park when a English
fellar come up to him and say you
are just the man I am looking for
who me Moses say yes the man say
come with me Moses went
wondering what the test want and
the test take him to a blonde who
was standing up under a tree and
talk a little so Moses couldn’t hear
but Blondie shake her head then he
take Moses to another one who was
sitting on a bench and she say yes
so the test come back to Moses and
want to pay Moses to go with the
woman (106-107).

The lack of punctuation and the flow of language represents the flow of ideas and thought as an

example of stream of consciousness technique which Selvon uses to emphasise the kind of alienation felt by the black immigrants in the alien and hostile environment of London in the 1950s. The alienation of Moses and by implication all Caribbean immigrants is represented here by the English fellar and the two women to whom Moses is offered. Selvon's use of stream of consciousness technique does not only reflect the alienation of the immigrants but also represents a liberating and ultimately empowering technique for the representation of black identity.

This technique, however, does not only reflect the solitary thoughts of an isolated individual, but also attempts to communicate to another of the same sub-cultural group an anecdotal story of the experience of one of the members of that group.

4.4.4 Field of Discourse

This has to do with the total events in which the text is centred. The central idea in *The Lonely Londoners* revolves around the living and working conditions of the West Indians in Britain. It also X-rays the life of seclusion that characterizes Britain besides racial segregation. This could be seen even in the eyes of a white child how he views the black Indians. He tells his mother, "Mummy, look at that black man! (71). This is indicative of racial discrimination that is predominant in London. Even the blacks curse themselves for being born black because black colour means suffering and misery to them. This is evident from Sir Galahad's comment where he says, "Colour is you that causing all this, you know. Why the hell you can't be blue, or red or green, if you can't be white? You know is you that cause a lot of misery in the world. Look at you, you so black and innocent and this time so you causing misery all over the world" (72). This type of discourse tends to determine the choice in the 'ideational' compound of language and how it is structured for use and the explication of ideas.

Selvon also uses language to X-ray his characters and their behaviours. For example, Cap is a Nigerian Negro in London who spends most of his time on women, smoking and drinking. "Cap was a fellar like that – a fellar that you never know what her will be doing, which part her will be, what

he will say. Yet day after day, Cap still alive, defying all logic and reason and convention, living without working, smoking the best cigarettes, never without women" (40 & 45). Cap lives a lascivious life, despite having dropped out of law school. Tanty is another character in the text who is described as a gossip because she talks a lot. "All poor Lewis business talk out in that shop with Tanty big mouth, for it ain't have no woman like stand up and talk other people business like Tanty, ... she too like the shop, and the chance to meet them other women and gossip" (62).

This form of character exposition is also evidenced in *The Suffrage of Elvira* as Naipaul describes Ramlogan's encounter with Chittaranjan. Ramlogan and Chittaranjan are neighbours but they live at loggerheads with each other. Ramlogan cries when Chittaranjan shouts at him to take off his 'fat dirty hand offa my fence'. Ramlogan says; "You don't even want me to touch your fence... Chittaranjan, the next time one of your wife chicken come in my yard, don't bother to look for it. Because that night I eating good... but everybody chicken think they can just walk in my yard as if my yard is a republic" (34). Despite the antagonism that exists between these two people, the reader cannot help but laugh at Naipaul's careful choice of words and expressions for comic effects.

One can therefore say that Selvon and Naipaul have succeeded in passing their message across through their peculiar style of writing which captures the experiences of the West Indians in London and on the Island in a more captivating manner that the reader even smiles with the author in his use of language. These writers, though educated, still prefer to write in this kind of language as a way of rebelling against colonialism and racial segregation thus enabling them to express the different socio-political, cultural and economic experiences of their people in a better way acceptable to their own society.

5.0 Communicative use of Creole in the Texts

Creole is used in the texts as an instrument and vehicle of thought for Selvon and Naipaul. Sequel to the way the authors have used language in the texts, Creole is seen as a huge resource and reservoir of folk wisdom and an encyclopedia of

culture for documentation and historical purposes. In the texts, both novelists show clearly that linguistic artefacts depend on structures. The authors equally portray how beautiful language is and how it can be put into perfect use to express ideas in the society it portrays.

- ✓ In their exploration of characterisation and use of words and idioms, grammar and lexicon, they have clearly displayed the states of minds of the characters and the calibre of cultural contents they have which have become traces of their social history. This they have successfully transmitted within their communities and diachronically through their texts to generations which are wide apart.
- ✓ In the selected texts, Selvon and Naipaul explore the aesthetic role of language as can be seen in the ways they have constructed linguistic artefacts based on cultural activities to create and express identity that evokes social, economic, political, professional, and geographical or sub-cultural affiliations. Their use of positive self-image and stream of consciousness technique expresses the feelings, thoughts and ideas for 'us and negative attitudes towards others or the state of affairs or 'them'. This 'us' versus 'them' has ideological implications. At the individual characters' level, the idiosyncratic and peculiar writing/spelling and patterns and structures of Creole used by the authors helped in construing a group identity within which they have located themselves. The authors equally contributed to human knowledge and documented history using Creole and have expressed their ideas lucidly by x-raying their communities in an interesting and captivating way.
- ✓ Evidence that this Creole variety appears to be differentiating themselves from standard English is symbolic of a new culture and a new domain which indicates that there are shared social backgrounds as they share other types of meanings (emotional and interactional meaning)

which are in themselves a form of social control. This form of cultural autonomy elicits a new sense of community because reference to personal knowledge and cultural reference results to meaning making.

- ✓ Closely associated with the above, is the phatic role Creole has played in the text. The use of this form of language has kept communication lines open and keep social relationships in good shape between characters in the text. It is used to strengthen bonds of social cohesion, establish contacts and relationship within or outside the speech community. As people cohabit & try to influence one another, language becomes a very useful tool for national and international cooperation. These and more indicate cultural and linguistic dimensions to Selvon's and Naipaul's style of writing.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Creole language is a peculiar variety both in characteristics and how it is used. This variety is systematically related to the standard variety observed through the use of several language features such as double negatives, lack of subject-verb concord, repetition of phonemes, idiomatic expressions and many others. Selvon and Naipaul were very much aware of their marginalized positions and that of their characters in their societies thus their reason for the choice of language in these texts that reflect the characters' level of education and their coming in contact with the colonized language which was used either for trade, political or communicative purposes. The use of Creolized English in *The Lonely Londoners* and *The Suffrage of Elvira* project the writers' means of distancing themselves from the colonial culture as a way of showcasing language as a symbol of cultural identity that rejects the cultural centrality of Englishness. However, it equally projects the voices of the marginalized through their characters in a manner that is understood by the European readers yet retaining the flavour and essence of Trinidadian locale speech. The various

characteristics x-rayed above that all relate to linguistic, stylistic or narrative structures, give support to the idea that beyond the Standard

English language itself, there indeed exists a variety of Creole widely spoken in the Caribbeans.

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