

**THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL IDENTITY IN
ZIMBABWEAN AND TRINBAGONIAN LITERATURES**

**A Thesis Submitted to the College of
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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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in the Department of English
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Saskatoon**

**By
Edmund Olushina Bamiro
Fall 1997**

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SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

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THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL IDENTITY IN TWO AFRICAN AND WEST INDIAN LITERATURES

The present study employs the frameworks of post-colonial literary theory, sociolinguistics, and the social psychology of language use to compare the nature, function, and meaning of English in the delineation of cultural and social identities in anglophone Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures. The construction of cultural and social identities in these literatures inheres in how certain Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian novelists use various linguistic devices to contextualize the English language in their respective cultures, and how they employ the English language to articulate and reinforce colonial, counter-colonial, and other heteroglossic social discourses arising from conflicts of race, class, and gender in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian contexts.

Chapter One outlines the nature of the research and sets up the terms and categories that will feature prominently in the analysis. Chapter Two examines the place of English in the socio-economic and cultural history of Zimbabwe and of Trinidad and Tobago, and offers a description of the indigenous or other national languages which play prominent roles in the linguistic configuration of the two nations. The chapter also critically reviews the attitudes of some prominent post-colonial writers, particularly from the African and Caribbean regions, to the use of English as a medium of artistic creativity.

Chapter Three engages with narrative idiom and characters' idioms and comments as they relate to (a) the nativization of English in selected Zimbabwean novels and the use of English and other indigenous languages for articulating social norms and certain situational imperatives, and (b) the power and politics of English as an instrument for domination, manipulation, oppression, the construction of elitist identity, the reproduction of unequal power relations, and of resistance to such social

injustice. Chapter Four addresses issues discussed in Chapter Three, but with reference to the Trinbagonian literary context.

Chapter Five, the conclusion, synthesizes the arguments by pointing out the sociolinguistic similarities and differences between Zimbabwe and Trinbagonian literatures analyzed in the study. Furthermore, the concluding chapter not only indicates the values of an interdisciplinary project such as this one for both linguistics and literary studies, but it also delineates certain research options for the future.

The dissertation generally concludes that the construction of Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian identities in and through language can be read as a mode of resistance to the homogenizing, assimilative practices of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Thus, the detailed documentation provided in this study of the range of linguistic and socio-cultural differences between Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures on the one hand, and other works of English (especially the acrolectal varieties) on the other, establishes that while there is no single, stable Zimbabwean or Trinbagonian identity that is constituted in the language of literary texts to set up in contrast to an imperial British or American one, the fact of differences is indisputable.

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ABSTRACT

The present study employs the frameworks of post-colonial literary theory, sociolinguistics, and the social psychology of language use to compare the nature, function, and meaning of English in the delineation of cultural and social identities in anglophone Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures. The construction of cultural and social identities in these literatures inheres in how certain Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian novelists use various linguistic devices to contextualize the English language in their respective cultures, and how they employ the English language to articulate and reinforce colonial, counter-colonial, and other heteroglossic social discourses arising from conflicts of race, class, and gender in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian contexts.

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***To Elizabeth, Seun, and Tobi;
for their love and patience***

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The nativization of English in non-native contexts at the levels of phonology, lexis, semantics, and syntax has been the main focus of a number of recent studies,¹ but the power and politics of English by which the language enters into processes of social and cultural domination on the one hand, and the creation of new social stratifications in post-colonial societies on the other, has as yet been little studied by scholars. Furthermore, research on the nature, meaning, and functions of English, especially in post-colonial contexts, has been reluctant to address language differentiation along gender lines, particularly the social production of gender, the social reproduction of male dominance and the modes of female resistance articulated in language.

This dissertation focuses on Zimbabwean and Trinidadian and Tobagan (Trinbagonian) literatures. These national literatures are chosen for analysis because, despite the continuing literary output from these two geolinguistic areas, little work has been done on the nativization strategies, and the power and politics of English in these two national literatures. By juxtaposing material from these two linguistic and literary traditions, this dissertation aims to highlight language as social and material practice in anglophone African and West Indian literatures in general. Consequently, the purpose of this dissertation is threefold: to investigate how selected Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian novelists use the English language to represent their nations' cultural and social contexts; how these novelists use various linguistic devices to contextualize the English language in their respective cultures; and how they employ the English language to reflect, articulate, and reinforce colonial, counter-colonial, and other

heteroglossic social discourses arising from conflicts of race, class, and gender in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian contexts.

The political and sociolinguistic transmutations the English language undergoes in post-colonial literary contexts and societies have engaged the attention of both literary and linguistic scholars over the years. The processes by which the use of the English language in post-colonial societies gradually move from an external to an internal norm have been variously labeled as *nativization*, *indigenization*, *relexification*, *translingualism*, *transculturation*, and *abrogation and appropriation*.

Nativization refers to “the linguistic readjustment a language undergoes when it is used by members of another speech community in distinctive sociocultural contexts and language contact situations” (Kachru “Second Diaspora” 235), while indigenization relates to “the forging of a new literary aesthetic medium out of the elements of an alien, dominant lexicon” (Zabus “Under the Palimpsest” 106). The process of relexification in the anglophone context entails the post-colonial speaker or writer “using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms” (Todd 297-8). However, indigenization is not restricted mainly to the literary context, while relexification also extends to the Europhone in the broader post-colonial context. Translingualism and transculturation are contiguous concepts. Translingualism is defined as “the purposive and artful reproduction within one language of features from another language” (Scott 75), while, according to Mary Louise Pratt,

cultural theorists . . . have used the term ‘transculturation’ to describe processes whereby members of subordinate or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant or metropolitan culture. While subordinate peoples do not usually control what emanates from the dominant culture, they do determine to varying extents what gets absorbed into their own, and what it gets used for.
(30-31)

The concept of transculturation bears a striking resemblance to the notion of abrogation and appropriation. As employed in post-colonial theory, abrogation and appropriation refer to the processes whereby post-colonial writers define themselves by seizing the language of the centre and replacing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place (Ashcroft *et al.* 38). According to Ashcroft *et al.*:

The first, the abrogation or denial of the privilege of English involves a rejection of the metropolitan power over the means of communication. The second, the appropriation and reconstitution of the language of the centre, the process of capturing and remoulding the language to new usages, marks a separation from the site of colonial privilege. (38)

A cardinal assumption in Ashcroft *et al.*'s *The Empire Writes Back* is thus that "language is a material practice and as such is determined by a complex weave of social conditions and experience" (41); another is that "the power structures of English grammar [are] . . . themselves metonymic of the hegemonic controls exercised by the British on Black peoples throughout Caribbean and African history" (48). A major focus of *The Empire Writes Back* is thus on "language as power," on texts as "sites of conflict," and on a language that interrogates, decentres, and destabilizes the canonical texts of a metropolitan and imperial aesthetics. In short, Ashcroft *et al.* assert that hegemonic, standard English is turned into 'englishes' and altered into radical and new modes of apprehending reality. However, despite Ashcroft *et al.*'s allusion to "language as power" and texts as "sites of conflict," the authors do not demonstrate in any great detail how such discursive formations as 'power' and 'conflict' might be negotiated and analyzed in literary texts.

One way of conceiving of post-colonial literatures in English is to think of them as the result of the contact of English with other languages in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Consequently, the texts to be analyzed in this research epitomize how post-colonial writers adapt and modify the English language to fit their own

cultural, social, and political exigencies. Specifically, the research intends to focus on the new cultural and social contexts in which the English language functions in the following novels: Stanlake Samkange's *On Trial For My Country* and *The Mourned One*, Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*, Shimmer Chinodya's *Harvest of Thorns*, Chenjerai Hove's *Bones*, and Dambudzo Marechera's *House of Hunger*, from Zimbabwe, and V.S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Samuel Selvon's *Lonely Londoners*, Earl Lovelace's *The Dragon Can't Dance*, Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack, Monkey*, and Marlene Nourbese Philip's *Looking for Livingstone*, from Trinidad and Tobago. I will also analyze the white Rhodesian novel, *The Grass is Singing*, by Doris Lessing, as comparative material to highlight the particular nature of the eleven main texts.

I focus on the novel because of its heteroglossic quality. For Bakhtin, the novel is the literary form which above all not only takes advantage of heteroglossia but, when it is most authentically itself, is the form which exploits the multiplicity of language (291). According to Chantal Zabus,

The Europhone [West African] novel provides an adequate testing terrain for the practice of indigenization because the novel is a flexible, polysemic form that can incorporate other genres . . . and other registers as well. As such, the analysis of its language poses interesting problems valid for other genres and other post-colonial literatures. (*The African Palimpsest* 4)

Stating this position is not to suggest, however, that other genres such as drama and poetry are not capable of displaying heteroglossia or capturing the social diversity of speech types.

Given the comparative nature of this project, a method of analysis that blends insights from post-colonial theory, sociolinguistics, and the social psychology of language use is necessary for the research objectives. However, as Clement Wyke (vii-

viii) observes, an interdisciplinary study at the interface of linguistics and literature always involves a fair amount of risk-taking, a delicate balancing act between two disparate fields of inquiry. The yoking together of the two worlds of linguistics and literature is, therefore, bound to “create higher expectations among specialists in both fields than may be fulfilled” (Wyke viii). Because of the emphasis of this study on language as cultural and social identity, traditional literary analysis, involving such critical priorities as narrative voice, points of view, setting, theme, characterization, and so on, is not given much prominence. Nonetheless, I make selective use of these literary devices in my analysis and, in the concluding chapter, I dwell at length on the value of this study for scholars and students of literature.

Relating to the method of analysis, for example, the theories of ‘constitutive graphonomy’ and ‘hybridity’ as formulated in post-colonial theory are useful in discussing the nativization of the English language in post-colonial literatures in English. Constitutive graphonomy conceives the discourse of the post-colonial as “rooted in conflict and struggle, as ‘counter-discourse’, since the perpetual confrontation with a ‘standard code’ is that which constructs the language” (Ashcroft 62). Characteristic of the arguments that run through ‘nativization’, ‘indigenization’, ‘relexification’, ‘translingualism’, and ‘transculturation’ discussed earlier on, constitutive graphonomy assumes that “One of the most interesting features of post-colonial literature is that kind of writing which is informed by the linguistic principles of a first language, or by the idiomatic variations of a language adapting to a new place and new culture” (Ashcroft 70). Constitutive graphonomy thus posits a theory of cultural difference because “language variance is *metonymic*, a synecdochic index of cultural difference which affirms the distance of cultures at the very moment in which it proposes to bring them together” (Ashcroft 71). However, Ashcroft’s conflation of metonymy and synecdoche in this formulation is problematic because they are properly contiguous not synonymous concepts. Because synecdoche is “a figure of speech in

which a part is used for a whole, an individual for a class, a material for a thing, or the reverse of any of these” (*Webster’s* 1358), and given that language is a constituent of culture, the term synecdoche is more appropriate in this context. In other words, language variance is construed as “the ‘part’ of a wider cultural whole” (Ashcroft *et al.* 51).

Among the ‘devices of otherness’ and ‘signifiers of alterity’ which establish the difference and uniqueness of the post-colonial text are direct glossing in the text, either by explanation or parenthetical insertions; syntactic fusion, in which the English prose is structured according to the syntactic principles of a first language; neologisms, or new lexical forms in English which are informed by the semantic and morphological exigencies of a mother tongue; the direct inclusion of untranslated lexical items in the text; ethno-rhythmic prose which constructs an English discourse according to the rhythm and texture of a first language; and the transcription of dialect and language variants of many different kinds (Ashcroft 72, original emphasis).

Although Homi Bhabha does not theorize specifically about language, his deployment of the term ‘hybridity’ has important implications for a consideration of language and discourse in post-colonial literary texts. Used to examine the cultural and political interfaces between colonizer and colonized, “The term involves a complex system of ideas. Talk of hybridity suggests that older oppositions -- ‘binarisms’, in the jargon -- need to be replaced by a more nuanced view that recognizes the mutual constitution of inside and outside, self and other” (Appiah Rev. of *Location of Culture* 5). As Bhabha formulates it:

The language of critique is effective . . . to the extent to which it overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of ‘translation’; a place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, *neither the one nor the Other*, properly alienates our political expectations, and changes,

as it must, the very forms of our recognition of the 'moment' of politics. ("Commitment" 117, original emphasis)

However, Bhabha's deconstruction of the binary opposition colonizer/colonized in favour of a new subjectivity tends to background the power and politics of language (especially English) in the dis/enfranchisement of colonized and subjugated peoples. Bhabha's deconstructive analysis has the tendency to erase, elide, and neutralize conflict and struggle in post-colonial literatures and discourses. Thus, in her critique of Bhabha and another deconstructive post-colonial critic Gayatri Spivak, Benita Parry contends that the deconstruction of the opposition between the discourses of the colonized and the colonizer is potentially a denial of the "radical force of transgressive appropriations in a reverse discourse that contests the master text on its own terrain" (46). In this connection, I would like to suggest at least within the context of African and West Indian literatures, that the use of the English language should be conceived as an appropriation that presupposes difference, and that hybridity should also serve as a marker of resistance, a method of defusing the idea of a single standard English's dominating power.

Consequently, the theories enunciated above are of limited usefulness in describing and analyzing the power and politics of English in post-colonial literatures in English. They thus need to be complemented with insights from sociolinguistics and the social psychology of language use. For example, apart from focusing on the relationship between language, culture, and society, sociolinguistics studies language varieties, the characteristics of their functions, and the characteristics of their speakers as these three constantly interact, change themselves, and change one another within a social context. As Janet Holmes put it:

Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society. They are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and they are concerned with identifying

the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning. Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community. (1)

Such sociolinguistic formulations as ‘field of discourse’, ‘tenor of discourse’, ‘mode of discourse’, and ‘social distance’ are useful in analyzing the power and politics of English in the Zimbabwean and the Trinbagonian literary contexts.

The social psychology of language not only emphasizes an individual’s linguistic behaviour in his or her social contexts, but it is also concerned with “how society and its structure . . . as reflected along such dimensions as power and control, affect the individual’s social behaviour” (Giles “Sociolinguistics and Social Psychology” 3). By focusing on the social world and social structure and through the enunciation of such theories as similarity-attraction, intergroup identity, gain-loss, and speech convergence and divergence, the social psychology of language use complements sociolinguistics and broadens the explanatory scope of language study.

However, since most works in sociolinguistics and social psychology of language use are not only androcentric (that is, traditionally concerned with men’s speech and conceptions), but also silent on the issues of language and gender, this dissertation will draw on scholarship dealing specifically with language and gender. Scholars, particularly feminists, doing research at the intersection of language and gender have insisted that “Language is part of patriarchy. If it plays a crucial part in social organization it is instrumental in maintaining male power, and feminists must study its workings carefully” (Cameron “Feminism and Linguistic Theory” 3). Such scholars are consequently in search of new metaphors and ways of writing which reflect female lives and bodies as patriarchal language cannot. These scholars thus enunciate a viewpoint that interrogate existing linguistic practice and espouse a critical

approach to the way language has been used (Cameron “Why is Language a Feminist Issue?” 2).

Having discussed key concepts in post-colonial theories of language and literature, explaining and clarifying the other terms and categories that will feature prominently in my analysis is useful at this juncture.

As an important concept in my analysis, ‘identity’ has been defined with a positive inflection as “a coalescence of mutually responsive (if sometimes conflicting) modes of conduct, habits of thought, and patterns of evaluation; in short, a coherent kind of human social psychology” (Appiah “Father’s House” 174) and, with a more negative inflection, as “a plebeian term for a shifting set of markers proposed or flaunted as distinguishing an individual or group from others” (Olaniyan “Discursive Bodies” 155). The decidedly pejorative quality of Olaniyan’s definition is incompatible with Appiah’s, whose postulation shows the influence of the post-structuralist critique of identity as a humanist concept that ignores the unstable, multiple, contradictory, contingent nature of selves.

Two modes of cultural identity have been identified in the counter-discursive practices of formerly un- or mis-represented human groups who seek “to speak for and represent themselves in domains defined, politically and intellectually, as normally excluding them, usurping their signifying and representing functions, over-riding their historical reality” (Connor 232-233). This first position defines cultural identity in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one self’, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common (Hall 393). According to Stuart Hall, “Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experience and shared cultural codes which provide us, as ‘one people’ with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history” (393). This view of cultural identity is in consonance

with what Tejumola Olaniyan identifies as the problematic concept of 'expressive cultural identity.' Such identity, he explains, is taken to

propose culture -- the entire order of the constitutive social processes and practices, spiritual and material, by which a people produce and reproduce themselves -- as an essence, transparent, obvious, and unchanging. "Society" itself is taken as given, preconstituted. Culture is a totality, whole, complete, and finished. This self-sufficiency screens out other cultures with an impenetrable rigor. The Other, in this context, remains fixed as an atavistic category of the Same. Or at best a grammar of parallelism is erected as the principle of recognition of difference, rather than the messy *real* of rancorous interference and overlapping. (*Scars* 30, original emphasis)

Because "Every human identity is constructed, historical" and "one we must continue to reshape" (Appiah "Father's House" 174, 177), and because identities are "strategies of identification and processes of affiliation" (Bhabha "Question" 90), the second view of cultural identity claims that cultural identity is not only always compound and overdetermined, but is also unstable at its origins, and incapable of being stabilized. This view of cultural identity recognizes that, as well as many points of similarity among identities, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute 'what we really are' or rather -- since history has intervened -- 'what we have become'. Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories, but they are also going somewhere because, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power. Far from being

grounded in mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past (Hall 394). This dynamic view of cultural identity accords with what Olaniyan has called 'performative cultural identity'. The performative view

stresses the historicity of culture, that is its "made-ness" in space and time. Rather than a given, seamless totality, culture is conceived as an intricate and open process of practices and discriminations through which a people define their "way of life" as distinct. "Society" as a unitary entity is discarded for mutually impinging social networks of differing scales relating to different types of power -- political, military, ideological, or economic. Identity in the performative conception is a *process* marked by endless negotiations. It is never closed or positive but always vulnerable, fragile, a complex historical process of appropriation, compromise, subversion, masking, invention, and revival. . . . Performative identity refuses to be an absolute and fixed otherness. (Olaniyan *Scars* 30-31, original emphasis)

Although Hall's and Olaniyan's formulations of cultural identity presuppose that it is contested or negotiated rather than being fixed, their analyses of cultural identity seem to emerge from the locus of dominant groups and the nation; they thus fail to produce a deeper critique of ideology by considering the position of those who are marginalized and excluded from group or national formations. As Renato Rosaldo puts it:

Social analysts must also consider how cultural artifacts look and feel from different positions. . . . Such positions can be purely structural, based on class, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race and so on, taken singly or together in various combinations.

Rather than being positioned in a single unified manner, individuals live at the intersection of multiple subject positions. (244)

By privileging the nation and dominant groups at the expense of those who are marginalized and excluded, Hall's and Olaniyan's conception of cultural identity is reminiscent of Benedict Anderson's cultural analysis of the nation as a community because "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (16). By describing the horizontal egalitarian ties that bind the members of a nation as fraternal, Anderson glosses over inequalities and politics of disenfranchisement stemming from race, class, gender, ethnicity, and other social distinctions. According to Rosaldo:

Anderson's cultural analysis of the nation as an imagined community attends more carefully to questions of inclusion than of exclusion. His analysis of imagined national communities situates itself from the vantage point of the state rather than from that of its more marginalized citizens. In failing to consider divergent subject positions, Anderson misses the opportunity for a critical analysis that would carry him beyond the important step he does take of studying the socially constructed character of national communities. (247)

Given this homogenizing tendency in the formulation of cultural identity, we need to deploy a different category of social identity to account for subjectivities, groups, and discourses that have been marginalized and excluded by the totalizing strategies of cultural identity. John Gumperz and Jenny Cook-Gumperz's formulation of social identity is useful in this respect:

Our basic premise is that social processes are symbolic processes but that symbols have meaning only in relation to the forces which control the utilization and allocation of environmental resources. We customarily take gender, ethnicity, and class as given parameters and

boundaries within which we create our own social identities. The study of language as interactional discourse demonstrates that these parameters are not constants that can be taken for granted but are communicatively produced. (1)

Given the general critical acceptance of the “interdependence of language and identity -- you are the way you speak” (Ashcroft *et al.* 54), the question arises: How does language intersect in cultural and social identity? Michel Pêcheux’s tripartite schematic outline of a dominated subject’s relationship to the dominating discourse will help make the relationship between language and cultural or social identity clearer. According to Pecheux, identification is the mode of so-called good subjects, who as seen from the hegemonic point of view are subjects who “freely consent” to the image held out to them, while bad subjects, trouble-makers, refuse it. Counter-identification is the mode of the trouble-maker who turns back those meanings lived by the good subjects who are only stating the obvious. Disidentification, by contrast, can be described as an effect of working “on and against” prevailing practices of ideological subjection, gesturing at the “transformation-displacement” or “overthrow-rearrangement” of the existing structures of domination, with the effect that the identity and identification set up in the dominant ideology, though never escaped entirely, are transformed and displaced (156-159).

Consequently, as conceptualized in this dissertation, language as a synecdoche of cultural identity counteridentifies with the language and culture of the metropolitan centre; language as a marker of cultural identity challenges the hegemonic territoriality of the dominant code of the so-called standard English. On the other hand, language as an articulator of social identity disidentifies with the dominant discourses of colonialism, racism, classism, and sexism. In other words, if the locus of language as cultural identity is the subversion of the hegemony of the English language through the strategy of nativization of linguistic forms that are altered to have different cultural

overtones when used by African and Caribbean speakers, the province of language as a reinforcer of social identity is the historically contested and socially constituted terrains of race, class, gender, and ethnicity. Generally speaking, language as cultural identity is based on a collective sense of national and group consciousness which emphasizes similarities, while language as a purveyor of social identity is more personal and individuated, therefore is more fully cognizant of differences.

The term **language**² means different things to different scholars. For those working in theoretical linguistics, “Language, as the object of linguistic theory, is a system of rules and representations (Saussure’s *langue*, Chomsky’s *grammar*), considered independently of its users and uses in context” (Black and Coward 115). This asocial and apolitical conception of language has found few followers in actual practice. Other scholars working within literary and cultural theory see language as a social and material practice, a view that challenges the kind of definition proposed by Noam Chomsky, who emphasizes innate, genetically determined, and unchanging capacity for linguistic competence, which is supposed to comprise a complete universal grammar.

According to the conceptualization of language as material practice, all languages, even the discourses of dominant power, are always what Bakhtin calls “heteroglot”, representing “the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth” (291). Language is thus conceived as a social instrument that “places an individual within a given social stratification, class, or caste, and . . . suggests how a person is to be evaluated by others. *Language, then, is not neutral or value-free; it can embody negative value stances and valuations related to how certain groups within society are appraised.* To this extent, social identity is inextricably tied to language” (Van Dan Bergh 132, original emphasis). For Richard Terdiman, “What is at stake in language

... is power” (40) because “Engaged with the realities of power, human communities use words not in contemplation but in *competition*” (38, original emphasis).

Terdiman’s conceptualization of language is relevant to this dissertation’s focus on the English language and the construction of cultural and social identity:

Language presupposes difference. It exists only within a “differential” world, a world of conflicts and oppositions. Otherness, difference, the heterological, are thus essential attributes of the realm of words, signs, and discourses. (15, original emphasis)

To be sure, linguists dissatisfied with the Chomskyan approach to linguistic analysis have seen language very much as a social phenomenon. For example, Roger Fowler states that “There is a dialectical interrelationship between language and social structure: the varieties of linguistic usage are both *products* of socio-economic forces and institutions . . . reflexes of such factors as power relations, occupational roles, social stratifications, etc. – and *practices* which are instrumental in forming and legitimating these same social forces and institutions” (21, original emphasis).

The term **discourse** is a very complex formulation. It has two meanings: the first used in linguistics and the second in literary and cultural theory. As employed in linguistics, discourse refers to larger-scale structures beyond the level of the sentence, or as Anthony Easthope defines discourse in linguistic terms, it is “a term which specifies the way that sentences form a consecutive order, take part in a whole which is homogeneous as well as heterogeneous. And just as sentences join together in discourse to make up an individual text, so texts themselves join others in a larger discourse” (8).

Other scholars have offered conceptualizations which regard discourse as socially and institutionally situated sets of techniques and assumptions, as material, social practices. In this direction, “Discourse” is not only “a violence that we do to things . . . a practice that we do to and impose upon them”, as Michel Foucault says,

“but also a violence, a practice that we do to and impose on human beings” (*Archaeology* 229). Terdiman also specifies that “Discourse is not simply that which expresses struggles or systems of domination, but that for which, and by which, one struggles; it is the power which one is striving to seize” (55). Terdiman goes on further to note that

Discourses are the complexes of signs and practices which organize social existence and social reproduction. In their structured, material persistence, discourses are what give differential substance to membership in a social group or class formation, which mediate an internal sense of belonging, an outward sense of otherness. (54)

Terdiman’s formulation of discourse is relevant to the study of social identity because, contrary to cultural identity formulation, his conceptualization firmly establishes the social and class basis of discursive formations.

Scholars working within the domain of what has come to be known as critical linguistics have also offered a theory of language and discourse whose aim is “to provide an illuminating account of verbal language as a social phenomenon, especially for the use of critical theorists . . . who [want] to explore social and political forces and processes as they act through and on texts and forms of discourse” (Hodge and Kress vii).

In this dissertation, discourse is conceived not only as a nexus of cultural and social identity but also as a site of social reproduction and struggle, and a producer of social relations. As Gill Seidel aptly puts it: “Discourse is a site of struggle. It is a terrain, a dynamic linguistic and, above all, semantic space in which social meanings are produced or challenged” (44).

A discourse may be dominant or counter-discursive. According to Terdiman, the dominant discourse “functions to exclude the heterogeneous from the domain of utterance” (14); the dominant “is the discourse which, being everywhere, comes from

nowhere: to it is granted the structural privilege of appearing to be unaware of the very question of its own legitimacy”; and the dominant “tends to efface anything which does not fall within its own orbit or appear consonant with its own interests” (61). It is the deployment of a term like dominant discourse that enables us to talk about such hegemonic discourses as colonial discourse and patriarchal discourse.

For example, colonial discourse has been defined as “an ensemble of linguistically based practices unified by their common deployment in the management of colonial relationships” and “the name for that system of signifying practices whose work is to produce and naturalize the hierarchical power structures of the imperial enterprise, and to mobilize those power structures in the management of both colonial and neo-colonial cross-cultural relationships” (Hulme 2). In analyzing colonial discourse, Abdul JanMohamed talks of a “manichean aesthetic” that sets up a system of oppositions -- white/black, good/evil, civilized/barbaric, etc. -- which invariably privileges the dominant power. According to JanMohamed:

The dominant model of power -- and interest -- relations in all colonial societies is the manichean opposition between the putative superiority of the European and the supposed inferiority of the native. The axis in turn provides the central feature of the colonialist cognitive framework and colonialist literary representation. (“Manichean Allegory” 82)

Patriarchal discourse can be generally described as a system of signs and practices produced in and by the dominant ideology that seeks to marginalize and objectify women, so that they can be made to serve male purposes. Such discourse functions so as to silence women or cause them to speak the myths men would have them speak.

If, as indicated, discourse is a site of struggle, an ideological zone for working out social meanings and enacting social differences, it follows that “for every dominant discourse [arises] a contrary and transgressive counter-discourse” (Terdiman 65). So

no dominant discourse is ever fully protected from contestation because “the discourses of a society are structured in a shifting, multiform network of linked assertions and subversions, of normalized and heterodox speech” (16). Consequently, “Situated as other, counter-discourses have the capacity to *situate*: to relativize the authority and stability of a dominant system of utterances which cannot even countenance their existence. They read that which cannot read them at all” (Terdiman 15-16, original emphasis). Situated as other to colonial discourse and patriarchal discourse, for example, are counter-colonial and counter-patriarchal discourses which not only establish a sceptical, oppositional, and disidentificatory dialectics with the discourses of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and patriarchy, but also seek to interrogate, decentre, and destabilize the ideology produced in and by these dominant discourses.

As indicated earlier on, questions of language and discourse are essentially questions of power. But what is **power**? The concepts of power and control are linked in various ways and, according to Braj Kachru, power implies “an attainment of various types of ‘control’ . . . and the processes and strategies used for this control” (“Power and Politics” 122). In a review of theories about power, Dennis Wrong offers this basic definition: “Power is the capacity of some persons to produce intended and foreseen effects on others” (2). Wrong then differentiates intentional from unintentional influence. Intentional influence may be achieved through authority (a conceptual acceptance of another as competent to wield power), manipulation (concealed power), persuasion (argumentation), and force (physical or psychic). Except for physical force, it is possible to realize these effects through language. Unintentional influence is realized in certain social interactions, for example, a boss may not mean to plunge employees into despair by greeting them somewhat distractedly in the morning, but the latter may read the former’s action as a means of exercising influence. In the words of Sik Hung Ng and James Bradac: “Language provides a conventional resource for influencing people’s attitudes and behaviour. Influence-

attempts may take the form of persuasion, argumentation, or use of threats, promises, requests, demands, order and such like” (5).

Tim O’Sullivan *et al.* conceive of power as “The means by which certain individuals and groups are able to dominate others, to carry through and realize their own particular aims and interests even in the face of opposition and resistance” (235). Apart from downplaying the efficacy of opposition and resistance, O’Sullivan *et al.* attempt to differentiate power and control, in spite of the fact that the latter concept is always considered an integral part of power. According to this distinction:

While the term *control* is often used in a general sense to describe the practices and aims of the powerful, *social control* is often more precisely employed to refer to socially generalized authority, forms of negative or corrective social regulation. . . . Where power is positively defined, implying rule and dominance contested and exerted through conflict and struggle between individuals, groups or social classes, social control often implies a consensually authoritative social order, whereby society regulates itself. (236)

Some of the assumptions in this distinction are contestable. For example, power can also be negatively defined, especially from the standpoint of dominated groups and classes in society. Similarly, social control does not necessarily imply a consensus but is often marked by struggle and conflict between dominant and dominated groups in societies; society does not regulate itself but it is the desire of the dominant and powerful groups within society to regulate and control society to suit their own ideological imperatives.

Cheris Kramarae *et.al.*’s conceptualization of the contiguous relationship between power and politics is useful for the analytical framework of this dissertation: “In common ways and in scholarly writings, the concepts of *power* and *politics* are so closely linked that they may even be used sometimes as synonyms. . . . [However]

'Politics' often implies power, persuasion, and influence" (10-11, original emphasis).

In other words, politics is a process in which power is struggled for.

Within cultural theory, "power", Foucault writes, is "a mode of acting upon the action of others", a "total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions . . . a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action" ("The Subject and Power" 221, 220). However, like other conceptualizations of power described above, Foucault's has been attacked not only for essentializing power, but also for de-emphasizing the resistance to power. For example, Edward Said argues that the "pessimism" which underscores Foucault's conception of power must be surpassed and more space found for questions and practices of resistance (Said "Imagination of Power" 151). Said thus contends that Foucauldian "images of power" are too closely tied to the interests and approaches of those *with* power rather than those *against* the way power is constituted and deployed. For Said, Foucault's concept of power is monolithic and unidirectional because power is conceived as a sovereign and commodified possession and not an outcome of particular social and institutional relations ("Imagination of Power" 150-152). Said thus calls for a reformulation of the Foucauldian view of modern forms of power in terms of a framework of class struggle and global domination by the forces and technologies of international capital (*The World* 221).

It would appear, however, that Said has misinterpreted the Foucauldian notion of power. As Foucault notes in *Power/Knowledge*:

Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of articulation. (98)

In this instance, Foucault's metaphors of the net-like organization and individuals acting as the vehicles of power seem to suggest that power is not monolithic but exists and circulates in a web of complex social relations where power is constantly being contested and negotiated. However, like the limitations of Said's own formulation, the failure of the Foucauldian conception is to see power as emanating from one dimension only -- class -- rather than viewing power as issuing from a complex web of social relations at the intersection of such determinants as race, class, gender, and ethnicity.

Owing to the essentialized views of power described above, some scholars have enunciated the concept of power relationships rather than power as an unnuanced notion. For example, it has been pointed out that power is a relative category because, especially in relation to language and discourse, and depending on a number of variables such as the tenor relationships of participants in a speech event, there are contexts in which members of a dominated group will come to dominate and oppress members of a dominant group. Even within the dominant and dominated classes, there are situations in which some members of either group will become more dominant or dominated.³ By seeing power in these contextual terms and by grappling with power not in terms of an absolute binarism of power and powerlessness, but as a complex positioning of individuals with a myriad of power potentials in different social relations, Deborah Cameron *et al.* have, for example, indicated that those who are dominated in particular social relations can and do develop powerful oppositional discourses of resistance -- feminism, Black power, gay pride -- to which people respond in complex ways. Furthermore, there are instances where relatively powerless people are nevertheless oppressing others: racist factory workers, school-teachers, working-class men (21). As a result, Noelle Moreau's position on power relationships is germane to the fluid dynamics of power adopted for the analytical framework of this dissertation:

Power relationships exist between groups when one, the dominated

group, is submitted to a system of real economic, political, juridical, and ideological constraints by the other, the dominant group.

Dominated and dominant groups do not exist as realities *per se*; the identity of each group is actually constituted through the relationship itself. So it is necessary to use the expression *power relationship* instead of *power*, a term that emphasizes only one side of the relationship (that of the dominant group), as if it could be defined *per se*, as if it were an entity. (43, original emphasis)

In addition to the concepts of discourse and power discussed above, some key concepts in sociolinguistics (**field, tenor, and mode of discourse; social distance, basilect, mesolect, and acrolect**) are useful in discussing and analyzing the relationship between the English language and the construction of cultural and social identity in Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures. According to Michael Halliday, the 'field' of discourse is "that which is going on, and has recognizable meaning in the social system; typically a complex of acts in some ordered configuration, and in which the text is playing some part, and including 'subject matter' as one special aspect" (*Language as Social Semiotic* 142-143). For example, the field of discourse might be constituted by the social interaction between a police officer and a suspect. The 'tenor' is concerned with "the cluster of socially meaningful participant relationships, both permanent attributes of the participants and role relationships that are specific to the situation" (*Language as Social Semiotic* 143). The tenor of discourse, for example, might relate to the asymmetrical power relationship between the police officer and the suspect. 'Mode' involves "the particular status that is assigned to the text within the situation, its function in relation to the social action and the role structure, including the channel or medium, and the rhetorical mode" (*Language as Social Semiotic* 143). The mode of discourse would relate to the varieties of English and any other language or non-verbal communication used between the police officer and the accused depending

on a number of situational variables such as their social status and educational attainment.

Ruqaiya Hasan's later work in sociolinguistics constitutes an attempt to broaden the scope of contextual configuration as proposed by Halliday above by including the two important variables of 'agent roles' and 'social distance' as components of the tenor of discourse. Hasan's views on agent roles and social distance as important variables of tenor are worth quoting in full:

Agent roles construct DYADS. If the dyad is HIERARCHIC, one agent will have a greater degree of control over the other; if it is NON-HIERARCHIC, then we have relations of peer-hood, such as those of friendship, rivalry, acquaintanceship, and indifference. . . . Both agent role and dyadic relation are essentially determined by reference to general social matters. We might even say that in as much as agent roles and their dyadic structures are determined by the nature of their social activity, these are expressions of a social structure. . . . SOCIAL DISTANCE is a continuum, the two end-points of which may be referred to as MAXIMAL and MINIMAL. A maximal social distance obtains when the persons involved know each other through infrequent encounters only in the capacity of the agent of some one institutionalized activity and in the dyadic status that correlates with the agent role. . . . The more minimal the social distance, the greater the degree of familiarity between the carriers of the role. Social distance affects styles of communication. In a long-standing relationship, for example, that of marriage, one participant is normally able to predict a great deal of what the other might say or do. (57, original emphasis)

Especially in post-colonial literary and multilingual/multicultural contexts, the mode of discourse finds concrete expression in what has become known as the

polylectal speech situation which entails the availability of several lects in the speech environment. Three main varieties of English have been identified in certain post-colonial societies, for example in Africa and the Caribbean, where the imperial fiction of hegemonic, standard English has been fractured and decolonized into various alternative ‘Englishes’⁴: (1) the higher variety (*acrolect*), which is the internationally intelligible variety; (2) the intermediate variety (*mesolect*), which is the intranationally accepted variety; and (3) the lower variety (*basilect*), which is the ‘context’ variety associated with the illiterate and semi-literate population (Bamiro “Nigerian Englishes” 7-8).

However, following Derek Bickerton’s use of these terms in describing the creole continuum, some scholars have suggested that in reality these three varieties are not discrete levels but rather form a continuum. For example, with particular reference to West African English, Loreto Todd indicates that to suggest the existence of clear divisions is a gross oversimplification because each of these varieties influences the other and each is itself a conglomerate of overlapping variants (286, 300). In describing the Guyanese creole continuum, Bickerton emphasizes that the basilect, mesolect, and acrolect “represent sectors of a continuum and should in no circumstances be reified as discrete objects (in the way that languages and dialects are traditionally reified). They are named in this way solely for convenience of reference; they blend into one another in such a way that no non-arbitrary division is possible” (24).

Jack Richards also points out that the situation is more complex in reality, in that an individual speaker may use an acrolectal speech variety as a rhetorical style and the mesolectal variety as a communicative style on some occasions, and on some occasions the same speaker may use a mesolectal variety as a rhetorical style and the basilectal variety as a communicative style, depending on speaker, role and other situation variables (7). Actually, Richards uses the terms ‘rhetorical styles’ and

'communicative styles' to refer to contrasting styles of speaking within an individual's speech repertoire, and uses the terms 'rhetorical' and 'communicative' norms to refer to the community's accepted norms for formal and informal speech. According to this distinction,

The favoured speech variety for formal communication, the *acrolect*, can be regarded as the rhetorical norm of the community. The speech variety accepted for informal communication, the *mesolect*, can be regarded as the communicative norm of the community. . . . The *acrolect* represents the idealized rhetorical norm for the community and the *mesolect*, the idealized communicative norm. The *basilect* may represent an actual communicative style but is scarcely recognized as a norm. (7-8)

However, the problem with Richards' formulation has to do with the question: Who sets the norm? For example, in a country like Nigeria where Nigerian Pidgin English is widely used both by the literate and the so-called semi-literate and illiterate population, and thus forms an autonomous system which has its own *basilectal*, *mesolectal*, and *acrolectal* norms, who dictates the norm and by what parameters? As Peter Strevens has rightly noted: "Each LFE [localized form of English] has its own characteristic range between 'acrolect', 'mesolect', and 'basilect', and its own social interpretations of when each is appropriate, and by people of what role in society" (26).

The notion of a lectal range is also similar to what Braj Kachru has termed a 'cline of bilingualism' or a 'cline of Englishness' ("World Englishes" 4). The cline of bilingualism refers to the range of varieties of English used by individuals within one country, ranging from a pidgin or market English to a highly educated variety. One could speak, for example, of a particular person's cline of bilingualism. Kachru further indicates that such variation can be found not only in oral usage, but also within literature written in English in countries such as Nigeria and India. He suggests that

such variation distinguishes among interlocutors and provides evidence of class status as well as group identity.

As earlier indicated, by enunciating such theories as **similarity-attraction**, **intergroup identity**, **gain-loss**, and **speech convergence and divergence**, the social psychology of language use complements sociolinguistics and broadens the explanatory scope of language study and discourse analysis. For example, the similarity-attraction theory is concerned with determining those dimensions along which we seek similarities with, and dissimilarities from, others. The theory thus proposes that “the more similar our attitudes and beliefs are to certain others, the more likely it is we will be attracted to them” (Giles and Smith 47).

Intergroup identity suggests that when members of different groups are in contact, they compare themselves on dimensions which are important to them, such as personal attributes, abilities, material possessions, and so forth. This process may lead individuals to search for, and even create, dimensions in which they can make themselves positively distinct from the outgroup. The perception of such a positive distinctiveness by the in-group will ensure that they have an adequate social identity. In other words, “people experience satisfaction in the knowledge that they belong to groups which enjoy some superiority over others” (Giles and Smith 52). The theory thus suggests that we are not only concerned with attaining inter-individual rewards and positive self-esteem, but that we also desire a favourable group identity. According to Howard Giles:

People like to emphasize their in-group identity and psychological distinctiveness from others by language in some situations, while in others they desire acceptance and attenuate their distinct modes of expression. . . .[W]ith this association between language variables and societal structure, people use speech behaviour as cues to group categorization and subsequent inferences for evaluation in important

social contexts. (17)

Gain-loss theory is similar to the similarity-attraction concept in that it focuses upon the tendency people have for being attracted most towards those whose admiration and respect they are gaining. It is believed that not only do people generally like the rewarding experience of others' attraction, but they enjoy most increments in others' liking for them. The theory is thus concerned with determining the nature of these increments and the conditions for their viability (Giles 13). However, unlike similarity-attraction theory, gain-loss theory (or 'social exchange processes' as it is referred to by certain researchers in the field) also posits that certain costs are involved in social interaction, such as the increased effort made to gain the attraction of a non-ascribed group and a loss of perceived integrity and personal or group identity. In its simplest form, gain-loss theory postulates that

Prior to acting, we attempt to assess the rewards and costs of alternative courses of action. Thus, if we have the choice of doing (or saying) A or B, we tend to choose the alternative which maximizes the chances of a positive outcome, and minimizes the chance of an unpleasant one. Engaging in convergent speech acts should then incur more potential rewards for the speaker than costs.

(Giles and Smith 48)

The sociolinguistic notion of social distance is very similar to the theory of 'accommodation' proposed by Howard Giles and his associates. Roughly described, the accommodation model hypothesizes that speakers accommodate their speech style to their addressees in order to win approval. The common form of accommodation is speech convergence by which a speaker's style shifts to become more like that of the addressee. Speech convergence is a crucial element in the delineation of similarity-attraction since it is but "one of the many devices a person may adopt in order to

become more similar to another” (Giles and Smith 47). Specifically, speech convergence involves

the reduction of linguistic differences between two people in terms of their languages, dialects, paralinguistic features, etc. Since increasing similarity between people along such an important dimension as communication is likely to increase attraction as well as intelligibility and predictability, convergence perhaps reflects a speaker’s desire for his [sic] listener’s social approval. Many factors could affect the descriptive levels on which, and the extent to which, convergence occurred, including the range of the speaker’s repertoire, the probability of future interaction with the listener, status relationships, and recollections of previous shifts made by the listener. (Giles and Smith 47)

Alternatively, instead of converging, speakers may maintain their style of speech or even diverge from their addressees. Speech divergence is thus a powerful signal that an individual or members of a social or ethnic group would want to maintain their identity and cultural or social distinctiveness. According to Giles and Smith:

It may well be that in certain situations, people not only want to maintain their own speech style, but wish to emphasize it in interaction with others. In these cases, speakers may wish to accentuate the differences between themselves and others, perhaps because of the other’s outgroup membership, undesirable attitudes, habits, or appearance. Speech shifts *away* from the interlocutor’s style, occurring with whatever intentions, have been termed ‘speech divergence’. (51-52, original emphasis)

Although accommodation theory originally suggested that the greater the desire for approval, the greater would be the convergence, Giles and Smith found, however,

that speakers can converge too much, causing addressees to react unfavourably to what they may feel is patronizing or ingratiating behaviour. Conversely, addressees need not always disapprove of divergence. I would observe that while speech convergence emphasizes conformity, speech divergence accentuates resistance. It is in this respect that speech divergence bears a striking resemblance to the concept of counter-discourse described earlier.

I want to emphasize that the concepts enunciated in this chapter are not by any means exhaustive of those used in the dissertation and other concepts will be clarified as they are deployed in the analysis in chapters three and four.

NOTES

¹Such studies include Zabus (1990), Winer (1989, 1993), Wylie (1991), Rahman (1990), Mair (1990), Morris (1993), Bamgbose *et al.* (1995), and Schmied (1991).

²The words in bold letters in this chapter are technical terms which may be unfamiliar to some readers. They are meant to serve as mnemonic devices so that such readers could easily relocate any terms used in subsequent chapters whose meanings the readers may have forgotten.

³In a paper entitled "The Social and Functional Power of Nigerian English," I demonstrate the fluid dynamics of power relationships with particular reference to the social functions of pidgin English in Nigerian literature.

⁴The authors of *The Empire Writes Back* maintain a manichean opposition between 'English' and 'englishes.' English with capital 'E' refers to the hegemonic standard of British English, while 'englishes' refer to the decolonizing and decolonized forms of the language as used, for example, in Africa and the Caribbean. However, this dissertation rejects the notion of 'englishes' because writing English with the lower case 'e' unwittingly privileges the so-called standard English in the binarism. The term Englishes with the upper case is preferred since the plural form itself signals that no single norm of English is privileged and that all the various Englishes are in cross-cultural interaction.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE POST-COLONIAL CONTEXT. WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITS USE IN LITERATURE

This chapter examines the place of English in the socio-economic, political, and cultural history of Zimbabwe and of Trinidad and Tobago, and offers a description of the indigenous or other national languages which play prominent roles in the linguistic configuration of the two nations. The chapter will also critically review the attitudes of some prominent post-colonial writers, particularly from the African and Caribbean regions, to the use of English as a medium of artistic creativity. However, in order to place these issues in their international perspectives, some preliminary remarks concerning the spread of English in the global context are appropriate at this juncture.

In a letter to Edmund Jennings on September 23, 1780, John Adams, the second president of the United States, mentioned, *inter alia*:

You must know I have undertaken to prophesy that English will be the most respectable language in the world, and the most universally read and spoken in the next century if not before the close of this. . . . Let us, then, encourage and advise every body to study English. . . . I see a general inclination after English in France, Spain, and Holland, and it may extend throughout Europe. (509-510)

This linguistic prophecy has come to pass and if anything in a more extensive way than Adams could envision from his moment in history. Today, no one questions that the English language is both a crucial factor in the international sociolinguistic balance of power, and it is also “generally acknowledged to be the world’s most important language” (Quirk *et al. Comprehensive Grammar* 3). English is one of the world’s most important languages “because of the ‘vehicular load’ it carries as a medium for science, technology and literature. And it continues to be associated with those nations

which are 'powerful', not only in political spheres, but as leaders in technology and science" (Quirk *et al. Contemporary English* 2-3).

The dominance of English as a world language can also be explained within the dynamics of what Pierre Bourdieu has called the 'linguistic market' and 'linguistic capital' respectively. Bourdieu points out that "In order for one mode of expression among others (a particular language in the case of bilingualism, a particular use of language in the case of a society divided into classes) to impose itself as the only legitimate one, the linguistic market has to be unified and the different dialects (of class, region or ethnic group) have to be measured practically against the legitimate language or usage" (45). The legitimate language in this instance is the dominant language in a multilingual setting.

With the creation of a unified linguistic market brought about by the imposition of English as an official language under colonial capitalism (Arnove 289) in many parts of the world, the linguistic capital of the language becomes enhanced. In his introduction to Bourdieu's *Language and Symbolic Power*, John Thompson remarks that linguistic capital refers to

the capacity to produce expressions *a propos*, for a particular market. Moreover, the distribution of linguistic capital is related in specific ways to the distribution of other forms of capital (economic capital, cultural capital, etc.) which define the location of an individual within the social space. . . . The more linguistic capital that speakers possess, the more they are able to exploit the system of differences to their advantage and thereby secure a *profit of distinction*. For the forms of expression which receive the greatest value and secure the greatest profit are those which are most unequally distributed, both in the sense that the conditions for the acquisition of the capacity to produce them are

restricted and in the sense that the expressions themselves are relatively rare on the markets where they appear. (18, original emphasis)

The quotation above implies that in post-colonial contexts like Zimbabwe and Trinidad and Tobago, while a command of English would bestow linguistic capital, the command of a privileged lect, such as Received Pronunciation of the acrolect, would bestow greater linguistic capital, and the appearance of the privileged lect in its most ideal forms would be relatively rare.

Over the years, the English language has expanded considerably in relation to the number of its users, range of uses, and the number of local varieties of the language. Braj Kachru reports:

The number of foreign-language and second-language users together adds up to 300 to 400 million. . . . Whatever the exact figures, this is a historically unprecedented phenomenon of language spread. When we add to this figure almost 300 million native speakers, we get 700 million users of English around the world. . . . As the statistics show, those who use English as their second or foreign (or “additional”) language now outnumber the users of Australian (15.8 million), Canadian (25.4 million), British (56.4 million), American (238.9 million), and New Zealand (3.3 million) varieties. By their geographical distribution, numerical strength, and varied uses of English, the non-native users have made English, as it were, a window on the world. (*Alchemy* 20)

June Jordan considers the spread of English in political and socio-economic terms:

What we usually call “English” less and less defers to England and its “gentlemen.” “English” is no longer a specific matter of geography or an element of class privilege; more than thirty-three countries use this tool as a means of “intranational communication.” Countries as

disparate as Zimbabwe and Malaysia, or Israel and Uganda, use it as their non-native currency of convenience. Obviously, this tool, this “English,” cannot function inside thirty-three discrete societies on the basis of rules and values absolutely determined somewhere else, in a thirty-fourth other country for example. In addition to that staggering congeries of non-native users of English, there are five countries, or 333,746,000 people, for whom this thing called “English” serves as a native tongue. (8)

Consequently, according to the most conservative figures, there are now two non-native speakers of English for every native speaker. Braj Kachru also notes that “if we accept an extremely optimistic figure of 2 billion users of English out of the total world population of over 5 billion, roughly every third person is using some variety of English as a nonnative speaker” (“Second Diaspora” 230). Given this unprecedented linguistic fact about the spread of the language, some scholars have predicted that “we shall see an increased divergence in the Englishes spoken world-wide and the ‘English’ of England will become an increasingly minor variety of ‘world English’” (Adams xiv). In this situation, seeing any form of British English as standard English becomes increasingly untenable.

In a paper entitled “Standards, Codification, and Sociolinguistic Realism: The English Language in the Outer Circle,” Braj Kachru represents the spread of English as it is used around the world as forming three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. He defines these circles with reference to the historical, sociolinguistic, and literary contexts. The Inner Circle incorporates varieties of English as used by native speakers in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The Outer Circle represents those countries where English was first introduced as a colonial language for administrative purposes. Countries exemplary of this circle include but are not limited to Bangladesh, Ghana,

India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Phillipines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Zambia, among others. In these countries, English has been institutionalized and nativized and although the varieties that have evolved share certain common core characteristics of Inner Circle varieties of English, they can be distinguished by their phonological, lexico-semantic, morpho-syntactic, and pragmatic innovations.

The third of Kachru's circles, the Expanding Circle, represents varieties of English which typically occur in countries where English functions as a foreign language. Such countries include China, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Korea, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, the former USSR, and, remarkably for the present study, Zimbabwe. The users of English in such countries are unpredictably increasing but the range and depth of the use of English is not the same as in Outer Circle countries. Kachru did not place some countries such as Jamaica, South Africa, and Puerto Rico within the above concentric circles because "their sociolinguistic situation is rather complex, particularly with reference to the English-using populations and the functions of English" ("World Englishes" 3).

However, given the status and range of functions of English in Zimbabwe (McGinley 159-160; Magura 251; Morrison 191-192; Ngara 20) and Jamaica, I find it difficult to accept Kachru's notion that Zimbabwe belongs to the Expanding Circle and, though it does not concern us directly here, that Jamaica does not fit relatively comfortably into any of the three circles described above.¹ The status of English in Zimbabwe suggests that it belongs to the Outer Circle, since in this circle, English was first transplanted as part of colonialism to vast numbers in what was then Rhodesia who, through the colonial policies of education and administration, were forced to learn English as a second language. Although a native-speaker model of English (British English) was initially introduced, the rise of nationalism, the attainment of

independence, and the development of nativized varieties and literatures in English have challenged this 'native-speaker' model in Zimbabwe.

In addition, the autonomy of English has been challenged in Zimbabwe by sheer growth in the number of users of English who are not first language users of the language and whose mother tongues are Shona or Ndebele (or Sindebele in some descriptions) respectively. For example, in Zimbabwe, Maurice Chishimba has indicated that "English [is] an official and second language . . . and the only language in public domains" (437, 438). I will have more to say about the status and functions of English in Zimbabwe later on in this chapter. However, a coherent account of the place of English not only in Zimbabwe, but also in Trinidad and Tobago first requires a brief sketch of the geo-political history of the two countries by way of introduction.

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country situated between South Africa, across the Limpopo River on the south, and Zambia, across the Zambezi River on the north. Its other borders are with Mozambique, to the east, and with Botswana, to the west. Its estimated population in 1990 is 9,721,000 (Rotberg 765).

Prior to becoming the independent nation of Zimbabwe in 1980, the country was, for more than eight decades, a British colony dominated by English-speaking white settlers of British and South African origin. It was called either Southern Rhodesia, its official name, or in the later 1960s and the 1970s, simply Rhodesia. After the breakup of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1963, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland became the independent states of Zambia and Malawi, while in Southern Rhodesia a stubborn settler regime ensconced itself in 1965, independent from the English Crown (Veit Wild *Teachers* 1).

The then-colony of Rhodesia was named after Cecil Rhodes, the English empire builder, who sent the first white settlers into the territory in the 1890s. Great Britain made it a protectorate in 1898. In 1923 Southern Rhodesia became a self-governing British colony, ruled, despite the preponderance of black Africans in the population, by

a tiny minority of whites, who had also seized the best farmland. In the early 1960s, responding to mass-based African nationalist movements, Britain changed its policy on Rhodesia and refused to grant Rhodesia independence unless its government agreed to accept eventual majority African rule. To avert this, the white Rhodesian regime in 1965 issued a “unilateral declaration of independence” referred to by the acronym UDI (Rotberg 765).

However, the white Rhodesian declaration of independence received no international recognition, and, in the 1970s, the white regime was challenged militarily by African nationalist guerrillas. The civil war of 1972-1979 was ended with a British-arranged conference, a cease-fire, and elections supervised by officials representing the British government and the Commonwealth of Nations. On May 18, 1980, the independent Republic of Zimbabwe was established under the political leadership of Robert Mugabe, who remains its Prime Minister up till today (Rotberg 765).

Trinidad and Tobago, on the other hand, is an independent dual island nation in the West Indies (just off the coast of Venezuela) and a member of the Commonwealth of Nations (Winer “Orthographic Standardization” 243). Trinidad is by far the larger island, having an area of 1,864 square miles (4,828 sq. km), and contains 96 per cent of the population, estimated in mid-1991 as 1,292,000 for both islands (Rogozinżki 4). Tobago, 21 miles (34 km) northeast of Trinidad, has an area of 116 square miles (300 sq. km).

Christopher Columbus reached Trinidad in 1498 and the island remained a Spanish possession for three centuries. The principal Spanish interest, however, was on the American mainland, and Trinidad was neglected. Although modest attempts were made by various Spanish governors to establish settlements during the 17th century, there were only fifteen small Indian villages in Trinidad, and the Spanish population was negligible. During the 18th century prosperity came to the sugar islands of the British West Indies, and under the leadership of Governor Jose Maria

Chacon, Spain tried to develop Trinidad by attracting foreign planters. The effort failed, although many French planters fled from Haiti, Martinique, and France with their slaves to Trinidad to escape the impact of the French Revolution (Merrill 479).

Trinidad was seized by the British in 1797 on the grounds that it was being used as a haven for people raiding neighbouring colonies for slaves, and Spain recognized British control in the Treaty of Amiens in 1802. Britain obtained in Trinidad a colony with large resources of pitch, or asphalt, used for caulking ships, and in its chief settlement Port of Spain, an excellent harbour relatively free of hurricanes. However, agricultural development was hindered by a shortage of agricultural labour. The abolition of slavery in the 1830s made the labour situation critical, and starting in 1845 the planters began to obtain indentured labourers from India. A terrible famine in 1846 in Madeira, a Portuguese island 560 kilometers off Morocco, forced many Portuguese peasants on that island to seek a new life in the Americas, and many settled in Trinidad giving up agricultural labour for shopkeeping as soon as possible. Chinese immigrants also began to arrive in the 1850s as a source of agricultural labour to supplement the work of black slaves (Merrill 479).

Tobago did not share the early history of Trinidad, as it was governed by several European colonial powers, including the British, Dutch, and French, but the vast majority of the population was primarily of African descent (Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 10). As Eric Williams put it: "In the 18th century Tobago had lived between England, France, Holland and Courland.² Becoming finally British, it went it alone for a while" (139). Consequently, although discovered by Columbus, Tobago did not become a possession of Spain. James I claimed the island for England in 1608, but the Dutch settled in Tobago in 1632. Tobago became a bone of contention among the British, Dutch, and French until it was accorded to Britain in 1814 for the vague reason of the Tobagan's impulse "to accommodate himself [sic] to another flag and to switch loyalties as well" (Williams 64). Although Trinidad and Tobago were merged into a

single colony in 1889, Eric Williams employs the metaphor of 'betweenity' to describe the historical destiny of Tobago:

Britain tacked it [Tobago] on to Barbados, in association with Grenada and St. Vincent, and later St. Lucia. Then Barbados seceded.

Therefore, Britain decided to associate Tobago with St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada and possibly Dominica. Betweenity in the 18th century and betweenity in the 19th century. Metropolitan betweenity in the 18th century became colonial betweenity in the 19th century.

Tobago would have none of this. If it was one of the eternal verities that Tobago was to be between, it preferred Trinidad to Barbados or Grenada or St. Vincent or St. Lucia. (139)

Trinidad and Tobago became part of the Federation of the West Indies in 1958. Following Jamaica's decision in 1961 to withdraw from the federation, Trinidad and Tobago determined to follow an independent future. Full self-government had been achieved in 1961, and on August 31, 1962 Trinidad and Tobago became an independent nation within the Commonwealth of Nations (Merrill 479).

2.1 LINGUISTIC CONFIGURATION IN ZIMBABWE AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

As indicated earlier, English is an official language of Zimbabwe, in addition to the other two officially recognized languages, Shona and Ndebele, spoken by 80% and 15% of the population respectively. In Zimbabwe, as in other parts of Africa, the English language came as a part of the colonization process, and the language was introduced officially in the then-Rhodesia by the British in 1890 when the country was conquered by the British South Africa Company owned by Cecil John Rhodes, the rich Prime Minister of the Cape Colony who had his name to two large territories, Southern Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) and Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) (Ngara 15).

Shona, the most widely spoken indigenous language, is composed of a number of dialect clusters as follows: Korekore in the north, Zezuru in the centre, Karanga in

the south, Manyika in the east, Ndau in the southeast, and Kalanga in the west. The main body of Shona speakers is in Zimbabwe, but the language is also spoken by a considerable number of people in the neighbouring countries. For example, Kalanga is spoken in Botswana, where the percentage of Shona speakers has been estimated at nine per cent of the total population. The Ndebele are closely related to the Zulus of South Africa who, like the Shona, belong to the Bantu group. Consequently, the Ndebele language stands in dialectal relationship to Zulu, and there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility between speakers of Zulu and speakers of Ndebele (Ngara 16-17, 19).

Although these three languages are officially recognized in Zimbabwe, Emmanuel Ngara indicates in *Bilingualism, Language Contact, and Language Planning* that in terms of the status and function of each language, English is the dominant language, while Shona and Ndebele are subordinate languages (20). Within the sociolinguistic context of Zimbabwe, Ngara contends that a language is called 'official' "if it is the primary medium of communication in one or more of the following fields: administration, education, parliament and the law courts. Interpretations or translations of official documents for non-speakers of the official language will not be classified as official use. It is important to state this clearly because Shona and Ndebele are widely used in administration, education and the law courts, but only when one or more of the interlocutors cannot speak English and has to use an interpreter. In such cases the use of Shona or Ndebele is not regarded as official" (21). Ngara characterizes the linguistic configuration of Zimbabwe in the following way:

In addition to these three officially recognized languages [i.e. English, Shona, and Ndebele], there are a few others. Afrikaans is spoken by Afrikaaners whose main occupation in the country is farming. There are small communities who speak Venda, Sotho or Tswana in the south and south-west of the country, notably in the Gwanda district. There is also

a small population of Indians and Asians, many of whom are shop-owners in the south. Although they all use English as do the Coloureds, these people of Asian origin make use of their home languages in their homes. Another language which deserves mention is Fanikalo (Fanagalo, Silolo, or Silapalalapa, as it is variously called). This language is used by Europeans and Asians when speaking to their African servants and was used in the colonial days in the entire Southern African region from South Africa to present-day Zambia and Malawi. . . . Fanikalo is a pidgin, its vocabulary being drawn principally from Nguni [the family of languages spoken by the Ndebele, Swazi, Xhosa, and Zulus] and to some extent from English. . . . The importance of the language seems to stem from the fact that White masters are normally not prepared to learn African languages, while an attempt by an African to speak English frequently meets with the disapproval of the White master. (13)

Relating to the status, functions, and domains of use of English, Shona, and Ndebele, all scholars agree that “It is one of the most remarkable features of Zimbabwe today that the role of English appears to be accepted as being unchallengable [sic] -- despite there being two other official languages: Shona and Ndebele” (McGinley 159). According to Benjamin Magura, “English is a prestige language, and the medium of education, journalism and creativity. It is now used to convey and express local culture and traditions. . . . In Zimbabwe, it [is] the language of . . . administration, the legal system and the media” (251). The dominance of English in the socio-economic and political life of Zimbabwe is captured by Kevin McGinley thus:

The use of English by leaders, especially by Prime Minister Mugabe (who is very articulate) may well be important in explaining the position of English in Zimbabwe today. According to at least one

observer, people want to imitate 'success': to 'speak English like Mugabe does'. In the private sector, in which most of the whites work, English is dominant: in the centre of the cities there are virtually no shop signs in Shona or Ndebele. There is a sprinkling of multinationals and here again English is the dominant mode of communication. In practice English is the official working language: used throughout the civil service and in the courts of law (except the lowest ones). It is also the language of creative expression. In common with nearly all African countries, there is a considerable and growing body of creative literature -- nearly all in English. (160)

Andrew Morrison's views on the status of English in Zimbabwe essentially reiterate those of McGinley on the central place accorded English in the country: "Within . . . Zimbabwe, the English language carries the 'vehicular load' . . . of science and technology. It also functions as the medium of much of formal education and it is used widely in the media. Furthermore, it is a language which facilitates intra-regional communication. . . . In addition, formal education in Zimbabwe is predominantly carried out in English and this includes written examinations in that language" (191-2).

In classifying English as the dominant language in Zimbabwe, and Shona and Ndebele as the subordinate languages, Emmanuel Ngara employs the functional criterion of domains of use of these three languages. According to this classification, English functions in the following domains: public administration, education, [commerce], the law courts, official documents, parliament, *lingua franca* (i.e. between language groups within the country), international communication, scientific and technical communication, radio, religious worship, school subject, and home language. In contrast, Shona and Ndebele only function as modes of communication in radio, religious worship, school subject, and the home (Ngara 20). However, Ngara omits the important function of English, Shona, and Ndebele as media of literary creativity in

Zimbabwe. Although English functions as a vehicle of literary creativity, George Kahari, in *The Rise of the Shona Novel*, published in 1990, places emphasis on the quantitative and qualitative growth of the written Shona and Ndebele narratives, romances, and novels published since 1956 under the aegis of the Southern Rhodesia Literature Bureau, itself established in 1954. According to Kahari, by the end of 1984, the number of published works in Shona and Ndebele far exceeded those published in English (“New Literatures in Zimbabwe” 15). He furnishes the following figures:

	<u>Novels</u>	<u>Plays</u>	<u>Poetry</u> (Anthologies)	
Shona	112	18	13	
Ndebele	68	6	7	
English	22	6	14	
	-----	-----	-----	
	202	30	34	Grand total = 266
	=====	=====	=====	

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that English functions in more domains and carries more ‘vehicular load,’ to use Randolph Quirk *et al.*’s term, than both Shona and Ndebele. Consequently, despite the fact that Zimbabwe became politically independent in 1980, “the linguistic dependence of the country on English continues” as “English is a prestige language” (Magura 251). Attitudinally, Zimbabweans “view the use of English in a positive light. . . . Its use is valued and, thus, not seriously questioned” (McGinley 160). In fact, Emmanuel Ngaru relates that when he was an undergraduate at the University College of Rhodesia in the 1960s, he witnessed the prestige with which an English Honours degree was associated and the low reputation of a degree in Shona. He was often greeted with compliments and admiration because he was specializing in English (24). Basing his evidence on a questionnaire administered to 60 Shona-English bilinguals (Form III students from three different schools) -- a questionnaire meant not only to discover the situations in which each language is used

by the individual and by Shona bilinguals in general, but also to elicit the attitudes of the students towards the two languages -- Ngara remarks as follows on the continued prestige enjoyed by English:

English seems to continue as the language associated with official communication, education and formal situations such as letter writing, speeches and conferences. Educated Africans tend to prefer English to Shona, even for purposes where Shona can function perfectly. A meeting where only Shona-speaking teachers are involved will be conducted in English, for instance, and one finds that educated interlocutors often converse in English even if they share the same mother tongue. An attempt by the present writer to use Shona in letter writing has not met much success as the addressee will almost invariably reply in English. (25-26)

The hierarchy of language functions suggests that the English language exists in a diglossic relationship with the two other official languages in Zimbabwe, Shona and Ndebele. The concept of 'diglossia,' developed by Charles Ferguson (1959), is used to describe a sociolinguistic situation in which there are two separate language varieties, each with its own specific functions within the society. The 'High' language variety in a diglossic situation is the language variety used in writing, in education, in government administrative and legal institutions, and generally in public and formal situations. In socio-political terms, the High language functions in domains which "are dominated by and under the control of the ruling classes and their values" (Devonish 9). On the other hand, the 'Low' variety in a diglossic situation is the one used by the mass of the population in the course of their everyday private and informal interaction, within the family, and in the various forms of popular culture. Diglossia may involve either two dialects of the same language or two quite distinct languages altogether. In the Zimbabwean situation, English could thus be seen as the High language and Shona and

Ndebele as the Low languages. This corresponds with Ngara's view that English is the dominant language while Shona and Ndebele are subordinate languages (20).

In Zimbabwe, as is the case in the other English-speaking African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and Zambia, English is a contact language and certain Zimbabwean scholars have addressed the question of what form of English has emerged or is emerging in the country. For example, in his foreword to Ngara's foundational study, *Bilingualism, Language Contact and Language Planning* (1982), D. Mutumbuka, the Minister of Education and Culture in the then-Zimbabwe, predicts that "The English that we are going to have in this country is Zimbabwean English. Dr. Ngara's book alerts us to the problems we should expect in this process of domesticating the English language" (ix).

In Zimbabwe, where the English language has become a stable second language, functioning side-by-side with Shona and Ndebele, both the English language and these indigenous languages cannot but have reciprocal influences on each other. In the book mentioned above, Ngara describes some of the reciprocal influences of Shona on English, and vice versa, especially at the phonological, lexical, and syntactic levels.

For instance, at the phonological level, Ngara observes that "Shona has a much more restricted vowel system than English. This is an important point to remember in the teaching of English to Shona speakers" (31). So the very rich vocalic system of English is equated with the simple vowel system of Shona [a, e, i, o, u], and, consequently, Shona approximations of the English sounds become a more or less permanent feature of Shona English. In this way the sound system of English is simplified because the English of Shona speakers contains fewer phoneme distinctions than mother-tongue English (Ngara 107). For example, like their West African counterparts, Shona speakers do not show the distinction between the following minimal pairs: feeling/filling, cots/courts, man/men, cattle/kettle, heard/head (Ngara 145). Several English consonants do not exist in Shona, namely /θ, ʃ, l/, as in the

following words: 'think,' 'them,' and 'law.' The velar nasal /ŋ/ exists in both languages, but in English it occurs only medially or at the end of words as in 'thinking,' not initially as in the Shona name 'Ngara' (Ngara 32). Shona has characteristically open syllables while English permits both closed and open syllables, so that as in Yoruba language spoken in Nigeria, all Shona words end in a vowel, while English permits consonants or consonant clusters in the final position. Since the Shona language does not permit the Consonant-Vowel-Consonant (CVC) structure which is very common in English, for example in the word 'led,' words with closed syllables change to an open syllable structure on being introduced into the Shona language, e.g., *nurse* (CVC) < *nesi* (CVCV). In this way, "the subordinate language counterbalances the impact of the dominant language" (Ngara 109). Other examples of such English loanwords in Shona, furnished by Ngara, include *driver* < *dhiraivha*, *pound* < *pondo*, *cheque* < *cheki*, *soup* < *supu*, *cake* < *keke*, *jam* < *jamu*, *shirt* < *sheti*, *boots* < *bhutsu*, and *church* < *chechi*.

At the lexico-semantic level, Ngara concentrates exclusively on kinship terms and translations from Shona into English to demonstrate the semantic and cultural differences between the two languages and cultures since, according to his argument, "Each language has its own semantic structure which is different from the semantic structure of any other language" (50). However, Ngara's postulation that "each language has its own semantic structure which is different from the semantic structure of any other language" smacks of what has become known in linguistics as 'linguistic relativity' stemming from the so-called Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Linguistic relativity hypothesizes that different languages give rise to different views of the world. According to this hypothesis,

we do not experience the world in a direct and straightforward fashion. On the contrary, the *language* that we use shapes and even creates the conditions for our experience. There is no absolutely neutral and

disinterested way of apprehending and representing the world because the particular language that we habitually use points us towards certain types of observation and predisposes certain choices of interpretation. This may be partly a question of vocabulary. Thus, different languages carve up areas of experience in different ways. Russian, for example, divides up the colour spectrum with twelve basic colour terms; whereas English segments the same domain with eleven basic terms, using only one basic colour term for 'blue' in place of two available in Russian. . . . Languages, however, differ in more than organization of their respective vocabularies. They also differ in their characteristic way of forming sentences -- in their grammar. The system of tense in one language may be very different from that of another: English grammar, for instance, provides at least two tenses, but Hopi -- a North American language -- seems to operate without tenses at all. (O'Sullivan *et al.* 168-169, original emphasis)

However, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has remained problematic and controversial. For example, in addition to the fact that it is not easy to provide empirical support for linguistic relativity, Tim O'Sullivan *et al.* note that "Critics point to the fact of translation between languages, which should not be possible if one's native language . . . constrained one's thought-world" (169). And as I have pointed out elsewhere, the fact that certain African varieties of English share some lexico-semantic and syntactic properties different from those of British English suggests that their source or substrate languages have certain underlying semantic and syntactic structures in common.³

For Ngara, the difference between the semantic structure of Shona and that of English is easily demonstrated by words referring to kinship relationships. For instance, the word 'father' (or 'mother' or 'brother', etc.) to a Shona speaker has a wider field of reference than it has to an English person. In Zimbabwean English,

'father' could mean one's own father, one's father's brothers (uncles), or one's father's male cousins. The lack of correspondence between English and Shona words also leads Shona speakers of English to translate features of their mother tongue into English. Ngara cites the following examples, among others, to support this claim:

- (a) 'Others . . . others' a translation of *vamwe . . . vamwe* is used for English *some . . . others*, e.g., *'There were many girls in the hall; others were sitting on chairs and others on the floor'.
- (b) Shona tends to use *vose* 'all,' *tose* 'all of us,' where English would use *everybody*, e.g., *'All people were scared,' for 'Everybody was scared'.
- (c) *Propose* is used for *propose to* as a result of translating *nyenga* 'to court,' e.g., *'Every man who knew Sara was tempted to propose her because she was an extremely beautiful girl'.
- (d) The prefix *mu-* can mean 'in' or 'into'. This leads the learner into using wrong prepositions, e.g., *'I went *in* my bedroom' (into), or *'I go *in* bed' (into). Nevertheless, this example offers an unidiomatic structure because a native English speaker would say 'I go to bed' not 'into bed.' Such a speaker would say 'I get into bed,' however.
- (e) The Shona word *kuna* expresses motion to or from and can therefore mean 'to' or 'towards'. This again leads to wrong prepositional usage, e.g., *'He enquired to some people' (from).
- (f) The Shona equivalent for *to have a bath* or *to take a bath* is *kugeza muviri* 'to wash the body,' e.g., *'You should wash the body before you go to sleep'. (Ngara 51-2, 65-7).

The asterisk preceding the examples above indicates that such usages are not acceptable in standard English. However, since English is learned as a second language in Zimbabwe, examples (c), (d), and (f) may also be owing to the learners' inadequate exposure to the English language or an indication of their lack of

understanding of the formation-rules of English syntax. As will be demonstrated in chapter three of this dissertation, lexico-semantic variation in Zimbabwean English transcends kinship terminology and literal translation.

In the area of grammar or syntax, Ngara furnishes the following categories and examples as typical of the linguistic behaviour of Shona users of English: the repetition of the subject, which is characteristic of Shona concordial agreement, e.g., 'The small boys (they) went away while (they were) crying'; Shona-speakers tend to avoid the use of complicated structures such as the tag question in favour of simplified forms -- hence the use of the simple Shona formula *handiti* ('isn't it'), e.g., 'John went home, isn't it?'; in answering yes/no questions, the Shona speaker will use *yes* irrespective of whether the total answer is negative or positive, e.g., 'Q: You are not a bad boy, are you? A: *Ee*, Yes [you are right in your assertion]' -- a native speaker of English will answer 'No, I'm not'; the comparative as we know it in English (e.g. taller, faster, more beautiful) does not exist in Shona, which leads some Shona speakers to produce sentences such as 'Muchena is tall than Mutemi'; in Shona, as in all Bantu languages, the article does not exist, which results in such structures as 'I saw man who spoke with Irish accent'; as a result of the influence of Shona on Shona learners of English, some Shona speakers use (a) the present progressive tense in place of the simple present tense, e.g., 'Excuse me please Sir, *I am not hearing* what you are saying,' (b) the future tense to indicate habitual action, e.g., 'During the cold season the swimming pool *will be* the only place where there *will be* not activity,' and (c) the Shona recent past tense in place of the English simple past tense, e.g., 'I am very tired because I *have got up* early this morning' (Ngara 43-49. 63-64, 108).

Emmanuel Ngara views the aforementioned syntactic variations in Zimbabwean English as "a sample of errors" (63), because "Shona speakers, like Sotho and Nguni speakers, have, as a result of approximation and poor teaching, developed speech habits which are different from those of mother-tongue speakers and tend to resent

Africans who strive to speak like Englishmen or Americans” (144). N gara does not attempt to undertake a sociolinguistic or politico-ideological analysis of why Zimbabweans scoff at their compatriots “who strive to speak like Englishmen or Americans,” but, using the parameter of international intelligibility, discourages the use and development of a Zimbabwean English arising from internal norms and the sociolinguistic reality of the country:

We need English not for internal communication, but for international communication and technological advancement (as well as for higher education). . . . If we want to use English for international communication we should not encourage the development of a dialect which is radically different from internationally recognized varieties. . . . If a local variety of English diverges from other forms of the language it may develop into a creole or pidgin which is not understood by people outside the immediate community. . . . The argument presented here is not that we should teach Africans in Zimbabwe to speak like Oxford professors or B.B.C. radio announcers, but that we should base our teaching on Received Pronunciation in order to maintain effective international intelligibility. In order to cultivate such a degree of intelligibility, we should start by basing ourselves on an acceptable external norm allowing greater or lesser divergences as long as these do not result in ineffective communication. (144-145)

There are certain misconceptions in N gara’s assumptions in the quotation above. By placing an accent on English for ‘international communication’ in Zimbabwe, N gara’s argument is symptomatic of two myths which Braj Kachru has labelled the ‘interlocutor myth’ and the ‘monoculture myth.’ The interlocutor myth presupposes that across cultures, “English is functionally learned to interact with the native speakers of English, American, Australian, or British. Actually, most of the

interaction in English takes place among and between its nonnative speakers: Indians with Sri Lankans, Germans with Singaporeans, Japanese with Malaysians, and so on” (Kachru “The Speaking Tree” 13). It is in this sense that given the cultural diversity in Zimbabwe, English is also used for intranational communication, and manipulated as a medium of inter-ethnic cohesion and unification. The monoculture myth assumes that

English is learned as a vehicle for learning American or British culture, or what has been labeled the Judeo-Christian tradition. This is only partially true. Actually, in what I have termed the Outer Circle, with ethnic and linguistic pluralism, English is used to impart native cultural values and historical traditions. An analysis of the textbooks, print media, and creative writing in India, Nigeria, Kenya, Pakistan, and Singapore provides excellent evidence for this claim. The roles English is assigned are primarily integrative in a national sense. (Kachru “The Speaking Tree” 13)

Ngara also expresses the fear of English in Zimbabwe degenerating into “a creole or pidgin which is not understood by people outside the immediate community.” Ngara’s apprehension stems from what I will call the ‘monolect syndrome’ which is indicative of the notion that the local varieties of English should conform as much as possible to the native speaker’s linguistic norms and values. However, as I pointed out in the last chapter, it is now an established linguistic fact that each non-native variety of English has an educated variety (acrolect), and a range of subvarieties: mesolect and basilect. In terms of this sociolectal configuration, acrolectal speakers are normally considered the speakers of the educated or standard variety of the language, while mesolectal and basilectal speakers use the non-standard and less prestigious varieties; the acrolect is thus accorded social prestige. Each of these ‘lects’ has its own functions and domains of use and “its own social interpretations of when each is appropriate, and by people of what role in society” (Strevens 26). Although the acrolect enjoys social

prestige, Kachru has noted that it does not mean that “the acrolect . . . is necessarily used by the largest number of speakers of a language. It is well established, for example, that although Received Pronunciation (RP) was for a long time recognized by some as the prestige variety of British English, the total number who actually used it did not exceed 3 percent of the British population” (“Second Diaspora” 245).

Consequently, there is nothing wrong with Zimbabwean English developing a pidginized or creolized variety, which is generally considered “a basilectal form of the English language” (Bamiro “Nigerian Englishes” 9). While features of a variety of English may be non-standard in formal terms, they nevertheless make a very strong case for regarding English as a language with multiple cultural identities and traditions. In this regard, basilectal features of African Englishes are systematic and predictable, giving these varieties of English a linguistic status quite distinct from the dominant code of the so-called standard English. A basilectal African English can then be construed as a dialect with its own rules, which function regularly to promote communication among various segments of the African population. Ngara himself admits that Zimbabwean English indeed has a basilectal or pidginized variety called the ‘Fanikalo,’ which is used by Europeans and Asians to facilitate communication with their African servants who are often upbraided for speaking English in the presence of their white masters (13).

Whereas Ngara employs the framework of contrastive analysis and error analysis to account for the development of English in Zimbabwe, Benjamin Magura’s analysis of Zimbabwean English is an enriching additional perspective on Ngara’s work as the former employs the framework of sociolinguistics to investigate the nativization of the language at the various linguistic levels. More importantly, Magura adopts the concept of sociolectal classification -- the acrolect, mesolect, and basilect -- to characterize the variation within Zimbabwean English. However, according to Magura:

There is less disagreement at the extreme ends of the lectal range (the

acrolect and basilect) but the middle range (mesolect) is rather arbitrary. This is evident in the limited number of examples I have given in this note. For instance, it is not transparent why *place-seekers*, *go-getters*,⁴ etc. should be in the acrolect, but *pass-fixer*, *staff-rider*, etc. should be in the mesolect. (252)

Magura indicates that the acrolectal variety of Zimbabwean English “differs from the native varieties in the types of ‘mixing’ – in some syntactic patterns, in lexicalization, and in discursal strategies” (252). There is a tendency in the acrolectal variety to use Latinate expressions, e.g., ‘They might be caught in *flagrante delicto*,’ and this lect also uses what Africans call ‘big’ words to show education and erudite style. The syntactic characteristics may be attributed to transfer from local languages, e.g., ‘How are you keeping?’ (for ‘How are you doing?’), ‘You have no mouth’ (for ‘You should not say anything’), and ‘The rain is in the nose’ (for ‘The rainy season is imminent’) (Magura 252). However, as I have explained elsewhere, these translations from the local languages are not syntactic but lexico-semantic because they represent the relexification of the Zimbabweans’ mother tongues, using English vocabulary but indigenous structures (Bamiro “Lexico-Semantic Variation” 54). Moreover, the idiom, ‘How are you keeping,’ is used in North America and, in the Zimbabwean context, it may be a borrowing from American popular cultural sources.

At the acrolectal level, according to Magura, the lexical characteristics of Zimbabwean English include (a) an over-generalization of certain formatives, e.g., *night-lifters* ‘those who go out for a nice time or for functions at night,’ or *place-seekers* ‘young students looking for places in secondary schools’; (b) the use of nativized collocations, e.g., *the now-now girls* ‘modern girls,’ or *my own-own niece*; and (c) acculturation of English in an African setting, e.g., the words *aid-centre* and *endorse out* in Zimbabwean English mean respectively ‘a referral centre for black persons arrested for failing to produce passbooks’ and ‘to be officially ordered and

forced to leave an urban area on account of lacking correct endorsements in the reference book' (Magura 253). However, apart from the fact that the category of 'over-generalization of certain formatives' -- which could more less judgementally read 'coinage' or 'neologism' -- is not clear, such reduplications as *now-now* and *own-own* function as adjectives in the clause structure, which suggests that their variation is syntactic rather than lexico-semantic (Bamiro "Syntactic Variation" 193-194).

According to Magura, the mesolect "is used by those who have an educational level not advanced enough to have acquired the acrolect" (253). At the lexical level, mesolectal Zimbabwean English includes (a) formations such as *cop-shop*⁵ 'police station,' *snatch-boys* 'pick-pockets,' *pass-fixer* 'one who forges passbooks,' *non-voter* 'a black man with no voting rights,' and *staff-rider* 'urchins who jump onto a moving train'; (b) hybridized lexical items such as *muti-man* 'a man who practices the use of herbs,' or *panga-killer* 'a murderer who uses a broad-bladed knife'; (c) semantic extensions, e.g., *paraffin* 'gin,' *the boys* 'freedom fighters,' *sweet potato* 'landmine,' etc.; and (d) culture-specific innovations such as *circumcision dance* 'a ceremony young initiates engage in after circumcision' and *coming out party* '[celebration of] first time when baby is taken out after birth'. However, at this juncture, Magura's sociolectal analysis breaks down because coinages such as *place-seekers*, *night-lifters*, *go-getters*, and *grudge-killer*, which he classifies as acrolectal features of Zimbabwean English, also have specific meanings in an African context. Consequently, as I indicated in the last chapter, several scholars have cautioned that in reality the sociolects -- acrolect, mesolect, and basilect -- are not discrete categories but rather form a continuum. The syntactic features of mesolectal Zimbabwean English include the tendency to omit function words and not to adhere to noun category restrictions (e.g., count vs. non-count and abstract vs. concrete) (Magura 254).

Basilectal Zimbabwean English "is attitudinally the lowest subvariety in the speech continuum, and is generally used by those with little or no formal education"

(Magura 254). A characteristic feature of this lect is the use of underdifferentiation in English due to transfer from the user's mother tongue. Like Ngara, Magura indicates that in the Zimbabwean mother tongue, there may be only one lexical item for two different lexical items in English. This is evident in the mixed use of pairs like *teach* vs. *learn* (e.g. 'Teacher learn us different subjects'); *borrow* vs. *lend* (e.g. 'Will you borrow me your pen?'). In this direction, "Languages like Shona do have one stem for each pair. To have equivalents for the pairs *teach/learn*, *borrow/lend*, one has to play around with the right suffixes as follows: *dzidz-a* for 'learn,' *dzidz-isa* for 'teach,' *kweret-a* for 'borrow,' and *kweret-esa* for 'lend'. In English we do not have one common stem for the pair" (Magura 254).

I want to note that my discussion of the linguistic configuration in Zimbabwe is based heavily on Shona not only because scholars have paid less linguistic attention to Ndebele, but also owing to the greater impact of Shona on English in Zimbabwe and its function as the mother-tongue of most all the writers (apart from Lessing) whose work I will analyze in the next chapter.

As in Zimbabwe, the official language of Trinidad and Tobago is English and the language has enjoyed this status since 1823 (Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 3). Despite the dominant status of English, Trinidad and Tobago "has experienced a remarkable degree of extended contact amongst a great variety of languages" (Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 10). As John Holm points out: "Its [Trinidad and Tobago's] sociolinguistic history is even more complex in that English has spread at the expense of at least three other languages in Trinidad" (459). These languages are Trinidad and Tobago English Creole (TEC), French Creole or *Patois* (FC), Spanish, and Bhojpuri (referred to locally as 'Hindi'). However, English has also spread at the expense of languages belonging to the original inhabitants such as the Caribs and Arawaks.

Although the Spanish were the earliest European colonists in Trinidad, by the late eighteenth century there was a large "influx of French and French Creole-speaking

immigrants from Haiti, Martinique and France,” and with them came the development of French Creole as a “lingua franca of Trinidad” that remained “until the early 20th century”. After the British gained ownership of the island in 1797 in the fifth Caribbean war with France (Rogoziński 167-168), English was spoken by 17 per cent of the free population, French by 53 per cent, and Spanish by 30 per cent (Winer “Early Trinidadian” 182, qtd. in Wyke 10). By 1811 the main population included a combination of British, American, Spanish, French, and African people. The last group, 66 per cent of the total, were almost all slaves, although there was even then a relatively large “free coloured” population (Winer “Early Trinidadian” 183, qtd. in Wyke 10). Although Winer acknowledges the influence of Carib, Arawak, and Guarani as source languages in shaping Trinbagonian Creole (“Trinbagonian” 21), indigenous peoples are not accounted for in her historical statistics. However, Williams observes that “At the time of their discovery, the archipelago of islands which have become known as the West Indies was inhabited principally by two Amerindian tribes. . . . The first of these was the Arawaks. . . . Apart from the Arawaks, there was a second principal group, the Caribs” (1).

Between 1841 and 1861 some 6,000 Africans -- many liberated by the British navy from slave ships but also some Kru from the Liberian coast -- came via St. Helena and Sierra Leone; in addition to their native languages, many of these people are likely to have spoken Krio or West African Pidgin English. During the same period, some 10,000 immigrants came from the Lesser Antilles, bringing creole English and French with them. Finally, some 145,000 indentured servants came to Trinidad from India, bringing with them a number of languages but, above, all Bhojpuri. A koineized variety of Bhojpuri survives in a moribund state among a dwindling number of the Trinidadians of East Indian descent who today make up 46% of the country’s population. However, Bhojpuri survives in the important lexical impact it has had on the local English of all Trinidadians (Holm 460).

In contrast, Tobago has had much less varied immigration and interaction. As indicated earlier, the island was governed by several European colonial powers, including the British, Dutch, and French, but the vast majority of the population has always been of primarily African descent (Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 10). According to David Minderhout, “About 98% of the population is black, descendants of slaves brought to Tobago to work the island’s once prosperous plantations” (“Language Variation” 4). Lise Winer further indicates that there is no Dutch influence aside from some proper names, little French Creole, and virtually no Indian influence in Tobagonian. Some varieties of Tobagonian English Creole, both historical and present-day, have been considered close to the creoles of Jamaica and Guyana but Tobagonian was already distinct from these varieties at least by the late 19th century. Moreover, there has been significant and continuous contact between Tobago and Trinidad, especially since their political union in 1889 (*Trinidad and Tobago* 10).

The language situation in Trinidad and Tobago is not altogether different from that in other English-speaking Caribbean countries “in which English as the official language coexists side by side with a lexically related creole language as the vernacular, with other varieties either non-existent or severely restricted in use” (Winford “The Caribbean” 565). Dennis Craig also notes that

An inescapable fact of life in the Caribbean is the coexistence and intermingling of English and Creole. There is a constant diglossia in most speakers, determined by social situations and the varied impressions that speakers might wish to communicate from one moment to the next. In this constant linguistic shifting, English remains the code for signaling formality, social distance, greater importance in the social hierarchy, education, intelligence, and other such impressions. If, for theoretical purposes, we regard English and Creole as discrete and different, each form of

language shows the influence of the other in the details of its form. (198)

However, the contemporary situation in the West Indies has been described as standard language-creole continuum. Frederic Cassidy observes,

Speaking broadly, there exists a linguistic scale or spectrum having at one end the Standard English language, and at the other, the conservative form of each creole language. Along the scale between, one may find many types of variation, and each to some extent correlated with social status -- itself, of course, closely correlated with education, economic status, and race. (163)

David Minderhout thus concludes that “Both speakers of the standard language and the creole vary their speech according to the social situation in which they find themselves. A creole speaker may use some standard language features in a formal situation, such as an interview, while conversely, a standard speaker may use some creole features in his [sic] speech in informal situations. Social mobility is also involved” (“Language Variation” 169).

In Trinidad and Tobago, therefore, the language sphere within which speakers operate can best be described as a continuum with Standard West Indian English as one pole of the continuum and an English-based creole language as the other. Between the two poles are a large number of language varieties combining features of both the standard and the creole languages. Basically the more formal the situation in which a speaker finds himself/herself, the more likely he/she is to move toward the standard end of the continuum; the more informal the situation, the more likely a move to the creole end (Minderhout “Wedding Speech” 8).

Clement Wyke’s description of three-tiered patterns of usage in Trinidad is in consonance with the classification above. The tiers he identifies are

the speech used by educated non-native speakers of English and a

few native speakers who had been extensively influenced by this class; a standard form of Trinidadian English which shared most of its grammatical and lexical features with the Standard English just described; and a Creole English with distinctive phonological, grammatical, and lexical characteristics produced through simplification, innovation, uneducated adaptation of more standard forms, borrowings from native sources, and influences associated with the development of the language. (12)

Wyke's own classification is based on Lise Winer's scheme (in a personal note from the latter to the former): (1) Standard Trinidadian English, which differs from standard international Englishes only in slight features of accent and lexicon; (2) Trinidadian English; and (3) Trinidad English Creole (Wyke 131). However, the main problem with Wyke's and Winer's three-part classification is how to differentiate linguistically level one and two of the tripartite scheme. Neither writer suggested how such differentiation is to be made. Given the problems inherent in separating Standard Trinidadian English from Trinidadian English, Donald Winford suggests a two-part classification of the varieties of English used in Trinidad as Standard Trinidad English and Creole English ("Social Differentiation" 4). Winford's two-part classification accords with John Rickford's suggestion that in most, if not all, continua variants or varieties can be ordered along a single basilect-acrolect dimension in some way (25-26). According to Vincent de Rooij,

Rickford's observation may hold true for creole speaking communities where there are only two easily available, vital language varieties, acrolect and basilect, which speakers may use as opposite points of orientation in giving social meaning to established and newly created ways of speaking. In such communities, differences may exist between urban and rural varieties, careful and casual speech, or between ways

of speaking characteristic of the old and the young. These differences, however, will tend to be characterized by being more or less basilectal or acrolectal. (59)

Especially within the context of literary analysis or the sociolinguistics of literature, the Standard vs. Creole distinction, or the acrolect-basilect classification has been found very useful (Mair 136ff, Wyke 28ff). The Standard-Creole distinction enables Winford to capture, for example, the particular role played by Trinidadian Creole in shaping the cultural identity of the Trinidadian:

It is not only that creole is the most natural medium of communication. It [is] also that creole is the depository of the folklore of the people, the vehicle for proverbs, for humour, for handing down traditional popular customs, ceremonies and rituals. It is the language of great emotion -- of abuse and insult on the one hand, of intimacy and companionship on the other. In short, creole is part of the very identity of its speakers, just as any other 'mother' tongue is.

("Social Differentiation" 13)

Given the preponderance of Trinidad and Tobago English Creole in the literary texts to be analyzed in chapter four, it is useful to summarize some of the salient phonological, lexical, and grammatical features of TEC at this point. Since "creole languages are very similar to each other, especially in terms of underlying grammar" (Winer "Trinbagonian" 17), a clarification of the term 'Creole' is in order here.

Generally speaking, the term Creole

refers to a normal process of language formation in which a pidgin language -- a reduced and simplified language used for restricted purposes amongst people of different mother tongues -- elaborates and becomes the new first language of a particular group of people. Creoles are usually identified by the language which has provided

most of the lexicon. So in the Caribbean, there are for example creoles 'based on' English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch. (Winer "Trinbagonian" 17)

For a long time, it was claimed that there was no "true" creole in Trinidad and Tobago. People claimed it had "decreolized," that is, moved in the direction of standard English so much that it was no longer recognizably separate (Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 11). However, Winer asserts that TEC "is basically similar to the other Caribbean English creoles," and "is the result of a lot of people speaking different kinds of English and English Creole and levelling out a recognizable dialect" ("Trinbagonian" 17-8). John Holm argues that the shift of the dominant language from Creole French to Creole English that occurred between the early nineteenth and early twentieth century took place not through formal education, which was seldom available, but through informal contact with the black immigrants. Thus TEC is a unique hybrid form of Creoles which originated outside as well as inside Trinidad as a result of the modification of several varieties of creolized English brought by immigrants (460). With particular reference to the situation in Tobago, David Minderhout says:

Presumably Tobagonian creole is the result of the slave experience. . . . [S]lave traders put their African captives in mixed language groups in order to reduce the chances of revolt. If speakers of mutually unintelligible languages were grouped, it would be difficult for them to communicate. It is likely, however, that communication did take place, probably through the use of a pidgin language. . . . The slaves had only restricted contacts with their masters. This imposed distance from a norm precluded the slaves' use of the standard languages. As children were born to the slaves, the pidgin languages became the native language of the child; creolization took place. ("Language Variation" 168-9)

Like other English-based creoles, TEC is formally “characterised by many reductions in the word forms of the language of the colonisers with many sound, phrase and sentence patterns which are typical of the original language(s) of the colonised people” (Roberts 13). For example, at the phonological level, while acrolectal speakers have a four-way distinction between the vowels in the English word classes containing *cut*, *cot*, *caught*, and *curt*, with /ʌ/, /ɒ/, /ɔ/, and /ɜ/ respectively, in popular pronunciation, all four of the vowels may be merged in a single back open rounded vowel /ɔ/ (Wells 579). Diphthongs are also different; for example, the sound of the first person singular pronoun in TEC is /a/ not /ai/ (*I don't know* becomes *A doan noa*); the sound of the second person singular pronoun is /yu/ (sometimes /yɜ/); the two medial sounds of English *there* (/ɪə/) are one -- /e/ in TEC (*there is dey*) (Wyke 15). According to Lise Winer:

The consonant inventory in TEC is generally similar to that of English; stops /p, b, t, d, k, g/; fricatives /f, v, s, z, ʃ, ʒ/; nasals /m, n, ŋ/; and approximants /h, j, l, r, w/. As in virtually all English-related creoles, TEC /t/ and /d/ correspond to English /θ/ and /ð/ respectively; for many speakers the two sounds, respectively, are merged. (*Trinidad and Tobago* 15)

However, in addition to the consonantal variation noted above, in TEC, the velar stops /k/ and /g/ are palatalized as /ky/ and /gy/ (*cap* becomes *kyap*, *garden* becomes *gyarden*); standard English velar nasal /ŋ/ is rendered as /n/, /nd/ as /n/, /st/ as /s/ (*going* becomes *goin*, *land* becomes *lan*, *fast* becomes *fas*) (Wyke 15).

Concerning the lexicon of TEC, Lise Winer indicates that “because of the continuing influence of British English rather than American English, especially in the educational system, the basic English vocabulary of Trinidad and Tobago is British” (*Trinidad and Tobago* 48). However, there are other influences from a number of contact languages such as French (e.g. *sou-sou* ‘an economic sharing among friends,’

malkadie 'epileptic fit' or 'a form of unexplainable sickness,' *jouvay* 'the opening of carnival'); Spanish (e.g., *mamaguy* 'to tease, especially by flattery,' *picong* 'the exchange of teasing and even insulting repartee,' *aguinaldo* 'type of Christmas song'); Hindi-Bhojpuri (e.g., *pooja* 'prayers,' *roti* 'curried meat or potatoes folded in a flat bread,' *nani* 'grandmother,' *sari* 'a female dress of cotton or silk worn around the body and over the head or shoulder,' *dhoti* 'loin cloth'); Chinese (e.g., *pow* 'a type of dumpling'); and Amerindian languages, especially Arawak and Carib, spoken by the Amerindians who constituted the bulk of the population of Trinidad until the late eighteenth century (e.g., *callaloo* 'a green vegetable mix from leaves,' *jiga* 'a kind of insect,' *ajoupa* 'a small temporary thatched shelter,' *balata* 'a tree which produces a gum-like juice'), etc.⁶

In addition to lexical transfers mentioned above, C.R. Otley, in *Creole Talk*, gives the following categories of lexico-semantic variation in TEC: (1) augmented phrasing (e.g., *tobesides* 'besides,' *onliest* 'only'); (2) faux amis or semantic shift (e.g., *fig* 'banana,' *tea* 'breakfast,' *trust* 'to take goods on credit'); (3) proverbs (e.g., *blood will tell* 'family ties eventually reveal themselves,' *put down molasses to catch flies* 'preparing to entrap someone'); and (4) figurative exclamations (e.g., *beat all cock fite* 'very strange,' *mutten dress up as lam* 'assuming a false appearance').⁷

Lise Winer also notes the following semantic processes as playing a role in developing TEC lexicon: (1) calquing (e.g., *big-eye* 'greedy,' based on loan translation from the West African languages of Twi and Ibo, *God-horse* 'praying mantis,' calqued on the Hausa *dokin Allah*); (2) reduplication (e.g., *kabba-kabba* 'shaggy, ragged,' *true-true* 'real,' *chirip-chirip* 'slowly, in dribs and drabs'); (3) coining (e.g., *box bass* 'a type of musical instrument,' *broughtupsy* 'good manners,' *cinerary* 'crematorium,' *early o'clock* 'early on,' *bellyful* 'a type of heavy cake'); (4) semantic shift (e.g., *brackish* 'unsweetened or slightly sweetened water or tea,' *sardine* 'a small silvery freshwater fish,' *tea* 'any hot drink'); and (5) syntactic function shift (e.g., *Dem too*

coward 'They are very cowardly,' *They advantage we* 'They took advantage of us'), etc. (*Trinidad and Tobago* 52-55).

Many of the lexical items cited above also occur in standard Trinidadian and Tobagan English and especially in the area of the lexicon, the distinction between the latter variety and TEC is rather fuzzy. As Winer rightly observes: "It is often difficult for people within Trinidad and Tobago to determine the boundaries between TEC and TE [Trinidad and Tobago English], and other varieties of English" (*Trinidad and Tobago* 50). The same tendency is observable in Caribbean English generally where lexis and idiom often blur the Standard-Creole or the acrolect-mesolect-basilect distinctions. Dennis Craig indicates that

Unlike the morphological and syntactic features, the lexical and idiomatic peculiarities of Caribbean English tend to pass completely unnoticed by native speakers, even when they attempt . . . to look critically at Caribbean language. Whereas morphology and syntax are describable by rules that become known to the layman through popular education, the same is not equally true of lexis and idiom.
(201)

In the area of syntax, TEC, like most creoles, relies on "free rather than on inflectional morphemes to convey grammatical information" (Holm 144). In scholarship on TEC, as in most other creole studies, major attention has been given to the verb phrase because "it is generally conceded that verb phrases are "core" elements in syntactic structures" (Alleyne 77). The TEC verb is quite different from the 'standard' English verb: the copula frequently found in 'standard' English is not required in present tense before adjective complements, as in *a taid* 'I'm tired'; however, in locative and equative constructions it usually occurs, e.g., *Hee dey in dee store*, and *Sheez a teachir* 'He's in the store,' 'She's a teacher' (Wyke 16-17). The auxiliary *be* which combines with *ing* to form continuous aspect constructions in so-

called standard English is not part of TEC grammar, which expresses continuity with *da* or *a*, e.g., *me a go* 'I'm going'. The past tense of the verb is not usually marked in the verb, e.g., *Jim meet hee brodir yestirday* 'Jim met his brother yesterday'. Often, past aspect can be indicated by particles such as *was* or *did*. The future tense of the verb is often formed by using *go* as an auxiliary, e.g., *She go leev yu* 'She will leave you' (Wyke 17).

The negative form of the verb assumes various patterns, e.g., *Dey en go do it* 'They will not do it,' *He kya sing* 'He can't sing,' *Dey must be en receive it* 'Perhaps they haven't received it'. *En(t)* is also used as a pre-verbal interrogative negator, e.g., *ent is he self* 'isn't that he?' Interrogation is thus not generally signalled by the addition of an interrogative form such as *what*, or by reversing the word order of the subject and verb or auxiliary. In TEC, compared to the tendency in 'standard' English, intonation can distinguish questions from statements, e.g., *Hee kil dee man?* 'Did he kill the man?' *yu comin?* 'Are you coming?' (Wyke 17).⁸

The noun phrase in TEC encompasses such syntactic phenomena as the use of determiners, number, pronouns, object marker, possession, word order, and topicalization transformation. A significant difference between TEC and 'standard' English in determiner usage is that no article or plural marker is used when a noun is generic or refers to a whole general category, e.g., *Mango sweet* 'Mangos are sweet'; *He drivin taxi* 'He drives a taxi'; *During the hunting, you must see snake* 'During the hunt, you'll undoubtedly see snakes/a snake'. As in all creole languages, nouns in TEC are not inflected to indicate number, e.g., *di mango* 'the mango, the mangos'. However, as in most Caribbean creoles, a plural marker, *dèm* or *an-dem* in TEC, can be added to indicate plurality, e.g., *de mango-dem* 'the mangos'; *the gyal an dem* 'the girl and the other girls with her' (Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 43).

As is typical in a creole system, pronouns have no morphological case distinctions, and are thus not overtly marked for case in TEC, e.g., *Dat is she own*

'That is hers'. The particle *am/um*, commonly found in Tobago, can occur with or without an expressed object, e.g., *Me Like am too bad* 'I like it/him/her a lot'. The commonest way of indicating possession is simple juxtaposition of possessor-possessed, e.g., *de man hat* 'the man's hat'; *he hat* 'his hat'; *Mister Johnson brother wife* 'Mister Johnson's brother's wife'. In the area of word order, some conjunctions are placed in TEC sentences differently to English, e.g., *She never drink rum neither whisky* 'She never drinks either rum or whisky,' or 'She drinks neither rum nor whisky' (Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 43-45). Peter Roberts has noted that "one feature . . . which can be termed an indispensable West Indian Creole feature is *a/iz* used as topicaliser" (89). However, in TEC, the topicalizer takes the form of *iz* (*is* of English), for example, *Is English we speaking* 'It is English we are speaking' or 'The language we are speaking is English' (Morris 18).

2.2 AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN WRITERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH

Every post-colonial writer using English as an additional or complementary language to their mother tongue must come to terms with the politics of the language as a powerful medium for literary creativity. This section critically examines the attitudes of some prominent African and Caribbean writers towards the English language, attitudes that would shed light on the larger question of the central place of English in post-colonial literatures. Diana Brydon and Helen Tiffin aver that

Several African writers are now choosing to write in African languages rather than in the languages of their past colonial masters, forcing rethinking of what African Literature means. But for the majority of writers in Canada, Australia and the Caribbean who (with the exception of indigenous peoples, some immigrants and in Canada, the Quebecois) do not have another language available to them, there is no alternative to English. For these writers, the challenge is how to make English their

own, how to strip it of its implicit class, racial, and gender bias, and how to make it register the specifics of their own experiences. (30)

It is arguable, however, whether in the Caribbean context, Creole cannot be construed as an alternative language available to Caribbean writers.

In the African context, Loreto Todd points out that a writer must make one of three choices in selecting the medium in which to create. The writer can write in the mother tongue, knowing that his or her audience will be a limited one. A second alternative is to relexify one's mother tongue, using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms. The third option has to do with the use of English (297-298). However, it is doubtful whether we can draw a rigid line of distinction between the second and third options because an African --and, indeed, any post-colonial -- writer using English as an additional language must necessarily contend with what Braj Kachru has termed the 'bilingual's creativity'. According to Kachru,

The bilingual's creativity entails two things: first, the designing of a text which uses linguistic resources from two or more -- related or unrelated -- languages; second, the use of verbal strategies in which subtle linguistic adjustments are made for psychological, sociological, and attitudinal reasons. Examples of such creativity may be drawn from non-native literatures written in English or French, or the code-mixed varieties of languages. ("The Bilingual's Creativity" 20).

Although many African writers have elected to express themselves in English, some African critics and writers have argued that the English language is nothing but a symbol of socio-cultural alienation. For example, the Nigerian critic and writer, Obi Wali, declared at the conference of 'African Writers of English Expression' held in Makerere, Uganda, in 1962 that

the whole uncritical acceptance of English and French as the inevitable medium for educated African writing is misdirected, and has no chance

of advancing African literature and culture. In other words, until these writers and their western midwives accept the fact that any true African literature must be written in African languages, they would be merely pursuing a dead end, which can only lead to sterility, uncertainty and frustration. (14)

But as Todd has observed, “although Wali published his creative writing in Igbo, his apologia for using his mother tongue was in English” (298). Suffice it to add that despite the fact that Wali is the contemporary of such Nigerian writers as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Gabriel Okara, his literary works are little known or unheard of outside his own cultural enclave in eastern Nigeria precisely because, among other factors, he chose to write in Igbo.

Obi Wali is not alone in calling for the abrogation of foreign languages as the media of African literary aesthetics. In the last few years, there have been renewed calls for the abandonment of foreign languages in favour of African languages. At the vanguard of this movement for a return to African languages is the famous Kenyan writer and activist, Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, who begins his book, *Decolonising the Mind*, with the statement: “This book . . . is my farewell to English as a vehicle for any of my writings. From now on, it is Gikuyu and Kiswahili all the way” (xiv). This mood of total rejection of English as a medium for literary creativity is further reiterated in his most recent book, *Moving the Centre*: “It was once again the question of moving the centre: from European languages to all other languages all over Africa and the world; a move if you like towards a pluralism of languages as legitimate vehicles of the human imagination” (10). In condemning the use of foreign languages as the vehicles of African literary creativity, Ngugi poses the following questions:

We as African writers have always complained about the neo-colonial economic and political relationship to Euro-America. Right. But by our continuing to write in foreign languages, paying homage to them,

are we not on the cultural level continuing that neo-colonial slavish and cringing spirit? What is the difference between a politician who says Africa cannot do without imperialism and the writer who says Africa cannot do without European languages? (*Decolonising the Mind* 26)

Arguing that “Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world” (16), Ngugi encapsulates the political dimension of the question about the appropriate language for African literature as follows: “While the poetic political compositions of the great anti-imperialist Somali fighter, Hassan, will be known by heart by every Somali-speaking herdsman, not a line by even the best of African poets in foreign languages will be known by any peasant anywhere in Africa” (87).

Despite these arguments, Josef Schmied indicates that Ngugi has found few followers in practice because

he forgot that peasants and workers may be no more literate in an African than in a European language (depending on the educational system). He may also have overlooked the fact that English is now an African language in some sense, and accepted as such by many Africans. And he may have failed to recollect that realism is not necessarily directly reflected in literary language. On the other hand, it is also important to remember that English has served as a medium of African expression since it first found its way into the continent, and won international recognition with the Nobel Prize award to Wole Soyinka in 1986. (120)

Others have indicated that Ngugi’s position is socio-politically naive and impracticable because, in certain contexts, English functions as an instrument of liberation. In South

Africa, for example, the political dynamics surrounding the use of English as a vehicle for African literature has been slightly different from those in Kenya, in that it has been Afrikaans which has been more visibly the language of power and oppression. English has for many years been the vehicle for the expression of black aspirations and opposition in both politics and literature (Brown 727).

Moreover, Ngugi's call for a return to African languages as vehicles of African literature smacks of nativism which could give rise to an ardent practice of separatism. In ascribing to traditional native culture and African languages the power to generate a new identity for the colonized, Ngugi is transgressing, for example, the very essence of Frantz Fanon's delineation of the limited place of nativism in *The Wretched of the Earth*. For Fanon, "native culture had but a transitional part to play in the revolutionary process. Indeed, its only role was in the second phase of liberation -- the moment when the native, discovering that 'the settler's skin is not of any more value than a native's skin,' turns away from the values of the colonizing culture and comes into touch again with those of his [sic] own people. Here, in contrast to the 'individualism' and 'egoism' of the settler, the native rediscovers the strength to be gained from communal ideals" (Maxwell 78). The place of nativism in Fanon's decolonization programme is thus one of subordination to a revolutionary new culture, which in its "fight against poverty, illiteracy and underdevelopment" (Fanon 74) is unabashedly modern and progressivist. As Christopher Miller put it: "Fanon allows the look backward into tradition, but only to the extent that it is in the intention of opening up the future, as an invitation to action and as a basis of hope" (98-99).

Despite his avowed repudiation of English, Ngugi's relationship to the language is one of ambivalence and paradox. I have argued elsewhere that "although Ngugi has successfully moved the centre of his creative writing from the code of 'standard' British English to that of his mother tongue, Gikuyu, this movement has not occurred without his prior reterritorialization of the English language" (Bamiro "Recasting the Centre"

74-75).⁹ Ngugi's ambivalent relationship to the English language is further underscored by the following remarks which precede and succeed his 'farewell' to English as a vehicle for any of his writings: "I continued writing explanatory prose in English. Thus *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary*, *Writers in Politics* and *Barrel of a Pen* were all written in English. . . . However, I hope that through the age old medium of translation I shall be able to continue dialogue with all" (*Decolonising the Mind* xiv). Consequently, in spite of his rejection of English as a medium of his literary endeavours, Ngugi finds it difficult to extricate himself from the linguistic and cultural capital and the "profit of distinction" (Bourdieu 55) of English as a medium of international exchange. The linguistic and cultural capital of the language is "convertible to economic capital through institutions of publishing, teaching, lecturing, and award-granting" (Arnove 288) from which Ngugi has benefitted tremendously. In this sense, "Ngugi's decision to publish in Gikuyu does not place him outside the market, but in a particular, distinctive, position within it" (Arnove 290).

In the final analysis, Josef Schmied's comment on the unassailable position of English in Africa today is also relevant for a critique of Ngugi's attitude to the language, despite its naive disclaimer of some sources of English's importance in African contexts:

But whether they [Africans] develop English into their essential means of expression or only use it when necessary in the international context, they will have to live with it, since the importance of English today is not based on ideological, political, or cultural dominance, but on the possibilities it offers in world-wide communication, in information retrieval, in technology and in economic exchange and cooperation. This means that English has come to Africa to stay -- in some form or other. (197-198)

As the analysis in the next chapter will show, the power and politics of English in the African context is partly based on its ideological, political, and cultural dominance as a powerful medium for the articulation of certain colonial and counter-colonial discourses.

As indicated earlier, despite the fact that some critics and writers have challenged the use of foreign languages as the vehicles of African literatures, many prominent African literati continue to employ English as the chief medium of their writings. The question thus arises: Why have such prominent African writers continued to write in English?

Abdul JanMohamed provides some answers to the question raised above. In his analysis, the African writers' decision to use English as their medium is engulfed by ironies, paradoxes, and contradictions. They write in English because they were born in a British colony and can receive formal education only in English. More significantly, however, they are compelled to master and use English because of the prevailing ideological pressures within the colonial and neo-colonial systems. Finally, a potential writer from a British colony is induced to use English because it is an intimate part of a powerful society that will control all technological and cultural development in the foreseeable future ("Sophisticated Primitivism" 20-21). Yet, the decision to use English "produces a contradiction between, on the one hand, the unconscious and subconscious psychic formations of most Third World writers, determined by the indigenous languages and, on the other hand, the more superficial, conscious formation, determined by the formal, public function of English in most colonies" (JanMohamed 21). As a result, the African writer who uses English is faced at some level with the paradox of representing the experience of oral cultures through literate language and forms. I will illustrate this particular point by alluding to the views of the South African writer, Eskia Mphahlele; the Nigerian writers, Wole

Soyinka, Gabriel Okara, and Chinua Achebe; and the Zimbabwean writers, Dambudzo Marechera and Chenjerai Hove.

Despite the oppressive system in the then-South Africa, Eskia Mphahlele once stated that English could be turned into a linguistic weapon against the colonizers: “South Africans . . . could do violence to standard English and carry their audience with them, exploiting a popular kind of English. It is more likely here than anywhere else in Africa that we shall see one mode of English succeed another owing to the restlessness of the situation” (304). Wole Soyinka also calls for the reconstitution of English within the African context: “When we borrow an alien language to sculpt or paint in, we must begin by co-opting the entire properties of that language as correspondences to properties in our matrix of thought and expression. We must stress it . . . stretch it, and compact it, fragment and reassemble it” (“Aesthetic Illusion” 67). Like Mphahlele, Soyinka believes that the colonizing medium of English can be radically altered into an insurgent linguistic weapon: “Black people twisted the linguistic blade in the hands of the traditional cultural castrator and carved new concepts onto the flesh of white supremacy. The customary linguistic usage was rejected outright and a new, raw, urgent and revolutionary syntax was given to this medium which had become the greatest single repository of racist concepts” (“Language as Boundary” 88).

The Ijaw writer Gabriel Okara justifies the constant relexification of the English language in his works as follows:

As a writer who believes in the utilization of African ideas, African philosophy and African folklore and imagery to the fullest extent possible, I am of the opinion the only way to use them effectively is to translate them almost literally from the African language native to the writer into whatever European language he [sic] is using as medium of expression. I have endeavoured in my words to keep as close as possible to the

vernacular expressions. For, from a word, a group of words, a sentence and even a name in any African language, one can glean the social norms, attitudes and values of a people . . . In order to capture the vivid images of African speech, I had to eschew the habit of expressing my thoughts first in English. It was difficult at first, but I had to learn. I had to study each Ijaw expression I used and to discover the probable situation in which it was used in order to bring out the nearest meaning in English. I found it a fascinating exercise. (15-16)

Okara thus emphasizes the necessity of fashioning a new English in the West African context:

Some may regard this way of writing as a desecration of the language. This is of course not true. Living languages grow like living things, and English is far from a dead language. There are American, West Indian, Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand version of English. All of them add life and vigour to the language while reflecting their own respective cultures. Why shouldn't there be a Nigerian or West African English which we can use to express our own ideas, thinking and philosophy in our own way? (16)

Of all the African commentators on the status of English in African literature, Chinua Achebe's views are frequently quoted. His views are often contrasted with the position of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o on the desirability of English as the carrier of African literatures and cultures. Achebe asks that "Is it right that a man [sic] should abandon his[sic] mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no choice. I have been given the language [i.e. English] and I intend to use it" (62). Achebe further stresses that "I feel

that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings” (62). Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman compare the position of Achebe and Ngugi in the following way:

Whereas Achebe sees language and culture as being primarily mobile, without fixed character, Ngugi sees them as containing and conveying essential and unchangeable ideological values; whereas Achebe considers that the history of European colonisation represents an irreversible factor in contemporary culture and political organisation, not contradictory to national self-determination, Ngugi sees the ongoing cultural hegemony of Europe in Africa as both a cause and reflection of neo-colonialism. Whereas Achebe claims realism in his argument for English as a necessary medium of national and international communication, Ngugi claims a contrasting realism in his argument for English as the language of the ruling class minority, and ethnic languages as the primary language of the majority of African population. (375)

The merits and demerits of Achebe’s and Ngugi’s arguments notwithstanding, those who call for the abrogation of English as a vehicle for African literary expression seem to discountenance the advantage of writing in a world language. Suzanne Romaine has asserted that “the world is becoming more linguistically homogenous through the increasing spread of [a] few world languages at the expense of the continuation of many local languages” and that “more publications are in English than in any other language” (“Global Village” 253, 258). For example, in a country like Nigeria with some 400 languages, writers who choose to express themselves only in one of the local tongues face the danger of being eclipsed from a national as well as an international audience. Chinua Achebe gives an example of this kind of predicament.

In 1960 when he was travelling in East Africa and went to the home of the late Shabaan Robert, the Swahili poet of Tanganyika, he and the poet spent some time talking about writing, but there was no real contact. Achebe knew from all accounts that he was talking to an important writer, but of the nature of Robert's work he had no idea. The great poet gave him two books of his poems which he treasured but could not read – though he might have learnt Swahili! Turning to the Nigerian situation, Achebe rightly concludes that

there are scores of languages I would want to learn if it were possible. Where am I to find the time to learn the half-a-dozen or so Nigerian languages each of which can sustain a literature? I am afraid it cannot be done. These languages will just have to develop as tributaries to feed the one central language enjoying nation-wide currency. Today, for good or ill, that language is English. Tomorrow it may be something else, although I very much doubt it. (58)

In the Zimbabwean context, two writers that epitomize the general attitude to the use of English in fiction are Dambudzo Marechera and Chenjerai Hove. While Marechera believes that his writing should stay close to standard English as much as possible, Hove strives to alter the colonial language in order not only to give it a new identity, but also to turn it into a new medium of artistic expression. Marechera professes the universality of the English literary tradition: "From early in my life I have viewed literature as a unique universe that has no internal divisions. I do not pigeon-hole it by race or language or nation" ("African Writer's Experience" 99). Flora Veit-Wild thus observes that "Marechera took to the English language as a duck takes to water," and was thus "a keen accomplice in [his] own mental colonization" (*Dambudzo Marechera* 7, qtd. in Wylie 49). Hove, by contrast, and, in a similar vein as Gabriel Okara, states that African writers' aim is "by virtue of our morality, [to] give the European literary forms new light" ("African Writing", qtd. in Wylie 56).

Consequently, “Hove ‘backburns’ against the English language’s wider incursion on Shona identity in order to preserve something of that identity. If Marechera has stolen the fire, the language, but found himself entirely consumed or colonized by it, Hove has chosen to steal a more limited portion of it and bend it to a different cultural end” (Wylie 56).

As indicated earlier, Diana Brydon and Helen Tiffin argue that for the majority of writers in the Caribbean who do not have another language available to them, there is no alternative to English. Consequently, in the post-colonial literary context, the most advanced exponents of the subversion, reterritorialization, and subsequent creolization of English are writers from the Caribbean who “have always been intensely involved in the ‘struggle over the word’ in making the only language available ‘native’ to Caribbean person and place” (Ashcroft “Intersecting Marginalities” 29). In their incessant struggle over the word, Caribbean writers thus “startle the reader by interrogating standard English and substituting new usages, often in the Caribbean demotic, for old ones” (Morrell 10). Nevertheless, the decision by a writer to write in creole or the juxtaposition of standard English and creole in literature presents a dilemma, because the writer has to do a delicate balancing act. According to Marlene Nourbese Philip,

One can never be less than self-conscious as an African Caribbean writer working in any of the demotic variants of English, whether the demotic variant be a form of standard English or Caribbean English. And for the writer from the Caribbean, language must always present a dilemma. At its most simple, the dilemma can be resolved to an either/or dichotomy: either one writes in a demotic variant of English, or one writes in straight English. . . . It is not sufficient, however, to write only in dialect for too often that remains a parallel and closed experience, although a part of the same language. Neither is it sufficient to write only in what we

have come to call standard English. The language as we know it has to be dislocated and acted upon -- even destroyed -- so that it begins to serve our purposes. (*She Tries Her Tongue* 18-19)

The sociolinguistic vitality in the West Indies brought about by the constant negotiation of the continuum of expression from standard English to Caribbean Creole thus negates V.S. Naipaul's nihilistic statement in 1962 that "History is built around achievement and creation; and nothing was created in the West Indies" (*The Middle Passage* 29). Naipaul's ambivalence in claiming the English language but feeling alienated from the tradition is further revealed in the following statement: "Every writer is, in the long run, on his own; but it helps, in the most practical way, to have a tradition. The English language was mine; the tradition was not" ("Jasmine" 19). Implicit in this remark, as Thorell Tsomondo points out, is "on the one hand, Naipaul's sense of loss in having to write in a tradition to which he feels alien, and, on the other hand, a sense of fulfilment through that very tradition" (18).

In contrast to Naipaul's nihilistic judgement is the view of other Caribbean writers built on the credo that "we must christen Language afresh" (Lamming 118). This creating of language afresh could be achieved "by disrupting the colonial language with its claims to linguistic and cultural superiority" (Wilentz 263). In this direction, George Lamming asserts:

I am not much interested in what the West Indian has brought to the English language, for English is no longer the exclusive language of the men who live in England. That stopped a long time ago; and it is today, among other things, a West Indian language. What the West Indians do with it is their own business. (36)

Sam Selvon is a self-conscious craftsman in his use of English Creole as part of his literary style (Wyke 124). In fact, Selvon offers no apology whatsoever in privileging creole over standard English in his fictional writings:

I think I can say without a trace of modesty that I was the first Caribbean writer to explore and employ dialect . . . in both narrative and dialogue. I was boldfaced enough to write a complete chapter in a stream-of-consciousness style (I think that's what it is called) without punctuation and seemingly disconnected, a style difficult enough for the average reader with 'straight' English. It was *after* the success of this novel, *The Lonely Londoners*, that I did several stories in dialect 'by request.' Later, after two 'straight' novels, *Turn Again Tiger* and *I Hear Thunder*, I lambasted them with another dialect novel, *The Housing Lark*. By then critics and reviewers were not even bothered about the dialect -- they were more concerned with the content of the book. ("A Note on Dialect" 63)

As is the case with Chinua Achebe and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o on the African scene, the language practice of Kamau Brathwaite and Derek Walcott often provides the focal point for investigating the attitudes of Caribbean writers towards the English language. Brathwaite's childhood and background were similar to Walcott's in many ways: both were born in the same year, 1930, in islands very close to each other -- Brathwaite in Barbados, and Walcott in St. Lucia; Brathwaite's family was respectable black middle class while Walcott is "Racially a mulatto . . . born into an educated and cultured Methodist family of the 'brown bourgeoisie'" (Beckmann 71); while Brathwaite won a coveted Barbados scholarship to study history at Cambridge, Walcott stayed in Saint Lucia before taking up a scholarship to study at the University College of the West Indies. The paradox, however, is that

Walcott, the poet who stayed in the Caribbean, writes, in his early verse particularly, in an English that was very much of the centre, the metropole. Brathwaite, on the other hand, who travels away

from the Caribbean *to* the metropole, becomes the poet of 'nation language,' his work rich with the voices of the *folk*, of the ways of saying of West Indian people. The crucial difference between the two men's early experience, which to some extent at least explains that divide in terms of their literary language, is to do with the linguistic circumstances of their respective islands. For although Brathwaite's middle class/scholarship boy orientation inevitably created a gulf between himself and the *folk* of his island, the language of the folk and the language of his education were not so much at odds as they were in Walcott's St. Lucia, where French-creole was/is the language of 'life' but a very formal English was the language of education and government. (Brown 8, original emphasis)

Consequently, Walcott's triple linguistic heritage -- French Creole, English Creole, and acrolectal English -- created in him a linguistic and cultural schizophrenia. Given this multiplicity of linguistic heritages, Walcott's writing "reflects in language and style a mulatto blend of the languages and artistic heritages that have contributed to the creation of contemporary West Indian man [sic]" (Beckmann 87). The following famous lines from the poem, 'A Far Cry From Africa,' epitomize Walcott's cultural and linguistic schizophrenia:

I who am poisoned with the blood of both,
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?
I who have cursed
The drunken officer of British rule, how choose
Between this Africa and the English tongue I love? (*Selected Poems* 4)

However, the early Walcott has been accused of speaking away from Caribbean audience because of the formality of his language, the English the colonizer forced on

his slaves and their only partially liberated descendants. Walcott opposes the idea of English as the residue and detritus of a demeaning past; he refutes the notion that to have mastery of the English language is still to be a victim of the history which the language, as received, bears and signifies (Thieme 100).

Over the years, Walcott has striven for an English which echoes the essential and characteristic tones of West Indian speech, which is 'fertilized by dialect,' as he puts it. The poet's function, he maintains, is to be 'filter and purifier, never losing the tone and strength of the common speech as he or she uses the hieroglyphs, symbols or alphabet of the official language'. He has striven, then, to make English speak his language (Thieme 100). Rei Terada conceptualizes Walcott's 'betweenness' and polyglotism in the following manner:

Although Walcott has always used traces of dialects and creoles, he intermingles languages and idiolects more freely and effectively as his career develops. From *Another Life* onward, especially, Walcott shows that languages do not possess strict borders and that every language owes something to others. As each author's poetry must be mimicry, each language, too, must finally be viewed as a creole -- each American language, but also European ones, for creolization is the very model of language formation. (5)

Walcott's "perceptual polyglotism" (Beaujour 104) comes alive in his insistence on "using syntaxes from various dialects" to forge a "form that would be comprehensible not only to all the people in the region that speak in that tone of voice, but to people everywhere" (Ciccarelli 303). In 'What the Twilight Says,' Walcott argues that

Pastoralists of the African revival should know that what is needed is not new names for old things, or old names for old things, but the faith of using the old names anew, so that mongrel as I am, something prickles in me when I see the word Ashanti as with the

word Warwickshire, both separately intimating my grandfathers' roots, both baptising this neither proud nor ashamed bastard, this hybrid, this West Indian. (10)

Unlike Walcott who is torn "Between this Africa and the English tongue I love," Brathwaite advocates a "literature of reconnection" which emphasizes "a recognition of the African presence in our society not as a static quality, but as root -- living, creative, and still part of the main" ("The African Presence" 133). And unlike Walcott who insists that "one works within a language," arguing that it is "a futile, stupid and political exercise to insist on 'creating' language" (Ciccarelli 306-307), Brathwaite "begins with speech" (Chamberlin 34) located in the linguistic regime of African cultural survivals. Brathwaite states in an interview that

creolization, that interlapping of experience -- to me that has been the big thing. So that when Africans come into the Caribbean one is very much aware that they have not only brought their own culture with them -- they have not come naked, as people usually say -- but that the culture begins to relate to the culture of the European, the conquistador, the Amerindian, and right away we are at the threshold of a new kind of social structure, a new kind of cultural imagination. (Mackey 24).

Brathwaite's linguistic Afrocentrism crystallizes into what he terms 'nation language'. According to Glyne Griffith, Brathwaite locates the particularity of nation language "in the complexity of West Indian registers and dialects, and [fixes] the commonality of it in regional resistance to colonialism's imperatives. He concentrates on 'folk,' drawing upon the ex-African cultural vestiges which infuse their West Indian reality" (84). Brathwaite conceptualizes nation language thus:

English it may be in terms of some of its lexical features. But in its contours, its rhythm and timbre, its sound explosions, it is

not English. . . . Nation language . . . may be in English: but often it is an English which is like a howl, or a shout or a machine-gun or the wind or a wave. It is also like the blues. And sometimes it is English and African together. (*History of the Voice* 13)

In the 1980s and 1990s Caribbean women writers have asserted their ability to function as more than symbolic keepers of culture and nurturers of Creole and are experimenting with the Caribbean language continuum in interesting and innovative ways. This experimentation with language and ‘voice’ in Caribbean women’s poetry and prose links into larger, thematic questions of (quests for) ‘identity,’ a holistic sense of self, which have always been central to Caribbean literature (Narain and O’Callaghan 627).

The conceptions of Marlene Nourbese Philip and Merle Hodge, for example, corroborate the foregoing observation. Philip has always insisted that standard English as we know it “must be subverted, turned upside down, inside out, and even sometimes erased” (*She Tries Her Tongue* 17). According to her:

The linguistic rape and subsequent forced marriage between African and English tongues has resulted in a language capable of great rhythms and musicality; one that is and is not English, and one which is among the most vital in the English-speaking world today. The continuing challenge for me as a writer/poet is to find some deeper patterning -- a deep structure, as Chomsky puts it -- of my language, the Caribbean demotic. The challenge is to find the literary form of the demotic language. (*She Tries Her Tongue* 23)

Elsewhere Philip argues that “The challenge for me was to use that language, albeit the language of my oppression, but the only one I had, to subvert the inner and hidden discourse -- the discourse of my non-being,” concluding that “For those of us who use

the demotic languages of the Caribbean -- dialect -- to express our reality in writing or in speech, an understanding of the underpinnings of power enables us to challenge what has been until very recently the linguistic hegemony of Western Europe in the Caribbean" ("Managing the Unmanageable" 296, 300).

Merle Hodge calls for a revaluation of Creole as a part of the cultural sovereignty which forms the crux of the larger issue of Caribbean liberation. For Hodge, Creole is the quintessence of the Caribbean culture, given the fact that "Ninety-nine percent of Caribbean people, for 99 percent of their waking hours, communicate in a Creole language that is a fusion of West African syntax and the modified vocabulary of one or another European tongue" ("Changing the World" 204). Hodge further insists on the place of Creole in the continuing struggle to liberate Caribbean cultures and literatures from the stranglehold of foreign cultural domination:

Caribbean Creole languages have been fashioned to fit our communication needs, and they have not only survived but developed -- and they continue to develop as our communication needs become, perhaps, more complex. In the "English-speaking" Caribbean, statistics from the education system show that only a very small proportion of the population may be said to possess English. . . . Creole is the main medium of communication in the Caribbean. Almost everybody uses Creole. . . . Caribbean people can be armed with *both* standard English and their mother tongue, Creole -- we speak Creole, we need Creole, we cannot function without Creole, for our deepest thought processes are bound up in the structure of Creole. ("Changing the World" 204, original emphasis)

Hodge's contention that Creole is the mother tongue of Caribbean people thus contradicts Diana Brydon and Helen Tiffin's claim that "West Indian writing in English

is not, in general, second language writing by those who have access to an alternative “mother” tongue, but is, as in the case of English Canada and Australia a *de facto* first language” (36).

The conclusion one can draw from the foregoing discussions on the status of English in post-colonial literatures and the attitudes of certain African and Caribbean writers to the language is that the English language will not only continue to play a crucial role in the creative imagination of post-colonial writers, but will also continue to engage in a dialectical and dialogical relationship with African and Caribbean languages and cultures. But as Chinua Achebe has maintained, “it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African [and Caribbean] surroundings” (62).

NOTES

¹In Jamaica, as in other anglophone Caribbean countries, English enjoys the status of an official language (Winford “The Caribbean” 568). In addition, as Beverley Ryan has noted, “although it [Jamaica] is primarily an English as a Second *Dialect* environment, with a certain insistence on Standard English for writing, there is a tendency towards functioning with more duality, as if in an English as a Second *Language* environment” (103, original emphasis).

²According to *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Courland, or Kurland, also known as Courlandia or Kurlandia, is a historic region now in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic of the [former] Soviet Union. It occupies 10,000 square miles (25,900 sq. km.) in the westernmost part of the Latvian S.S.R., on the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga. Originally inhabited by Kurs and Livs, the region today is inhabited mainly by Letts and Lithuanians (Vol. 7, p. 403).

³This has been discussed, for example, in Edmund O. Bamiro, “Syntactic Variation in West African English,” *World Englishes* 14.2 (1995): 189-204.

⁴*Go-getters* is a term in common usage in the North American context.

⁵*Cop-shop* is also North American slang.

⁶These examples are drawn from the following sources: John Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 82; Lise Winer, *Trinidad and Tobago* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993) 52; Lise Winer, “Trinbagonian,” *English Today* 5.2 (1989): 21; Clement H. Wyke, *Sam Selvon's Dialectal Style and Fictional Strategy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1991) 18-20.

⁷Among some British speakers, the idiom *mutten dress up as lam* means an older person inappropriately dressed in the garb of a younger one.

⁸The verb phrase construction in TEC is fully discussed in Lise Winer, *Trinidad and Tobago* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993) 20-42.

⁹See Edmund O. Bamiro, "Recasting the Centre: Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and the Africanization of English," *Kunapipi* 16.2 (1994): 67-74, for an analysis of the strategies of linguistic nativization in selected Ngugi literary texts.

CHAPTER THREE

ENGLISH IN SELECTED TEXTS OF ZIMBABWEAN LITERATURE

This chapter engages with narrative idiom and characters' idioms and comments as they relate to (a) the nativization of English in Zimbabwean novels and the use of English and other indigenous languages for articulating social norms and certain geolinguistic imperatives, and (b) the power and politics of English as an instrument for domination, manipulation, oppression, the construction of elitist identity, the reproduction of unequal power relations, and of resistance to such social injustice. These issues will be examined in relation to the following texts: Stanlake Samkange's *On Trial for My Country* (1966), and *The Mourned One* (1975); Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* (1989); Shimmer Chinodya's *Harvest of Thorns* (1989); Chenjerai Hove's *Bones* (1988); Dambudzo Marechera's *The House of Hunger* (1978); and Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* (1950).¹

Before examining the relationship between the English language and the construction of cultural and social identity in these novels, under the appropriate headings of Linguistic Texturing, Nativization Strategies, and the Power and Politics of English respectively, I want to comment on their general nature. These texts are post-colonial in the general sense of being "grounded in those societies whose subjectivity has been constituted in part by the subordinating power of European colonialism" and "conceived as a set of discursive practices, prominent among which is *resistance* to colonialism, colonialist ideologies, and their contemporary forms and subjectificatory legacies" (Tiffin vii, original emphasis). The contemporary forms and subjectificatory legacies of colonialism refer most prominently to the politics of gender, race, and class in post-colonial literary texts.

The texts are also 'decolonizing fictions,' in the sense that they "write back against imperial fictions and . . . incorporate alternative ways of seeing and living in the world" (Brydon and Tiffin 11). In other words, these texts "subvert the imperial perspective, creating from the tensions of their colonial legacy new fictions that generate new ways of perceiving" (Brydon and Tiffin 29). These texts are also post-colonial in terms of their sociolinguistic practice. Given the fact that these novels arise out of "an encounter of dialects" (Deleuze and Guattari 13), and "occupy spaces in at least two traditions . . . European tradition and black traditions" (Gates *Black Literature* 4), they seek not only to reject the metropolitan power over the means of communication, but also to capture and remould the English language to new usages in the post-colonial [Zimbabwean] context (Ashcroft *et al.*, 38).

I would like to note that the sense of 'post-coloniality' emphasized in this study has less to do with its use as a "temporal signifier" with the meaning of "beyond-colonial; past-colonial; after-colonial" or endowing "its principal morpheme 'colonial' with an originary privilege" (Osundare 203, 206, 208), and more to do with post-coloniality as "a horizon of expectation for literary production and consumption wherein the term 'post-colonial' nominates the actuation of a specific form of discursive resistance to colonialist power -- a resistance which is grounded in experience and which is set in train the moment that colonialist culture acts upon the body and space of its Others" (Slemon and Tiffin xix-xx).

In a socio-historical analysis of black Zimbabwean literature, Flora Veit-Wild says the following of the specific nature of this literature:

Protracted colonial rule and isolation from the rest of Africa brought about a specific quality in Zimbabwean literature. The typical pattern in the development of African literature -- a phase of cultural nationalism and anti-colonial protest followed by a phase of post-colonial disillusionment -- shifted in the case of Zimbabwe. Here post-colonial

disenchantment and criticism of African leadership emerged even before independence was achieved; a residual cultural nationalism co-existed with a modernist existentialist perspective. (*Teachers 1*)

She goes on to claim:

By 1990, after the first decade of independence, there was still not much homogeneity in Zimbabwean writing; one cannot speak of a clear-cut, distinctly Zimbabwean identity. There are certain common themes -- the war of liberation in retrospect has been one major preoccupation of the 1980s -- but approaches, styles and outlooks differ greatly, as do the ways in which writers try to come to terms with their past and present. Hence it is not surprising that no "classic" has emerged, no piece of literature that would have expressed, summarised and defined a Zimbabwean identity. (*Teachers 2*)

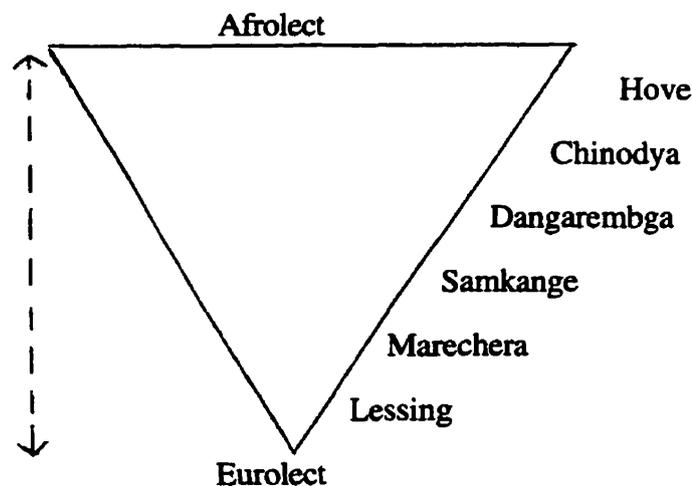
However, the pitfall of Veit-Wild's notion of identity in relation to Zimbabwean literature is that it is static, monolithic, and homogenizing. As I pointed out in the introduction to the present work, since every human identity is always in the process of being constructed, contested, and negotiated, one cannot accurately speak of a clear-cut Zimbabwean identity. And if human identity is always in a state of flux and continually being reshaped in light of new historical realities, readers cannot expect homogeneity in Zimbabwean writing, neither can they expect to find any piece of literature that would have expressed and defined a Zimbabwean identity.

Furthermore, Veit-Wild's assumption that no "classic" of Zimbabwean literature has emerged is, at best, subjective and misleading and, at worst, Eurocentric. We need to bear in mind that what is a "classic" in a colonial or Euro-American context is not necessarily coterminous with what is "classic" in a post-colonial situation such as that in Zimbabwe. If we strictly follow the dictionary definition of "classic" as "of the highest class; being a model of its kind; excellent; standard; authoritative; established"

(Webster's 258), then the literary works to be analyzed in this chapter arguably qualify as classics on their own merits.

3.1 LINGUISTIC TEXTURING IN THE NOVELS

Generally speaking, the linguistic texturing in the novels is characterized by a conservatism in language practice, conservative in the sense that the authors are careful in distinguishing between the language of narration (crafted in acrolectal English) and the language of the fictional characters (sometimes acrolectal but more frequently rendered in mesolectal or basilectal English). Specifically, however, the linguistic texturing in the novels -- which also coincides with the authors' attitudes to linguistic experimentation -- can be ranged along a sociolinguistic continuum which can be represented in the form of an inverted pyramid, having at its maximally-broad top what I will call an Afrolect and, at its base, a Eurolect. The bi-directional arrow suggests the nature of the sociolinguistic continuum and the interaction of the Afrolect and Eurolect.



The Eurolect alludes to literary productions that exhibit considerable influence from European literature in content, language, and style, while the Afrolect indicates a linguistic experimentation in variants of an imperial language such as English, experimentation that reflects the characteristics of the African oral traditions. For example, Doris Lessing's style is Eurolectal in the sense that except for strands of basilectal English that occur in the verbal repertoire of the major black character, and

certain lexical transfers and linguistic hybridization from Afrikaans, *The Grass is Singing* cannot really be labelled a work of African expression. In fact, the novel opens with a journalese and abounds in such foreign expressions as *esprit de corps*. Afrolectal functional texts such as proverbs, songs, myths, legends, and folktales are absent from the novel.

Given the unique position of *The Grass is Singing* among the novels chosen for analysis in this chapter -- a text written by a white Rhodesian as opposed to black Zimbabweans -- a word on the thematic concerns of the text is relevant at this point. Owing to the fact that Lessing's text contains passages that are racist, sexist, and decidedly Anglo-conservative, it is customary for critics to label *The Grass is Singing* as colonialist literature. However, reminiscent of Brydon and Tiffin's argument on V. S. Naipaul's works, Lessing's achievement rests on her intricate analysis of the forces of imperialism and colonization, and her description of the Rhodesian [Zimbabwean] society as effects of this destructive history. The novel thus foregrounds a continuing struggle between conservative British and European conservative interests which construct it as obedient responses to colonialist interpellation, and post-colonial readings which elucidate the "disobedient" subversions in her works (Brydon and Tiffin (146-147).

In terms of the post-colonial trajectory of the text, Fishburn indicates that Lessing "does not hesitate to reveal the greed, ruthlessness, moral turpitude and sheer self-interested stupidity of the British settlers" (3) and the white colonial ruling class. Thus, the novel not only encodes "indictments of racism" but also reinforces "colonial fantasies of racial and sexual otherness" (Roberts 73). According to the gender politics of the novel, the protagonist, Mary Turner is, in spite of her racist views, powerless within the rigid patriarchal norms of colonialism. Eva Hunter thus indicates that the novel is a valorization of the masculine because "The woman, sterile, unnatural, guilty, is sacrificed by the author, as well as by Moses [her servant] -- who represents the

natural, the whole, the fertile, and the innocent – to a new ‘dawn’” (154). However, as will be demonstrated later, given the politics of ‘Othering’ in the text, it is doubtful whether Moses can be viewed as “natural” in the hegemonic discourse of colonialism.

In Dambudzo Marechera’s *The House of Hunger*, Afrolect is almost absent and linguistic texturing is marked by heavy allusions to Eurocentric texts such as Shakespeare’s *Othello*, Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Wordsworth’s *Prelude*, and Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. The lexis and syntax of the text exhibit a high degree of foreign influence, while there are textual tissues and interweavings that show influence from Greek mythology and Russian writers such as Gogol, Yevtushenko, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Turgenev, Pushkin, and Gorky. The following passage is typical of the intertextuality inherent in Marechera’s style:

‘Now poetry,’ Harry began, ‘is the soul of all civilised nations.
Verse. Tiger, tiger burning bright. In the forest of the night. The
falcon cannot hear the falconer. Things fall apart. When the stars
threw down their spears what rough beast . . .’ (*HH* 18)

The weave of Marechera’s text exhibits literary threads from African cultural heritage and that of the Black diaspora, from Sedar Senghor and Christopher Okigbo to Aime Cesaire, Leroy Jones, and James Baldwin, but these threads are few and thin. On the whole, his language remains Eurocentrically allusive and characteristically abstract.

Especially in *On Trial for My Country*, Stanlake Samkange shows a considerable influence from Eurolect in content, form, and style. This is hardly surprising given the fact that the novel is a historical text in which the writer uses actual letters and documents of Rhodes, Moffat, Jameson, and other British imperialists to portray not only the colonial conquest of Rhodesia but also the conflict and struggle between Cecil Rhodes and Lobengula, the Matebele King. The Eurolectal orientation of the novel thus stems from the preponderance of legalese, a Eurocentric functional text, and the anglicized nature of the author’s idioms, lexis, and syntax. Nevertheless,

the Eurolectal and anglicized nature of the novel is sometimes moved in the direction of *métissage*² by the incorporation of Afrolectal varieties relating to code-mixing, linguistic hybridization, and culturally proxemic expressions in metaphors and proverbs.

However, ten years later, the Eurolectal linguistic texturing that dominates the earlier novel has shifted to the Afrocentric cultural influence and linguistic experimentation of *The Mourned One*, a novel that teems with various traditional genres such as proverb, song, and legend. Also in this novel, the inclusion of culturally proxemic idioms and metaphors, and the incorporation of lexical items from Ndebele and Shona become intensified. It is in this respect that the linguistic texturing in Zimbabwean literature must be viewed in terms of a continuum.

Tsitsi Dangarembga can be said to occupy the middle position in the linguistic continuum of these writers. In *Nervous Conditions*, the content is not Eurolectal in the sense of allusions to Eurocentric texts noted with Marechera above, but her style is anglicized, especially in lexis and syntax. The language of the novel is Eurolectal because context-sensitive metaphors, proverbs, and other markers of the oral tradition are in minimal evidence. The Eurolectal orientation of Dangarembga's form and style is perhaps traceable to her imperial education. For example, while her parents were studying for their degrees, she spent some of her early childhood years in Britain. Moreover, after secondary education at Marymount Mission, Mutare, and at the prestigious private and mostly white Arundel School in Salisbury, she worked briefly as a teacher and then went to Cambridge to study medicine (Veit-Wild *Teachers* 331). However, at the same time, one notices that she has started not only to experiment with mesolectal and basilectal varieties of Zimbabwean English, especially as devices for sharpening characterization, but also to transfer culturally salient Shona words and ethnolexemes into the narrative idiom of her text. That Dangarembga's language and style will move towards more Afrolect in her later works therefore seems likely.

In a 1993 interview with Isabella Matsikidze, Shimmer Chinodya laments that Zimbabwean writers

haven't experimented enough. We haven't even explored our oral traditions enough --traditions whose forms just abound. We haven't exploited them, and adapted them enough and I think we need to go back to them and come up with an eclectic fusion of both our indigenous techniques and all the techniques that have been attempted in other parts of the world. (53)

Chinodya thus shows that at least by 1989 when *Harvest of Thorns* was published, he shares Chenjerai Hove's sensitivity to language and style, especially in terms of the syncretic blending of the oral and literate modes of fictional production. *Harvest of Thorns* is crafted in an Afrolectal style deriving from lexical transfers from Shona, and ethnolexemes, metaphors, proverbs, myths, and folktales that not only challenge the cultural hegemony of British English, but also reterritorialize the English language according to Shona socio-cultural imperatives.

As I indicated in the last chapter, the Afrolectal linguistic texturing of Hove's *Bones* has never been in doubt. Like Chinua Achebe and Gabriel Okara, and unlike Dambudzo Marechera, Hove has consciously striven to Africanize the English language. He conceives of the task of the African writer as

cleansing the colonial languages to the extent of representing them to our former colonizers as languages which can also be used to depict human dignity, not human slavery and anger. This is a task which we can only achieve with the inspiration of the great masters of oral narrative to whom we are accountable. (qtd. in Veit-Wild "Dances with Bones" 6)

The linguistic texturing in *Bones* is thus marked by "a fairly literal translation of Shona sentence structure, proverbs, terminology, and imagery. All voices share this idiom: an

idiom which carries the tradition and perceptions of their people, creating out of many apparently separate mouths one communal and collective voice” (Veit-Wild “Dances with Bones” 7).

Veit-Wild’s comparison of the form and style of the works of Hove, Chinodya, and Dangarembga offers a polarized view of English in the work of the three writers:

Whereas Hove has been innovative in Africanising the English language, Chinodya and Dangarembga use the medium in a conventional descriptive and analytical way. All these three authors have however been inspiring in the way they experiment with narrative structure. (*Teachers* 310)

Although Veit-Wild does not make clear what she means by Chinodya and Dangarembga using the medium of English in “a conventional and analytical way,” this study seeks to demonstrate that the strategies of Africanizing the English language cut across the texts of these writers and are thus sociolinguistic markers of Zimbabwean cultural identity. Hove’s innovativeness in Africanizing English is, therefore, one of depth: while, like Okara, he consciously and intentionally foregrounds nativization strategies, other Zimbabwean writers are not, at least in this respect, so adventurous.

3.2 NATIVIZATION STRATEGIES

As I indicated in the introductory chapter, Zimbabwean writers use certain linguistic devices to contextualize the English language in their respective cultures. These linguistic devices specifically relate to loan-words, lexico-semantics, lexical transfers and linguistic hybridization, and syntax.

Loan-words typify the process whereby Zimbabwean writers subject English words to the phonological and morphological processes of their native languages, Shona or Sindebele. The inscription of Shona and Ndebele morpho-phonemic dynamics on English words involves the addition of vowels to the end of English

words and the breaking up of consonant clusters by the insertion of vowels. As I indicated in the previous chapter, Ngara cites such examples of loan-words as *pound* < *pondo*, *cheque* < *cheki*, and *soup* < *supu*. Loan-words thus epitomize Homi Bhabha's concept of 'hybridity' *par excellence*, because they tend not only to bridge the cultural gap between the colonized and the colonizer but also to signify the mutual constitution of 'inside' and 'outside,' 'self' and 'other'. For example, the loan-word *pondo* collapses the British and Shona modes of signification respectively, synthesizing the 'insiderness' of Shona culture and the 'outsiderness' of British culture. Relating to the domains of influence of loan-words, Josef Schmied indicates that "Domains associated with modern European life and inventions, such as technology, administration, education, sports and entertainments, tend to be expressed in English terms, even if that entails incorporating them as loans into an African language context" (141).

The following examples of loan-words in the novels relate specifically to the following domains of influence, where the symbol < means that the loan-word is 'derived from' the succeeding or corresponding English lexical item:

Technology: *tererina* (*HT* 48) < terylene; *dirayiva* (*MO* 112) < driver

Administration: *Spekshen* (*HT* 55) < Inspection; *Saijen* (*HT* 88) < Sergeant; *vesenzazi* (*HT* 151) < census; *baas* (*B* 114) < boss; *Masoja* (*HT* 210) < soldier; *Cheme* (*MO* 35) < Chairman; *Sekerere* (*MO* 35) < Secretary

Education: *Vokebyurari* (*HT* 135) < Vocabulary

Sports: *penelet* (*HT* 7) < penalty (in the game of soccer)

Personal Names and Endearments: *dali* (*HT* 32) < darling; *Janifa* (*B* 1) < Jennifer

Christian Discourse: *Mapostori* (*HT* 48) < Apostle; *Satani* (*MO* 35) < Satan; *Jesu Kristo* (*MO* 37) < Jesus Christ; *bete ra hama* (*MO* 36) < Bethlehem; *Muvangeri* (*MO* 54) < Evangelist; *Maneri* (*MO* 54) < Minister; *Wisili* (*MO* 116) < Wesleyan.

Loan-words are not attested in Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*; this absence is thus an attribute of her Eurolectal form and style.

Especially in *On Trial for My Country*, a novel that focuses on the contact and conflict between the British imperialists and Africans, the following loan-words, used to name those colonialists who play a prominent role in the political disenfranchisement of the Ndebele and the appropriation of their land, allude to the vigorous attempts of Lobengula, the Matebele king, and his followers to bridge the political and socio-cultural distance between the colonized and the colonizer: uJoni (TC 34) < John; the Amangisi (TC 35) < the English; Amaputukezi (TC 35) < the Portuguese; uLodzi (TC 36) < Rhodes; uTomusoni (TC 68) < Thompson; uLadi (TC 68) < Rudd; Helemu (TC 70) < Helm; Reni Tela (TC 72) < Rennie-Taylor; uMondi (TC 74) < Maund; uGavuna (TC 75) < Governor; Jemusoni (TC 81) < Jameson; uSelu (TC 112) < Selous; and Doyili (TC 112) < Doyle. Such loan-words do not occur in the speech repertoires of white characters in the novel, which suggests their attempt to maintain the asymmetrical power relationship and social distance between the colonizer and the colonized.

As in other varieties of English around the world, most differences between Zimbabwean English and British English, with special reference to the so-called BBC English or Received Pronunciation spoken in the British Isles (hereafter, BE), are to be found in the innovations in lexical items and idioms and their meanings. I propose two modes of analysis for lexico-semantic variation in Zimbabwean literature: the primary and secondary degrees of delicacy or analysis. The scale of delicacy, borrowed from systemic-functional linguistics, is concerned with the degree of detail of the analysis. In the latest version of systemic-functional grammar (1985), the scale of delicacy is congruent with the notion of 'metafunctions,' which provides for the analysis of a clause, and even a single lexical item, on several dimensions simultaneously. Michael Halliday speaks of metafunctions as "aspects/kinds of meaning" (*Functional Grammar* 53). For example, although an ethnolexeme such as *senior wife* is classifiable as a

coinage or neologism at the primary degree of delicacy, it exhibits other functions ideologically than the central one it plays by the privilege of its occurrence in the semiotic structure of the text.

In deconstructive terms, the ethnolexeme is 'decentered,' as it splits the text open, exposing the gaps and silences which the lexical item disseminates within the ideological system of the particular society. As Jacques Derrida remarks from a deconstructive point of view, "you lose sight of any line of demarcation between a text and what is outside of it" because texts form endless network of allusions, "a differential network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces" ("Living On" 82, 84). The concept of ethnolexemic metafunction is also congruent with Michel Foucault's argument that texts mean not because of their supposed objective structures, but because they are the result of discursive formations, "which are intricated in the ideological system of a society" (Frow 94). If Foucault's archaeological analytic is a technique meant to "free us from a residual belief in our direct access to objects" and help us overcome the "tyranny of the referent" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 117), his deployment of the term 'discursive formation' has much in common with the degree of delicacy or the metafunctions. Foucault speaks of "the different possibilities that it [discursive formation] opens of reanimating already existing themes, of arousing opposed strategies, of giving way to irreconcilable interests, of making it possible, with a particular set of concepts, to play different games" (*Archaeology* 66). However, whereas Foucault looks at a specific discursive formation in terms of its history and the larger context of power structures in a society, systemic-functional grammar probes the metafunctions of linguistic items only in terms of the options and possible sets of choices open to the user of a language.

Consequently, at the primary degree of delicacy, lexico-semantic variation in Zimbabwean English alludes to the functions of the ethnolexemes as signifiers of cultural difference carried by Zimbabwean and British Englishes. As a symbol of

otherness, an ethnolexeme in the Zimbabwean context thus “affirms the distance of cultures at the very moment in which it proposes to bring them together” (Ashcroft 71). However, at the secondary degree of delicacy, as explained above, the ethnolexemes mark the novels as sites of conflicts and struggles between various ideological systems operating in Zimbabwean society. In other words, the salient question is: How do some of these ethnolexemes foreground the discursive formations of race, class, and gender in these texts?

At the primary degree of delicacy, I have identified the following modes of lexico-semantic variation in Zimbabwean literature: loanshift, lexico-semantic duplication and periphrasis, conversion or functional shift, clipping, ellipsis, translation equivalence, analogical creation, and coinage or neologism.

Loanshift refers to the various ways in which English lexical items have acquired a polyvalence of reference and social meaning in the Zimbabwean sociolinguistic environment. In other words, Zimbabweans transpose English words into a new language of expression to reflect the new cultural, social, and pragmatic contexts in which the language is embedded. For example, the meanings (furnished in parenthesis under each example) of the following italicized words or word groups go beyond the traditional definitions to be found in Western dictionaries, such as *Oxford* or *Webster's*. Since, owing to the facts of colonization and the subsequent linguistic imperialism, British English (BE) is taken as the norm in Zimbabwe, the BE equivalents and glosses, in certain instances, are also furnished following the localized meanings in the Zimbabwean context. The contexts of occurrence of these ethnolexemes are also given.

Mupandi called in a *doctor* who lived at Chiwaridzo's kraal. (MO 8)

(traditional healer or herbalist)

In the tent was a '*stretcher*' as it was called. (MO 38)

(camp-bed)

Mr. Kamuriwa was *a son of the soil* of Chipata. (MO 52)

(a [male] indigene of a locality in Zimbabwe, whereas in BE, the word has the meaning of someone whose father worked on the land and who follows his father's occupation)

Sometimes we went to see Moses' friends in the *location*. (MO 120)

(town or city)

It was not long before the entrepreneurial among us . . . built their little *tuckshops* beside the Council Houses. (NC 3)

(shops that sell staples like bread, tea, sugar, jam, salt, cooking oil, matches, candles, paraffin, and soap. In BE, a tuckshop is "a pastry-cook's shop for the sale of pastry, sweets, fruit, and the like, chiefly to schoolchildren" [OED, Vol. XVIII, p. 651])

The *siren*, that was the bell, wasn't it? (NC 77)

(school bell; it is possible that *bell* in this example is also a loanshift because in this context *bell* means that which signals specific time in a school day rather than designating the instrument creating the sound)

Babamunini took over the living-room and all the unmarried women, including Lucia, slept in the *kitchen*. (NC 132)

(In the Zimbabwean context, the house is constructed in such a way that the kitchen can double as a bedroom)

'Mkwasha, we came from far away, by bus.'

'In the *reserves*?' (HT 29)

(designated dwelling areas for blacks)

THE BOYS IN THE BUSH ARE OUR BROTHERS. (HT 106)

(freedom fighters)

'How many *sweet potatoes* have you laid, comrade?' (HT 115).

(land mines)

'Spray!' shouted Baas Die. *'Move Back!'* (HT 244).

(chemical reagent used in warfare)

Furthermore, in consonance with the African worldview of the extended family system, the following kinship terms have undergone the process of semantic widening:

'May I enter, my father?' (TC 4).

'Mother, where are you going?' Mukuwasha asked (MO 64).

In most contemporary Western contexts, kinship terms such as *father* and *mother* refer to nuclear as opposed to extended family. However, in the Zimbabwean situation, we have to consider the wider social meaning attached to such kinship terms.

Consequently, in the first example, the narrator addresses the old man he meets at the cave as 'my father' despite the fact that the old man, a complete stranger, is not his biological or legal father; in the next example, following the same cultural logic, Mukuwasha addresses the old woman he meets on the train as 'mother'. These modes of address connote respect and solidarity in Zimbabwe, and indeed most Black African contexts.

Lexico-semantic duplication and periphrasis refer to the duplication of lexical items either having identity of reference or belonging to the same semantic field, or the use of a superfluous modifier for emphasis. Periphrasis underscores the doric style which, according to Michael Halliday, represents natural language "in its commonsense, everyday, spontaneous spoken form" as it functions "way below the usual level of consciousness" ("Language and the Order of Nature" 142, 143). In this respect, the doric style is concerned with how Zimbabwean writers are able to capture in English the idiom, the 'hidden' grammars, and the ordinary spoken language -- in their everyday, commonsense contexts -- so typical of African peoples. For example, in *On Trial for My Country*, when Lobengula tells his followers that "I wanted them [the indunas] to be my mouth, eyes and ears and ascertain that there was such a person as the white Queen" (74), he simply means that he wanted the Indunas to be his

representatives or emissaries to the Queen. In fact, Lobengula's language recalls Ezeulu's admonition in *Arrow of God* by the Nigerian writer, Chinua Achebe: "I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eyes there" (45-6). In the Nigerian and Zimbabwean contexts of usage, there is a resistance to moving into abstractions through the use of words such as *representatives* or *emissaries*; thus Samkange's modes of linguistic representation -- *mouth, eyes, and ears* -- remain grounded in the body.

Other examples of periphrasis or doric style in the texts include the following where the English 'grammaticalized' approximations are given in parentheses:

The big induna uGavuna Robinson *was refusing to give us the road to cross the sea and go to England.* (TC 75)

(was refusing to grant us right of passage)

Nobody will come to claim the body from *the house where they keep corpses so that they do not grow worms.* (B124)

(mortuaries)

The people with uniforms will talk in their *small houses where they are kept so that they do not harm others.* (B125)

(prison cells)

Think of it, my own mother comes to see me in *the house where people with bad heads are kept.* (B 127)

(asylum)

'Takesure, *have you ever seen me riding a hyena's back?*' (NC 144)

('Am I a witch?')

This [dowry] paid, they then inquired if "*our daughter is still herself or has been wounded and is limping on one leg*". (HT 47)

(. . .if she is still a virgin)

The only example of lexico-semantic duplication attested in the data epitomizes the incursion of Western technology into Zimbabwe. This example is notably embedded in the basilectal and probably highly idiosyncratic written Zimbabwean English of the semi-literate Clupas Tichafa.

'I hereby sent you a *camera fopicture*'. (HT 39)

(photograph or picture)

In conversion, Zimbabwean writers subvert the dominant code by the deliberate transfer of a word from one part of speech to another without any change in its form. By circumventing the English code, these writers are able to economize their expressions and condense information. The following examples allude to the Westernization of Zimbabwe:

Refreshed, *talcum-powdered* and *Ponds Vanishing-Creamed*, she would breeze out in a billowing cotton-dress. (HT 51)

(. . . rubbing her face with talcum powder and her body with Ponds Vanishing Cream; the economy of expression here derives from the functional shift of objects to material processes or action verbs)³

In the following example, the conversion involves a shift from an adjective to a substantive referring to a shift from communalism to individualism in the Western tradition:

In the yard, unmarried uncles, cousins, and aunts began on the drums and hosho in a circle, dancing and singing while individuals *freestyled* in the centre. (NC 42)

The term 'clipping' denotes the subtraction of one or more syllables from a word, which is also available in its full form. The subtraction may occur at (1) the beginning of the word: *phone* - *telephone*, (2) the end of the word (more commonly): *photo* - *photograph*, (3) at both ends of the word (rare): *flu* - *influenza*. The clipped form is normally felt to be informal (Quirk *et al.* *Contemporary English* 1030). In the

following examples which attest to the incursion of colonial goods and values into Zimbabwe, the clippings occur at the end and beginning of the words respectively.

What dirt that could be removed from the *lino* was removed regularly through scrubbing. (NC 67)

(linoleum; *lino* is attested in acrolectal English)

'*Spekshen!*' a gruff voice barked. (HT 55)

(Inspection; this usage may have been created on analogy with '*tenshun*' 'attention,' a clipped form of command commonly heard in movies and TV shows about the military)

In general terms, ellipsis is "a process of linguistic cohesion that reduces output by omitting material that the speaker assumes the hearer can understand from the linguistic or interactional context" (Bonvillain 393). However, with specific reference to the African context, ellipsis sometimes involves the deletion of the obligatory headword in the nominal group structure, while the modifiers are retained to become the focus of the sentence. In the following example, the deleted element is indicated in parentheses:

'I hear she is keeping it up there in the *secondary*'. (NC 100)

(i.e. secondary school)

Translation equivalence is similar to the process of relexification as defined by certain linguists. Owing to the sociolinguistic consequences of the contact and convergence between the English language and Zimbabwean languages and cultures, Zimbabwean creative writers often relexify their mother tongues, "using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms" (Todd 298). Relexification thus epitomizes what ethnolinguists have referred to as the affective associations in language use. Such affective associations with one's native language are common. Bilingual and bicultural speakers often feel more emotionally attuned to their mother tongues and are more apt to express feelings through them. Generally speaking, loan translations

and calques are aspects of relexification. Chantal Zabus remarks that “As a method, relexification stems from a need to solve an immediate artistic problem: that of rendering African concepts, thought-patterns and linguistic features in the European language. As a strategy *in potentia*, relexification seeks to affirm the hidden or repressed original behind what is construed as the original language text” (“Under the Palimpsest” 106).

As important aspects of translation equivalence, modes of temporal reference are ethnolinguistic forms that contribute to the construction of a Zimbabwean cultural identity. Time in African languages cannot be dissociated from action considered in its dynamics. For example, Genevieve Calame-Griaule indicates that the preoccupation with envisaging time in its duration is a basic one in traditional societies. She further points out that

[the] cyclic concept of time is based on observation of the cosmic rhythm on the one hand (cycle of the stars, the seasons and vegetation) and the rhythm of human life on the other hand (birth, life, death, and the renewing of generations). Man [sic] remains the privileged reference system. . . . This ‘humanised’ aspect of the concept of time in Africa is also found on the level of emphasis duration. (158-159)

In the following examples from Samkange’s novels, time reference has connotations related to cyclic concept or cosmic rhythms:

No one knew the ways of witches and wizards better than you who ate and slept with them for *many moons* in the Matopo Hill. (TC 12)

It was only *one moon* after this visit of the Boers that uJoni . . . visited me. (TC 34)

In the foregoing examples, ‘moon’ connotes one lunar month in Western contexts.

Furthermore, since words and expressions often presuppose underlying cultural values, the following highlighted examples are calques or direct translations from the Shona language, which follows the BE glosses and equivalents.⁴

uLodzi was *a big man* in the Cape. (TC 68)

(a very important person: *munhu mukuru*)

I called on this gentleman at his village in Chipata, addressing him, in accordance with tribal custom, as '*small father*.' (MO 1)

(uncle: *Babamudiki*)

He welcomed me, as we say in Shona, *with both hands*. (MO 1)

(warmly: *andi tambira*)

My father's elder brothers I called '*big fathers*.' (MO 10)

(uncles: *Babamukuru*)

... there was already speculation as to who had caused the death of my ... '*small mothers*'. (MO 20)

(aunts: *Mainini*)

The ceremonies and dances of '*beating*' the grave were held. (MO 21)

(one year anniversary of a person's death: *kurova suva*)

... it [the train] '*drank water*' at Makwiro. (MO 63)

(refuelled: *kunwa bvura*)

They conducted boxing tournaments of their own, fighting with ... '*dry hands*.' (MO 122)

(bare fists as opposed to boxing gloves: *kuwoma maoko*)

... we went to the *beer drink*. (MO 127)

(drinking spree: *kunwa hwahwa*)

'*Son of my mother* ... I am positive he is a private eye'. (MO 129)

(mode of address, connoting affection and solidarity, used by friends and acquaintances: *mwa wamai vangu*)

'He thinks that because he *has chewed more letters* than I have, he can take over my children'. (NC 24)

(is more highly educated: *aka dzidza*)

My aunt Gladys . . . is my father's *womb-sister*. (NC 35)

(born of the same parents: *wemu nhumbu*; the calque comes from a polygamous context so that the need arises to distinguish between siblings who share the same mother and those who share only a father)

. . . *she walks in the night*. (NC 143)

(she is a witch: *anofamba huziku*)

'She needs to *climb buses*.' (HT 31)

(to take buses: *kukwirai bazi*)

But always, with amazing timeliness, the *washing out* came. (HT 61)

(menstruation: *kushamba*)

. . . these children had seen their *children's children*. (HT 153)

(grandchildren: *vana vemwana wangu*)

Translation equivalence is also underscored through the use of native figures of speech and proverbs. At the primary degree of delicacy, it is through the use of these devices that Zimbabwean writers are able to evoke the cultural milieu in which the action takes place. Examples of such figures of speech include:

. . . Matebele fell down like bags of mealies (TC 140).

That night, news that a learned man who had passed standard three and was reading standard four was at the school swept through the village like a wind in the month of August. (MO 56)

Compare the foregoing example to the following, which is also derived from the same figurative language relating to the weather:

Babamukuru drove like an August wind. (NC 201)

Other examples include:

My father jumped out of Babamukuru's car . . . brandishing a staff like a victory spear. (*NC* 36)

Chemhere . . . black as a three-legged pot. (*HT* 100)

The wide forehead beams over a piercing pair of round brown eyes, a side squashed nose and impressive teeth reminiscent of ears of R200 seed maize. (*HT* 168)

Hove's *Bones* bristles with figurative language and Flora Veit-Wild is right when she points out that "Hove's internationally acclaimed 'Africanized' English is a fairly literal translation of Shona sentence structure, proverbs, terminology, and imagery. All voices share this idiom" ("Dances with Bones" 7). For example, in the following example, Chisaga uses a series of metaphors or an imagery cluster to bemoan his predicament:

But Marita did not know that words must be filled with trust. She has roasted me like a sweet potato so that I can see the power of her breast. Now I am like a feather that flies to nowhere. I am the hornbill whose journey was disturbed by the wind. I am like the hornbill whose feathers make it look like a lot of meat. (*B* 103)

However, in contrast to context-sensitive figurative language cited above, one of the hallmarks of Marechera's language and style is the use of similes and metaphors that indicate intertextuality. In other words, rather than being drawn from the Zimbabwean semiotic universe, Marechera employs similes and metaphors to emphasize the interrelatedness of his texts and European texts. Examples of allusive metaphors in Marechera's text include the following:

Harry drew himself up like Achilles sizing up Troy. (*HH* 15)

All my life I've been in the kraal slaughtering cattle like Ajax. (*HH* 15)

Poking his head into a Pandora's box. Deserved what he got. Like a baboon poking his head into Pandora's box. (*HH* 42)

Philip came in. His hands looked like Macbeth's after the murder of
Duncan. (*HH* 55)

Marechera's resort to such allusions, among other things, has led Dan Wylie to chastise him for paying "almost no homage to his native orature" (49), and Musaemura Zimunya to conclude that Marechera has prostituted himself to the West and, therefore, could hardly be thought of as an African writer since

the vision is preponderantly private and indulgent. The social and moral undertaking is cynically dismissed at the expense of the aesthetic motive. The artist curries favours and succumbs to the European temptation in a most slatternly exhibition. (126)

Other critics see Marechera's style as a counter-discursive strategy. In this regard, Veit-Wild asserts that his "extensive knowledge of world literature supplies Marechera with an arsenal of allusions and parody with which to 'write back,' to launch a canonical counter-discourse against the literary models, norms and values of his colonial education" (*Teachers* 260). In other words, if Marechera, according to Pêcheux's formulation, disidentifies with colonial discourse by choosing Eurocentric tropes that transform and displace the dominant ideology in hegemonic discourse, Hove counter-identifies with colonial discourse by employing figures which reterritorialize the English language in his Shona culture.

Zimbabwean writers also transcreate proverbs from their native languages. The culture-embeddedness of such linguistic items is well-recognized and, as Achebe says, they are "the palm-oil with which words are eaten" ("Foreword" viii). With particular reference to Achebe's use of proverbs in his novels, Bernth Lindfors argues that African writers make use of proverbs to provide a "grammar of values" by which the deeds of their protagonists can be measured; to serve as thematic statements reminding us of some of the motifs in the literary works, for example, the importance of status, the value of achievement, and the idea of man [sic] as a shaper of his [sic] destiny; to

add touches of local colour; to sound and reiterate themes; and finally, to comment on or to warn against foolish and unworthy actions (47, 65).

For example, in *On Trial for My Country*, Lobengula uses the following proverb to comment on the imminent conflict between himself and the colonizers:

'I told them that just as no two bulls can live in one kraal no two kings can rule in one country; and there would be no peace if whitemen were brought to live in the country with blackmen. (12)

Likewise, in *Harvest of Thorns*, Sungu Dzangu and Baas Die, both freedom fighters, use proverbs to warn their followers of foolish and rash actions:

'But one bit of fungus can poison a whole load of mushrooms'. (*HT* 200)

'Suicide never won a war'. (*HT* 225)

In *Bones*, proverbs are used to sharpen characterization, reiterate themes, and clarify issues. For example, Chisaga, Manyepo's (the white boss's) cook, uses a series of proverbs to lament his powerlessness against colonial domination:

A closed mouth is a cave in which to hide. (36)

A king's son is a nobody in other lands. (37)

Do they not say that those who have done bad things of regret do not die early? (42)

When you climb a tree you must not then tell it that its branches are bad when you are up there. (43)

Analogical creation is "the formation of new words on the basis of partial likeness or agreement in form or in sense with already existing words" (Adegbija 172). Word formation processes in English such as affixation and compounding are very productive analogy models in African English. The following are some examples from the novels:

From the facial expressions of many *Hararians*, we could tell that our singing was having the desired effect. (MO 93)

(residents of Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe)

That's where I used to water the cattle as a *herdboy*. (NC 122)

(cowherd; shepherd; cf. *herdsman* in BE and *cowboy* in North American English)

This information . . . was often spread far and wide by *gossipers*. (MO 10)

(gossips)

Anna was Maiguru's *housegirl*. (NC 60)

(housekeeper)

Her hair was short without a *head-tie*. (HT 193)

(BE = woman's headdress or headgear: "the analogy must have resulted from the fact that this kind of costume involves 'tying' a cloth around the head" [Bamiro "Lexico-semantic Variation" 56])

The *houseboy* has confessed to the crime. (GS 10)

(BE = male housekeeper)

She was standing in the kitchen, the *cookboy* just behind her. (GS 120)

(BE = cock)

She told him to fetch the *headboy*. (GS 135)

(BE = overseer)

But the houseboy would enter and say there were *farm boys* waiting to see him. (GS 171)

(agricultural workers)

Research in the ethnography of communication has indicated that language is not a mere functional tool but is always invested with the force of communal life. Consequently, Zimbabwean creative writers and users of English often invent or coin

new words or word groups to achieve a correspondence with a concrete universe of experience; English forms and norms are thus adapted to suit new realities, social norms and ecological needs, or are subjected to “the socio-cultural logic and imperatives” of the Zimbabwean geolinguistic environment (Bamiro “Nigerian Englishes” 14). In the following examples, coinages or neologisms accommodate English words to a Zimbabwean cultural reality:

Teachers and ministers occupied brick houses, while evangelists used ordinary ‘*pole-and-dagga*’ constructions. (MO 29)

(a round hut made of poles with a high thatched roof)

In ‘*bush*’ schools, the ‘standards’ varied from mission to mission. (MO 45)

(schools in rural areas)

I am the one who will give him cattle for the *bride-wealth* to bring home his fifth wife. (B 7)

(what the prospective husband has to furnish as evidence of his ability to provide for his wife)

The *bossboy* beside her called out the names. (GS 138)

(chief servant)

... it became fashionable among the women of Chipata to wear ‘*mini-blouses*.’ (MO 59)

(short blouses barely covering the breasts; this word might also have been coined in analogy with ‘mini-skirt’)

...she heard him shouting at Samson in *kitchen kaffir*. (GS 72)

(an interlanguage or pidgin that facilitates communication between blacks and whites)

Mahohoma was hearing a case concerning ‘*Teachers’ Disease*.’ (MO 107)

(the habit of male teachers impregnating their female pupils)

This latter he did diligently in *Sub A* and *Sub B*. (NC 15)

(first and second years of kindergarten respectively)

. . . my grandfather could not claim a very high *bride price* for his daughters. (NC 125)

(analogous to bride-wealth but named from a different perspective, bride price is what the prospective bride's family or male relatives claim)

. . . as the *senior wife*, she was expected to oversee all the culinary operations. (NC 135)

(eldest wife in a polygamous marriage or an assembly of wives in an extended family system)

I wandered towards the *beerhall*. (HH 1)

(a pub or bar that sells locally brewed beer made from fermented grain; it is legal to drink here)

I . . . stopped at the *bottle-store*. (HH 1)

(a store that sells hard drinks through a window; one can drink there although it is illegal)

. . . she was living with her elder sister married to a *dip-attendant*. (HT 27)

(a person who attends to the disinfecting of cattle)

. . . she strapped the *carrying cloth* on her back. (HT 27)

(a cloth used for strapping babies on the mothers' back)

. . . a lean boy with a clean face . . . farting into his '*don't touch*' trousers. (HT 100)

(overly starched and ironed trousers)

He wished he could have a piece of *chewing stick*. (HT 124)

“a piece of dried or fresh twig chewed at one end into a soft brush and used for cleaning the teeth” [Sey 78])

... you tried to make yourself comfortable on a *grass mattress*. (*HT* 129-130)

(a kind of mattress “stuffed with pads of grass to serve as foam rubber” [Bamiro “Lexico-semantic Variation” 57])

‘I had forgotten you *born-locations* are afraid of cows.’ (*HT* 186)

(Zimbabweans born in the city; it is an abusive term implying that such people have lost their traditional values)

... his son crunched in with three litre-packs of ‘*shake-shake*’ beer. (*HT* 263)

(a locally brewed beer sold in plastic containers; the name derives from the act of shaking the beer to mix the sediments at the bottom of the container with the liquid contents)

My own wife has been telling you these things for a long time, but you dared call her a *wide-mouth*. (*B* 21)

(a talkative and gossipy woman)

As I indicated earlier on, at the secondary degree of delicacy, some of the above-mentioned ethnolexemes reflect, articulate, and reinforce certain colonial, counter-colonial, and other heteroglossic social discourses arising from dialectics of race, class, and gender in the Zimbabwean context. I will touch on some of these issues here and then will later discuss how metaphors and proverbs replicate colonial/counter-colonial, and patriarchal/counter-patriarchal discourses in the novels.

The ethnolexemes *bride-wealth*, *bride price*, and *senior wife* are, for example, constitutive elements of patriarchal discourses which define the female characters in relational terms as male property. In *The Mourned One*, the term *Teachers’ Disease* is a euphemism which shrouds the sexual abuse of female pupils by male teachers in

mystery. It also suggests that the teacher is suffering from something that has attacked him rather than naming the violation of the fiduciary relationship between teacher and student as a gross moral failure on the teacher's part. By referring to freedom fighters as *THE BOYS* in *Harvest of Thorns*, Chinodya conveys the impression that women did not play a prominent role in the Zimbabwean war of liberation: this is an insidious linguistic strategy of effacing women's contributions. The association of *wide-mouth* with a female character in *Bones* (121) suggests that women are not only talkative but nosy and gossipy. Of course, this association is meant to perpetuate the myth that women talk more than men and, consequently, an attempt to confine women to powerless positions and the domestic sphere. The implication is that women cannot be trusted to keep matters confidential and they waste words. However, as indicated by Deborah James and Janice Drakich, "the investigation of gender differences in amount of talk has not supported this widely held stereotype: the bulk of research findings indicate that men talk more than women" (281).

Especially in *The Grass is Singing*, such coinages as *houseboy*, *cookboy*, *headboy*, *bossboy* and *farmboys* exemplify what Abdul JanMohammed identifies as the "colonialist's need to perpetuate racial differences" ("Manichean Allegory" 88). In contrast to the "symbolic" text which attempts to establish a rapprochement with the native Other, the examples above allude to an "imaginary" colonialist text which precludes "the possibility of syncretism, or a rapprochement between self and Other" (JanMohammed "Manichean Allegory" 92). Consequently, in JanMohammed's manichean allegory of white and black, good and evil, salvation and damnation, civilization and savagery, superiority and inferiority, intelligence and emotion, self and other, subject and object (*Manichean Aesthetics* 4), these ethnolexemes disseminate the negative values implied in these binarisms. The implication is that Blacks never achieve adult status and therefore never attain the conditions necessary for self-governance.

Lexical items denoting dwelling and learning places, such as *reserves*, *locations*, *pole-and-dagga constructions*, *kitchen*, and *bush schools*, signify social stratification in terms of race/class hierarchy in the Zimbabwean society. These ethnolexemes mark the social and political distance between colonialists (such as Charlie Slatter in *The Grass is Singing* and Manyepo in *Bones*) and members of the African national bourgeoisie (represented by Babamukuru in *Nervous Conditions*) on the one hand, and the masses of the African population, on the other. While the masses live on *reserves* and in *kitchens*, *locations* and *pole-and-dagga huts*, and whereas their children attend *bush schools*, colonialists and African ruling classes live in mansions. For example, the narrator of *Nervous Conditions* says that such descriptions as “‘palace’ and ‘mansion’ and ‘castle’” (62) are not enough to capture the grandeur of Babamukuru’s house, or “the mansion standing at the top of the drive marked ‘14, HEADMASTER’S HOUSE’” (62, original emphasis). Since members of the African bourgeoisie were partly formed and to some degree produced by colonial power, they fit the description Benedict Anderson offers of the colonial bourgeois:

the colonial empire, with its rapidly expanding bureaucratic apparatus and its ‘Russifying’ policies, permitted sizable numbers of bourgeois and petty bourgeois to play aristocratic off centre court: that is, anywhere in the empire except at home. In each colony one found this grimly amusing *tableau vivant*: the bourgeois gentilhomme speaking poetry against a backcloth of spacious mansions and gardens filled with mimosa and bougainvillea, and a large supporting cast of houseboys, grooms, gardeners, cooks, amalis, maids, washerwomen and, above all, horses. (137)

Even ethnolexemes like *beerhall* and *bottle-store* have symbolic value in the discursive formation of a novel like *The House of Hunger*, a text that depicts mindless violence, filth, madness, and moral decay in the then-Rhodesia. In an attempt to come

to terms with the moral and social malaise pervading his own psyche and that of his society, the nameless narrator often attempts, albeit unsuccessfully, to drink himself into a stupor. In this instance, frequenting the beerhall and bottlestore becomes for him a strategy for negotiating his cultural and social identity. As one critic puts it:

The novella's opening sentence, 'I got my things and left,' records the narrator's desire to break free of its [his society's] grip and find elsewhere what life here has denied him. It is a vain hope. He never gets further than the township beerhall where a series of fragmentary flashbacks, snapshots of a nation, a culture and a mind in crisis, grip him in a Beckettian stasis. (Foster 59)

As deployed in the novels, some metaphors and proverbs serve as conduits of colonial and counter-colonial discourses. For example, in *On Trial for My Country*, Lobengula deploys an extended metaphor to describe how the British colonialists made an incursion into his country:

The truth is that whatever I did or said in the matter was immaterial and unimportant. These men were after my country. I was like a fly. Have you ever watched a chameleon catch a fly? It comes slowly and noiselessly, one hesitating step at a time until it is very close, then it flickers its tongue out and the fly is gone. These men were like the chameleon taking one step at a time towards me and my country. One dart of the tongue and my country and I would be gone. (82)

Similar to the discursive formations associated with such ethnolexemes as *bush schools*, *reserves*, and *pole-and-dagga constructions*, the following metaphors in *Harvest of Thorns* exemplify the socio-economic gulf that divides the neo/colonialists and the masses of the population:

Dawn was a purple glow hovering over the *matchbox houses* of the township. (HT 87)

Below him he could see shimmering township houses laid out *like thousands of cardboard boxes* in the valley, and the plush white suburbs on the hill slopes, out of the pall of industrial smoke. (HT 112)

Note that in the last example above, the narrator implicitly compares the houses of the masses, which are like 'cardboard boxes,' to the 'plush' white suburbs of the imperial overlords and their Zimbabwean sycophants.

Similar to certain ethnolexemes like *houseboy*, *cookboy*, *headboy*, and *bossboy*, which form a chain of lexico-semantic synonymy in *The Grass is Singing*, certain metaphors are used in the same novel to pejorate the black Other. A sampling of these metaphors follows:

He [the native] followed her [Mary Turner] like a scared dog. (GS 81)

He [the black houseboy] had had years of experience working for a white woman who treated him as if he were a machine. (GS 82)

Did he [Dick Turner] expect her [Mary Turner] to go about in rags like a kaffir. (GS 113)

Their babies hanging on to them [the black mothers] like leeches,' she [Mary Turner] said to herself. (GS 116)

The children hung to their mothers' backs (like monkeys, Mary thought). (GS 117)

A white person may look at a native, who is no better than a dog. (GS 176)

. . . the native moved about the table through the meal like an automaton. (GS 180)

As always, he [Moses] behaved as if he were an abstraction, not really there, a machine without a soul. (GS 188)

In the economy of the colonizers' manichean allegory, some of the vehicles in the examples above foreground Africans as animals, while others approximate Aimé Césaire's equation that "Colonization = thingification" (21).

Although these metaphors rarely function in a counter-colonially discursive way in the texts, the following examples are used to lampoon the physicality of white men and their African functionaries:

One of them, a white one -- he whom they call 'Nyamambishi,' raw meat, because he is tough and rough. (*MO* 2)

A truck full of men in colourless uniforms comes to a stop near the door of the house where they keep corpses so that worms do not grow inside them. A truck with clean-shaven men whose heads are as round as beans. (*B* 92)

The policemen were dismissed. Their sergeant was a cocky six-footer, lean and hungry, and sly like a chameleon stalking a fly. (*HH* 2)

In the novels, proverbs are generally used in counter-colonially discursive way in espousing or interrogating the novels' hierarchization of gender. For example, in *On Trial for My Country*, one of the king's followers uses the following proverb to allude to the treachery of John Moffat, Cecil Rhodes' emissary in Matebeleland:

'This is how he thanked you for treating him like a prince of the blood royal. Teach a dog to eat milk and the next day he will bite you.' (*TC* 37)

As I have already indicated in my discussion of nativization strategies in Zimbabwean literature, social and cultural meanings are often encoded through the processes of metaphors and proverbs. However, in this section, I want to look at some examples of metaphors and proverbs which "demean and degrade women and which seem to portray woman as a negative Other to a male norm" (Mills *Feminist Stylistics* 128-129). About the social formation of metaphors, Nancy Henley and Chervis

Kramarae argue that “Structural male dominance favors the growth of faulty linguistic systems, including dominant metaphors, which express primarily male experience and further add to making women a muted group” (401).

For example, in *The Mourned One*, the narrator employs celestial and animal imagery to paint a picture of the African girl as archetypally soft:

Add to all this a nice, pretty, plump African girl, with *the voice of an angel, the coyness of a gazelle and the gentleness of a dove*, and you will have an idea of what it was like, for me, along that road to Mariga.
(104, my emphasis)

The animal images suggest the reverse of brutishness, which is often the implication of animal images in colonial discourse. However, armed with this patriarchal image of African girls as compliant and submissive, the narrator relates that “It seemed to be accepted by both boys and girls that any young man could fondle the breasts of any girl (to whom he was not related) if he could catch her off her guard. Other boys literally twisted girls’ arms and compelled them to be walking mates” (*MO* 103). This passage is indicative of sexual harassment of girls: the unwarranted touching of the female body suggests the men of whom Samkange is writing think that they properly have unlimited access to female sexuality.

In *The Grass is Singing*, apart from the fact that Mary Turner is pejorated when the term ‘girl’ (45) is used to refer to her, the following metaphors confirm that even at the age of thirty, she is a character who is not willing to grow up:

And she still wore her hair *little-girl fashion* on her shoulders, and wore *little-girl frocks* in pastel colours, and kept her shy, naive manner.
(GS 45-46, my emphasis)

She sewed all morning, till lunch-time, sewed after lunch, and went to bed immediately after supper, *sleeping like a child all night*. (GS 73, my emphasis)

Although saying that someone sleeps like a child is not in most circumstances a negative observation, the last figure of speech further connects to and underscores other infantilizing descriptions of Mary. As the omniscient narrator informs the reader, Mary behaves like a child because “her life was entirely dependent upon men” (GS 45).

In other contexts, dominant metaphors cannibalize women as sex objects meant to satisfy the wanton male gaze. In a half-literate letter that forms part of his wooing strategy of Shamiso, Clopas Tichafa objectifies the former through his choice of similes: “Your skin is like the mupichisi frute. Your eyes like black diamonds. Your lips is maroro chairo” (HT 37). In the same novel, woman’s body is used to highlight and conceptualize an animal, thus trivializing and objectifying femaleness: “The cow backed off angrily, its empty udder swishing from side to side like an old woman’s breasts” (HT 187).

In *Bones*, the potency of words becomes an extension of male dominance and corresponding female powerlessness: “Words must be like that, erect like the thing of a little boy on waking up, promising the girls that when I grow up, certain things will happen which are being made now” (40). And in *The House of Hunger*, the narrator relates how Harry, the chauvinistic detective, uses a derogatory metaphor to describe the former’s female friend, Patricia: “‘He said she looked like the back of a bus and he wanted to know how on earth I mounted it’” (47).

Similar to such words as ‘honey,’ ‘sweetie,’ ‘sweetheart,’ and ‘sugar,’ there are dominant metaphors which imply that women are something “good to eat, available for consumption” (Mills *Feminist Stylistics* 117). For example, in *Bones*, metaphoric usage in love letters written by boys to girls commodifies women: “I love you, you are my margarine, my butter, my peanut butter for my heart” (1). Likewise, in *The House of Hunger*, Harry describes her white girlfriend both as a baby bird and as a consumable commodity: “My white chick is full of sugar. She is a full-blooded wine with a touch of divinity, that’s what she is, my chick” (12). However, women

sometimes resist this kind of pejorative signification. For instance, in *Bones*, Janifa, asserting her female pride, tells Marita that men marrying her “is not like plucking mangoes from Manyepo’s big field of fruits” (132).

Like dominant metaphors, certain proverbs in Zimbabwean literature seek to perpetuate female subservience and subjugation. Sara Mills points out that there are phrases which are preconstructed:

This is the case with proverbs which have sexist messages underlying them. Proverbs and set phrases are curious elements because they are posed as commonsense knowledge which is uncontestable. . . . When it [the proverb] is used, it is very difficult to counter, because it is presented in a form which is not personal: the person using the phrase does not claim responsibility for inventing it, but is simply calling upon pre-existing knowledge, which it is to be assumed is self-evidently true. (*Feminist Stylistics* 129)

She gives the example of ‘Behind every successful man is a woman’ which can be used to patronize women and to naturalize the role of the male’s helper as the nearest that women can get to holding power or achieving success themselves (*Feminist Stylistics* 129).

In *Bones*, during a conversation with Marita, Murume, her husband, employs a series of phallogentric proverbs to define and legitimize Marita’s secondary status in the society. However, in the following passage, the first and last examples are not in themselves patriarchal but are deployed in a patriarchal fashion:

Woman, since when have you become a man? . . . Do you think all these people who shut their mouths in front of Manyepo are mere shadows of their fathers’ children? . . . You must learn to shut your mouth if you still want to continue filling your belly with Manyepo’s beans, that’s all. Have your parents not told you that *you must not*

quarrel with the midwife if you still want to bear more children? . . .
Marita, you are a married woman, *the sins of a married woman also smear on to her husband. . . . A man with a beard must control his wife. . . .* Not let her run around wild like a rabid dog. If you are determined to continue with this madness, you will see why *the dog cannot laugh while it can show you its teeth*. I tell you this because you are still my wife. (19, my emphasis)

The following proverbs in the same novel are also meant to naturalize the inferior status of women in the gender hierarchy:

A woman giving away her pots and spoons is giving away her womanhood, my aunt used to say. (29)

They say if you can see the cleanliness of the pot from the colour of the dregs, then you know how clean your friend's wife is. (98)

A good mouth knows its own food child. When a man chooses you to be his wife, he thinks you will know the food of his mouth. (107)

. . . they say every woman thinks her husband is the bringer of rain to the village. (66)

These proverbs set up a number of presuppositions and inferences. For instance, the first three examples presuppose that the main duty of women is taking care of, and ministering to the domestic needs of men; in other words, the place of the woman is in the kitchen. The last example confirms the superior status of men on the gendered scale of valuations: for example, it is not possible that the proposition embedded in this example can be reversed to read, "every man thinks his wife is the bringer of rain to the village."

The tenor of proverbs in African societies derives from the reality that the performers of proverbs are not really expressing their personal views but are rather acting as spokespersons for, and intermediaries of, the elders, the ancestors, and the

society at large. The absence of self-reference words, for example, first-person pronouns, and modalized utterances such as 'I think' and 'In my opinion' attests to the depersonalization of the performers' utterances, whereas the compelling presence of such locutions as 'your parents told you,' 'they say,' and 'my aunt used to say,' as in the foregoing examples, locates the performance within the general context of antecedental and ancestral usage. Such locutions give proverbs a distinctive stamp of authority which makes it inappropriate, if not virtually impossible, for anyone in the society to challenge the authority implied in proverbs.

Although in terms of their counter-discursive strategy the foregoing Zimbabwean English expressions challenge the territoriality of BE and thus polarize African and colonial discourses, direct lexical transfers or borrowings from the mother tongues of the writers perform the same function. Lexical transfers or borrowing form part of the phenomenon known as code-mixing which refers to a linguistic process that incorporates linguistic features from a second language (Shona, Sindebele, Afrikaans) into a base language (English). Since code-mixing implies the transfer of untranslated words into a text as a counter-discursive strategy of 'Otherness,' code-mixing is a device that directly confronts and challenges the territoriality of a dominant discourse in the context of a multilingual and multicultural setting. According to William Ashcroft,

the insertion of unglossed foreign language in the text . . . is a direct confrontation with the requirement of meanability. Signifiers of alterity are not necessarily inaccessible; rather they explicitly establish a distance between the writer and reader functions in the text as a cultural gap. The gap of silence reaffirms the parameters of meanability as cultural parameters and the language use offers its own hybridity as the sign of an absence which cannot be simply traversed by an interpretation.

("Constitutive Graphonomy" 72)

Indigenous words incorporated into the texts are either single lexical items, e.g., ‘dagga’ (*HH* 3), or loan-blends, e.g., ‘mupani leaves’ (*B* 100); the latter category refers to a lexical transfer that collocates with or clarifies an existing English word. These lexical borrowings from the indigenous languages signify culturally bound objects and systems of belief that have no direct translation equivalence in English. They thus set up hermeneutic tension between the post-colonial and pre-colonial representations in the texts. If the texts are post-colonial in the sense that they set up disidentificatory and oppositional dialectics to colonial discourse, these culturally salient words attest to the pre-colonial status of certain ideas and objects in the novels.

Part of the pragmatics of lexical incorporation in Zimbabwean literature inheres in the fact that the writers need to give prominence to culturally bound objects and domains of experience related to foods and drinks, flora and fauna, clothing items, places, social and political activities, naming practices, utensils/implements, traditional beliefs and customs, occupations, chants, exclamations and traditional sayings, and modes of address. Some examples of each domain are furnished as follows:

Foods and Drinks: *sadza* ‘thick porridge’ (*HH* 36); *mhandire* ‘fried mealies’ (*MO* 57); *mahewu* ‘a non-alcoholic drink’ (*NC* 41); *bumhe* ‘sweet beer’ (*MO* 42); *chikondamoyo* ‘a local cake’ (*HT* 34).

Flora and Fauna: The following passage vividly captures some of the flora of the Zimbabwean environment: “Wild animals . . . frolicked in the elephant grass . . . among its . . . forests of gum, pine, *musasa*, *munondo*, and *mipfuti* trees. I was to know . . . where most of the tasteful *matamba*, *mazhinyu*, *matupfu*, *matowhe*, and *makuyu* could be found and *tsambatsi*, *hute*, *maroro* and *tswandzwa* picked” (*MO* 30, my emphasis). Some of the fauna of Zimbabwe documented in the texts include *Kangamuti* ‘a long black snake’ (*MO* 7); *pfunye* ‘the go-away bird’ (*MO* 8); *whidzikwidzi* ‘black birds’ (*MO* 55); and *kudu* ‘a large antelope with curled horns’ (*B* 84).

Clothing Items: *khaki* (HH 1; NC 9), “a kind of cloth fashioned on the khaki-coloured uniform worn by British soldiers during the second Anglo-Boer War” [*Dictionary of South African English* 153]; *doek* ‘head-tie’ (HT 31; GS 76).

Places: *kopje* ‘a hillock’ (B 96); *kraal* (TC 11; HH 15), “an enclosure for farm animals; a village or settlement of an indigenous tribe; a cluster of huts occupied by one family or ‘clan’” [*Dictionary of South African English* 164]; *dare* “a place where the men and boys sat, ate, and talked” (MO 24); *stoep* (HT 6), “a raised platform or verandah in front of or all round a house” [*Dictionary of South African English* 315]; *dorps* ‘country town or village’ (GS 36).

Social and Political Activities: *smanje-manje* ‘a traditional dance’ (HH 23); *amalayita* ‘gangsters’ (MO 122); *nyonganyonga* ‘the troubles in Bulawayo during the reign of Chaminuka’ (MO 128); *hosho* ‘a traditional dance’ (NC 42); *marimba* ‘a traditional music’ (TC 92).

Naming Practices: Especially in *The Mourned One*, the colonized satirize the colonizers by naming them according to physical features and social behaviours, as in the following examples: *Va Chidoma* ‘Mr. Dwarf’ (MO 28); *Mesomana* ‘four eyes,’ because “Reverend John William Stanlake . . . wore spectacles” (MO 29); *Dzito* ‘black,’ because “Mr. Dolly-Bright always wore black boots, a tight-fitting black suit and a cap” (MO 68); *Jongwe* ‘the cock’ because “when, during morning assembly, somebody coughed while he was reading the Bible, Governor Searle would lose his temper and declare, ‘No coughing! . . . I am the cock here’” (MO 71).

Utensils/Implements: The following passage from *The Mourned One* vividly documents some of the devices and instruments used by women in the Shona traditional dwelling place: “Above the fireplace, with one end attached to the centre of the roof, was a rope, *mutariro*, on which hung pieces of meat or cooked mealies still on the cob. . . . On the farthest end opposite the door was an earthen platform, *huva*, a foot or more high. . . . Beside the *huva*, was invariably the water pot, *chirongo*, and its

mukombe or cup, usually with a long handle. Behind the door there were the *guyo* and *hando* grinding stones. . . . My mother's plates were made of wood. She had several other wooden utensils such as the cooking stick, *mugoti*, and a large spoon known as *mugwaku* or *chigwaku*" (96).

Traditional Beliefs and Customs: *kurowora* 'bride wealth' (MO 49); *kuzwarira* 'to bear a child for a man' (MO 49); *ku ponda whu gariri* 'the custom which requires a poor man to live and work at another man's kraal for a number of years in return for a wife' (MO 49); *lobola* 'dowry' (MO 74); *hunhu* 'humanness' or 'personness' (MO 96).

Occupations: *vanhu vesenzasi* 'census officer' (HT 151); *vanhu vemakandiwa* 'agricultural officer' (HT 151); *vanhu vetsetse* 'health officer responsible for killing tsetse flies' (HT 151); *impi* 'an army' (TC vii); *ngangas* 'native doctors' (MO 9); *gosa* 'steward' (MO 116).

Chants: *Kwa Nenguwo! Kwa Nenguwo!*

Ne chnhembe. Ba! Kudubu!

(To Nenguwo! To Nenguwo!

In skin clothes. Hit! Fly open!) (MO 65)

Exclamations and Traditional Sayings: For example, to show strong emotion, women in *Nervous Conditions* generally interlace their conversation with such exclamations as *Yuwi* (18), *kani* (115), and *Aiwa* (125); there are other traditional sayings related to felicitation, e.g., *Makorokoto* 'Congratulations' (NC 156; MO 16), and proverb, e.g., *rine manyanga hari putirwe* 'that which has horns can never be wrapped up and concealed' (MO 48).

Modes of Address:

Like kinship terms, modes of address emphasize social relationships in the Zimbabwean context. Consequently, in any Zimbabwean speech event, modes of address constitute "One of the most sensitive features of language in reflecting speakers' assessment of co-participants" (Bonvillain 89). A mode of address may be

reciprocal or non-reciprocal. A reciprocal mode of address is used among equals while a non-reciprocal mode of address is used to signal asymmetrical social relationships.

For example, because of the communal cohesion in Zimbabwe -- in theory, a person is another person's sister or brother -- which cohesion is an offshoot of the extended family system, there exist reciprocal usages based on age differences. In certain contexts, non-reciprocity of address between women and men is a feature of the Zimbabwean society. For instance, female characters might use deferential speech patterns to their husbands and their husbands' relatives. In *Harvest of Thorns*, for example, Nkazana, Benjamin's betrothed, addresses her husband's younger brother as "Ba'minini Peter" (12), which means 'small father' in the Shona language. In return, Benjamin and Peter often reciprocate by addressing her by her given name. This sort of exchange constitutes a strategy of 'negative politeness.' Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson distinguish strategies of polite behaviour in accordance with the differentiation of face wants: *positive politeness*, oriented to the positive image that the hearer claims, emphasizes solidarity, friendliness, and in-group reciprocity; *negative politeness* emphasizes social distance, status differences, and the speaker's restraint and avoidance of imposing on the hearer (70).

However, outside the marriage or family system, women use a reciprocal formulaic address system to indicate perceived age differences between them and men, thus emphasizing positive politeness. For example, in *Harvest of Thorns*, when Shamiso's sister first meets Clopas Tichafa at the birth registration office and sensing that she is probably older than him, she greets him with the honorific formula, *Mkwasha* 'son-in-law,' while the latter reciprocates with *Ambuya* 'mother-in-law' (29). Nevertheless, it would appear that this kind of patriarchally-induced mode of address encourages Tichafa to initiate the wooing of Shamiso. Similarly, Mai Tawanda, despite the fact that she is under interrogation for treason, knows that she is

older than her interrogator. To assert her dignity and social identity, she addresses Baas Die, the leader of the freedom fighters, as *mwanagu* 'my child' (HT 205).

Same-sex interaction in the novels is sometimes marked by positive politeness. For example, despite the age differences between them, Maiguru often addresses Tambu as *Sisi Tambu* (NC 71-72) 'Sister Tambu.' This reciprocal mode of address is also accompanied by the appropriate non-verbal gesture to emphasize female solidarity and in-group reciprocity. According to the narrator, on one occasion, "she [Maiguru] smiled, advancing to greet me with her right arm bent upwards from the elbow, with her palm facing me and swinging her hand down so that I was forced to slap palm with her by way of greeting, in the way that you do when you greet your age mates or friends" (NC 71-72). In the same way, Anna, Maiguru's housegirl, engages in a reciprocal mode of address with Tambu. According to the narrator: "It was strange the way she had begun to call me 'Sisi,' because she was older than I and so did not need to call me that. . . . After all, Maiguru called me 'Sisi,' affectionately and companionably, so Anna might have picked it up from her" (NC 85).

Having exemplified the categories of code-mixing in the texts, it is pertinent to ask the question: What is the function of code-mixing? I would argue that, at the primary degree of delicacy, these indigenous lexical items have implications for the field, the tenor, and the textual metafunction of the discourse. If we consider the fact that the code-mixing involves words selected from the authors' native language repertoire, these codes relate the texts, at the semiotic structure of field, to the Zimbabwean and South African geolinguistic environments, especially the context of culture.

At the semiotic level of tenor, these codes allude to the permanent ethnic identities of these writers as Zimbabweans or, in the case of Lessing, Rhodesian. It is in this sense that Braj Kachru indicates that "In discourse, code-switching may be used

as a device to mark, among other things, an identity [or] may be used to reveal or to conceal region, class and religion” (“Code-Mixing” 111).

Concerning the textual metafunction, these codes are sometimes used as devices for elucidation and interpretation. Some of these codes form ‘similarity chains’ (through repetition and synonymy) by the presence of key words, words having special significance for the meaning of particular passages in the texts. Consider the following passage from *Harvest of Thorns*, which exhibits a lexical spread associated with the register of marriage in the Zimbabwean context:

With his friend Joshua as his *munyai* he visited Shamiso’s parents at their rural home to start the proceedings. . . . First, the *mkwasha* and his *munyai* were both impeccably dressed in black suits which made them look like twins. . . . After a round of whispered consultations the in-laws asked for the *vhuramuromo* so that they could hear the visitor’s mission. This was paid, and they asked for the *makandinzwa nani*. . . . the marriage firmly established as the objective, they moved on to *zvibinge*. The father demanded a goat . . . the master of ceremonies demanded a goat too for having been skipped in the preliminary consultations, and the aunt from the hill across the river followed suit with demands for a cockerel. . . . The beasts were promptly promised and they got on to the business of *kununga mari*. . . . Satisfied by the prompt payment of these preliminary dues, the master of ceremonies went on to announce the *roora*. The *danga* was to be four head of cattle. . . . Then there were the *nhumbi* for the parents; a black suit for the father, of a similar texture to what the *munyai* was wearing. (HT 46-47, 48)

The lexical transfers in this passage suggest that the system of proposition and marriage negotiation are more elaborate in the Zimbabwean than Western contexts.

At the secondary degree of delicacy, some of these indigenous words foreground the politics of race/class and gender in the novels. For example, *chitupa* (*MO* 31), or *situpas* (*HT* 41) were symbols of racism and instruments of subjugation of blacks in the pre-independence eras in Zimbabwe and South Africa, while in the same period, the *sjambok* (*GS* 15), or “a stout rhinoceros or hippopotamus hide whip” (*Dictionary of South African English* 289) was wielded mercilessly by white bosses, especially farmers. As the narrator of *The Grass is Singing* says: “Slatter believed in farming with the sjambok. It hung over his front door, like a motto on a wall: ‘You shall not mind killing if it is necessary.’ . . . It was he who had told Dick Turner, long ago, when Dick first started farming, that one should buy a sjambok before a plough or a harrow” (*GS* 15-16).

However, some of these words directly challenge the cultural hegemony inherent in the dominant discourse. For example, in *On Trial for My Country*, the lexical item, “Masi-wa-tunya -- the smoke that thunders” (26) challenges the notion that David Livingstone discovered and was the first to name the Victoria Falls; in other words, long before Livingstone came to Africa, the people of the land had their own name -- *Masi-wa-tunya* -- for what people of European descent began to call the Victoria Falls. In the same way, the African characters in *The Mourned One* counter-identify with certain colonialist naming practices by renaming the Waddilove Training Institution as ‘Maswingo.’ The narrator describes this politics of naming thus: “First, it was called Negubo Mission, no doubt in honour of the local African chief. Later, the name was changed to Waddilove. Most Africans, however, continued to call it by its African name, ‘Maswingo’” (*MO* 28). Similarly, African characters in the novel identify the Wesleyan Methodist African Women’s Guild as ‘Ruwadzano’ (*MO* 28).

Some of the lexical items also foreground gender hierarchy in Zimbabwean literature and society. For example, a signifier of place such as *dare* simultaneously points to the peripheralization of women in the Zimbabwean context. The *dare* signifies

the social prominence enjoyed by males as illustrated in the following passage: “All the women sent at least one plate of sadza and another of relish to the ‘dare’ where all the men and boys sat, ate, and talked” (*MO* 24). Women are apparently excluded from participating in the conviviality of the *dare* but service its needs nonetheless.

Certain modes of address reproduce male dominance and female subservience in the novels. For example, in *Nervous Conditions*, given the dignified status of Babamukuru, the reader does not get to know his real name. His social position is so exalted that every character in the novel calls him *Babamukuru* which means *big father* in the Shona language; this is a politeness strategy to avoid mentioning his name. In social interactions between Babamukuru and his wife, Maiguru, the latter, despite her benefit of higher education in England, addresses him with the full form “BabawaChido” (84), while he sometimes reciprocates with the clipped form of “Ma’Chido” (84). The clipped address term is a signifier of Maiguru’s abbreviated personhood in the gender hierarchy. Moreover the address term *Ma’Chido* foregrounds the fact that Maiguru is addressed in relation to her son. This is in consonance with the principle of relationality in patriarchal discourse which Henley, writing with Western forms of address in mind, explains as follows:

Language and usage reflect and help maintain woman’s secondary status by defining them and their “place.” Whereas men are often referred to in occupational terms, women are often referred to in relational terms, for example as *wife* or *mother*, or by titles which denote the presence or absence of an authorized relation to a male [*Miss, Mrs.*]. (“Sexism in Language” 3-4, original emphasis)

Despite linguistic and cultural differences from the situation Henley is writing about, the patriarchal language practice is the same. As a result, given the patrilineal heritage of most African societies and the privileging of male offspring, a married woman is addressed not only in relation to her husband but sometimes also in relation to her

eldest son. However, the question arises, if parents are to be named in relation to their children, then if Nyasha, a girl, is the first-born, why should her parents not be BabawaNyasha or Ma(mawa)Nyasha?

In the majority of cases, the way these indigenous words are made intelligible to the English-only and non-Zimbabwean readers is that the authors do not attempt to define the lexical items but leave the interpretation to the imagination of the reader, as in the following examples: “he blinked in the light and said, ‘*Manheru*’ (HT 3); “Beyond that again stretched bush . . . bounded at the horizon by *kopjes*” (GS 69); “there are many pictures of elephants and *kudu* in Manyepo’s house” (B 84); “nor would I need to worry any more about my books becoming embellished with grime and grease-spots in their corner of the *chikuwa*, where I kept them at home” (NC 60); “Even the challenge of immorality, and snivelling *tsotsis* like this semen-drop of a bastard” (HH 65). This mode of lexical incorporation is favoured by Chinodya, Lessing, Hove, Dangarembga, and Marechera.

At times, the authors explain these transferred words through the parenthetical explanatory tag or “cushioning” (Stone 12). This ‘translation’ strategy is favoured by Samkange, especially in *The Mourned One*: ‘gano’, a ceremonial axe (7); ‘hozi’, the pantry (38); ‘Tsitsi’ -- meaning pity or sorrow (47); ‘makoko’, the hard, burnt lining of sadza usually found at the bottom of a pot (75); and dried meat that the Boers call ‘biltong’ (95). This translation technique has its drawbacks and advantages. By consciously striving to translate words in this manner, the text may at times degenerate into an anthropological document. Conversely, the translation confirms the auto-ethnographic status of the text and would thus align this practice with a counter-discursive bent since the writer is at least implicitly claiming that an insider is better equipped to write a people’s ethnography than an outsider.

Finally, the authors sometimes resort to fashioning the immediate context of lexical transfers so that their meanings are made as clear as possible. For example, in

Nervous Conditions, the context suggests that the *nhodo* is a kind of traditional game played with stones: “They were playing *nhodo*, which is to say that Netsai was playing and Rambanai, when it was her turn, was simply throwing the stone into the air and protesting loudly when Netsai resumed her turn. Rambanai was too young to throw a stone up into the air and pick up several other stones and then catch the first stone as it fell” (NC 8-9). Likewise, the context suggests that the *dara* is a kind of table or pump platform: “I went to the *dara* to fill the enamel basin with water and to take the pots and plates I would need for my cooking. The *dara* was depressing. Termites had determinedly chewed their way right through one leg, so it stood tilted at an insolent angle, constantly letting things fall off it” (NC 11).

As in other African varieties of English, a Zimbabwean cultural identity is constructed through certain syntactic variations. Syntactic variation in Zimbabwean English is the result of three main linguistic variables governing the acquisition and use of English in Zimbabwe: (1) Zimbabwean English users’ continuous attempts to reorder the English language to incorporate the structures of Zimbabwe’s indigenous languages; (2) the inadequate exposure of many Zimbabweans to the English language in terms of acquiring active competence in the language; and (3) the preference of many Zimbabweans for structurally simplified sentences owing to the two variables mentioned above. However, as would be expected, these three variables are so intricately interwoven that it is difficult to ascertain the source of certain syntactic variations. My aim in this section is to analyze the formal properties of these variations; their sociolinguistic functions will become clear in the next section when I look at the power and politics of English in the texts.

An analysis of the novels reveals the following modes of syntactic variation in Zimbabwean English: deletion of function words; reduplication; non-inversion of subject and verb in forming questions; undifferentiated tag questions; use of the progressive aspect with mental processes; non-distinctive use of pronouns, concord,

tense, and gender; prepositional substitution; variant forms of response to yes-no questions; emphatic deixis; double subjects; resumptive references; and topicalization or thematization. Some of these variations -- for example, the deletion of article; non-distinctive use of concord, tense, and gender; prepositional substitution; and emphatic deixis -- are less prominent and, in such cases, only one example of each is attested in the texts. Nevertheless, ethnographically speaking, this does not detract from their status as variations.

Concerning the deletion of function words, Eyamba Bokamba has pointed out that it is difficult to determine with any certainty the main sources of omission of function words in African English. He indicates, however, that his “inclination is to believe that interference from African languages plays a critical role” (129-30). Nevertheless, as I pointed out earlier, another decisive factor is the inadequate exposure of many Africans to the English language, or what Peter Strevens has called the “shortfall variations” resulting from “incomplete learning” and “ineffective learning” on the part of the individual learner of English (28). For our purposes, the deletion of function words in Zimbabwean English is divided into (1) deletion of articles, and (2) deletion of auxiliary items.

In Shona, as in all Bantu languages, the article does not exist. Consequently, the black trooper in *Harvest of Thorns* omits the article in the following usage, where the dash __ indicates the site of deletion, and the missing article in parentheses follows the example.

‘I think he’s wanting to go to __ border, Baas.’ (HT 116)

(the)

As in West African and West Indian Englishes, there is a tendency “to dispense with tense markers in the verb where context or where another grammatical feature is adequate” (Ramchand *West Indian Novel* 95). The following examples occur in the verbal repertoire of Marita and Moses respectively:

'Yes, I am leaving him tomorrow so that I __ go and look for my son in the city. I __ take the bus tomorrow.' (B 30)

(can, will)

'Madame asked me to stay. I __ stay to help Madame. If Madame __ cross, I __ go.' (GS 188)

(will, is, will)

Reduplication involves the repetition of lexical items. With special reference to South Asian English, Braj Kachru has noted that the reduplication of items belonging to various word classes and larger units "is used for emphasis and to indicate continuation of a process ("South Asian English" 361). The following are some examples from the novels:

She was a big baby, and she was going to be dark . . . not *dark dark* but smooth dark. (HT 74)

I was tired of *thinking, thinking* and *thinking*. (MO 1-2)

She was always *talking, talking* and *talking*. (MO 91)

The tendency of Zimbabwean users of English to form interrogatives without changing the position of subject and auxiliary items is perhaps a result of the preference of these speakers for structurally simplified utterances where interrogation is marked only by intonation as in the following examples:

'You are saying I should go to the bus-stop?'[↗] (NC 24)

'Missus like to see the kitchen?'[↗] (GS 70)

'The boss is better?'[↗] (GS 135)

However, I have to acknowledge that many structures in these texts do invert subject and verb in questions, and that BE speakers sometimes do not invert the word order in interrogatives. The difference is in frequency of non-inversion and not in kind. In fact, this writer did a statistical count of the number of questions used by both the white and black characters in *The Grass is Singing*. Among them, the white characters --

Mary Turner, Dick Turner, Charlie Slatter, Sergeant Denham, Tony Maston, the Barman, the two female interlocutors, and the doctor -- employed some 125 questions. Out of this figure, 113 belong to the inverted category while only 12 are not inverted. Between them, the black characters -- Moses and the headboy -- employed a total of 21 questions; 7 are inverted while 14 are not inverted. This data confirms that non-native users of English are prone to engage in a non-inversion of the subject and auxiliary in forming interrogatives as a strategy of simplifying English syntactic structures.

In English, the structure of tag questions is composed of a statement and a tag attached to it. In such structures, there is contrasting polarity; a positive main clause is followed by a negative tag, and vice versa. However, as I pointed out in the last chapter, the tag element in Shona consists of one word, *handiti* or *nhaika*. Transfer thus results in Zimbabwean English constructions such as the following examples noted in the verbal repertoire of Lucia in *Nervous Conditions* and Moses in *The Grass is Singing* respectively:

‘They are easy to chase away, *isn't it?*’ (NC 153)

‘You are joking, *isn't it?*’ (NC 157)

‘I do the work well, *yes?*’ (GS 189)

‘She is tired, *yes?*’ (GS 196)

Michael Halliday groups together clauses of feeling, thinking, and perceiving under the general heading of “mental process” used with verbs such as *see, hear, like, fear, drink, know, understand, and need*. He emphasizes that “In a mental process, the unmarked present tense is the SIMPLE PRESENT; we say ‘She likes the gift’ (not ‘She is liking the gift’), ‘Do you know the city?’ (not ‘Are you knowing the city?’), ‘I see the stars’ (not ‘I am seeing the stars’)” (*Functional Grammar* 109, original emphasis). Therefore, the following examples, transferred from the first language of Clopas Tichafa and the black trooper respectively in *Harvest of Thorns* would not only

sound ungrammatical to a native speaker of English but also indicate the low social class and educational attainment of their users:

'This woman *is needing* help, Baas.' (HT 30)

(needs)

'This woman *is having* a child.' (HT 30)

(has)

'No Baas, she *living* in the reserves.' (HT 32)

(lives)

'I think *he's wanting* to go to Border, Baas.' (HT 116)

(wants)

In English the *case* or form of a personal pronoun is dictated by the grammatical function it serves in a sentence. In the *subjective case*, pronouns function as subjects or subject complements (e.g., I, he, she, we, they); in the *objective case*, pronouns function as direct objects, indirect objects, or objects of prepositions (e.g., me, him, her, us, them); and in the *possessive case*, pronouns show ownership (Rosa *et al.* 187, original emphasis). In the following examples, the speakers subvert the rules of pronominal usage:

'When I was a child *me* and my sisters got sick from mushrooms my mother picked.' (HT 201)

(I)

'You and *me*, we're civilised.' (HH 11)

Because "Shona does not have the present perfect tense properly so called [sic] or as it applies to English" and given that "Shona uses two past tense forms where English uses one" (Ngara 45), Msindo, Mellecker's farm hand, subverts the rule of tense usage thus:

'Baas Mellecker *is died* here, Baas Mellecker *is died*.' (HT 165)

(has died)

Concerning the rule of concord in Shona, Emmanuel Ngara states that

Concordial agreement is an important aspect of the Shona sentence. Parts of speech are generally divisible into the stem and the prefix. The prefixed elements in pronouns, adjectives, possessives and predicates relating to a noun agree with the prefix of that noun. Concordial agreement in Shona is therefore a matter of agreement between the noun and all the words that go with it. (42)

Since there is no correspondence between Shona and English concordial rules and because of the inadequate exposure of many Zimbabweans to the English language, the black trooper, for example, disregards the rule of concord in the following response to the white soldier's question, 'Has he got his school pass?':

'Yes, but *it have* no stamp.' (HT 117)

Ngara indicates that "Shona employs grammatical class gender, there being no distinction between the feminine and the masculine gender" (41). Consequently, Clopas Tichafa confuses the gender systems of English when he tells his white boss that

'She is needing to have a bath [birth] certificate for *his* child, Baas.'
(HT 30)

The condescending white man is quick to ask him, 'Is this woman a *he* or a *she*?' to which Tichafa replies, 'She, Baas.' Tichafa's boss reasons that this solecism is owing to Tichafa's inadequate exposure to the English language as he remarks sarcastically, 'I thought you said you passed Standard Five.'

Considering the idiosyncratic usage of prepositions in African English, Munzali Jibril has observed that many African languages do not have prepositions which correspond to the English ones. Instead, African languages make do with a few general-purpose particles which are less specific in their reference to temporal and

spatial relations than the English ones (525-526). Consequently, in the following example, Benjamin, the protagonist of *Harvest of Thorns*, substitutes a pronoun:

'Do you ask that *to* every customer?' (HT 8)

(of)

Another difference between Shona and English is seen in the way in which the listener answers yes/no questions. As explained by Ngara:

In English, there is a tendency to operate on the basis of the answer. If the answer is positive, the listener will use *yes*; if it is negative *no* is used. In Shona, as in Sesotho and Nguni, the listener's answer, whether yes or no, will depend on whether he [sic] (the listener) agrees with the speaker or not. If he [sic] agrees with what is implied by the speaker's questions, he [sic] will use *yes* irrespective of whether the total answer is negative or positive. If he [sic] disagrees, he [sic] employs *no*. (46-47, original emphasis)

The following verbal exchange between Tichafa and his white boss illustrates this feature:

'They taught you English at school, didn't they?'

'No, Baas.'

'What? Did they teach you English or did they not?'

'They did, Baas.'

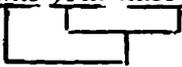
'Then say yes. For God's sake speak proper English! If the Queen heard you she'd send you to the gallows!'

'Yes Baas.' (HT 31)

Tichafa's boss makes explicit here the connection between language and power. BE is the Queen's English, so any change to it is an affront to her power. Moreover, as a member of her colonial civil service, Tichafa's boss feels defending standard English (i.e. The Queen's English) to be part of his duty.

The matter of syntactic variation also involves a type that I have elsewhere called focus constructions, which are communicative strategies used to achieve emphasis and thematization, and their use underscores the logic of many African languages. In other words, focus constructions enable speakers to reorder the English language to reflect their thought channels (Bamiro “Syntactic Variation” 197). These constructions are generally classifiable as emphatic deixis, double subjects, resumptive references, and thematization.

Emphatic deixis indicates the use of a redundant person or place deixis (e.g. your, this) to achieve emphasis, as in the following example which is followed by the BE construction:

He must have fallen from a rock, *this your husband*. (B24)
 (your husband) 

Double subjects (also known as pronominal copying) involve the subject of the sentence as focus and an anaphoric pronoun subject. In this regard, Ngara has noted that “It is important to point out that the repetition of the subject, which is characteristic of Shona concordial agreement, does not occur in English” (43). However, according to Ayo Bamgbose, double subject constructions “appear to be acceptable in Native English only if there is a demonstrative or a contrastive stress on the pronoun subject, for example, ‘These politicians and their supporters, *they* are the ones who don’t often listen to advice’” (“Standard Nigerian English” 159n, original emphasis). The following are some examples from the novels:

This woman *she* is needing help.’ (HT 30)

(This woman needs help)

And *the smell of the chewed grass*, it told me who I was. (B 41)

Marita, she kneels on the brown soil. (B 11)

The old man who died in that nasty train accident, he once got into trouble for begging and loitering. (HH 2)

The last example above, which occurs in the narrative idiom of the novel, seems to indicate that despite his highly anglicized style, Marechera sometimes relapses into Zimbabwean English.

Resumptive references refer to certain syntactic constructions in which the subject of the sentence is delayed or postposed to hark back to an earlier stated pronoun, as in the following examples:

‘That’s why they are tied, these dogs. They aren’t dogs to play about with, these.’ (NC 66)

(‘That’s why these dogs are tied’)

It is not good for me, this thing you have started. (B 26)

They are clever, the strangers. (B 56)

While resumptive references are not common in British English, they do appear. Again, the variation has to do with the frequency of occurrence. For example, no resumptive reference is found in the speech repertoire of the white characters in the novels. In other cases, the subject of the resumptive anaphoric pronoun is explicitly stated as a topicalization strategy. Ordinarily, the subject should have been conflated with the resumptive anaphoric pronoun. The following examples illustrate this feature:

‘Your name, what is it?,’ the messenger repeated in Shona. (MO 109)
(‘What is your name?’)

‘*Your nonsense*, you are about to begin *it!*’ (NC 17)

The examples above occur in the speech repertoire of characters who belong to the lower strata economically, occupationally, and educationally (Anna, the housegirl; Murume, the servant; the messenger; and Marita). This indicates that these features represent the underlying structure of the Shona language. Actually, the example from *The Mourned One*, which we are told is a translation of the Shona original, reframes the white commissioner’s question, ‘What is its name?’ (MO 109). However, apart from the fact that the commissioner’s question is the ‘unmarked’ form, the use of *its*, a

neuter form of pronominal reference, represents the commissioner's attempt to objectify his African clients, thereby claiming a putative racial superiority.

According to Michael Halliday, the theme, in English, is identifiable as "that which comes in the initial position in the clause" (*Functional Grammar*, 39), and "the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned" (38). Halliday also makes the important distinction between *unmarked* and *marked* themes in English. According to this distinction, "We shall refer to the mapping of Theme on to subject as the UNMARKED Theme of a declarative clause" (*Functional Grammar* 45, original emphasis). Conversely, MARKED Theme is realized in the foregrounding or fronting of clause elements such as initial complements (e.g., *nature*, in 'Nature I loved' which is normally realized as 'I loved nature') or adjuncts (e.g., *in the corner*, in 'In the corner sat an old man') that would normally not occur in the first position.

Given the fact that many African languages are topic-prominent, speakers have a preference for the thematization of complements and adjuncts in these languages, a tendency that is then reflected in a dialect like Zimbabwean English. The following sentences are marked for topicalization:

'The boy . . . *Ephraim* is his name. . . . The other . . . *Cheukai* is his name. (*HT* 197)

Things he despises. *People* he despises. (*B* 121)

'*Anne*, that's her name.' (*HH* 43)

I should point out, however, that the syntactic variations noted above could also be owing to the mutability of varieties of English over time and across generations. As I reiterate in the concluding chapter, therefore, this mutable quality of language partly explains why several of the lexico-semantic and syntactic features shared by Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian Englishes are also to be found in such varieties as West African, East African, and Indian Englishes.

3.3 THE POWER AND POLITICS OF ENGLISH

Although I have broached the subject of the power and politics of English in my analysis of the nativization strategies in the novels, in this section, I want to further expand on the politics of English as they relate to the symbolic appropriation of the 'Other' and the way English functions as a powerful medium for the production and reproduction of colonial and counter-colonial discourses.

As the language of the colonizer, English functions as a powerful medium for the production and reproduction of colonial and hegemonic discourse, and is often employed to constitute a repressive form of discourse meant to justify white racism and the colonization of Africans by the British imperialists. The naming practice which racist English-speaking characters use is a significant colonizing strategy and, therefore, counter-colonial discourses re-name the pejorated and name the pejoraters in negative ways. Colonial discourse operates through a manichean opposition between blackness and whiteness, whereby "'White' is the solvent of all values, and the entrenched symbol for all positive attributes, while 'black' is the irredeemable opposite" (Olaniyan "Corporeal/Discursive Bodies" 159). Frantz Fanon indicates that colonial culture positions the native as its degraded Other:

The native is declared insensible to ethics; he [sic] represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. He [sic] is, let us dare to admit, the enemy of values, and in this sense he [sic] is the absolute evil. He [sic] is the corrosive element, destroying all that comes near him; he [sic] is the deforming element, disfiguring all that has to do with beauty or morality; he [sic] is the depository of maleficent powers, the unconscious and irretrievable instrument of blind forces.

(41)

As Albert Memmi has noted, Europeans constructed the different 'races' they encountered in their colonialist and imperialist ventures as "inferior" and "savage" in

order to exploit them economically; racism provided a justification, after the fact, for that exploitation (xxiii, cited in Currie 139). For example, in *On Trial for My Country*, the kind of racist discourse employed by Cecil Rhodes and his imperial agents enables them to justify their political and socio-economic exploitation of Lobengula. Cecil Rhodes conceives of his civilizing mission thus:

‘I believe that we, the British, are the first race in the world, and the more of the world we inhabit, the better it is for the human race. Every area added to our territory provides for the birth of more of the British race, who otherwise would not be brought into existence. . . . I believe that the English-speaking race, whether British, American, Australian, or South African, is the type of race which does now and is likely to continue to do in the future, the most practical and effective work to establish justice, to promote liberty and to ensure peace over the widest possible area of this planet.’ (TC 28)

Having thus established the British as the superior race, Cecil Rhodes and his agents proceed to construct and stereotype Lobengula in such ways as “the savage king of the Matebele” (TC 30), “the old blighter” (TC 56), “a real, live, genuine savage king” (TC 101), and “the old buster” (TC 109).

Similarly, in *The Mourned One*, the Reverend Percival Ockenden sees his mission in Africa in terms of a manichean allegory, that is, “the task of turning Africans from paganism to Christianity, from darkness to light, from savagery to civilisation” (MO 34). However, behind this lofty ideal lurks a deadly hypocrisy and belief in white racial superiority because “white people in this part of Africa do not ordinarily shake hands with black people” (MO 34). Consequently, the white missionaries are not immune to racist discourse. For example, the white missionary pejorates African culture when he says that “I see the *heathens* are going to pray to their river god” (MO 26, my emphasis), while Nurse Fry upbraids the narrator by saying “You ungrateful

baboon . . . you still want to go and live like a *savage*” (MO 92, my emphasis). In the same vein, the white train conductor refers to his black passengers as simians: “All these *baboons* have no ticket” (MO 65, my emphasis). In the novel, the term, *boy*, like the ethnolexemes *houseboy*, *cookboy*, *farmboy*, and *headboy* analyzed earlier, becomes the means by which the colonialists script the putative racial and social inferiority of Africans. For example, when a white woman “shouted ‘Boy!’ . . . an African old enough to be her grandfather, presented himself” (MO 118). In *Harvest of Thorns*, the white soldier’s racist discourse maps Benjamin as a beast: “‘Is this *monkey* giving you any trouble, Corporal?’” (HT 116). In *Bones*, one of the freedom fighters asks Marita whether the white farmer she works for calls her “such names as kaffir, boy, bobojani, skelemu” (74). To Manyepo, the white farmer, his workers are either “pikinini” (25) or “boy” (26).

Certain white characters in *The Grass is Singing* seem to celebrate the dehumanization and depersonalization of the black race. That these white characters fetishize the subject races as inferior and degenerate by nature is made clear by the comment: “one never had contact with natives except in the master-servant relationship. One never knew them in their own lives, as human beings” (21). Consequently, the following examples of colonial discourse of the white characters such as Charlie Slatter, Mary Turner, Dick Turner, and Sergeant Denham represent the black subjects in the story as degenerate, alien, and inferior Others:

‘Have you any idea why this *nigger* murdered Mr. Turner?’ (22)

Dick was really sorry to see the end of this *nigger*! (78)

‘I can’t afford to buy *niggers* at five pounds a head.’ (170)

The *old boy* [the elderly native] kept his eyes on the ground. (68)

‘I should have got a *new boy*.’ (78)

‘There are plenty of other *munts*, aren’t there?’ (78)

‘All day I am down on the lands with these *lazy black savages*.’ (78)

'Selling kaffir truck to *stinking kaffirs*.' (95)

And after a few moments she felt she [Mary] could not stay there any longer, shut into the stuffy store with a crowd of these chattering *evil-smelling creatures*. (117)

'*Filthy savages!*' she [Mary] thought vindictively. (135)

Certainly, just as Chinua Achebe has observed in his analysis of the image of Africa in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the white characters in *The Grass is Singing* have a neurotic obsession with the word, 'nigger'. Their "inordinate love of that word itself should be of interest to psychoanalysis" (Achebe "An Image of Africa" 125).

However, as I pointed out in the introduction, for every dominant discourse, there is a contrary and transgressive counter-discourse. For example, in *Resistance and Caribbean Literature*, Selwyn Cudjoe defines resistance as any act or complex of acts designed to rid a people of their oppressors, be they slave masters or multi-national companies (19). Cudjoe identifies three kinds of resistance: cultural, socioeconomic, and political. Cultural resistance is generally expressed in the folkways, art and religion of a people. Socioeconomic resistance is expressed in socially subversive acts such as work sabotage, suicide, murder, and abortion, while political resistance is concerned with acts that encourage political change, such as revolts, rebellions, and revolutions in the process of government and a change in administration (19).

Modes of cultural resistance adopted by the black characters in the novels include the use of satire, subversion of the address system, silence, and a repudiation of the English language. For example, in *On Trial for My Country*, Lobengula launches into a diatribe against British hypocrisy and deceit:

'What could anyone have done with such dishonourable men? Just look at Joni. He and his father preached to us about God until our ears were full. They said that their God wanted people to be honest, kind and good and not kill many people as the Amandebele did. Was it being

honest first, to trick me into signing a paper for his Queen and now to read a letter to me saying it was written by his Queen when he knew very well that the letter had been written by Jemisoni?' (83)

Similarly, the students' shouts in *The House of Hunger* constitute a symbolic resistance to the hegemonic discourse of colonialism and cultural imperialism:

'Bloody missionaries!'

'Bloody whites!'

'They had the Bible!'

'We had the land!'

'Now they have the land!'

'And we have the Bible!'

'Bloody sell-outs!' (36)

The asymmetrical power relationships between the colonized and the colonizer presuppose non-reciprocal modes of address in social and institutional settings. The colonized, because of their subjugated positions, are expected to use terms of address that show deference and respect for the colonizer. As Janet Holmes points out: "Where people use non-reciprocal address forms, . . . the reason is always due to a status or power difference. If you call someone Sir, and he calls you Chris, then he is your superior in some context" (378). Consequently, owing to the unequal power relationships between blacks and whites in the Zimbabwean context, we do not expect the colonized to be on first-name terms with the colonizer. This is why in most contexts the white Native Commissioner, in *The Mourned One*, for example, is addressed with the polite formulas of *Nkosi* or *Mambo* (the Ndebele and Shona words for King respectively). However, in certain contexts, some Africans would subvert the non-reciprocal mode of address as a gesture of resistance to the dominant cultural order. In the following example, Moses, the lorry driver, relates how one Matewu Zwimba subverts the address system:

‘When the Native Commissioner visited Chikaka to address a meeting, Matewu had his chair put right next to the Native Commissioner and sat there, next to the Nkosi. They were all too scared of him to remove him. When the Native Commissioner whose name was Palmer Walker, called him “Matthew”, he called him “Palmer”, and when the Native Commissioner said, “Who do you call Palmer?” Matewu replied, “Well, who do you call Matthew?”’ (MO 119)

Moses, of course, senses the political potential of this resistance when he says that “six men like him in this country would change this land completely. Everything would be different” (MO 119).

Susan Gal has indicated that “silence is generally deplored [by those analyzing differential power relations], because it is often taken to be a result and a symbol of passivity and powerlessness: those who are denied speech cannot make their experience known and thus cannot influence the course of their lives or of history” (407). However, she points out that “silence, like any linguistic form, gains different meanings and has different material effects within specific institutional and cultural contexts. Silence and inarticulatedness are not, in themselves, necessary signs of powerlessness” (407). In *The Grass is Singing*, for example, the black farm workers often use silence as subversive defence and political protest against white domination. Faced with the heavy-handedness and racial repression of Mary Turner, they often “worked reluctantly, in a sullen silence” (136). They often “listened to her with what she described to herself as ‘cheeky’ faces. They were sullen and angry, listening to her (or what they could understand of her speech) with inattention, simply waiting for her to finish” (141). However, Mary Turner’s relationship with the workers indicates the complex interweaving of race and gender politics in the colonial context. Whereas the workers read her action as racist and were therefore protesting through silent gestures because she had administered corporal punishment to them, Mary interpreted their

action in terms of gender politics because she thought they “resented her, a woman, supervising them” (136).

Especially in *The Grass is Singing*, the natives’ particular strategy of negotiating their subjection and its relation to the dominant discourse is to revert to their mother tongues and dialects. Social dialects are markers of the speaker’s belonging to a socially recognizable group, and part of the latter’s social identity. Recourse to dialects is a counter-discursive strategy that reverses the dominant cultural order not only by abrogating the privilege of English over the resources of communication, but also by banishing the colonizer from the domain of utterance. In Lessing’s novel mentioned above, for example, Mary Turner finds the natives’ use of dialects particularly distressing because disempowering: “She hated it when they spoke to each other in dialects she did not understand, and she knew they were discussing her and making what were probably obscene remarks against her – she knew it, though she could only ignore it” (141).

As the language of the colonizer, English is also often employed as a repressive form of discourse that reflects and reinforces the unequal power relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. Trevor Pateman, in Jacob Mey (26-27), distinguishes between oppressive and repressive use of language in the following way: Oppressive language use relates directly to societal oppression: it doesn’t even try to hide behind an acceptable front. This is the way in which most minority languages are oppressed, for example, the American Indian languages, or the native languages in other former European colonies. Repressive use of language, on the other hand, hides the social realities. It establishes a linguistic facade, behind which the powerful can freely oppress the powerless. Language is the context of oppression as well as its pretext, its veil. In other words, what we are dealing with here is manipulatory use of language (50).

Since social reality is to a large extent linguistically structured and mediated, “words, expressions, propositions, etc. change their meaning according to the positions held by those who use them” (Pêcheux 111). In this direction, Rolv Blakar indicates that “In choosing among ‘synonymous’ expressions, one can signal one’s attitude toward that which is referred to. When an American chooses among ‘black,’ ‘negro,’ ‘colored,’ and ‘nigger,’ he [sic] simultaneously expresses his [sic] attitude. And behind ‘poor box’ and ‘social welfare’ we encounter different attitudes” (148). If, according to Mikhail Bakhtin, language is “ideologically saturated” (271), and “there are no ‘neutral’ words and forms” (293), the imperialists employ the following repressive linguistic forms not only to portray pejoratively the women and men engaged in the war of liberation in Zimbabwe, but also to legitimize the use of oppressive force to quell their resistance: *terrorists* (*Bones* 17, *HT* 114), *gangsters*, *thieves*, and *robbers* (*Bones* 61). Also, in *Harvest of Thorns*, the ‘demonstrations’ by the students fighting for political and social justice are framed by the imperialists as “illegal demonstration” (*HT* 88, 89), and “Burning government property” (*HT* 89).

However, as I pointed out in my discussion of discourse in chapter one, discourse is not only a site of struggle, it is also a social space in which social meanings are produced or challenged (Seidel 44). As a result, colonized subjects often employ counter-colonial discourse to establish oppositional and disidentificatory dialectics to the discourse of colonialism and imperial cultural hegemony. As I also indicated in chapter one, the concept of ‘disidentification,’ used by Pêcheux, is useful in theorizing counter-colonial discourse. Pêcheux describes ‘disidentification’ as an effect of working “on and against” prevailing practices of ideological subjection with the effect that the identity and identifications set up in the dominant ideology, though never escaped entirely, are transformed and displaced (159, 215). Consequently, the narrator of *Nervous Conditions*, as she became increasingly aware of the colonization process in her society, comes to a disidentificatory position and re-evaluates her former

identification with colonialist discourse. What she comes to understand is why she had not earlier been “concerned that *freedom fighters* were referred to as *terrorists*” (155, my emphasis). Furthermore, the following examples are instances of counter-discursive namings the women and men engaged in the war of liberation employ to transform and displace the dominant ideology inherent in colonial discourse, thereby asserting and reclaiming their social identity: *guerillas* (HT 122), *freedom fighters* (HT 126), *fighters* (Bones 47, 72, 73, 85, 87), and *nationalist guerillas* (HH 26).

Whereas the British imperialists name the liberationists as *terrorists*, *gangsters*, *thieves*, and *robbers*, the latter seize the language of the dominant discourse and use it to rename and countername their identities as *guerillas*, *freedom fighters*, *fighters*, and *nationalist guerillas*. This counter-discursive mode of signifying thus polarizes African and colonial discourses. If colonial discourse is an enforcer and embodiment of ideology, then it can only be constituted in relation to what it is not; the concept of ‘colonizer’ can exist only by virtue of what it excludes: the ‘colonized’. In the final analysis, the liberation fighters, in their self namings and namings of the colonizing Others, formulate a disruptive counter-discourse to the colonial hegemony, which counter-discourse situates them directly in opposition to the dominant ideology. By refusing the assigned subject position, the colonized are in effect ‘counter-identifying’ with the dominant discourse.

‘Legalese’ (the language of legal documents or legal English) is another form of repressive discourse the colonizer uses to manipulate, disenfranchise, and exert social power over the colonized in the colonial context. The manipulatory and masking potential of legalese stems from its overly “technical terms; words of Latin or old French origin, like *habeus corpus*; archaic expressions like ‘hereafter’; polysyllabic words; unusual prepositional phrases (e.g., ‘in the event of’ instead of ‘if’); words belonging to a formal register; and sentences of unusual length and syntactic complexity” (Danet 540). Consequently, legal English is not the province of

laypersons and the uninitiated since psycholinguistic research has demonstrated that many features of legalese are associated with difficulties of comprehension. David Crystal and Derek Davy put it succinctly:

To speak of legal language as communicating meaning is in itself rather misleading. Of all uses of language, it is perhaps the least communicative, in that it is designed not so much to enlighten language-users at large as to allow one expert to register information for scrutiny by another. This is another factor which has provided opportunities for unusualness. Legal writers, pushed into oddity by their attempts to be unambiguous, are pulled as it were in the same direction by the knowledge that since their productions are for the benefit of someone as familiar with the jargon as themselves, they have no need to bother too much about the simpler needs of a general public. (193-194)

For example, especially in *On Trial for My Country*, legalese constitutes an important hegemonic discourse in the repertoire of colonial discourses and Ideological State Apparatuses⁵ the British imperialists manipulate to swindle the Matebele of their land. The following is an extract of the legalese drawn up by Reverend John S. Moffat, Rhodes' emissary:

It is hereby further agreed by Lobengula, Chief in and over the Amandebele country, with the dependencies as aforesaid, on behalf of himself and his people, that he will refrain from entering into any correspondence or treaty with any foreign state or power to sell, alienate or cede or permit or countenance any sale, alienation or cession of the whole or any part of the said Amandebele country under his chieftainship, or upon any other subject without the previous knowledge and sanction of Her Majesty's High Commissioner for South Africa. . .

In faith of which I, Lobengula, on my part have hereto set my

hand at Gubalawayo, Amandebeleland, this 11th day of February, and of Her Majesty's reign the 51st. (45)

That this legalese is meant to deceive and confound Lobengula is evident in the following admonition of Moffat by Reverend Rhodes: "So you were able to get Lobengula's signature to this treaty because he trusted you as a brother and because he could neither read nor understand all the things you had written" (TC 48). Given the fact that the treaty was drafted by a man of God, Samkange reveals how Christianity colludes with imperial law to disenfranchise colonized peoples.

A natural corollary of English as constitutive of repressive discourse is that in certain contexts, the use or suppressed use of the language becomes a tactic for accentuating the social and communicative distance between the colonizer and the colonized, thus reproducing the putative racial superiority of the colonizers. In this sense, the colonized can only exist in the realm of 'mutedness,' which is a function of exclusion from a dominant system of articulation. According to Edwin Ardener, mutedness refers to a structural situation in which a group may be muted "simply because it does not form part of the dominant system of the society" (22). In the post-colonial context, Clifford Prator presents the British attitude as one of "deep-seated mistrust of the African who presumes to speak English too well" (471). He elaborates further:

A man [sic] who consciously regards language as a symbol of social status is naturally suspicious of one who appropriates the symbol but clearly does not belong to the social group that it typifies. If an Englishman [sic] is himself [sic] a proud speaker of RP [Received Pronunciation], he [sic] may find each encounter with a person who obviously does not speak his [sic] language well a pleasantly reassuring reminder of the exclusiveness of his [sic] own social group. (471)

For instance, knowing that English is a symbol of elitist identity which can be used to bridge the social distance between the races, the white Native Commissioner in *The Mourned One* is averse to the narrator conversing with him in English. The following social interaction between the commissioner and the narrator illustrates the former's view of English as a marker of power and social distance from the ruled:

The African messenger stood erect beside me. 'What does it want?' the Nkosi [the white commissioner] said in Shona. And the messenger repeated in Shona: 'The Nkosi says, what do you want?' 'I have come to get a Registration Certificate,' I said, in the King's English. 'Don't speak English to me!' the Nkosi said. And the messenger told me in very strong Shona: 'Listen, boy, English is not spoken here. We do not care how educated you are. The Nkosi understands Shona and wants you to speak to him in Shona. You are not his equal to speak English to him. Are you a Murungu?' (109)

In the social interaction above, the commissioner prefers to communicate with Africans in Shona, which not only signals the subordinate and powerless positions of Africans, but also signifies the subordinate status of Shona in the linguistic hierarchy. Moreover, by acting through an African interpreter, the commissioner erects a social barrier between himself and Africans, thus accentuating the asymmetrical power relations between the colonized and the colonizer. However, this social practice also mirrors the psychology of dependency between the colonizer and the colonized.

Similarly, in *The Grass is Singing*, the narrator reports that when a man asked Mary Turner for water, "She said, breathless with anger, 'Don't speak English to me'" (146). Her angry retort stems from the fact that "most white people think it is 'cheek' if a native speaks English" (146).

In other contexts, English not only symbolizes the social distance between the colonizer and the colonized, but also becomes an instrument creating new social

stratifications among the colonized in post-colonial societies. This phenomenon is illustrative of Braj Kachru's view of non-native Englishes which, he argues, are creating elites in post-colonial societies, who are then able to erect social and linguistic barriers within their own societies and develop English-based social practices which enact and reproduce their privileges (*Alchemy* 4, 7-8). These are the so-called "Afro-Saxons" (Mazrui 16) whose colonial education has forced them into a double bind. Abdul JanMohamed, ironically using the sexist pseudo-generic *he* throughout, explains this peculiar predicament in the following way:

For the indigenous person, the colonial situation . . . creates a dilemma from which he cannot easily disentangle himself If he chooses conservatively, and remains loyal to his indigenous culture, then he opts to stay in a calcified society whose developmental momentum has been checked by colonization. If, however, the colonized person chooses assimilation, then he is trapped in a form of historical catalepsy because colonial education severs him from his own past and replaces it with the study of the colonizer's past. Thus deprived of his own culture and prevented from participating in that of the colonizer, the native loses his sense of historical direction and soon his initiative as well. . . . If he attempts to espouse Western values, then he is seen as a vacant imitator without a culture of his own. Thus colonialist ideology is designed to confine the native in a confused and subservient position. (*Manichean Aesthetics* 5)

Caught between two cultures, the colonized person is forced, in linguistic terms, into what Einar Haugen has termed "schizoglossia" (63, cited in O'Callaghan 130). This is a psychic imbalance, a fragmented sense of self, and a linguistic disability that sometimes occur in writers and speakers who are exposed to several languages or several varieties of their own language. Unsure which variety to opt for,

speakers become insecure, self-deprecatory and often concerned more with the form than the substance of language (O'Callaghan 130).

In the following extract of a letter from Clopas Tichafa to Shamiso, whom he is courting, the former employs a basilectal form of Zimbabwean English not only as a marker of social prestige and elitist identity, but also as a strategy of manipulation and control:

I am hereby sent you a camera fotopicture taken me by my best friend Jeshua so that you can remind and thinking of me all times. . . . I still love you over than and will not stop scripting until the world stops and all the enjels come and God 'says' every-body to Heaven or to Hell but I'm cokesure a butifull girl like you is going to HEAVEN stret away. S'true God, Shamiso I love you more each day. I will go on scripting even I buys all the written peds and envelops at Bright Bookstore and even the postmaster say no. . . . (HT 39)

The basilectal form of the letter above is an indication of Tichafa's very low educational attainment and socio-economic status. Noteworthy are the abundant 'hypercorrections' in the letter, such as 'fotopicture,' 'scripting,' and 'cokesure' (cocksure). In other letters not cited here, Tichafa uses such hypercorrections as 'missive' (HT 37, 'letter'), and 'My heart is swelling and paining with love for you' (HT 38, 'I love you'). According to Donald Winford, hypercorrection involves "the attempt by linguistically insecure speakers to replace features of their everyday speech by forms which are regarded as prestigious" ("Phonological Hypercorrection" 282). Tichafa's linguistic behaviour is also illustrative of W.B. Willmot's observation of a "biblical, archaic or awkwardly formal flavour given to many speech patterns" by Africans speaking an imperial language (230). Little wonder then that Shamiso's sister reasons that "'He [Tichafa] must have a book he gets all these ideas from" (HT 40).

Tichafa is a bilingual speaker who has at least two codes -- English and Shona -- in his verbal repertoire. However, the fact that he privileges English in the code hierarchy signals that he wants to use the language for an identity shift, that is, “to obscure one identity and bring into focus another” (Kachru *Alchemy* 10); in this case, he foregrounds an elitist identity in order to impress Shamiso. In social-psychological terms, he refuses to display the behaviour traits typical of his ascribed group in the social structure. Obviously, the ‘attraction’ of a non-ascribed group -- the colonizer’s culture and the dominant class -- is so strong as to provide adequate motivation for Tichafa to behave atypically. It then follows that Tichafa’s letter above is an instance of ‘hypercorrected behaviour’ -- in this case, hypercorrection towards the norms and code of the dominant class -- as the writer strives to behave sociolinguistically in a manner more firmly in line with educated speech. Tichafa’s internalization of colonial discourse is also manifest in his dress code. The day he visited Shamiso for the first time, he was “immaculate in a black suit, white shirt and matching black tie, clutching a small package of groceries in one hand and swinging a black umbrella with the other” (*HT* 40-41).

However, if Tichafa uses English language and dress to signal an elitist identity and to neutralize cultural norms, Shamiso resists this identity by replying to his letters in Shona, her mother tongue. As we learn in the novel, Shamiso always replied in her “laconic Shona” (*HT* 40, 46). Shamiso uses Shona not only to establish an “in-group” identity but also to assert her cultural and social identity. This situation is congruent with Patrick Taylor’s observation:

The colonizer’s culture and his or her language, in particular, is the medium through which European values and the life-style can be presented as the norm and the good, and in relation to which the colonized begin to define themselves. Still, the majority of the colonized, unlike the colonial bourgeoisie, are able to maintain a certain

distance from these norms by resisting them and recreating traditional cultural patterns. (60)

The speeches of Cromwell Nwemba, Gore, and Fred Marimba, students at the Waddilove Institute in *The Mourned One*, provide further evidence of hypercorrection. Nwemba's speech reads as follows:

'Mr. Chairman, and spectators. It is my opinion that women should not be educated. In the course of my peregrinations I made a visitation to a friend of mine who made a blunder and married an educated lady who had passed Standard III. I arrived at my friend's abode early, in front of lunch. My friend was mighty glad to see me, so he assassinated a pig for my mastication, deglutition and peristaltic disposal. Behind lunch, when we had buried the pig in our stomach, my friend told his wife to brew tea.' (MO 73-74)

The fields of discourse of these speeches are a debate, a wedding reception, and a conversation between friends respectively. Compared to Tichafa's letter above, there is nothing syntactically wrong with these speeches. However, they are still instances of hypercorrected behaviour *par excellence*, hypercorrection towards the norms and code of the native speaker of English. For example, the hypercorrection in Nwemba's speech derives from malapropism ('spectators,' 'assassinated'), and highfaluting polysyllabic words ('peregrinations,' 'visitation,' 'mastication,' etc.). While the hypercorrection in Marimba's speech derives from the same sources ('good salubrity,' 'symptoms of mobosity,' 'to peregrinate, perambulate, to vamoose instantly,' 'loquacious, garrulous, voluble homo') (MO 126, 129), that of Gore derives from mimicry of colonial discourse. In this direction, the narrator informs us that Gore, the speaker, forgets "not only to acknowledge his indebtedness to Booker T. Washington, but also to apologise for so mercilessly mutilating the famous Atlanta Exposition Address" (MO 101).

Nevertheless, in their grotesque attempt to reproduce colonial discourse and thus deny their African identity, these speakers make a caricature of themselves. In terms of gain-loss theory, what Tichafa, Mwemba, Gore, and Marimba gain by moving in the direction of British norms they lose by counter-identifying with their Zimbabwean cultural identity. Ironically, however, in the post-colonial context, it would appear that the colonized relish this kind of linguistic behaviour which constitutes a veritable yardstick for measuring knowledgeability and learnedness. According to the narrator, "As far as they [the speakers' audience] were concerned, the more incomprehensible [the] English was, the more learned was the speaker. The less they could understand it, the more they liked it and thought it good" (*MO* 101).

In certain contexts, English is a symbol not only of new inter-ethnic social stratifications, but also of the cultural alienation of the educated and elitist class in post-colonial societies. Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* provides classical examples of this predicament. For example, when Nyasha and Chido, Tambu's cousins, return from England, their use of English, coupled with their adherence to British cultural norms, becomes the marker of their social distance from Tambu's family. As Tambu laments: "I had been looking forward to having my cousins back so that things would be fun and friendly and warm as they had been in the old days, but it was not happening that way" (43).

Moreover, at the Catholic convent school, Nyasha feels culturally alienated because she speaks a kind of English that approximates the British accent or RP. Nyasha laments that the girls in her school "do not like my language, my English, because it is authentic and my Shona, because it is not! They think I am a snob, that I think I am superior to them" (196). Nyasha is not alone in this predicament as her problem is typical also of monolingual speakers of English who just happen to be Africans. As many African linguistic scholars have pointed out, a native speaker's model such as RP (Received Pronunciation) or GA (General American) is not accepted

without reservations in Africa. For example, Ayo Bamgbose has emphasized that “Many Nigerians will consider as affected or even snobbish any Nigerians who speak like a native speaker of English” (41). In Ghana, another West African nation, Kofi Sey cautions that although ‘educated’ Ghanaian English is acceptable, it does not entail competence in speaking RP since in Ghana “the type that strives too obviously to approximate RP is frowned upon as distasteful and pedantic” (1).

Similarly, when Nhamo, Tambu’s brother, goes to live with Babamukuru for one year, the kind of colonial education he receives makes him increasingly culturally alienated from his family. As the narrator says, “he was no longer the same person” (52). The narrator explains Nhamo’s schizoglossia in the following way:

He had forgotten how to speak Shona. A few words escaped haltingly, ungrammatically and strangely accented when he spoke to my mother, but he did not speak to her very often any more. He talked most fluently with my father. They had long conversations in English, which Nhamo broke into small, irregular syllables and which my father chopped into smaller and even rougher phonemes. Father was pleased with Nhamo’s command of the English language. He said it was the first step in the family’s emancipation since we could all improve our language by practising on Nhamo. (52-53)

Nhamo’s father is not conscious of the English language as creating a social distance between Nhamo and the rest of the family: “The more time Nhamo spent at Babamukuru’s, the more aphasic he became and the more my father was convinced that he was being educated” (53). Nhamo’s type of linguistic aphasia also afflicts the nameless narrator of *The House of Hunger*:

I was losing my grasp of simple speech. . . . I was being severed from my own voice. I would listen to it as to a still, small voice coming from the huge distances of the mind. It was like this: English is my second

language, Shona my first. When I talked it was in the form of an interminable argument, one side of which was always expressed in English and the other side always in Shona. At the same time I would be aware of myself as something indistinct but separate from both cultures. I felt gagged by this absurd contest between Shona and English. I knew no other language. (30)

Nyasha's, Nhamo's, and Marechera's narrator's linguistic behaviour is symptomatic of what has become known as 'subtractive bilingualism' whereby "competence in the foreign language is acquired, but only at the expense of the native language" (Ng and Bradac 179). The authors summarize the pitfalls of subtractive bilingualism for colonized subjects thus:

There are . . . psychological costs associated with becoming monolingual in the dominator's language. To the extent that language is connected to one's self-identity, the dominated party may lose or fail to gain an authentic sense of self through the use of the dominator's language. In the extreme case, one may see identification with the oppressor. In such a situation the dominated party lives in a world out of joint, a world that conduces to a schizoid stance toward self in the context of events. (180)

Paradoxically, while these characters' fathers and male mentors approve of a convergence between English and Shona languages and cultures in the social and psychological development of their wards, their mothers and other female mentors, like Shamiso in *Harvest of Thorns*, favour a divergence from English cultural norms. In the case of Nyasha, however, the exception is Maiguri, her mother, perhaps because she had been acculturated in certain British norms during her sojourn in England. For example, the narrator's mother in *The House of Hunger* resists English. She once chided him for speaking to her in English: "How dare you speak English to me. . . .

You know I don't understand it, and if you think because you're educated . . .' She hit him again" (13). The mother's repudiation of English has the desired effect on the narrator: "I jumped up and rushed back into the room, and dragging my box from under the bed took out my English exercise-books and began to tear them up with a great childish violence" (13-14).

Similarly, Ma'Shingayi, Tambu's mother, believes that it is 'Englishness' that is creating a socio-cultural and psychological gulf between her and her children, her most valuable asset: "It's the Englishness. . . It'll kill them all if they aren't careful. . . Look at them. That boy Chido can hardly speak a word of his own mother's tongue, and you'll see, his children will be worse. . . The problem is the Englishness, so just be careful!" (NC 202-3). Tambu could follow her mother's trend of thought. Although her mother did not mention Nhamo in talking about Englishness, "I knew she was thinking about him and I could see she considered me a victim too" (NC 203).

On the one hand, these female characters repudiate English because they see Shona language and culture as a chief symbol of the family's identity. For example, regarding intergroup relations, H. Tajfel has argued that members of a group are led by interactions with other groups to seek qualities of their own group which can serve to differentiate themselves favourably from the outgroup (65, cited in Ryan 149). Consequently, for these female characters, Shona language and culture are markers of positive in-group distinctiveness which allows for a positive social identity, as well as satisfaction with their own group membership. In rejecting English language and culture, these female characters also resist the colonizing experience.

In psychoanalytical terms, these female characters' valorization of Shona language may be owing to their attempt to "recreate in language their own original relationship with the excluded and negated subjectivity located in their bodies" (Ashcroft "Intersecting Marginalities" 28). In "Intersecting Marginalities," Ashcroft cites Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (1985) as arguing that woman's language is the

vernacular (29). They further go on to claim that the vernacular, the mother tongue, spoken by women and children and suppressed by the formalized father tongue, is indeed a woman's language.

On the other hand, however, these female characters' conscious psycho/sociolinguistic subversion of the English language puts them in a double bind. Their decision to subvert the hegemony of English means that they are, in essence, devaluing English not only as a vehicle of law, commerce, and education, but also as an instrument of social mobility in the Zimbabwean context. Although in most cases African women are not responsible for their own subjugation because the patriarchal culture teaches them to be the guardians of their culture, the female characters' reluctance to accept English as a symbol of social mobility is one of the reasons many women in Africa remain domesticated and are confined to the private sphere of influence today. After all, in *Nervous Conditions*, for example, a character like Maiguru is highly educated as she holds the degree of "Master of Philosophy" (97), and, in the same novel, Lucia, in spite of "six-month pregnancy," decided that "she was going to school to Grade One in the evenings" (160). The fallacy of the female characters' position also stems from their belief "in an essential cultural purity which can be recovered as the focus of national and cultural identity" (Ashcroft "Intersecting Marginalities" 31). However, in post-colonial societies today, the syncretic and hybridized nature of post-colonial experience refutes the notion that cultural practices can be returned to a precolonial condition, or that the use of vernacular languages might re-establish such authenticity (Ashcroft *et al.* 41-42). Nevertheless, the strength of the women's position inheres in the fact that their devaluation of the oppressor's language, which has accumulated at the expense of their own indigenous languages, is consistent with socialist revolutionary aims. Moreover, their insistence on vernacular usage underscores the value of the indigenous languages, thus enhancing their capital. According to gain-loss theory, therefore, what these women lose in terms of upward

social mobility which an English education affords, they gain by consciously identifying with their Shona cultural identity.

Like the female characters mentioned above, members of the dominated classes in Zimbabwe sometimes employ the basilectal form of Zimbabwean English as a counter-hegemonic discursive strategy in the Zimbabwean context. For example, in *The Mourned One*, despite the fact that certain characters “were advised not to expose their ignorance with their own ‘peculiar’ brand of the king’s language, as this would be offensive to the students who spoke and sang English so well” (93-4), a member of the dominated groups was heard to say:

‘Does matter, Roki! Soziberi is suffer town. Burawayo presure prez. Anyway, so rongo raif, suffer is nothing!’ (It doesn’t matter, Buddy! Salisbury is a town of suffering; Bulawayo of pleasure. Anyway, as long as one is alive, suffering is nothing!) (94).⁶

In the social interaction above, the tenor/social relations between the speaker and Waddilove students are hierarchic, while their social distance is maximal. The speaker’s basilectal English thus exposes the tension and conflict between the dominant and dominated classes in Zimbabwe. For the speaker and his friends, the fact that these students are undergoing colonial education symbolizes that they are agents of neo-colonialism, hence their dominant status. In this experience domain, therefore, the basilectal code not only marks the ‘speech divergence’ between the dominated and dominant groups in the Zimbabwean context, but also becomes a code that symbolizes the solidarity of the dominated class.

English does not function in all contexts as an adversarial language or a repressive form of discourse. In fact, in certain contexts, English is used as an instrument of ‘accommodation’ or ‘speech convergence’ between the colonized and the colonizer in Zimbabwe. Generally, an African who seeks to interact with the colonizer and who conceptualizes the English language as a symbol of social mobility has to

coopt the language into her or his own sociolinguistic behaviour. For example, conscious of this fact, the narrator, in *The Mourned One*, employs English as an accommodation strategy when he tells the white Native Commissioner, "I have come to get a Registration Certificate" (109). However, as indicated earlier, the white commissioner, who sees English only in terms of its connotation of power and as a reflector of social differences, repudiates the narrator's attempt to use English as a tactic of neutrality.

In contrast to this commissioner's linguistic behaviour is that of other white characters in the novels who consciously use English as an accommodation strategy, thereby minimizing racial conflicts and misunderstandings between themselves and their African interlocutors. For example, Tichafa's boss has the option of interacting with him in chiraparapa (also known as Silapalalapa), a pidgin language. In fact, he displays a competence in this language when he once tells Tichafa, "Wena buya tomorrow, Mfazi" (*HT* 32). Nonetheless, in the following extract of a social interaction between Clopas Tichafa and his white boss, English ultimately fulfills an integrative function:

'All right, Clopas. What's the problem?'

'This woman she is for to wanting to have a bath certificate for her son, Baas.'

The young white man laughed again and shook his head. A snicker ran down the line. Clopas grinned.

'Why isn't she in the queue with all the others?'

'S'begging your pudding Baas.'

'Begging my *what*?'

'Pudding, Baas.'

'*Pardon?*'

'Yes Baas. Pardon, Baas.'

'I wish my mom could hear this. She thinks our cook speaks rotten English! I said why isn't she in the queue. The queue, Clopas, the *line?*' (HT 31, original emphasis)

Despite the British bureaucratic emphasis on orderliness and protocol, and the white boss's pejoration of Tichafa's basilectal English, the speech convergence between them ensures the boss's consent that "'She can come for the birth certificate tomorrow'" (HT 32).

Compare the foregoing example with the following from *Harvest of Thorns* where the white farmer, Mellecker, actually code-mixes his English with chiraparapa in his verbal exchange with Msindo, his African foreman:

'That you, Msindo?'

'Yes Baas, me Baas.'

'What d'you want?'

'*Mina buyire buza small fevha Baas,*' he snaps into Chiraparapa. . . .

'You think jobs grow on trees, eh? What about the two dollars I gave you last month? *Hini wena enza, msindo? Wena kumbula fanika pickanniny skati zonke.*'

'No, Baas. Jus' asking Baas.'

'Ho'right. *Hamba karokhaya, Mina chere wena tomorrow.*' (HT 161)

As a result of the verbal accommodation between Mellecker and Msindo, the latter is told on successive occasions that "he has been given a two-dollar raise, or one of his sons has been awarded a job with the cows, or that as foreman he has been allowed to build himself a house with a corrugated iron roof in the compound where all the other huts are built of grass" (HT 161). I would like to emphasize, however, that although English is the means by which Tichafa and Msindo are assured social mobility, it is simultaneously the same instrument that perpetuates their economic exploitation and social subjugation.

Although Mary Turner, in *The Grass is Singing*, has never felt the need to interrogate white racism in Rhodesia, her depression forces her into dependence on Moses, her black servant. Consequently, despite her inveterate hatred of blacks and her awareness of the asymmetrical power relations between whites and blacks, she adopts an accommodating verbal strategy when she realizes that she has no choice but to live with Moses: “Without looking at her, he said: ‘I do the work well, yes?’ *He spoke in English, which as a rule she would have flared into temper over; she thought it impertinence.* But she answered in English, ‘Yes.’” (189, my emphasis). By virtue of the speech convergence between Mary and Moses, “the formal pattern of black-and-white, mistress-and-servant, had been broken” (GS 177-8). Paradoxically, in terms of double bind, her personal relationship with Moses only tends to aggravate her sense of paranoia. According to Sheila Roberts, Mary’s contact with Moses “forms a multiplex of repulsion and attraction, anger and gratitude, passivity and fear -- fear being the strongest affect” (78).

This chapter has described and analyzed the linguistic texturing, nativization strategies, and the power and politics of English in Zimbabwean literature. As has been pointed out, although the linguistic texturing in the novels is characterized by a conservatism in language practice, linguistic texturing in Zimbabwean literature must be viewed in terms of a continuum. The linguistic devices Zimbabwean writers use to contextualize the English language in their respective cultures pertain to loan-words, lexico-semantics, lexical transfer or borrowing, and syntax. Finally, the power and politics of English in Zimbabwean literature inheres in how English is often employed to constitute a repressive form of discourse, how the colonized are able to marshal various counter-discursive strategies against the dominant discourses of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperial cultural hegemony, how the use or suppressed use of English becomes a tactic for accentuating the social and communicative distance

between the colonizer and the colonized, how English becomes an instrument creating new social stratification among the colonized in the Zimbabwean context, and how the use of English functions as a strategy of speech convergence or divergence not only between the colonizer and the colonized, but also among the different classes of the colonized themselves. These sociolinguistic features provide the frames of reference for similar analysis in Trinbagonian literature in the next chapter.

NOTES

¹After excerpts, the novels will be identified as follows: *TC*, *MO*, *NC*, *HT*, *HH*, and *GS*. References to 'Zimbabwean literature' strictly mean "Zimbabwean literature studied in this dissertation."

²Francoise Lionnet employs the term *métissage* to characterize "the dilemmas of all those who must survive (and write) in the interval between different cultures and languages" (1). She thus defines *métissage* in cultural terms as the "braiding of cultural forms through the simultaneous revalorization of oral traditions and reevaluation of Western concepts" (4), or the syncretic blending of "orality and literacy, speech and writing" (4). She defines *métissage* in political terms as "the site of undecidability and indeterminacy, where solidarity becomes the fundamental principle of political action against hegemonic languages" (6), and as an enabling metaphor with revolutionary potential, "a concept of solidarity which demystifies all essentialist glorifications of unitary origins, be they racial, sexual, geographic, or cultural" (9). However, with particular reference to linguistic texturing in Samkange's *On Trial for My Country*, *métissage* is taken to mean "the constant interaction, the transmutation between two or more cultural components, with the unconscious goal of creating a third cultural entity -- in other words, a culture -- that is new and independent even though rooted in the preceding elements" (Lionnet 15).

³In systemic-functional grammar, material processes represent 'doings' or goal-directed actions.

⁴I am grateful to Anna Mary Mambo, who incidentally is Stanlake Samkange's cousin, for providing me with translations of, and useful information on, the Shona language.

⁵The two terms ISAs (Ideological State Apparatuses) and RSAs (Repressive State Apparatuses) were coined by the French Marxist philosopher, Louis Althusser, in his influential book, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971). According to Althusser, RSAs are the complex of coercive or regulatory forces available to and directly under the control of the state. They include the penal system, the police, the army, the legislature and government administration. ISAs, on the other hand, are various social institutions that arise within civil society (the sphere of the private, as opposed to the state). They too perform regulatory functions, and reproduce ideology 'on behalf of' the state. They include education, the family, religion, the legal system, the party-political system, culture, and communication (O'Sullivan *et al.* 143-144).

‘This translation to standard English is Stanlake Samkange’s.

CHAPTER FOUR
ENGLISH IN SELECTED TEXTS OF TRINIDADIAN
AND TOBAGAN LITERATURE

This chapter addresses the issues discussed in the last chapter but with reference to the Trinidadian and Tobagan (Trinbagonian) context. The comparative nature of the dissertation becomes evident as this chapter examines English in the Trinbagonian context by constantly looking back to the postulates and analysis undertaken in the last chapter. The texts that form the basis of the analysis in this chapter are *V.S. Naipaul's A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961); Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956); Earl Lovelace's *The Dragon Can't Dance* (1979); Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack, Monkey* (1970); and Marlene Nourbese Philip's *Looking for Livingstone: An Odyssey of Silence* (1991).¹

As is the case with Zimbabwean literature, Trinbagonian literature is also post-colonial in the general sense that it attempts "to unweave the complex structures put in place by colonizer and colonized . . . to discuss how subjects are constituted now that the colonial powers no longer have overt, political control" (McWilliams 102-103). Kenneth Ramchand provides a helpful summary of the major concerns of West Indian novelists, although his view discountenances the politics of gender in the West Indian context. According to him, West Indian writers are also concerned with "an analysis and interpretation of their society's ills, including the social and economic deprivation of the majority; the pervasive consciousness of race and colour; the cynicism and uncertainty of the native bourgeoisie in power after independence; the lack of a history to be proud of; and the absence of traditional or settled values" (*West Indian Novel* 4).

Ramchand goes on to claim that "If, however, the social consciousness of writers from the islands draws attention to itself as a peculiarly interesting matter, it is worth suggesting at once that this social consciousness is not class-consciousness"

(*West Indian Novel* 4). Apart from the fact that it is difficult to dichotomize the race/class hierarchies in the Caribbean context, many critics believe that class-consciousness forms part of the “angst of identity” (Gilkes 96), in West Indian literature. According to Evelyn O’Callaghan:

Given the Caribbean’s history of colonization, and the ubiquitous ‘quest for identity’ theme in its literature, it is hardly surprising that the . . . writing too is concerned with the influences of race and class hierarchies, the legacy of slavery and colonial hegemony. However, the women writers *also* note how race and class inform socialization into gender, and what problems result. (*Woman Version* 3, original emphasis)

Discussing novels published in the 1930s to the 1960s, Margaret Bass also notes that “Since the characters [in West Indian literature] believe that they have no roots, they define themselves only in terms of race, gender, and social class. No character [in Alfred Mendes’ *Pitch Lake*, Edgar Mittelholzer’s *Corentyne Thunder*, Roger Mais’ *The Hills Were Joyful Together*, and Jean Rhys’ *Wide Sargasso Sea*, for example] defines himself or herself as West Indian, and that is an important omission” (128-129).

A crucial difference between Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures is that while the function of ‘race’ in the former inheres in the manichean opposition between the colonizer and the colonized, the same function is more complexly nuanced in the latter. According to Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, the inquiry “‘What is my colour, what is my race?’ is more complex in the West Indies than in other settings” (*Homecoming* 104). Margaret Bass comments further on the problem of ‘race’ in West Indian literature: “The centuries of intermingling and intermarriage among the races in the West Indies has intensified the ‘angst of identity.’ ‘White’ characters in the novels vociferously

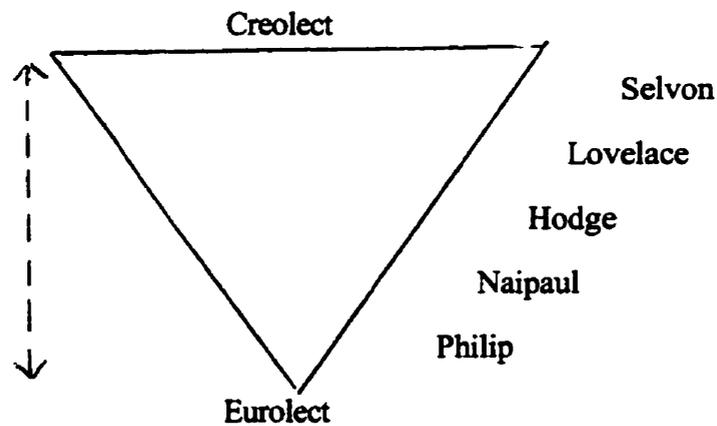
proclaim their racial purity. For people of colour, the question of ethnic heritage becomes more complicated” (129).

V.S. Naipaul claims that West Indians divide people into categories of “white, fusty, musty, dusty, tea, coffee, cocoa, light black, black and dark black” (*Middle Passage* 68). What O.R. Dathorne calls the “polygenous races” (9) translate into the hodge-podge of people of European, African, East Indian, Chinese, Spanish, and Portuguese descent that make up the complex Trinbagonian history and socioscape. However, as George Lamming cautions in *The Pleasures of Exile*, “The list [of races] is always incomplete, but they all move and meet on an unfamiliar soil, in a violent rhythm of race and religion” (17).

4.1 LINGUISTIC TEXTURING IN THE NOVELS

Another critical difference between Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures is the conservative nature of the linguistic practice in the former. As noted in the last chapter, for example, whereas Zimbabwean writers often maintain a rigid distinction between the language of narration (acrolect) and the language of the fictional character (mesolect and basilect in certain instances), there is often an abrogation of the semiotic distance between the lects in Trinbagonian literature. Jean D’Costa thus recognizes the “fusion of differing linguistic and generic codes . . . [as] the primary challenge to the [Caribbean] writer” (“Bra Rabbit” 259), while Carolyn Cooper has referred to the need for bridging “the usual stylistic distance between the Caribbean writer and his [sic] indigenous audience, between the oral and the scribal cultures” (21). However, V.S. Naipaul “achieve[s] effects of incongruity by stressing differences between the two voices [the language of narration and the language of the fictional character]” (Ramchand *West Indian Novel* 102).

Like their Zimbabwean counterparts, Trinbagonian novelists can also be ranged along a sociolinguistic continuum in terms of the general linguistic experimentation in their texts as follows:



As explained in the previous chapter, Eurolect refers to a language and style influenced considerably by European literature, linguistic forms, and culture. In the Trinbagonian context, Creolelect is the cover term I use for a content, form, and style that exhibit influences from Creole languages, society, and culture, with special reference to a re-evaluation of the East Indian or the African cultural heritage.

Concerning Creolelect, for example, Edward Kamau Brathwaite distinguishes four types of “African influenced writing” in the Caribbean (“The African Presence” 112). The first is ‘Rhetorical Africa,’ for example, some aspects of Walcott’s *Makak* in *Dream on Monkey Mountain* or Prospect in Lovelace’s *The Dragon Cant’Dance*, where the writer uses Africa as a mask, signal, or *nomen*, invoking a dream of the Congo, Senegal, Niger, the Zulu, Nile, Zambesi, and so on. The second is ‘The Literature of African Survival,’ for example, Ananse stories, a literature which inheres in the folk tradition -- in folk tale, folksong, proverb, and imagery. This kind of literature deals quite consciously with African survivals in Caribbean society, but without necessarily making any attempt to interpret or reconnect them with the great tradition of Africa. The third is ‘The Literature of African Expression’ which has its root in the folk, and which attempts to adapt or transform folk material into literary experiment; examples of this category will include Andrew Salkey’s or Louise Bennett’s Ananse tales. Finally, there is ‘The Literature of Reconnection,’ for example, Brathwaite’s *The Arrivants*, written by Caribbean writers who have lived in Africa and are attempting to relate that

experience to the New World, or who are consciously reaching out to rebridge the gap with the spiritual heartland.

Philip's *Looking for Livingstone* is highly Eurolectal in form and style because the Caribbean demotic that is interspersed with the essay and poetry of *She Tries Her Tongue* is virtually non-existent in the former work. In fact, her pangeneric style in *Looking for Livingstone* has confounded critics as to how to classify the work generically. For example, the publisher, Mercury Press, presented the work as "a novel, and some reviewers have followed suit. It certainly tells a story, but it is written in highly poetic prose and interspersed with poems. . . . Philip herself termed *Looking for Livingstone* a narrative in prose and poetry" (Savory "Philip" 302).

Philip's linguistic deviation, especially in graphology, is reminiscent of the stylistic experimentation traceable to the writings of such British and American poets as George Herbert, Gerald Manley Hopkins, and e.e. cummings. Although *Looking for Livingstone* has been described as "a complex exploration of the nature of the relation of language to power and gender and racial identity" (Savory "Philip" 303), the only suggestions that one is reading a book that has a Creolelect content emanating from 'Rhetorical Africa' are onomastics such as Kalahari, Timbuctoo, Mosioantunya, and Zambesi. However, African male names are downplayed in the text while the various African female names -- Bellune, Chareem, Mama Once, Marphan, Arwhal -- are representative of the various "Women's cultures [which] give her [the protagonist] sustenance and the learning she needs for her quest" (Savory "Philip" 303). The text thus emphasizes physical and spiritual bonding among women and, as Carol Morrell indicates, for example, "The 'NEECLIS' episode . . . takes the narrator into a love relationship with the weaver/needlewoman Arwhal. This is a departure from the heterosexual relations of Philip's women" (19-20).

A striking feature of *Looking for Livingstone* is the valorization of silence which, "like the subsumed woman, is chosen as a positive value and potential strength"

(Morrell 19). The anagrammatic play on SILENCE -- NEECLIS, ECLENIS, LENSECI, SCENILE -- suggests the regenerative value of silence itself. This view on the power of silence is similar to the use of silence as resistance strategy by black characters in Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* noted in the previous chapter. The protagonist affirms at one point: "in finding my own Silence I was finding my own power -- of transformation" (LFL 54). Arwhal advises her to weave "something new," composed of "word and silence":

' . . . neither word alone, nor silence alone, but word and silence -- weave, patch, sew together and remember it is *your* silence -- all yours, untouched and uncorrupted. The word does not belong to you -- it was owned and whored by others long, long before you set out on your travels -- whore words.' Then she laughed. But to use your silence, you have to use the word.'

'Whore words?' I asked.

'Yes, and there's the rub, my dear,' she said, and gently drew me close and held me -- 'there's the rub -- you need the word -- whore words -- to weave your silence.' (LFL 52-53)

In the final analysis, Philip's linguistic repertoire is complicated by her long-time Canadian residence, her wide reading, and her professional years as a lawyer.

Linguistic texturing in Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas* is based on a system of oppositions between the Eurolect and Creolect, invariably privileging the former. This is not surprising because as Bruce King points out, Naipaul "has an unusually precise command of the English language, of its various registers, and is fascinated by regional, technical, and amusing uses" (2), and he "brought the West Indian novel into the mainstream of contemporary English language fiction" (14). As indicated earlier, his writing exhibits a difference between the language of narration and the dialogue of

fictional characters, with Naipaul maintaining a stylistic distance from Creole, which is only attested in the speech repertoire of the characters.

A House for Mr. Biswas also displays a difference between English and Creole-based lexicon. For example, the ethnolexemes and Hindi-based lexical items (examples of the latter include *dhoti*, *roti*, *mai*, *nakphul*, *puja*, and *chamar*) have to negotiate the same textual terrain with certain “non-core words” of the acrolectal varieties of English (Carter 180) or “obscure vocabulary” (Quirk *et al. Comprehensive Grammar* 987) such as *prognathous*, *lymphatic*, *lugubriousness*, *hypochondria*, *thaumaturge*, *inaneities*, *mellifluously*, and *ducoed*. Finally, while *A House for Mr. Biswas* is “a study of West Indian society, a record of the Asian Indians in Trinidad and an imaginative reconstruction of the life of Naipaul’s father” (King 46), Biswas’s consciousness of himself as an Indian and of his heritage is mediated by colonial texts which seem to validate the imperial moment; the consciousness of the novel’s protagonist is formed and conditioned in part by colonial discourses such as H.G. Well’s *The History of Mr. Polly*, *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*, *Macdougall’s Grammar*, *Bell’s Standard Elocutionist*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Tales from Shakespeare*.

Furthermore, as I will show later in this chapter, the linguistic interplay between English and Hindi is very prominent in *A House for Mr. Biswas*. For example, through narrative comments, the reader understands that the speech of Indian characters, although conveyed in English words, is translated from an Hindi original.

Merle Hodge’s *Crick Crack, Monkey* marks a shift from a distinction between the language of narration and the language of fictional characters to an abrogation of the boundary between the two codes. The orality of the novel is accentuated as the writer strives to represent the Trinbagonian culture through the deployment of oral storytelling formulas (e.g., ‘Crick, crack’), Ananse characters, folk-tales, traditional maxims, and context-sensitive imagery. Unlike Philip and Naipaul, Hodge is able to

integrate the dialect, tone and style of characters into the narrative idiom through “The use of a first-person narrative voice [which] allows her to move smoothly from standard Trinidadian English, used for much of the narrative, into recorded speech” (Gerschel 74). The following passage is typical of the novel’s abrogation of the privilege of formal English over the means of communication:

Tantie raged all evening. An’ she had a mind not to give us anything to eat because allyu belly must be done full wid that bitch ice-cream and sweetie . . . She reiterated for the hundredth time what could have happened to us: we had jus’ nearly get we arse kidnap’! (CM 12)

Hodge also has a keen ear for the variations relating to the Trinbagonian sociolinguistic continuum. For example, she captures very well variations ranging from the affectedly anglicized linguistic behaviour of Auntie Beatrice, Ma’s biblical adaptations and maxims, Sir’s pompous and overbearing discourse, to the shop-keeper’s and Mrs. Harper’s creolisms.

Linguistic texturing in Earl Lovelace’s *The Dragon Can’t Dance* is marked by an intensification of the abrogation of the linguistic boundary between the so-called standard English and Creole. According to Carolyn Cooper:

The rhetorical virtuosity of *The Dragon Can’t Dance*, like the exuberant art of the Carnival masquerade, affirms the careful craftsmanship of the novelist. Lovelace, employing a Caribbean folk form, the Carnival as subject, and the lucid language of ordinary discourse as artistic medium, narrows the usual stylistic distance between the Caribbean writer and his indigenous audience, between the oral and the scribal cultures. (21)

The following passage is typical of the linguistic merger between Creole and formal English:

All Ah We Is One. Last year Casablanca and Rising Sun got their sponsors, and even Tokyo came on the streets wearing the colours of

Matta and Matta, and with these strange people among them.
Everybody friendly, everybody nice, everybody well behaved, and men
like Harry and Tommy Gun and Slip-away grinning, and walking
behind the band. (*DD* 82)

Lovelace also has a sharp ear for the rhythms, dialects, and tones of Trinbagonian speech, which Carolyn Cooper identifies as evident, for example, in the “long resonant sentences of the oracular omniscient narrator,” “the rhythmic energy of Lovelace’s evocation of the calypso dance, that enacts in its repetitive syntactical structure the action of the dance,” “the voices of the ordinary people, voices that have their stylistic roots in the calypso genre . . . its use of picong -- the art of sustained verbal insult -- its witty word play,” and “the satirized language of a ‘professor of English at the University of West Indies,’ explaining the significance of the calypsonian’s art in a bookish English unintelligible to the calypsonian” (Cooper 18, 19-20). Finally, Lovelace can be characterized as a writer whose work is influenced by what Brathwaite calls ‘Rhetorical Africa,’ as explained earlier. In this respect, *The Dragon Can’t Dance* bristles with references to African names such as Shango, Manzanilla, Congo, Dahomey, and Ghana.

As in *The Dragon Can’t Dance*, linguistic texturing in Sam Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* is marked by the author’s “ear for the oral and rhythmic qualities of Trinidadian colloquial speech” (Nasta 8). Although Vic Reid, in *New Day*, is the first West Indian writer to use dialect as the language of narration, Selvon’s linguistic practice in this respect is generally judged more successful and influential. Selvon thus “flouts the sociolinguistic conventions of his time. He refuses to place his fiction within the ‘diglossic’ sociolinguistic framework of Caribbean society” (Mair 146). The second paragraph of the novel alerts the reader to the linguistic interweaving of Creole with the narrative idiom:

When Moses sit down and pay his fare he take out a white handkerchief and blow his nose. The handkerchief turn black and Moses watch it and curse the fog. He wasn't in a good mood and the fog wasn't doing anything to help the situation. He had was to get up from a nice warm bed and dress and come out in this nasty weather to go and meet a fellar that he didn't even know. That was the hurtful part of it -- is not as if this fellar is his brother or cousin or even friend; he don't know the man from Adam. But he get a letter from a friend in Trinidad who say that this fellar coming by the SS *Hilderbrand*, and if he could please meet him at the station in London, and help him until he get settled. (LL 23)

Consequently, Selvon's linguistic deviation from BE in *The Lonely Londoners* "constitutes a kind of mixing and alternation of standard and dialectal elements which allow the narrative point of view to accommodate to the shifting voices of the storyteller, as is the case in ordinary conversation among the 'lonely Londoners' trying to maintain a link between their Caribbean homeland and English society" (Wyke 38). In relation to sociolinguistic variation in Selvon's novels, Stephen Bernhardt has observed that

Selvon adroitly presents characters who style shift across a range of the dialect continuum, depending on the social constraints of the varying situations in which they find themselves. . . . [O]ther characters, because of their education, social status, work experience, or family teaching are able to vary their speech to control social relations, to establish shared identities, to create humorous effects, and to comment metalinguistically on their own or others' behaviour. (366)

4.2 NATIVIZATION STRATEGIES

Because of the extensive creolization of the English language in the Trinbagonian context -- in fact, some theorists claimed that Trinbagonian Creole “had *decreolized*, that is, moved in the direction of standard English so much that it was no longer recognizably separate” (Winer “Trinbagonian” 17, original emphasis) -- it is futile to talk about loan-words in the Trinbagonian literary context. Except for West Indian literature’s exhibiting *semantic underdifferentiation*, the processes of abrogating and appropriating the linguistic categories of the imperial culture to make English words bear the burden of Trinbagonian cultural experience, are similar to those noted in Zimbabwean English in the previous chapter. I will discuss lexico-semantic variation in Trinbagonian literature by defining and exemplifying the category of semantic underdifferentiation. However, since I have already defined the other categories with reference to Zimbabwean literature, they will only be exemplified in this section. The data compiled on the novels selected for study suggest that categories of lexico-semantic duplication, conversion, and coinage are more productive in the Trinbagonian context.

Semantic underdifferentiation occurs as Trinbagonian writers subvert the collocational rules or rules of selection restrictions in English. For example, collocation, in systemic-functional grammar, refers to the “co-occurrence tendency” among certain lexical items (Halliday *Functional Grammar* 312). Collocational theory itself is traceable to John Firth’s argument that “You shall know a word by the company it keeps” (195). For Firth, this keeping company was part of the meaning of a word. Following Firth and Halliday, several systemic linguists have written at length on the subject. They insist that “Collocation is an important concept to have in mind when studying the language of literature” (Spencer and Gregory 79). Spencer and Gregory further specify that

Collocation is set up to account for the tendency of certain items in a language to occur close to each other, a tendency not completely explained by the grammar. For example, the item *economy* is likely to occur in the same linguistic environment as items such as *affairs, policy, plan, program, disaster, etc.* These items are termed the collocates of *economy* which because it is the item under examination is itself termed the nodal item. (78, original emphasis)

The subversion of collocational rules might be the result of the superimposition of West African languages on English in the Trinbagonian context. As I noted in chapter two, many West Africans were taken as slaves to the West Indies during the 17th and 18th centuries. According to Peter Roberts:

The slaves themselves came predominantly from West Africa, but one can deal only in generalities when trying to pinpoint the exact sources in West Africa. In the 17th century the majority of slaves are said to have been taken from the coastal area from modern Senegal to Sierra Leone. In the 18th century, the most important period for the West Indies, the majority are said to have come from the coastal area from modern Liberia to Nigeria. (112)

Usages noted under the category of semantic underdifferentiation thus epitomize the survival of West African languages in the Trinbagonian context. For example, the Yoruba language, spoken in Nigéria, does not distinguish between the English pair *borrow/lend*, both words being realized as *ya* in the language.

In a complex sociolinguistic situation such as that of Trinidad and Tobago, English and other local languages must have reciprocal influence on one another. Consequently, the influence of East Indian languages, especially Hindi, is also possible. As I pointed out in chapter two, Hindi-Bhojpuri continues to have an important lexical impact on the local English of Trinbagonians. For example, in his

study of South Asian English, Braj Kachru has observed that rules of selection restrictions are not adhered to in Indian English (“English in South Asia” 520). Kachru gives the following example: “The Baluchistan Clerks Association has *announced to take out* a procession” (‘. . .has announced to form a procession’).

Examples of semantic underdifferentiation noted in Trinbagonian literature include the following:

‘Draw your photo now.’ (HMB 34)

(BE = ‘Take your picture now’; *draw/take* realized in Yoruba as *ya*)

‘He used to study *doctor*.’ (HMB 173)

(BE = *medicine*; *doctor/medicine* realized in Yoruba as *isegun*)

‘That fat man was trying to *thief* my money.’ (HMB 285)

(*steal*: usage also found in DD 137, and LL 42, 114)

‘What *o’clock* is it?’ (HMB 429)

(*time*; *time/o’clock* realized in Yoruba as *ago*)

‘I *hot* some water quick.’ (LL 71)

(*warmed* or *boiled*; *hot/boiled* realized in Yoruba as *gbona*)

Moses help Big City to *full up* the forms. (LL 96)

(*fill*: *full/fill* collapsed in Yoruba as *kun*; examples also found in DD 232; HMB 175, 279)

‘I could *dead* any time.’ (DD 87)

(*die*: *dead/die* realized in Yoruba as *ku*; however, this usage could also have resulted from the deletion of the linking verb *be*)

The exemplification of other categories follows.

Loanshift:

. . . we heard his step in the *gallery*. (CM 9)

(“front porch” [Winer *Trinidad and Tobago* 146]; usage also attested in HMB 88)

'He is a real *smart man*.' (HMB 61)

(a ridiculous person; usage also found in DD 85)

'How the hell all-you get so *fresh* and conceited?' (HMB 84)

("bold and impertinent" [*Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* 243]²)

The *sardines* were dry, the onion offended him. (HMB 85)

(As explained by Lise Winer, whereas in BE *sardine* is "a small silvery marine fish," in Trinbagonian English, it is "a small silvery freshwater fish" [*Trinidad and Tobago* 54])

He was invited to lunch in the *hall*. (HMB 93)

("The drawing-room or sitting-room of a house [as distinct from its gallery or galleries] in which guests are entertained" [*DCEU* 280])

At the *barracks* there were no apples. (HMB 215)

(a *barrack* is "A long, low building raised on short, wooden pillars and consisting of several adjacent rooms under one roof, in each of which is lodged a labourer and his family on a sugar or cocoa plantation, or in urban slums" [*DCEU* 82])

The school had taken the first four places and won seven of the twelve *exhibitions*. (HMB 488)

(competitive examinations for entrance and scholarships into high schools)

It was a big *ballad* in all the papers. (LL 29)

(story or news)

'I don't want to start *antsing* on the State unless I have to.' (LL 41)

(to depend upon somebody or something; in North American English *antsy* is an adjective that means "full of nervous energy, fidgety, nervous, impatient" [*Webster's* 62])

... any bus going up towards Paddington ... will take you to the school.’ (LL 41)

(Employment Exchange of the British Ministry of Labour; the semantic shift derives from the fact that unemployed minorities have to go there everyday in search of jobs)

One day she ask the shopkeeper if he don’t know about *trust*. (LL 79)

(buying goods on credit; *trust* is also used as a verb: “she spread the ballad all about that anybody could *trust* if they want” [LL 79])

‘... look how we sit down here happy, and things *brown* in general.’ (LL 129)

([of things, outlook, events] bad; gloomy; the verb phrase *sit down* also signifies a shift because standard English would use this phrase only to signify the action; otherwise a continuous tense would be used)

People said he was *mounted*. (DD 76)

(original emphasis; possessed by ancestral spirits, or, as explained by Lovelace himself, “a spirit of a warrior was inside him, and he couldn’t help himself” [DD 76-77]).

Lexico-semantic Duplication and Redundancy:

‘... go an find some work to do, *quick sharp!*’ (CM 5)

(quickly; usage also attested in HMB 197; this usage is also a British English colloquialism)

‘That is the *onliest* reason why I have to move.’ (HMB 11)

(only)

‘And *too besides*, she living in a house a lot cleaner.’ (HMB 124)

(besides)

‘No sharing out of anything -- food and thing -- as other Indians *does do?*’ (HMB 257)

(do)

Round about that time the Captain trousers start to give way under the stress and strain of the seasons. (LL 55)

(around or about; also a BE colloquialism)

Conversion or Functional Shift:

'I don't *credit* at her place.' (DD 35)

(. . . buy goods on credit: GOAL > PROCESS, where the symbol > means 'converted to')

'You told me *to cutlass* and hoe and weed.' (DD 51)

(to cut with a cutlass: INSTRUMENT > PROCESS)

'And if you have *to friend* with Guy . . . we ain't against you.' (DD 182)

(to be a friend of Guy: ACTOR > PROCESS; usage also found in LL 57)

'If things open up, I *outing* off fast.' (LL 119)

(getting out fast: TIME ADJUNCT > PROCESS)

'What time this fete *overing*?' (LL 121)

('When will this fete be over?': COMPLEMENT > PROCESS; the word fete also qualifies as a loanshift because, in the West Indian context, it means "house-party or a public dance . . . usually with much food, rum-drinking, and spreeing" [DCEU 228]).

Clipping:

'You don't get tired playing the same *mas* ' every year?' (DD 47)

(masquerade; usage also attested in CM 85)

. . . we were to run over to *Neighb* ' Ramlaal-Wife and stay there. (CM 10)

(Neighbour).

Ellipsis:

Ma . . . barricaded into the darkened house with the rain drumming on
the *galvanize*. (CM 10)

(galvanized iron roof; usage also attested in HMB 259)

. . . the employment exchange send Cap to a *railway* to get a
storekeeping work for seven pounds. (LL 51)

(railway station).

Translation Equivalence:

Like semantic underdifferentiation, this category relates to the survivals and traces of West African languages in the Trinbagonian context, as in the following examples:

Chareem, the youngest *girl-child* . . . lifted her hand. (LFL 11)

(girl; translates literally in Yoruba as *omo-binrin*)

Compare the foregoing example to the following:

They warned their *girl children*, ‘walk straight.’ (DD 180; usage also found in HMB 195)

He don’t know is a *big man* he talking to. (DD 108)

(V.I.P.; translates in Yoruba as *enia nla*)

‘Well, boss, how about something *to wet the job?*’ (HMB 255)

(drinks offered before a building construction can start; translates in Yoruba as *damile*)

As in Zimbabwean literature, translation equivalence is also underscored through the use of native figures of speech and proverbs. Through the use of these devices, Trinbagonian writers are able to evoke the cultural milieu in which the action takes place. The following is the description of rainfall, and the activities related to it, in *Crick Crack, Monkey*:

. . . it would be pounding the earth like a thousand horses coming at us through the trees . . . we had seconds in which to race about the yard like mad-ants helping Ma to place her assortment of barrels and buckets in places where they would catch the water. . . . Ma bustled about the house -- we knew that she was just as excited as we were, barricaded into the darkened house with the rain drumming on the galvanize and surrounding us with heavy purring like a huge mother-cat. (17)

In fact, the passage above reads like citations from the following extract of the poem, "Night Rain," by the Nigerian, John Pepper Clark-Bekederemo, thus emphasizing a symbiosis of the Caribbean and African climate and socioscape:

What time of night it is
I do not know . . .
It is drumming hard here
And I suppose everywhere
Droning with insistent ardour upon
Our roof thatch and shed . . .
Great water drops are dribbling
Falling like orange or mango . . .
Mother is busy now deploying
About our roomlet and floor.
Although it is so dark
I know her practised step as
She moves her bins, bags and vats
Out of the run of water
That like ants filing out of the wood
Will scatter and gain possession

Of the floor. (*African Verse* 17)

As I mentioned earlier, part of the linguistic texturing of *The Dragon Can't Dance* inheres in its use of figures that connect with the African experience. The following figurative expression compares Sylvia's power over men to the resilience of African drums: "Every time he turned he would see her flitting by or standing in that long soft sullen pose, her eyes and spirit and provoking limbs piercing and surrounding and entangling him like Shango drums that he was already fated to dance to" (*DD* 55). Likewise, Aldrick Prospect as Dragon symbolizes a culture of resistance that connects with the African heritage: "He was Manzanilla, Calvary Hill, Congo, Dahomey, Ghana. He was Africa, the ancestral Masker, affirming the power of the warrior, prancing and bowing, breathing out fire, lunging against his chains, threatening with his claws" (*DD* 137).

In addition to functioning as signifiers of cultural difference, proverbs are also used in Trinbagonian literature to sharpen characterization and reiterate themes. For example, the following proverb in Lovelace's novel is used to comment on Aldrick's exalted position as the dragon in the Carnival, a spirit removed from the gaze of ordinary mortals: "A dragon doesn't wave at a friend" (*DD* 192). Although Aldrick is supposed to enter the mask of the dragon and unify the community, during the course of the narrative, he is constrained by this ancestral role. Miss Olive thus uses a proverb to comment on the mercurial mood of Aldrick: "They say when a lively fellar get serious so is to watch him" (*DD* 163).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o has claimed, "The Search for order and identity is the theme of Naipaul's major work, *A House for Mr. Biswas*. . . . The disorder he dreads is symbolized by the House of the Tulsis, where they try to turn Mr. Biswas into an object, to deny him private life and human individuality" (*Homecoming* 93). Some of the proverbs in the novel sound and reiterate this theme. For example, the following proverb reiterates Mr. Biswas's search for order in the form of his own house: "When

you are sheltering from the rain you don't run outside to look at what is sheltering you" (HMB 259); the same motif is sounded in the following proverbs and the comment on them: "When you sick you forget what it is to be well. And when you well you don't really know what it is to be sick. Is the same with not having a place to go back to every afternoon" (HMB 561). Conversely, Shama, Biswas's wife, uses a proverb to comment on the perennial disorder and anarchy of her household: "Well, as the saying goes, you never miss the water till the well runs dry" (HMB 348).

Analogical Creation:

He was seeing her now, her round, solemn face beneath the blue *headtie*. (DD 235)

(gloss identical to that on the same word in the last chapter)

'We must have a *house-blessing ceremony*.' (HMB 67)

(BE = house-warming; in the Trinbagonian Indian context, the house or shop has to be blessed by the pundits before occupation or use)

The *shopman* offered Mr. Biswas a cigarette. (HMB 216)

(shop-keeper or a person who owns or operates a shop or small store)

Coinage or Neologism:

They watched Pariag *carry-push* the bicycle. (DD 155)

(to carry and push something simultaneously)

'... he mighta keep her as a *outside woman* forever.' (DD 233)

("A married man's mistress" [DCEU 421])

'I imagine you have enough *outside children* now to make up your own little school.' (HMB 251)

(children born out of wedlock)

... the fellows now thought nothing of addressing him as *Fresh-water*.

(CM 7)

(a person who assumes an American accent to gain prestige, without even having visited America)

‘You see how she has these *coolie* children running about with them?’

(*CM 11*)

(a racist term for Indian; *coolie* is derived from the Hindi *kuli*)

. . . one day someone maliciously murmured ‘*Crick-crack!*’ (*CM 7*)

(something made up; a falsehood; in other contexts, *crick-crack* signifies the beginning or end of a folk story)

She . . . told us ‘*nancy-stories*. (*CM 13*)

(fairy-tales, based on Anancy stories, originating in West Africa, especially Ashanti folklore, featuring a tricky spiderman; ‘Anansi’ means ‘spider’ in Ashanti)

. . . there was no more room in *ABC class*. Immediately people with older children began to struggle forward, to the irritation of those with *ABC candidates*. (*CM 21*)

(kindergarten; pupils in kindergarten)

We were beginning to discuss . . . the proud prospect of going over to *Big-school*. (*CM 39*)

(elementary school)

We were in *Exhibition Class*. (*CM 66*)

(last grade of the elementary school)

I thought of Ma’s *pepper-sauce* that was a favourite in Pointe d’Espoir. (*CM 79*)

(“A very piquant condiment made from the juice and seeds of ground, red or yellow peppers with mustard, vinegar, and chopped onions added” [*DCEU 436*])

... greasy paper bags ... that contained ... *accra* and *fry-bake* and *zaboca* from Tantie. (CM 106)

(“A large roasted piece of round, flattened dough about 8 to 10 ins in diameter, very popular as a substitute for a loaf of bread” [DCEU 72])

And it was to be the *grass-gang* for Mr. Biswas. (HMB 23)

(boys and girls who cut grass to feed the buffaloes that draw the cane carts)

Between them and the *buffalo boys* there were constant disputes.

(HMB 23)

(boys who look after the buffaloes that draw the cane carts)

It would have pained Mr. Biswas if anyone from the school saw where he lived, in one room of a mud hut in the *back trace*. (HMB 48)

(slum; ghetto; DCEU defines a *trace* as “A pathway between a row of houses which are generally backing on each other” 564)

... she would leave and get a job with the *roadgang*. (HMB 48)

(people who mend roads)

... he slept on a hard, *coconut fibre mattress*. (HMB 62)

(mattress stuffed with coconut fibre to serve as foam rubber)

Groups of men, their week’s work over, stood in *week-end clothes* at street corners. (HMB 64)

(clothes worn strictly on weekends)

With this hold, widely known in Lal’s school as *the policeman’s hold*, Bhandat led Mr. Biswas to the next room. (HMB 64)

(to grab somebody by the back of his trousers and lift him to his toes)

‘He must have bought them wholesale from some *godshop*.’ (HMB 103)

(a shop where statues of Hindu gods and other Hindu religious objects are sold)

‘Busy man, you know. Handling nearly all the work in the *Petty Civil*.’
(HMB 172)

(public service)

‘Talking night and day. *Puss-puss* here. *Puss-puss* there.’ (HMB 226)

(interminable talk; gossip)

Mr. Biswas . . . was again touched by the boy’s fragility and the carefully ragged ‘*home-clothes*.’ (HMB 236)

(clothes worn by children the moment they come back from school to preserve their uniforms for school use)

Mr. Maclean went to a ‘*bandon*.’ (HMB 261)

(an abandoned or unused plot of land)

He heard . . . the fanning of *coal-pots*. (HMB 268)

(a *coal-pot* is “a black cast-iron, charcoal stove, having a round foot, and a shallow pot-like top with a metal grill” [*Dictionary of Jamaican English* 109])

They climbed and they jumped; many took serious falls but, being *barrack children*, came to little harm. (HMB 263)

(children who live in barracks; see *barracks* in list of loanshift on page 183 above)

Shama, surrounded by the *barrack-women*, called. (HMB 277)

(women who live in barracks)

On Friday evening Shama laid out Anand’s *speechday clothes*. (HMB 470)

(dresses for outings and special occasions)

Shama was in her ornate *visiting clothes*. (HMB 502)

(dresses for outings and special occasions)

She was flanked by Miss Blackie, in her *churchgoing clothes*. (HMB 535)

(clothes meant for attending church services)

. . . it [the sun] just there in the sky like a *force-ripe* orange. (LL 42)

(“[of fruit] Picked when fully mature and ripened under cloth or other covering; prematurely ripened and so less sweet” [DCEU 240])

The pigeon and rice have Moses feeling good and he in the mood for a *oldtalk*. (LL 127)

(“Idle chatter; gossip; social chit-chat” [DCEU 415]; usage also

functions as a verb, e.g., “I mean, sometimes when we *oldtalking*” [LL 129])

At the secondary degree of delicacy, some of the foregoing ethnolexemes have implications for the politics of race, class, and gender in Trinbagonian literature. For example, as used by Auntie Beatrice in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, the coinage, *coolie*, is a racist term that marks the East Indian identity as a degraded and inferior Other. I will have more to say about racist discourse in Trinbagonian literature in my discussion of the power and politics of English.

Certain analogies and coinages are also markers of social stratification in the Trinbagonian context. For example, certain occupations such as *grass-gangs*, *buffalo boys*, and *road gangs* symbolize the poverty that pervades the Trinbagonian society: the people who do these kinds of jobs can only belong to the lowest socio-economic strata of the society. In the same way, signifiers of dwelling places, their furnishings, and their occupants such as *back trace*, *coconut fibre mattress*, *coconut fibre mat*, *barracks*, *barrack children*, and *barrack women* not only depict Mr. Biswas’s relentless efforts to

rise above the poverty of his social formation, but also portray the socio-economic gulf separating the rich and the poor in Trinbagonian society.

Similarly, the careful distinction between clothing items foregrounds the fact that the poor in this society have a few clothes specifically designed for certain social activities. Such clothing items, which form an interesting lexical chain, include *weekend clothes*, *home clothes*, *speech-day clothes*, *visiting clothes*, and *church-going clothes*. It will be interesting to see whether this ritualized dressing code is a cultural phenomenon, and whether the affluent in Trinbagonian society have to distinguish among this array of clothing items. The class of a person is also sometimes revealed by the food she eats. For example, along with *accra*, the glossary in *Crick Crack, Monkey* defines the coinage, *fry-bake*, as a “low-class food of the African population” (114).

In contrast to the Zimbabwean context, only a few of these ethnolexemes connect to gender politics in Trinbagonian literature. However, similar to the deployment of *wide-mouth* in Zimbabwean literature, the lexical item *puss-puss* (*HMB* 226), used in relation Shama’s linguistic behaviour, is meant to promote the myth that women are talkative and gossipy. Nevertheless, the association of *oldtalk* (*LL* 127) with certain male characters explodes the myth that only women are talkative and gossipy in the Trinbagonian context.

The analogy *shopman* (*HMB* 216), rather than the neutral form *shopkeeper*, suggests a patriarchal dichotomy of social activities, whereby the inside of a house symbolizes the female realm, while the outside symbolizes the male sphere of influence. As Julia Penelope noted, “*Housework*, tasks performed inside a house, are ‘women’s work,’ while tasks performed outside are ‘men’s work’” (43, original emphasis). This dichotomy is replicated in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, for example, where Mrs. Tulsi, Shama, and the majority of the female characters are confined to Hanuman House, whereas Mr. Biswas, Seth, Anand, Owad, and other male characters

are forever in search of a better life in the world beyond the house. Note that even the shop where these female characters serve is connected to the house.

Whereas in Zimbabwean literature some figures and proverbs serve as conduits of colonial/counter-colonial and patriarchal/counter-patriarchal discourses, figurative expressions in Trinbagonian literature under study here only serve to put into play certain classist and sexist discourses in the novels. In fact, the Trinbagonian novels analyzed in this chapter lack parallels to the phallogocentric proverbs used to interrogate the hierarchization of gender in the Zimbabwean literature studied.

Given the extreme socio-economic poverty in the West Indies, figurative language is often deployed to concretize this destitution and privation. In *Crick Crack, Monkey*, the description of Mr. Oliver, the school watchman, becomes a metonymy for the school's dilapidation itself:

It must have been the thought and the sight of the multitudes of school-children pouring through the gates morning after morning for years on end that had bent Mr. Oliver's back and slowed his movements down to a slouch and given him his overall air of voluntary dilapidatedness. It was said that he had not changed his clothes for years, and slept in them. Such was their appearance at any rate. They were approximately the same colour as the schoolbuilding and like the schoolbuilding had once been of a more prepossessing colour. An untidy growth like grey stunted weeds had over-run an area of his face. One of his eyebrows was in a permanently raised position, like a disparaging question-mark as to the validity of anything whatsoever, while his eyes were never more than half open, as if he would shut out as much as was possible of the disgusting spectacle which the world presented. (48-49)

Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* focuses on the experience of West Indian immigrants in London in the 1950s and early 1960s. According to Ramchand,

“Selvon’s immigrants are offered the worst jobs; they pay high prices for insecure tenancy in the most undesirable houses. . . . They suffer from rain, snow, wind and fog, and are driven to combine as pirates or parasites on the fringes of a host society which regards them with indifference or hostility” (“Introduction” 6). Parallel to the description of Mr. Oliver in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, the description of the clothes of certain characters in the novel mirrors the general poverty of Selvon’s characters in London. For example, the following is the comic description of Galahad’s clothing, amidst the general affluence of Britain:

When Galahad put on trousers the seam could cut you, and the jacket fitting square on the shoulders. . . . He have on a old cap that was brown one time, but black now with grease and fingerprint, and a jacket that can’t see worse days, and a corduroy trousers that would shame them ragandbone men. The shoes have big hole, like they laughing.
(86)

The distressing and bleak landscape of Calvary Hill, the setting of *The Dragon Can’t Dance*, is presented through a cascade of telling figures:

This is the hill, Calvary Hill, where the sun set on starvation and rise on potholed roads, thrones for stray dogs that you could play banjo on their rib bones, holding garbage piled high like a cathedral spire, sparkling with flies buzzing like torpedoes, and if you want to pass from your yard to the road you have to be a high-jumper to jump over the gutter full up with dirty water, and hold your nose. Is noise whole day.
Laughter is not laughter; it is a groan coming from the bosom of these houses -- no -- not houses, shacks that leap out of the red dirt and stone, thin like smoke, fragile like kite paper, balancing on their rickety pillars as broomsticks on the edge of a juggler’s nose. (23)

In other contexts, figures are used to highlight and lampoon the alienating, neo-colonial, and middle-class snobbery of certain characters. For example, in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, Auntie Beatrice's spurious social world is captured when, at the funeral, she "tock-tocked into the room" with "a voice like high heels and stockings"

(2). Conversely, the down-to-earth folkworld of Tantie is described as follows:

"Tantie's company was loud and hilarious and the intermittent squawk and flurry of mirth made me think of the fowl-run when something fell into the midst of the fat hens"

(4). In the same novel, the satirical description of children taking lessons at the dance-school mirrors the artificiality and pretentiousness of the middle-class:

We came into a twittering room full of half-dressed children of all shapes and sizes leaning up against walls and standing about with their legs weirdly twisted. There were squat little ones who rolled here and there like tubs on a pair of stumpy pillars, and tall thin ones with their chins in the air like miniature film stars, and a regrettable number whose proportions could not be likened to anything in particular. . . . Miss de Vertueil had now taken hold of a nearby child and was twisting its arm and neck here and there like dough. . . . one girl limped heavily from one end of the room to the other while flapping her arms, like a fat hen bent on taking flight. . . . I collided with a ballet-dancer spinning for all she was worth with her arms outspread and who, when she could focus me, fixed her face into an expression like a drunk person trying to look superciliously irate. (74-75, 76)

The sycophantic functionaries of the colonizers are also not spared the butt of the author's satire. For example, Sir, a teacher at Tee's elementary school, treats his pupils with high-handedness and utmost contempt but becomes a fawning puppy in the presence of his superiors, like Mr. Thomas or the Reverend. So when either of them appeared in Sir's class, "Sir's eyes shooting crimson out of his head seemed to scurry

in behind eyelids lowered a little like shutters, his forehead flattened itself, the bristling mustache lay down, and the roaring tailed off as his mouth was seen to roll swiftly out across his face like a mat" (*CM* 55). Hodge also selects apt images from the Trinbagonian environment to paint a caricature of Sir: "He had been complete with his mustache and the bald area on his head like the middle part of the Savannah where skipping ropes and cricket kept the grass away" (*CM* 60). Lovelace also lampoons Caribbean judges who still dress in a colonial fashion: "He watched the judge, his wig around his head like the large drooping ears of a Saint Bernard dog" (*DD* 195).

As in Zimbabwean literature, certain dominant metaphors in the novels describe women in pejorative terms. However, whereas such dominant metaphors are attested in male-authored texts in Zimbabwean literature, a female writer like Hodge uses such devices to sharpen characterization. For example, Hodge uses a bird metaphor to describe and criticize Teacher Gloria's supercilious attitude towards her pupils: "She was a young lady with crisply ironed blouses and droopy flared skirts and who was like an over-active mother hen, directing and scolding and clucking round us all day long" (*CM* 45). Although Teacher Gloria condescendingly regarded her pupils as "a bunch of infants who had wandered in from play and who had no idea what school was all about," she "would suddenly turn into a girl whenever Sir came down the stairs, and when he talked to her she either hung her head or looked up at him as though he were the Governor or we didn't know who" (*CM* 45). In this instance, Hodge seems to be calling attention to Gloria's internalization of patriarchal values which infantilize her and elevate males higher in the hierarchy in exaggerated ways. Similarly, Hodge uses a metaphor that summarizes Auntie Beatrice's imprisonment in her infantile middle-class mannerisms: "Auntie Beatrice fairly skipped about the kitchen humming to herself like a little girl" (*CM* 90). Consequently, these metaphors are not pejorative in a patriarchal way but are instead deployed in Hodge's text to depict the fallacious social identities assumed by these characters.

On the contrary, the male-authored texts bristle with figurative expressions that deliberately pejorate women. For example, in *The Dragon Can't Dance*, Philo's calypso, titled 'The Axe Man,' is filled with phallocratic metaphors which overtly claim exaggerated male sexual potency and suggest that women are always sexually available:

I am the axe man cutting forests down
I am the axe man working all over town
If you have a tree to cut, I am the man to call
I never put my axe on a tree and it didn't break and fall. (126)

Sometimes his metaphors connect to the 'outside woman' syndrome, suggesting that women are sexually promiscuous:

Poor Emelda, she can't get a lock for she door
It always open to rich and poor
I going home the other night, one big uproar
A sailor, a soldier, a police and a scavenger
Fighting to get in Emelda door. (DD 246)

On other occasions, Philo's calypso uses figures that degrade women, as for example in his representation of Janet:

Dirty Janet, black like Jet, wouldn't take a bath
She face like a tart
Want me to marry she, boy,
If you hear how I laugh. (DD 246)

The misogyny inherent in calypso has been made abundantly clear in studies of the form. For example, commenting on the form and function of calypso in Trinidad and Tobago, Charles de Ledesma and Simon Broughton remark that "calypso is very male-dominated and a great many songs are shockingly sexist. One of the commonest themes is the calypsonian's great sexual prowess. . . . Double standards for men and

women are the norm. Men boast of sleeping around while women are supposed to be faithful and obedient” (508).

One critic has remarked that one of the subtle issues in Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* is “the attitude of Selvon’s immigrants toward women and marriage. . . . In London ‘the boys’ rigidly maintain a cohesive male community closed to women. Women and family are peripheral, marriage is undesirable and those who do marry are either ridiculed or they come to grief” (Barratt 287). Consequently, the novel is a perfect study in the semantic pejoration of women. Women are not only portrayed as silent and passive, for example, “he [Galahad] walk Daisy brisk down the road, and she quiet as a mouse” (92), but the metaphors, both animate and inanimate, used to pejorate them suggest that they are either sex-objects or commodities available for consumption. The metaphors that objectify women are legion in the novel: “cat” (50); “old geezers” (75); “bags of white pussy” (90); “number” (90); “something” (98); “thing” (100); “pretty pieces of skin” (102); “sports” (107); and “black number” (102). These metaphors are used by both characters and narrator. Consequently, rather than offering a critical perspective on the boys’ misogyny, Selvon uses his narrator to confirm their view.

Although Sylvia’s femaleness, in *The Dragon Can’t Dance*, is compared to the primeval energy of African “Shango drums,” this analogy is soon undercut by her description as a delectable commodity: “Sylvia, at seventeen, ripening like a mango rose . . . tapping her feet to the calypso music prancing in her brain” (37). This figure is quite portentous because the culture of poverty in her environment pushes Sylvia into marrying Guy, a City Councillor old enough to be her father. Having been thoroughly ravaged by the oppressive patriarchal forces in her society, “She [Sylvia] . . . was no longer full of the brimming vitality of a Shango priestess” (151).

The dominant metaphors in the male-authored texts confirm Pamela Mordecai and Betty Wilson’s observation that the general presentation of male-female

relationships in Caribbean literature “from the earliest work to the most recent augurs ill. Almost invariably the man regards the woman as an object, neglects, abuses, ill-treats and diminishes her” (xiv). In her foreword to *Out of the Kumbia*, Carol Boyce Davies says more or less the same thing about the forms of women’s abuse in Trinidad, forms which include

street insult and verbal abuse and physical beatings from men; women with scores of children who were forced to beg the ‘children’s father’ for support at his workplace on payday before the money was spent; girls of promise getting pregnant and thereafter losing all the brilliance that they had previously shown, sinking into a round of baby-making for men who saw sex as recreation and women as conquest; all this crowned by an oral culture which endorsed this behaviour. (xiv)

In spite of women’s domination by men in the novels, certain female characters who belong to the older generation remain pillars of strength and enviable role-models for the young girls. A vivid example is Ma (Tee’s grandmother) in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, a novel that focuses on the divided consciousness of the protagonist, Tee, who is

torn between the secure and nurturing folk world of Tantie [and Ma] and the alienating, neo-colonial middle-class world of Auntie Beatrice. These . . . female guardians come to represent conflicting class, colour and linguistic models for the child, as well as conflicting gender roles from which she must choose. (O’Callaghan *Woman Version* 70)

Although at the end of *Crick Crack, Monkey* Tee seems about to succumb to Auntie Beatrice’s middle-class foppery, Ma’s folkways provide her with a solid base from which to negotiate her future. According to Mordecai and Wilson, “Hodge’s *Crick Crack, Monkey* presents Tee’s grandmother as providing her with roots, a source of goodness, wholeness, and reality which contrasts with life in Port of Spain trammelled

up with middle-class aspirations and false values” (196). Consequently, in contrast to the dominant metaphors described earlier, the unbendable spirit of Ma’s grandmother is presented through an imagery cluster that is a key element in a counter-patriarchal discursive strategy:

Ma said that I was her grandmother come back again. She said her grandmother was a tall straight proud woman who lived to an old age and her eyes were still bright like water and her back straight like bamboo, for all the heavy-load she had carried on her head all her life. The people gave her the name Euphemia or Euph-something, but when they called her that she used to toss her head like a horse and refuse to answer so they’d had to give up in the end and call her by her true-true name. (19)

Euphemia or Euph-something in this example connects to Euphemism, which suggests that Ma’s grandmother is a *persona non grata*: Euphemia suggests the substitution of a less expressive name for Ma’s grandmother’s original name deriving from her African slave ancestry. By refusing the offered subject position and insisting on being called by her true-true (African) name, she emphasizes the validity of her African cultural roots and identity.

As in Zimbabwean literature, certain lexical items borrowed from the Trinbagonian socioscape directly confront and challenge the territoriality of the English language in the Trinbagonian literary context. Similar to lexical incorporation in Zimbabwean literature, the transferred words are either single lexical items, e.g., ‘dalpouri’ (*CM* 79), or loan-blends, e.g., ‘tapia grass’ (*HMB* 141). In Zimbabwean literature these lexical items traverse the texts via the highways of Shona, Sindebele, and Afrikaans, whereas the transferred lexical items and phrases in Trinbagonian literature reflect the polygenous languages and cultures that make up the Trinbagonian landscape: *barra* (*DD* 106: Hindi); *accra* (*CM* 106: Yoruba); *Panol* (*CM* 96: Spanish);

marchan (CM 48: French Creole); and *jujitsu* (DD 86: East Asia: this word is of Japanese origin, so it might have entered the Trinbagonian lexicon via American films or other popular culture media). Moreover, in contrast to Zimbabwean literature where many of the transferred words are ‘marked’ through quotation marks and italicisation to show that they have immigrated into the English prose as resident aliens, and later ‘unmarked’ to signal that such words have now become naturalized citizens,³ the majority of such words in Trinbagonian literature are unmarked, thus signaling their naturalized citizen status in those texts.

Linguistic hybridization in Trinbagonian literature relates specifically to the following domains of experience:

Food and Drink: *roti* (DD 104; HMB 22; CM 106), “a kind of unleavened bread made out of flour, salt, and water” (DCEU 477); *accra* (DD 144; CM 106), “A fritter made of shredded saltfish mixed in a batter of flour and seasoning” (DCEU 8); *mauby* (DD 235), “a refreshing bitter-sweet, non-alcoholic, folk drink made by fermenting or boiling the bark of the mauby tree” (DCEU 376); *channa* (DD 104; CM 47), “chick pea, fried with salt, or boiled and seasoned, served as an inexpensive snack” (DCEU 146).

Flora: *callaloo* (DD 31), “any of a number of plants with edible, succulent leaves which are cooked as green vegetables” (DCEU 130); *tannia leaf* (DD 62), “the foliage of the TANNIA plant which is often used in Caribbean cookery” (DCEU 547, original emphasis); *poui* (HMB 174), “a large decorative, shade tree which annually sheds its leaves and comes out massively in flower” (DCEU 451); *ganja* ‘marijuana’ (HMB 193).

Clothing Items: *dashiki* (DD 231), “[of Yoruba and Hausa origin] a man’s short-sleeved upper garment that is fairly loose-fitting, without collar or buttons” (DCEU 188); *dhoti* (HMB 18; CM 79), “an East Indian man’s white loin-cloth” (DCEU 191); *nakphul* ‘a nose flower’ (HMB 32); *saga-clothes* ‘trendy clothes’ (CM 5); *uhr’ni* ‘waist-length veil worn by Indian women’ (CM 78).

Places: *chulha* (HMB 161), “a rural fire-place, usually in the ground, made of a mixture of mud and cow-dung” (DCEU 154); in *Looking for Livingstone*, the following place names locate the action within the African context: *Kalahari* (29); *Timbuctoo* (33); *Loanda* (65); *Zambesi* (72); and *Mosioatunya* (68).

Naming Practices: *chamar* (HMB 301), “an East Indian person of low social standing” (DCEU 146); in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, Auntie Beatrice is named as a *djablesse-face* (French Creole) ‘female devil’ (10) to connote her terrifying attributes in the imagination of the children Tee, Todan, and Dolarie, while the portrait of Winston Churchill is caricatured as *Crapaud-Face* (French Creole) ‘Frog face’ (24) to signify the pupils’ apathy toward colonial history; Mrs. Harper’s muttering of *Panol* ‘Spanish racist term’ (96) in reference to Roger, Bernadette’s boyfriend, alludes to Mrs. Harper’s antipathy toward him.

Instruments: *Shango drums* ‘[of Yoruba origin] drums used in spiritual and ancestral worship’ (DD 55); *cheelums* (HMB 193), “a long clay pipe used for smoking ganja” (DCEU 150); *posie* ‘chamber pot’ (CM 17).

Traditional Beliefs and Customs: *jujitsu* (DD 86), “A Japanese system of wrestling in which knowledge of anatomy and the principle of leverage are applied so that the strength and weight of an opponent are used against him or her” (*Webster’s* 732); *puja* (HMB 174), “an act of prayer and worship of a Hindu deity, either by an individual or collectively in a ritual ceremony” (DCEU 454); *Hosein* (HMB 174), “a Muslim religious festival held annually to commemorate the martyrdom of Hasan and Hosein, grandsons of the Prophet Mohammed” (DCEU 297); *jumbie* ‘ghost or spirit’ (CM 5); *obeah* (CM 52), “a set or system of secret beliefs in the use of supernatural forces to attain or defend against evil ends” (DCEU 412); *lagahou* (French Creole) ‘vampire or a man that turns into an animal, a werewolf (French, *loupgarou*)’ (CM 57).

Occupations: *Shango priestess* ‘a woman who leads or directs the worship of Shango, the Yoruba deity of thunder and thunderbolt’ (DD 151); *marchan* (French Creole; cf. *marchand*) ‘vendor’ (CM 48).

Chants: *Rama Rama Sita Rama, Rama Rama Sita Rama* (HMB 289) as chanted by Mr. Biswas to ward off evil spirits.

Modes of Address:

Non-reciprocal modes of address are often used in cross-sex social interaction to show deference towards women and to indicate perceived age differences. For example, in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Biswas often addresses Mrs. Tulsi, his mother-in-law as *Mai* ‘mother or mother-in-law’ (HMB 128) as a strategy of negative politeness, while the latter often reciprocates by addressing him by his first name, Mohun. Similarly, on page 39 of the novel, Dhari addresses Biswas’s mother as *maharajin* -- “They will keep on looking *maharajin*” -- which is a “respectful form of address for an East Indian lady” (DCEU 360), as a negative politeness strategy, while the former calls him by his first name: “I will remember you for this, Dhari.” Other terms of address include *dou-dou* (French Creole) (CM 1), a term of endearment meaning “darling; my sweet little one (DCEU 200); *Nennen* (CM 8), a term of affectionate address for “a woman, young or old but elderly in relation to a young child, to whom she may be, or plays the role of, an aunt or guardian” (DCEU 403); *Baba* (HMB 53), a term of respect “used in addressing a father; folk title used before the name of a respected older male” (DCEU 53); and *babu* (CM 79), “an old East Indian man, usually bearded and poor” (DCEU 54). The terms *dou-dou*, *Nennen*, *Baba*, and *babu* have their origins in French Creole, Efik, languages of the Niger-Congo group (such as Yoruba, Fulani, Hausa, and Shona), and Hindi languages respectively.

At the secondary degree of delicacy, some of these indigenous words have implications for race and class ideologies in the Trinbagonian context. For example,

the use of *Panol* (CM 96), in reference to Roger, has racist connotations. The association of *accra*, *polorie*, *anchar*, and *roti* (CM 106), kinds of food, with Tantie, Doolarie, and Uncle Sylvester foregrounds the low-class status of these characters. This is why the narrator in *Crick Crack, Monkey* dreaded “the very thought of sitting in Auntie Beatrice’s drawing room eating coolie-food!” (107). When Sushila refers to Ramchand as “a real, *charmar*-caste-type” (301) in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, she exposes his lowly upbringing. The reader must also be aware of the social distinction between *Baba* and *babu*: while the former has a neutral connotation, the latter has connotations related to class in the East Indian Trinbagonian context.

Given the extensive creolization of English in the Trinbagonian context, the level of lexical incorporation is not as intensive as that of Zimbabwean literature. As in Zimbabwean literature, however, these indigenous words have implications for the semiotic configurations of field and tenor in Trinbagonian literature. Although lexical spread associated with certain registers -- for example, the register of marriage -- in Zimbabwean literature is not as pronounced in Trinbagonian literature, the following lexical chain is associated with food register: “they drew forth a series of greasy paper bags, announcing that they contained *polorie*, *anchar*, *roti* from Neighb’ Ramlaal-Wife, and *accra* and ... *zaboca* from Tantie” (CM 106).

In making these transferred words intelligible to the English-only reader, these authors, as in Zimbabwean literature, do not attempt to define most of the lexical items but leave their interpretation to the imagination or knowledge of the reader, as in the following examples: “I, who have travelled the *Kalahari* with a child at my breast” (LFL 29); “Raghu remained at home . . . making walking-sticks and *sabots*” (HMB 20); “And learn some *jujitsu*” (DD 86); and “that was God pee-peeing into his *posie*” (CM 17).

Occasionally, the authors explain these transferred words through ‘cushioning’: “I’ll tell you -- *Mosioatunya* or The Smoke That Thunders” (LFL 68); “She also wore

earrings and a *nakphul*, a ‘nose-flower’” (*HMB* 32); “he had saved and bought . . . *channa*, a tasty bean that was a favourite of the town people” (*DD* 97). In other instances, the authors sometimes resort to fashioning the immediate context of lexical transfers so that their meanings are made as clear as possible: “He had walked; his *dhōti* and jacket were sweated and dusty” (*HMB* 18-19); “it was the sale of her sugarcakes and *mauby* and tarts that fed the children” (*DD* 235); “Take off this damn stupid pants, man! Ah want to *ka-ka*” (*CM* 38).

Syntactic variation in Trinbagonian literature, unlike the equivalent linguistic practice in Zimbabwean literature, occurs both in the narrative idiom and characters’ speeches in the texts. This is a deliberate discursive strategy not only to subvert the syntactic categories of the imperial culture, but also to abrogate the privilege of the so-called formal or standard English over the resources of communication. Consequently, whereas in Zimbabwean literature syntactic variation is used to signal the social class and origins of characters, the same strategy is used for similar ends in Trinbagonian literature but also extended to bridge the stylistic distance between speech and writing or orality and literacy.

Except for syntactic variation relating to non-distinctive use of gender, prepositional substitution, variant forms of response to yes-no questions, emphatic deixis and thematization, all other categories attested in Zimbabwean literature are also found in Trinbagonian literature. However, owing to the extensive creolization of English in the Trinbagonian context, the following additional categories of syntactic variation are also attested in Trinbagonian literature: deletion of prepositions; non-distinctive use of articles and determiners; non-distinctive use of relative pronouns and the genitive; deletion of ‘-ly’ morpheme in manner adjuncts; and subjectless sentences. The syntax of Trinbagonian English has also been influenced by traces of West African languages relating to such languages as Yoruba and Congo (Warner 40). Robert LePage has also emphasized that

the vernaculars spoken in different parts of the West Indies all have in common features which result from interference between West African linguistic habits and English. This interference has taken place at all linguistic levels: phonological, grammatical, lexical and semantic. (“Dialect in West Indian Literature” 125-126)

Given the demographic presence of people of East Indian origin in Trinidad and Tobago, and the fact that V.S. Naipaul and Sam Selvon come from East Indian backgrounds, Hindi has also influenced the syntax of Trinbagonian English. For example, Kachru has furnished several Indian English categories and examples similar to the variations described below. The categories and examples given by Kachru include the following: violation of selection restrictions in *be + ing* constructions, e.g., ‘I am understanding English better now’; deviant use of articles; reduplication, e.g., ‘small small things’; undifferentiated tag questions, e.g., ‘He isn’t going there, isn’t it?’; formation of interrogatives without changing the position of subject and auxiliary items, e.g., ‘What you would like to eat?’ (“English in South Asia” 518-520).

I will first of all exemplify those categories that correspond to the syntactic processes in Zimbabwean literature, and then go on to explain and exemplify the syntactic categories that differentiate Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian Englishes. Since, as indicated earlier, the syntax of Trinbagonian English has, among others, been influenced by West African and East Indian languages, I will also attempt to compare syntactic formations in Trinbagonian literature with similar innovations in West African and Indian literatures. As will be shown below, many variations noted in West African literature are also found in Indian literature. This demonstrates a high degree of linguistic convergence between West African and Indian Englishes, probably induced not only by certain similarities between West African and Indian source languages, but also by the tendency of Trinbagonian users of English to simplify English syntactic structures.

Deletion of Articles:

... to tell ___ truth most of the fellars who coming now are real hustlers.

(LL 24)

(the)

'You have the money, you want to buy ___ house.' (HMB 11)

(a)

'Mother and ___ biggest son on either side.' (HMB 33)

(the)

For example, in Yoruba, "you want to buy house" translates directly as *o fe rale* where the article is deleted.

Cf. West African English: 'You say ___ (the) truth.' (Armah, *Two Thousand Seasons* 119); and Indian English: 'Why all people of ___ (the) world / Are not following Mahatma Ghandi' (Ezekiel 237)

Deletion of Auxiliary and Linking Verbs:

'I ___ gone.' (CM 101)

(am)

Miss Cleothilda ___ not right in her head. (DD 37)

(is)

'They ___ feeding you, but you want to see me and Mai go to jail.'

(HMB 123)

(are)

Again, in Yoruba, "I gone" translates as *Mo lo* where the auxiliary verb *am* is not present.

Cf. West African English: 'I ___ (am) gone.' (Omotoso, *Memories* 37); and Indian English: 'What ___ (do) you think of prospects of world peace?' (Ezekiel 238)

Reduplication:

Maureen Warner indicates that the racy colloquial form of Yoruba, derived from its reduplicative patterns, is of significance to the stylistic tendencies which have been adopted by Trinbagonian users of English (44). She gives examples such as the following: *Dee man run, run, run; Dee plais faa, faa, faa* ('The man ran, ran, ran'; 'The place is far, far, far'). The following are some examples from the novels:

I was Ma's *own-own* bold face. (CM 19)

'And all the *friendly-friendly* thing she gone off for Carnival is just a smoke-screen.' (DD 35)

'I been sleeping *sound sound*.' (HMB 150)

'His face,' Jagdat said, 'come *small small*.' (HMB 252)

. . . people *falling falling* into a stupor. (LFL 45)

Cf. West African English: 'The white man is like hot soup and we must take him *slowly-slowly* from the edges of the bowl.' (Achebe, *Arrow of God* 85); and Indian English: 'Why world is *fighting fighting*?' (Ezekiel 237)

Non-inversion of Subject and Verb in Forming Questions:

'What you could say?' (DD 46)

So what Moses could do when these fellars land up hopeless on the doorstep, with one set of luggage, no place to sleep, no place to go? ↗
(LL 24)

'Why you don't go and tell him yourself?' (HMB 112)

Cf. West African English: 'What he has done to me has not filled his belly?' (Okara, *The Voice* 40); and Indian English: 'You are going?' (Ezekiel 238)

Undifferentiated Tag Questions:

Unlike tag questions which are replicated in Zimbabwean literature in the forms of *is it?* and *yes?*, the tag questions in Trinbagonian literature take the form of *not so?*, as in the following examples:

'And what school would you like to go to, dear -- St. Ann's, *not so?*'

(*CM* 68)

(isn't it?)

'... he's got a streak of Chinese or something in him, *not so?*' (*CM*

96)

(hasn't he?)

'It's Sylvia, *not so?*' (*DD* 114)

(isn't it?)

'The driver is your father, *not so?*' (*HMB* 284)

(isn't he?)

The first two examples occur in the speech repertoire of Auntie Beatrice which, as we shall see in the next section on the power and politics of English, belie her middle-class pretensions. The tag *not so?* in the Trinbagonian context may be a translation equivalent of the French *n'est ce pas?*

Cf. West African English: 'You are writing a paper about our organization, *not so?*' (Armah, *Why Are We So Blest?* 225)

Progressive Aspect with Mental Processes:

'I see that she *was liking* me too.' (*HMB* 92)

(liked)

'I just *wanting* to know how much you want to spend right away.'

(*HMB* 241)

(want)

'Nobody *wanting* certificates these days.' (*HMB* 317)

(wants)

Cf. West African English: 'I *was wanting* you to do some things.' (Armah, *Fragments* 177); and Indian English: 'I *am not believing* in ceremony' (Ezekiel 238)

Non-distinctive Use of Pronouns:

As in West African languages, there are no pronominal inflexions for case:

‘We only want you to help *we* to get a place to stay and tell *we* how to get a work.’ (LL 25)

(us)

‘Let *we* go inside,’ Moses say. (LL 44)

(us)

One day he was to meet *she* by a bus stop in Edgware Road. (LL 66)

(her)

‘Well I see this girl and she was looking at me and I was looking at *she*.’ (HMB 92)

(her)

Non-distinctive Use of the Rules of Concord:

Peter Roberts indicates that “Most West African languages do not depend on verb inflexions to mark person-number” (128). This is reflected in the following variations:

‘They *is* people, girl. And we *is* people to them, even though they *is* Creole and we *is* Indian.’ (DD 103)

(are)

This was their night: they *was* ripe. They *was* ready. (DD 130)

(were)

‘I *is* the Big Boss, eh? And Mai *is* the old queen and the old hen. And these boys *is* the two gods, eh?’ (HMB 109)

(am, are)

Non-distinctive Use of Tense:

Roberts notes that in West African languages such as Yoruba and Twi, tense and aspect are marked outside the verb form; in other words, there are no suffixes for

tense and aspect (130). Mervyn Alleyne also says that the perfective is unmarked in Twi and Yoruba; for example, Twi has *mi ko* which means either 'I come' or 'I have come,' and Yoruba *emi ri* 'I see' or 'I have seen' (163). The following sentences are not marked for tense and aspect:

In America he heard that a man could live his whole life in an apartment, in a room, and nobody *know*, and if he was dead nobody *know*, and if he was alive nobody *know*. (DD 157)

(*would know*)

When Moses *sit* down and *pay* his fare he *take* out a white handkerchief and *blow* his nose. The handkerchief *turn* black and Moses *watch* it and *curse* the fog. (LL 23)

(*had sat; paid; took; blew; turned; watched; cursed*)

'You *make* me marry your daughter, you *promise* to do this and do that.' (HMB 124)

(*made; promised*)

cf. Indian English: 'How one goonda fellow / *Throw* (Threw) stone at Indirabehn' (Ezekiel 237)

In other instances, as in West African Pidgin English, *go* is used before the verb to indicate the future tense:

'I *go* tell him.' (HMB 172)

(*will*)

'You *go* be surprised what a little bit of paint could do.' (HMB 259)

Double Subjects:

In the following example from *The Lonely Londoners*, the narrator employs a series of double subjects to depict the social stratification in London:

London is a place like that. . . . *Them rich people* who does live in Belgravia and Knightsbridge, *they* would never believe what it is like in

a grim place like Harrow Road or Notting Hill. *Them people who have car, they don't know nothing about hustling.* (74)

Cf. West African English: '*My brother he has made all the arrangements.*' (Ekwensi, *People of the City* 96); and Indian English: '*That shopman he's giving me soap*' (Ezekiel 269).

Resumptive References:

'You think *it* will come, *the rain*?' (DD 211)

('Do you think the rain will come?')

Cf. West African English: '*They have done well, the Japanese.*' (Armah, *Beautiful Ones* 140).

I now focus on those syntactic categories not attested in Zimbabwean literature.

Deletion of Prepositions:

For example, concerning the deletion of prepositions, many West African languages either do not have overt prepositions or do not have prepositions which correspond to the English ones. For instance, one prepositional form in Yoruba may correspond to more than one in English (*si* = *to*; *towards*; *into*; and *ni* = *on*; *in*; *at*). The following examples have parallels in West African English:

Vishnu tilted down the rear view mirror to comb his hair and squeeze a pimple out ___ his face. (DD 97)

(of)

. . . he paused in front ___ Pariag's shop before he turned from entering it. (DD 220)

(of)

'It look to me that it would have to be two ___ one side and three the other side.' (HMB 33)

(on)

'No food for none of all ___ you today.' (HMB 166)

(of)

Cf. West African English: 'The people pressed ___ (against) each other for warmth.' (Okara, *The Voice* 63)

Non-Distinctive Use of Articles and Determiners:

As in West African languages, the articles and determiners are sometimes not differentiated in Trinbagonian English:

'What you going to do with *a* old woman like me, Philo?' (DD 149)

(an)

... *a* old lady look at him with a loud tone in her eye. (LL 44)

(an)

Them people who have car, they don't know nothing about hustling.

(LL 74)

(Those)

'You want to see the two boys . . . go through life without *a* education.'

(HMB 123)

(an)

'She is a she-fox. *A* old she-fox.' (HMB 129)

(an)

Non-Distinctive Use of Relative Pronouns:

In other contexts, Trinbagonians do not distinguish among relative pronouns, as in the following examples:

The same way with the big clock they have in Piccadilly Tube Station, *what* does tell the time of places all over the world. (LL 84)

(which)

'Harris *what* used to thief fowl egg under the house.' (LL 114)

(who)

'Poor fellar, he must be still studying that girl *what* let him down.' (LL 119)
(who)

Similarly, in Yoruba, all these pronouns are collapsed as *ti*.

Non-Distinctive Use of the Genitive and the Deletion of the '-ly' Morpheme:

Other West African aspects of Trinbagonian syntax include non-distinctive use of the genitive and the deletion of the '-ly' morpheme in manner adjuncts. Examples of the former category are:

A sailor . . . / Fighting to get in *Emelda* door. (DD 246)
(Emelda's)

'This is my *sister* husband,' (LL 67)
(sister's)

A little child holding on to the *mother* hand. (LL 87)
(mother's)

. . . he bend down and pat the *child* cheek. (LL 87)
(child's)

Since most West African languages form manner adjuncts through the reduplication of lexical items (e.g. 'Go quickly' translates in Yoruba as *Lo kia-kia*), Trinbagonian users of English sometimes delete the '-ly' morpheme in manner adjuncts, as in the following examples:

. . . he walk Daisy *brisk* down the road. (LL 92)
(briskly)

'How you manage this so *quick*?' (HMB 92)
(quickly)

'But you must get a few more cents *quick*.' (HMB 242)

Cf. West African English: 'Send patrol van to pick her up *quick*.' (Ekwensi, *People of the City* 10)

Subjectless Sentences:

Subjectless sentences are examples of the tendency of Trinbagonian users of English to delete the dummy subject *it* in discourse structure and to use the topicalizer *is* as focus. As Peter Roberts points out, subjectless sentences are “normal in many . . . [West African] languages, even though the word order may differ” (130). Mervyn Alleyne (172) cites an example in Yoruba, *gbigbe ni won gbe e lo* (take + is + they + took + it + go) ‘they actually took it away,’ and for Twi, spoken in Ghana, *hwe na Kwasi ase* (fell + is + Kwasi + fell + down) ‘Kwasi actually fell.’ Examples of subjectless sentences found in the data include the following:

‘__Is I who name him.’ (CM 36)

__Is noise whole day. (DD 23)

__Is a place where everyone is your enemy and your friend. (LL 45)

‘__Is a nice little truth.’ (HMB 33).

I would like to emphasize that such examples attested in the speech repertoires of characters signify those characters’ low social status and educational attainment in the class hierarchy. And although I have attempted to delineate the West African and East Indian linguistic sources of several of the variations, Peter Roberts has cautioned that “West Indian English has a history and structure relatable to different traditions. It has to be borne in mind . . . that it is virtually impossible to demonstrate a direct line of descent of any feature” (125).

4.3 THE POWER AND POLITICS OF ENGLISH

Similar to language as social and material practice in Zimbabwean literature, English also functions as a powerful medium for the production and reproduction of hegemonic discourses, and is sometimes employed to constitute a repressive form of discourse meant to justify white racism in Trinbagonian literature. As in Zimbabwean literature, the naming practices which racist English-speaking characters employ become a significant colonizing strategy.

However, the politics of English as a vehicle of racist discourse and a reproducer of the asymmetrical power relations between the colonizer and the colonized is not as prominent in the novels analyzed in this chapter as it was in those analyzed in the previous one. Nevertheless, certain instances are noted in *Looking for Livingstone* and *The Lonely Londoners*, novels set outside the geographical orbits of Trinidad and Tobago. For example, *Looking for Livingstone* charts a journey made across immense time and space by a daughter of Africa who does not know her goal. She eventually meets the “Man,” David Livingstone, who symbolizes the “silencing” of Africa, both in the assumption that the continent had no voice before colonial occupation and in the imposition of colonial rule (Savory “Philip” 303). The novel is thus an Afro-diasporic text that connects intertextually to African and Caribbean experience. Like Cecil Rhodes’ racist discourse in *On Trial for My Country*, Livingstone’s racist discourse scripts Africans as people without “reason,” without a history, without a written language -- archetypal “Hegelian” figures who are useful primarily as a mirror to reflect back the whites’ conviction of racial superiority (Gates “Writing ‘Race’” 11): “Africa . . . burning solitudes, bleak and barren, heated by poisonous winds, infested by snakes, and only roamed over by a few scattered tribes of untameable barbarians” (*LFL* 7).

The social encounters between the colonizer and the colonized in *The Lonely Londoners* often lead to what Edward Said has termed the recurrence and persuasive circulation of demeaning rhetorical figures, stereotypes and inequitable ‘we’-‘they’ binarisms (*Culture and Imperialism* xi). For example, on an occasion when Galahad wanted to take the bus, he attempted to jump the queue. Assessing the situation, a white girl told her companion: “They’ll have to learn to do better, you know” (44). The use of the pronoun, *they*, by the white girl, presupposes that Galahad has the “mark of the plural,” whereby “the colonized is never characterized in an individual manner; he [sic] is entitled only to drown in an anonymous collectivity: ‘They are this.’ ‘They are

all the same” (Memmi 85). In other words, Galahad’s action is taken as a racial synecdoche of all blacks in Britain in general. This denial of black subjectivity is characteristic of a racist discourse which enables “a codification of difference” that privileges “civilized peoples” over “subject races” (Said *Culture and Imperialism* 13), or “the manichean opposition between the putative superiority of the European and the supposed inferiority of the native” (JanMohamed “Manichean Allegory” 63).

Moreover, at the Ministry of Labour, the records of West Indians looking for jobs in London are marked in red ink as “J-A, Col.” This means that such people are from “Jamaica” and “Coloured.” Suppose there is a vacancy and “they want to send a fellar, first they will find out if the firm want coloured fellars before they send you. That save a lot of time and bother, you see” (LL 46). Again, blacks in Britain at that time had the mark of the plural inscribed on them as it was presupposed that they were all from Jamaica: “the English people believe that everybody who come from the West Indies come from Jamaica” (LL 28).

The racist encounters between the colonized and the colonizer in Selvon’s novel sometimes lead to self-denial on the part of the subject races. On a certain occasion, Galahad condemns the colour of his skin by wallowing in Negrophobia, Olaniyan’s term for “the negative discursive sexualization of the black corporeal body” (“On ‘Post-Colonial Discourse’” 744):

And Galahad watch the colour of his hand, and talk to it, saying,
‘Colour, is you 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. Is not me, you know, is you! I ain’t do anything to infuriate the people and them, is you! Look at you, you so black and innocent, and this time so you causing misery all over the world!’ So Galahad talking to the colour Black, as if is a person. (LL 88)

As I noted in the introductory section of this chapter, while the function of race in Zimbabwean literature inheres in the manichean opposition between the colonizer and the colonized, the same function is more complexly nuanced in Trinbagonian literature. As a result, in contrast to Zimbabwean literature, the archive of racism and racist discourse in Trinbagonian literature also includes the colonized versus the colonized. For example, in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, Auntie Beatrice, a colonized person herself, sees her relationship with the colonized in terms of the unequal power relationships characteristic of the neo-colonial situation. For Auntie Beatrice, therefore, language becomes a device for “fragmenting and stereotyping members of society” (O’Callaghan “Creole Sociolinguistic Patterns” 129). Trinbagonians who do not share her putative middle-class pretensions are thus classified as “coolies” (11), and their social behaviour characterized as “ordinaryness” and “niggeryness” (95), or “coolie affair” (78), the latter referring to a wedding in the East Indian tradition. Bernadette, her daughter, and Tee have also internalized Auntie Beatrice’s racist discourse. For example, Bernadette characterizes the Carnival, the Trinbagonian “massive, nationally organized festival of competitive, costumed street-dancing, calypso singing, etc. held usually in the last four days before Ash Wednesday” (DCEU 137) as “nigger-break-loose” (85), while Tee, reminiscing about the same event, shamefully reflects that “Tantie and Toddan must be packed into that ridiculous truck with all those common raucous niggery people and all those coolies” (86).

In the same novel, Mr. Hinds, the black headmaster of the kindergarten class, engages in a racist discourse that silences and scripts his pupils as socially inferior Others. His pronouncements are strategies of racial and class distancing: “Here I stand . . . trying to teach *confounded piccaninnies* to read and write” (29, original emphasis), or “I don’t have to stand here and busy myself with *little black nincompoops!*” (29, original emphasis).

In *The Dragon Can't Dance*, Dolly and Pariag constitute an East Indian family living in a black-dominated community in Trinidad. They are, therefore, not accepted by the majority black population. The following marginalizing discourse attests to Pariag's racial Otherness:

Three fellars were discussing the upcoming Colts-Maple game. They looked like all-right fellars, and he felt he could talk to them. 'I like Colts,' he said, and they all stopped walking and looked at him. Then the Maple supporter said, 'Haii! What the hell this Indian know about football? You ever see an Indian on a football team?' Pariag felt very chilly. He didn't say nothing. (DD 98)

In most contexts, Pariag's individual social identity is effaced as he is simply stereotyped as a "Crazy Indian" (107), or "fucking Indian" (155). Towards the end of the novel, Pariag admits to his wife: "You know they [the Creole population] never see me. . . . They never really see me" (225). Cleothilda, the shopkeeper and aging mulatto leader of the Calvary Hill Steelband, is also not spared the ingrained colour prejudice of her society. For instance, in a fit of jealousy, Miss Caroline, in a conversation with Miss Olive, rationalizes Cleothilda's social success in terms of the colour of her skin: "You don't have eyes in your head to see that is because the woman skin lighter than yours and mine she feel she better than people on this Hill" (DD 35). Like Pariag's, her social identity is sometimes effaced as she is stereotyped as "red-nigger skin" (DD 35), and her boyfriend classified as "nigger man" (DD 102).

In *The Lonely Londoners*, Bart, the mulatto, once denied his West Indian identity by lying that he was a "Latin-American" (65). He believes that his fair skin makes him racially superior to his fellow West Indians in London: "If a fellar too black, Bart not companying him much, and he don't like to be found in the company of the boys, he always have an embarrass air when he with them in public, he does look

around as much as to say: ‘I here with these boys, but I not one of them, look at the colour of my skin’” (63).

However, as in Zimbabwean literature, certain characters in the novels also marshal counter-discursive strategies against the deforming power of the discourses of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and oppression. For example, the colonized would appropriate features of acrolectal English as counter-discourse to the hegemonic discourses of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Acrolectal English as constitutive of counter-colonial discourse is used in Philip’s *Looking for Livingstone* which, as I noted earlier, relates the story of a daughter of Africa who confronts David Livingstone in Africa. Elaine Savory observes that “It is important that Philip’s protagonist meets Livingstone in Africa, since from the beginning of her writing she has been concerned with what has happened to language for Africans displaced from their ancestral tongues and cultures” (“Philip” 303).

As a counter-discursive strategy, Philip’s protagonist reverses the colonizer/colonized power relationships whereby she employs certain discourse strategies to control and dominate her conversation with Livingstone. First, she asks the questions, inquiring for example, “You’re new here, aren’t you?” (61), a question that subverts the assumption that Livingstone discovered certain parts of Africa. Second, she uses ‘unmasked’ facts of history: “You’re nothing but a cheat and a liar, Livingstone-I-presume. Without the African, you couldn’t have done anything” (62).⁴ And third, she dominates the conversation through the strategy of interruption: “He was all huffy again at my interruption and merely shrugged” (69). That the narrator has seized the conversational initiative is evident in the fact that when Livingstone addresses her as “my child,” she retorts, “I am not your child, Livingstone-I-presume” (72).

In the same way, the erstwhile Creole-speaking Pistach, in *The Dragon Can’t Dance*, seizes the English language and uses it to espouse a discourse of liberation. On the occasion of Fisheye’s final act of resistance, which involves the kidnapping of

several police officers and stealing a police van for several days, Pistach becomes the spokesperson for the group and uses acrolectal English to disseminate a revolutionary discourse:

‘This is the People’s Liberation Army. We are armed and dangerous. We have two policemen prisoners. Any attempt to stop us will result in their death. . . . We are heavily armed. Do not take leave of your senses and try to attack us, for we shall kill your comrades. . . . This is the People’s Liberation Army demanding Freedom, Liberation and Justice. . . . We are armed and dangerous.’ (188)

In this regard, the use of the phrase “armed and dangerous” changes when uttered from the very different subject position of the ones the dominant culture sees as the outlaws or rebels or terrorists, as compared to the subject position of an agent of the Repressive State Apparatus.

In other contexts, the technology of resistance is both physical and symbolic. For example, physical resistance is symbolized in the character of Fisheye as Bad John in *The Dragon Can’t Dance*. Fisheye is predisposed to be a Bad John because of a depressed economy, the plundering of Trinidad’s rich oil resources by foreign interests and a middle-class leadership that presides over a widespread culture of poverty in urban areas. Fisheye’s acts of resistance include disrupting the activities of the new Carnival bands sponsored by foreign multinationals, kidnapping several police officers, and stealing a police van for several days, all of which earned him a jail sentence. However, this jail term afforded him the opportunity for an intellectual dialogue with the Dragon master, Aldrick Prospect.

Cultural resistance is symbolized in Aldrick’s ability to enter the mask of the Dragon and unify the community. According to Chezia Thompson-Cager, “The Dragon is a classical carnival character in Trinidad that represents the spirit of black people to resist political and social disenfranchisement in a society favoring the white,

the wealthy, and the educated (“Lovelace” 74). However, since the Dragon is an Asian rather than a Black cultural phenomenon, the symbol is appropriated from the Chinese West Indian community. The Dragon thus symbolizes not only the rebellious spirit of the people, but also their resistance to the culture of poverty in the Trinbagonian context. As the narrator avers:

Once upon a time the entire Carnival was expressions of rebellion. . . .
Suddenly they were all gone, outlawed from the city or just died, gone,
and he left alone. The dragon alone was left to carry the message. (*DD*
135)

Calypso, a prominent indigenous art-form in Trinidad, is mainly satirical and is said to be historically related to West African songs of derision (Roberts 164), although I have earlier commented on the misogyny inherent in this form. Calypsos also often function as vehicles for counter-colonial and social protest. In the following example, Philo’s calypso ridicules the sense of inertia and complacency induced in the colonized by a neo-colonial Christian discourse:

I hear the Baptists singing, praying for heaven
Waiting for salvation from the Lord
They not working, they only skylarking, making
More hungry children
Waiting for salvation from the Lord. (*DD* 247)

In contrast to the experience in Zimbabwean literature where ‘legalese’ is a form of repressive discourse the colonizer uses to manipulate, disenfranchise, and exert social power over the colonized, the same form is used in Trinbagonian literature by the well-placed colonized not only to neutralize cultural norms but also to exert social power over other colonized subjects.⁵ In other words, legalese becomes an instrument creating new social stratification in the Trinbagonian context. For example, as my analysis of the loanshift, *trust*, has demonstrated, part of the culture of Trinbagonians is

the ability to take goods on credit. However, in the following terse legalese drafted by lawyer L.S. Seebaran on behalf of Mr. Biswas, the former manipulates the language of the law to coerce the latter's creditors to pay up, thereby eroding a veritable cultural tradition:

Unless this sum, . . . together with One Dollar and Twenty Cents (\$1.020), the cost of this letter, is paid within ten days, legal proceedings shall be instituted against you. (*HMB* 175)

The effect of this legalese is immediate and decisive. In the words of Moti, Seebaran's agent, "Well, Ratni pay up. . . . Dookhni pay. Sohun pay. Godberdhan pay. Rattan pay. . . . Jankie ask for time. Pritam too. But they going to pay, especially as they see the others paying up" (*HMB* 180).

As in Zimbabwean literature, the use of specific varieties of English becomes a tactic for accentuating the social and communicative distance between the colonizer and the colonized in Trinbagonian literature, thus reproducing the putative racial superiority of the colonizers. This strategy of 'speech divergence' or 'disaccommodation' is very telling in *The Lonely Londoners*. In the following encounter between the police officer and Galahad, the former uses standard English as a marker of racial distancing:

'Move along now, don't block the pavement.' Galahad start to stammer, all the big talk left him now.

'Can I help you to get some place?' the policeman say.

'I looking for the employment exchange,' Galahad say, looking around as if he expect it to be near.

'You have to catch a bus over there,' the policeman say, pointing across the road. 'The conductor will tell you where to get off.' (*LL* 43)

Notice that in this verbal exchange, the policeman uses a series of question and directives which establish and confirm his dominant status even when his initial distrustful approach is modified into an attempt to be helpful. On the functions of

questions, Jennifer Coates remarks that “questions don’t just seek information; they are also used to establish power and status. Discourse analysts have identified questions as powerful forms, as they oblige the addressee to produce an answer, and to produce an answer which is conversationally relevant. . . . Through questions, powerful participants are able to control the topic of discourse” (“Language, Gender and Career” 17-18). In the same article, Coates indicates that a directive can be defined as a speech act which tries to get someone to do something. Directives can range from the bluntness of imperative forms (e.g., ‘Shut the door’) to more mitigated forms (e.g., ‘Could you possibly shut the door?’). Typically, powerful participants will demonstrate their power (i.e. their ability to ignore the face needs of their addressees by using direct commands (18).

Similarly, in a social interaction between Galahad and Daisy, his white girlfriend, the latter disparages the former’s Creole English as a tactic of proclaiming her superior racial identity:

‘Fix up,’ he say, handing Daisy a cup.

They sit down there sipping the tea and talking.

‘You get that raise the foreman was promising you?’ Galahad ask, for something to say.

‘What did you say? You know it will take me some time to understand everything you say. The way you West Indians speak!’

‘What wrong with it?’ Galahad ask. ‘Is English we speaking.’ (LL 93)

In this encounter, Daisy’s linguistic behaviour constitutes speech divergence from the majority of the characters’ way of speaking, a marker of her disidentification and racial differentiation from people like Galahad. Nevertheless, the example above foregrounds a tension between race and gender politics, because Galahad initiates the conversation by using a directive, a discursive strategy typical of male dominance in social interaction between women and men.

However, in certain contexts, English functions as a strategy of accommodation or speech convergence between the colonizer and the colonized in Trinbagonian literature, thus allowing the colonized to maintain their sanity in the face of racial oppression. For example, in contrast to Chinodya's *Harvest of Thorns* where Mellecker has to downshift to accommodate his speech to that of Msindo, Galahad would, in certain situations, coopt standard English into his own sociolinguistic behaviour. In the following example, despite his awareness of the social distance between whites and colonial subjects in London, and contrary to the earlier example where he consciously uses Creole to affirm his West Indian cultural identity, Galahad lect-shifts upwards to employ acrolectal English as a strategy of speech convergence:

'Mummy, look at that black man!' A little child, holding on to the mother hand, look up at Sir Galahad.

'You mustn't say that, dear!' The mother chide the child.

But Galahad skin like rubber at this stage, he bend down and pat the child cheek, and the child cower and shrink and begin to cry.

'What a sweet child!' Galahad say, putting on the old English accent.

'What's your name?' (LL 87-88)

Also comparable to the sociolinguistic experience in Zimbabwean literature, English becomes an instrument creating new social stratification among the colonized in Trinbagonian literature. This sociolinguistic feature is the most pronounced aspect of the power and politics of English in this literature. In *Crick Crack, Monkey*, for example, Auntie Beatrice, and Bernadette and Carol, her daughters, are fond of using hypercorrected English as a strategy of distancing themselves from other characters whom they believe do not belong to their social class, that is, people given to "ordinaryness and niggeryness," "people with no culture, no breeding, no sense of right and wrong" (95). Very early in the novel, Auntie Beatrice establishes her social

and communicative distance from her wards, Tee and Dolarie, by using standard English in contrast to the latters' Creole:

'Your Auntie is not at home, is she?'

'No,' we chorused.

'And the boy?'

'He gone to work.'

'Well, how would you like to go for a nice drive in your Uncle Norman's car?' (11)

Also in a conversation with Father Sheridan, Auntie Beatrice was saying on the phone that "something *rorthor* unexpected had turned up and couldn't *Forther* please come another day" (106, *rorthor* emphasized in the original). However, Auntie Beatrice's middle-class affectations and pretensions are belied by the fact she sometimes uses the undifferentiated tag *not so?*, (e.g., 'And which school would you like to go dear -- St. Ann's *not so?* [CM 68]) which alludes to her Trinbagonian cultural identity.

The characterization of Auntie Beatrice as an 'Afro-Saxon' is also reflected in the linguistic behaviour of her daughters, Bernadette and Carol. Exhibiting characteristically middle-class pretensions, Bernadette "came and went, with fantastically piled hairdos, dangerously high thin heels, and a most unlikely affectedness in her speech" (CM 80). She also spends hours on the telephone conversing in affectedly anglicized English: "I said well *dorling* why don't we just go and pick the others up *orfterwards*. . . . Oh that's some *lil* relative *Mommer* found up in the country" (CM 80-81, my emphasis). In much the same way, Carol uses hypercorrected English in conversation with her mother: "I don't know where she is going to put her things because all my *dorncing* things are in there and I have nowhere else to put them" (CM 69, my emphasis).

Also in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, Mr. Hinds and Sir employ formal English not only to distance themselves from their pupils, but also to affirm their similarity-

attraction to the code and norms of British English. In an appropriation of the lines “Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note / As his corpse to the rampart was hurried . . .”, Mr. Hinds would berate his kindergarten pupils in a discourse that is not commensurate with their linguistic competence: “Not an eyelid must bat, not a finger must twitch when we honour the Mother Country” (26). That Mr. Hinds’ discourse is meant to oppress his pupils is borne out by the fact that they found some of his words incomprehensible. According to the narrator:

Mr. Hinds’ word ‘nincompoops’ which we never heard elsewhere seemed to us the height of incongruity, issuing as it did from the mouth of one who, we were certain, never committed the lapse of etiquette known to us by its onomatopoeic final syllable. (28)

However, in his grotesque attempt to approximate British English and thus deny his West Indian identity, Mr. Hinds makes a caricature of himself. Hence, when Mr. Hinds engages in this kind of outrageous discourse, “a kind of frightened hush would ensue [among the pupils], pregnant however with suppressed giggling” (28).

Similarly, Sir interlards his discourse with polysyllabic, highfalutin words as markers of elitist identity when speaking to his elementary school pupils: “Well, tell us about your escapade up in other people’s property! . . . Disrespect! . . . Disrespect! Up into the gentleman’s land . . . to revile him! disrespect! . . . Keep your rudeness for your mother and father!” (CM 60).

Mr. Hinds’ and Sir’s linguistic behaviour recalls the discourse of another character in *The Dragon Can’t Dance*, “a professor of English at the University of West Indies (243-244). In attempting a critique of Philo’s Tarzan calypso, the professor’s discourse diverges from the Trinbagonian folk language:

The political and social themes confronted so subtly in Lord Philo’s Tarzan calypso had already begun to indicate a cryptic humour and incisive wit that could force open, indeed explode myths cultivated by

the propagandists of the western world to deprive the Black man of his sense of location. (245)

The communicative distance engendered by the professor's discourse is epitomized in the narrator's comment that "It was a nice article, and he [Philo] had cut it out and put it into his scrapbook. . . . He wasn't sure that he understood the professor" (245).

In *The Lonely Londoners*, Harris is an Afro-Saxon *par excellence*, and he is described as follows:

Harris is a fellar who . . . like English customs and thing, he does be polite and say thank you and he does get up in the bus and the tube to let woman sit down, which is a thing even them Englishmen don't do. And when he dress, you think is some Englishman going to work in the city, bowler and umbrella, and briefcase tuck under the arm, with *The Times* fold up in the pocket so the name would show, and he walking upright like if is he alone who alive in the world. Only thing Harris face black . . . when Harris start to spout English for you, you realise that you don't really know the language. Harris moving among the bigshots. (111)

For Harris, the power of English lies in its tractability in maintaining his similarity-attraction to the code and norms of the British, while simultaneously socially differentiating him from his fellow West Indians. Consequently, in most contexts, Harris's linguistic behaviour counter-identifies with that of West Indians in London. For example, in the following interaction between Harris and Five, the former uses standard English as a marker of speech divergence and social distance:

And from the minute he [Five] burst through the door with a long jacket draping across the knees he bawling out: 'Harris, you old reprobate! What happening?' Harris naturally feel bad that in front of all the English people Five getting on so. He pull Five to one side while the

girls go inside. 'Listen man,' Harris plead with Five, 'I want you to make an effort to behave and comport yourself properly tonight. I have a distinguished gentleman and his wife here tonight. Try to get on decently just for once.'

'But Harris man, you looking good, things going good with you.

. . . I hear you have steel band -- oh God, fete like stupidity!' (112)

Similar to Clopas Tichafa's linguistic behaviour in his social interaction with Shamiso in *Harvest of Thorns*, both Lal and F.Z. Ghany in *A House for Mr. Biswas* repudiate their Hindu cultural identity in their social interactions with other Hindus in the novel. Lal, a teacher at the Canadian Mission School, "had been converted to Presbyterian from a low Hindu caste and held all unconverted Hindus in contempt. As part of this contempt he spoke to them in broken English" (41-42). In the following interaction with Mr. Biswas and Bipti, Biswas's mother, Lal uses Creole English as an instrument of social domination:

'Tomorrow I want you to bring your both certificate. You hear?'

'Both suttificate?' Bipti echoed the English words. 'I don't have any.'

'Don't have any, eh? Lal said the next day. 'You people don't even know how to born, it look like.' (42)

By using the phrase "You people," Lal simultaneously denies the subjectivity of the women, a discourse typical of the 'We-They' binary opposition, and distances himself from other East Indians.

Similarly, F.Z. Ghany, "solicitor, conveyancer and a commissioner of oaths" (42), although a Hindu himself, "disliked the way Indian women had of using Hindi as a secret language in public places" (43). Although Ghany could follow Bipti's and Tara's conversation in Hindi, he prefers to interact with them in English, a language that signals his social differentiation from, and superiority to, the women:

Bipti told Tara in Hindi, 'I can't really say. But Pundit Sitaram should know. He cast Mohun's horoscope the day after he was born.' . . .

Ghany could follow their conversation. He . . . asked impatiently, 'Date of both?'

'Eight of June.' Bipti said to Tara. 'It must be that.' (43)

In terms of gain-loss theory, what characters like Auntie Beatrice, Bernadette, Carol, Mr. Hinds, Sir, the professor of English, and Harris gain by identifying with the codes and norms of British English, they lose in terms of their alienation and disidentification from their traditional values and West Indian cultural identity. The same is true of Ramchand in the discussion below. Also, in terms of Pierre Bourdieu's 'linguistic capital,' these characters enhance the capital of acrolectal English at the expense of Creole English and other local languages, such as Hindi-Bhojpuri, which are more attuned to a distinct Trinbagonian cultural identity. Hence, "differences in terms of accent, grammar and vocabulary . . . are indices of the social positions of speakers and reflections of the quantities of linguistic capital (and other capital) which they possess" (Thompson 18). In the same vein, Bourdieu emphasizes that

The dominant competence functions as linguistic capital, securing a profit of distinction in its relation to other competences only in so far as certain conditions (the unification of the market and the unequal means of production of the legitimate competence, and to the legitimate places of expression) are continuously fulfilled, so that the groups which possess that competence are able to impose it as the only legitimate one in the formal markets (the fashionable, educational, political and administrative markets) and in most of the linguistic interactions in which they are involved. (56-57)

As in Zimbabwean literature, English is a symbol not only of new inter-ethnic social stratification, but also of the cultural alienation of the educated and elitist class in the Trinbagonian context. For example, Ramchand, in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, started as a yardboy (servant) in Tara's household. However, his transition from rural Trinidad to urban Port-of-Spain led to a profound change in his linguistic and other social behaviours. The narrator describes Ramchand's sociolinguistic behaviour in the following way:

Mr. Biswas was amused by Ramchand's city manners and allowed himself to be patronized by him. . . . He had acquired a loudness and heartiness which was alien and which he did not always carry off easily. He spoke English most of the time, but with a rural Indian accent which made his attempts to keep up with the ever-changing Port of Spain slang absurd. And Mr. Biswas suffered when, as sometimes happened, Ramchand was rebuffed; when, for instance, partly to impress Mr. Biswas, he overdid the heartiness in his relations with the Negroes in the yard and was met with cold surprise. (312)

In *A House for Mr. Biswas*, English as a symbol of the socio-cultural alienation of the educated and the elitist class is also much evident in the interaction between Seth and Owad upon the return of the latter to Trinidad after completing his medical studies in England. Apart from the fact that Seth was an overseer in matters relating to Hanuman House and Mrs. Tulsi's property, he also played the role of a father-figure to Owad when the latter was growing up. Seth thus wielded enormous powers in Hanuman House and, according to the narrator, "In Seth's presence Mr. Biswas felt diminished. Everything about Seth was overpowering: his calm manner, his smooth grey hair, his ivory holder, his hard swollen forearms" (108). However, after the movement of Mrs. Tulsi and her family to Arwacas, Seth became too ambitious and fell from grace. In the following social interaction, which took place when Seth went to

welcome Owad on the latter's return from England, English becomes a reinforcer of social and class differences:

Seth was advancing towards Owad. He was smiling, tears in his eyes, raising his hands as he approached. In that moment it was clear that despite his age, despite Shekhar, Owad was the new head of the family. Everyone looked at him. If he gave the sign, there was to be a reconciliation.

'Son, son,' Seth said in Hindi.

Owad still held Mr. Biswas's hand. . . . Seth held out his hands and nearly touched Owad. Owad turned and said in English, 'I think I'd better go and see about the luggage.' He released Mr. Biswas's hand and walked briskly away. (537)

In this interaction, Seth uses Hindi, a language that symbolizes in-group identity, and the kinship term 'son,' to bridge the social distance between himself and Owad and to try to cement their earlier solidarity. However, Owad responds in English to accentuate his social and communicative distance and underscore his new prestige as the head of the Tulsi family.

However, in certain contexts, members of the dominant and elitist class would use Creolized English as a strategy of accommodation or speech convergence between themselves and members of the dominated or underprivileged groups. For example, in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, in contrast to Sir's and Mr. Hinds' speech divergence tactics, Mr. Thomas, the headmaster of Tee's elementary school, speaks Creole to a crowd of mothers who have come to register their children in the kindergarten class:

'Look, what allyou want me to do, put allyou children to siddong on one-another head? I tell you I ain' have no more room in ABC -- try the RC school, put them by Mis' Hinds, send them up Coriaca school, I

do' care what allyu do jus' carry them away and you could bring them back when they pass ABC!' (21-22)

By addressing the women in Creole, Mr. Thomas appeals to a sense of shared cultural identity in the Trinbagonian context. This speech convergence strategy has a positive effect on otherwise adamant and pugnacious mothers as “a few people at the edge of the crowd began to move off rather precipitately. . . . With one accord we surged out of the schoolyard” (22).

Furthermore, in contrast to Sir's speech divergence described earlier, Mr. Thomas employs accommodating verbal strategy with his pupils, which attests to his understanding of their emotional problems. For example, he discusses Tee's misdemeanour by interlarding his speech with Creole:

‘Well, what must I do with you, child? . . . Tell you to leave the mister's fruit trees in peace. I use' to stone those very trees, yu know, when I was a boy. . . . Collect some good cut-tail, too. . . . A-a. Go to your class, child, go to your class.’ (CM 59)

In *Lonely Londoners*, even an Afro-Saxon like Harris knows the social benefits of speech convergence. In the following example, Harris downshifts or lect-shifts from acrolectal to basilectal English to accommodate his speech to that of Five and his friends:

‘Five, the last time you come to one of my dances you was even jocking waist when everybody else was standing at attention. Now it have decent people here tonight, and if you don't get on respectable it will be a bad reflection not only on me but on all the boys, and you know how things hard already in Brit'n. . . . So please boys, do me a favour, and when the band play God Save The Queen, stand up to attention.’ (122)

Harris' Creole is in sharp contrast to his earlier reprimand of Five, which is negotiated in formal English: “I wish you would watch your language. . . . You don't know it but

there are decent people around you” (122). Harris’ Creole has a therapeutic effect on an otherwise belligerent Five, whose tone becomes instantly conciliatory:

‘All right Mr. Harris . . . anything you want. If you want me to leave right now I will leave. . . . Come and have a drink with the boys, man. You haven’t had one for the night.’ (122)

Likewise, Owad, who had earlier spurned Seth’s attempt to fraternize with him, knew the benefits accruing from speech convergence. As head of the family, his linguistic behaviour with members of the family becomes more accommodating, as in the following example where he shifts from standard English to Creole:

When they had gone Owad calmed the sisters’ fears by deriding the girl’s [Dorothy, Shekhar’s wife’s] Canadian degree, her slight Canadian accent and her musical skills. ‘She went all the way to Canada to learn to play the violin. . . . I hope she doesn’t want to play to me. I’ll break the bow on her parents’ heads. People starving, not getting enough to eat in Trinidad, and she playing the violin in Canada.’ (*HMB* 546-547)

As a result of his verbal accommodation strategy, and in spite of the contradiction of claiming an exalted position, Owad starts to gain the confidence and loyalty of the Tulsis sisters. According to the narrator, “The sisters now sought audience with him singly or in small groups. They came to the house, waited up for him, and when he returned they fell to talking. . . . In time each sister felt she had a special hold on him; and having received his confidences, offered hers” (*HMB* 547).

The market value and economic benefits accruing from lect-shifting and speech convergence are also evident in the social interaction between Mr. Biswas and Mr. Maclean, the house builder and contractor. These characters belong to two distinct ethnic groups: Mr. Biswas is of East Indian descent, while Mr. Maclean is of African heritage. One thus naturally expects language to become a signifier of racial or socio-ethnic difference between the two. However, during their first encounter, Mr.

Biswas's Creole anticipates and converges with Mr. Maclean's perceived sociolect as a strategy of enhancing the former's bargaining power:

He [Biswas] said shyly, 'I have a little business I want to talk to you about.' . . .

'What sort of business?' Mr. Maclean asked. . . .

'Is about a house.'

'Oh. Repairs?'

'Not exactly. It ain't build yet. As a matter of fact ___'

'So you want me to build a house for you?' . . .

'Is not a mansion.'

'That is a blessing. Too much people putting up mansion these days.'

. . . 'Upstairs house. Small thing. But neat.' . . .

'It sound nice. . . . You think you could give me about a hundred and fifty dollars to start off with?' . . .

'I just waiting to know how much you want to spend right away.'

(*HMB* 239, 241)

Mr. Biswas initiates the conversation in standard English but soon shifts to Creole as a strategy of speech convergence. Later on in the dialogue, Mr. Maclean lect-shifts in response to Biswas's Creole. Although Mr. Maclean initially "looked eager and uncertain" (*HMB* 239), Mr. Biswas's accommodation strategy ensured that at the end of the bargaining session, "Mr. Maclean wasn't animated, but some of his wariness had gone; he even sounded encouraging" (*HMB* 241), and was "almost friendly now" (*HMB* 242).

Closely related to the strategies of speech convergence described above is the sociolinguistic process in Trinbagonian literature, familiar from the earlier consideration of Zimbabwean literature, whereby members of dominated groups use Creole to resist elitist and middle-class identity. In *Crick Crack, Monkey*, for example, in contrast to

Bernadette and Carol, who have internalized Auntie Beatrice's middle-class pretensions and hypercorrected linguistic behaviour, Jessica, Auntie Beatrice's other daughter, often interlards her speech with Creole as a symbol of rebellion against the middle-class foppiness in her family. In the following social interaction between Auntie Beatrice and Jessica, the latter resists elitist identity while the former tries in vain to 'repair' Jessica's linguistic behaviour:

Auntie Beatrice threw her hands up and rolled up her eyes heavenward, and in frustration fell upon Jessica again.
'It's not my fault, I tell you Sister Columba don' like me.'
'Sister Columba *doesn't* . . . !' barked Auntie Beatrice.
'Oh I know it's doesn't, give me a chance, nuh!'
'Well then say doesn't! If you want to talk like any old ordnry market-people then you can go and live with market-people!' (83, original emphasis)

In this encounter, Jessica deliberately uses the wrong auxiliary, *don'*, and even when her mother attempts to correct her linguistic behaviour, she employs another Creole tag, *nuh*.

Other characters in *Crick Crack, Monkey* also resist Auntie Beatrice's elitist identity. For example, during one of her shopping sprees, "Auntie Beatrice made a systematic effort not to understand a word of what the shop-people said to her, and when she spoke to them it was loudly, slowly and emphatically, with much pointing and sign-language" (89). However, Auntie Beatrice's grotesque attempt to erect a sociolinguistic barrier between herself and the ordinary people only made her socially ridiculous. Consequently, using Creole, the communal language, "one shopkeeper remarked under his breath to the rest of his amused clients: 'I wonder whe' this one come-out, boy? Mus' be land yesterday!'" (89). In this episode, Creole symbolizes the solidarity and shared identity of the ordinary people.

Similarly, Mrs. Harper, Auntie Beatrice's occasional housemaid, would use Creole to resist and snub the latter's middle-class pretensions. Everytime Mrs. Harper has finished her domestic work, she would murmur the Creole expression "I gone" to signal her departure. This always offends the middle-class sensibilities of Auntie Beatrice. The narrator explains further:

This always caused deep offence to Auntie Beatrice. She never failed to bid Mrs. Harper farewell with a smile and a pleasantness that were as high-pitched as when she talked to the lady on the other side of the fence; but when Mrs. Harper had made her way down the path and up the road . . . then she would begin again to swear that she would teach that woman to address her in a fitting manner and not to talk to her as if it were a chair she was talking to, she had a name, after all, and in any case she was used to being addressed as 'Madam' by people who worked for her and she had never *known* such disrespect. (*CM* 101, original emphasis)

Similarly, in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Creole becomes for Mr. Biswas a psycholinguistic weapon for negotiating his social identity against the oppressiveness of Hanuman House. A.C. Derrick identifies the ways this oppressiveness is communicated:

The stifling conservatism of Hanuman House is suggested by a description which seems equally applicable to a prison: 'white fortress . . . the concrete walls looked as thick as they were . . . the narrow doors . . . bulky, impregnable and blank . . . the side walls were windowless and on the two floors the windows were mere slits in the facade . . . sinister.' . . . Such a place seems hardly likely to sustain Biswas's vague romantic longings. . . . The 'heavy braceleted arms' of Mrs. Tulsi, which permit her no more than 'a clumsy dancer's gesture,'

are suggestive of oppressive restraints placed on individual and spontaneous movement. (202)

To negotiate his separate social identity, “Mr. Biswas nearly always spoke English at Hanuman House, even when the other person spoke Hindi: it had become one of his principles” (*HMB* 118-119).

Especially in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, there is often a sociolinguistic tension between English and Hindi as codes of inclusion and exclusion respectively. This is similar to the rejection of English by certain female characters in Zimbabwean literature. Braj Kachru explains the distinction between inclusive and exclusive codes in the following way:

In functional terms, the bilingual’s codes may be viewed either as *inclusive* or *exclusive*. The inclusive codes are “free access” codes, and conscious efforts may be made to increase the number of their users. Such codes may be termed, for example, *national language, official language, lingua franca, koine, or Creole*. These codes generally cut across language and/or dialect boundaries. The use of such a code may be sought for nationhood, educational status, and political unification (e.g. the case of Hindi in India, Swahili in parts of Africa, English in non-native contexts). The exclusive codes tend to have a restricted membership. These may be termed “limited access” codes, and they mark an “in-group identity.” Such codes are used for *trade, secrecy, caste, religion, and initiation*. The membership of each type is not necessarily mutually exclusive. (*Alchemy* 61, original emphasis)

However, depending on the context, English can also function as an exclusive code. For example, as noted earlier, Biswas uses English at Hanuman House to exclude the Tulsis from his perceived social identity. The Tulsi sisters also use English to exclude other members of the family from the sisters’ gossips and discussions of

other intimate subjects. According to the narrator, “Friendly sisters exchanged stories of their husbands’ disabilities, the names of illnesses and remedies, forcing such discussions to be in English” (*HMB* 105).

In the same way, Seth would sometimes use English with Mr. Biswas not only to exclude the latter from the in-group identity of the Tulsi family, but also to remind him of his out-group identity. On one occasion, for example, Seth “went to Mr. Biswas and said, in a tone of gruff authority, ‘The old lady want to see you before you go.’” Mr. Biswas knew that Seth’s use of English was a signifier of his [Biswas’s] out-group identity and “was disturbed that Seth had spoken to him in English” (*HMB* 86). However, this episode alludes to Biswas’s double bind: although he uses English to signal his own out-group identity, he does not like others to use it for the same purpose. On another occasion, Seth addresses Biswas in Creole English to reinforce the latter’s out-group identity:

‘It’s all right, son [i.e. Owad],’ Seth said. ‘I am still here to look after you.’ He turned to Mr. Biswas. ‘All right,’ he said in English. ‘You see what you cause. You want to get the family in trouble. You want to see them go to jail. They feeding you, but you want to see me and Mai go to jail.’ (*HMB* 123)

Notice that although Seth addresses Owad in Hindi -- signalled by his syntactically correct initial utterances, which correctness suggests a translation from a Hindi original -- he switches to Creole as a marker of Biswas’s out-group identity, the language shift being specifically noted by the narrator.

Also, depending on the context, Hindi can also function as a language of exclusion and inclusion. As I noted earlier in my discussion of the power of English as a signifier of new social stratification in the Trinbagonian context, F.Z. Ghany, the solicitor, disapproves of the way Indian women use Hindi as a secret language in public places. In this sense, Hindi functions simultaneously as an exclusive code to

signal the out-group identity of non-Hindus and as an inclusive code to mark the in-group identity of the Hindu interlocutors. This split or double function of Hindi is also confirmed in the following passage: “Heedless of stares, they [the Tulsi women] stared; and made comments in Hindi, unusually loud, unusually ribald, because in the city Hindi was a secret language” (*HMB* 360). This split function of English and Hindi thus develops and refines the kind of distinction Kachru makes between inclusive and exclusive codes.

However, in certain contexts, Hindi functions solely as an inclusive code to signal intimacy and affection. Although Mr. Biswas believes in the power of English as a symbol of his out-group social identity in Hanuman House, he addresses Mrs. Tulsi in Hindi to express his intimacy and regret on the occasion of the latter’s illness:

Mr. Biswas didn’t want to talk to Mrs. Tulsi in Hindi, but the Hindi words came out. ‘How are you, Mai? I couldn’t come to see you last night because it was too late and I didn’t want to disturb you.’ (*HMB* 200)

Similarly, when Shama was indisposed, “She got Savi and Anand to walk on her and said in Hindi, ‘God will bless you’” (*HMB* 338).

By using the postulates in Zimbabwean literature as frames of reference, this chapter’s consideration of the linguistic texturing, nativization strategies, and the power and politics of English in Trinbagonian literature has uncovered certain similarities and differences between the linguistic practices of both literatures. For example, whereas the linguistic texturing in Zimbabwean literature is generally marked by a rigid distinction between the language of narration and the language of the fictional character, there is often an abrogation of the semiotic distance between the two codes in Trinbagonian literature. Except for the opacity of loan-words in Trinbagonian literature and minor differences in lexico-semantics and syntax, the strategies of nativizing the

texts are similar in both literatures. These similarities are probably owing to the influence of West African and East Indian languages on Trinbagonian English and the common linguistic features shared by the substrate African and East Indian languages.

Concerning the power and politics of English, certain sociolinguistic features differentiate Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures. These features involve the province of racist discourse, which includes the colonized versus the colonized in Trinbagonian literature and the use of legalese as a discursive strategy by influential colonized subjects to neutralize cultural norms and thus exert social power over other colonized subjects.

NOTES

¹After excerpts, the novels will be identified as follows: *HMB*, *LL*, *DD*, *CM*, and *LFL*. References to 'Trinbagonian literature' strictly mean "Trinbagonian literature studied in this dissertation."

²Henceforth, abbreviated as *DCEU*.

³These immigration metaphors are borrowed from the supervisor of this dissertation, Professor Susan Gingell.

⁴Another depersonalizing strategy may be at work here. Professor Gingell speculates that the protagonist uses a naming strategy found in a very popular North American children's book, Dr. Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham*, in which the interlocutor is a character called Sam-I-am. By taking the portentous recognition of Livingstone by Stanley and recasting it in a format that to many North Americans will recall a character in a humorous but largely nonsensical children's book, the narrator is undermining the dignity and seriousness of this imperial encounter. This is an example of how Philip's Canadian experience may be shaping her linguistic practice.

⁵Since only one example of legalese is found in the data, I should acknowledge the very limited basis on which I make this assertion.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

By employing the frameworks of post-colonial literary theory, sociolinguistics, and the social psychology of language use, this study has compared the nature, function, and meaning of English in the delineation of cultural and social identities in anglophone Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures. Although cultural identity and social identity are contiguous terms, I have called for a distinction between the two concepts. If identity is “a composite of shifting selves” (McWilliams 105), and given the homogenizing tendency of cultural identity formulation, I argued we need a different category of ‘social identity’ to account for subjectivities, groups, and discourses that have been marginalized and excluded by the totalizing strategies of producing and circulating cultural identity.

Language as an articulator of cultural and social identities can be seen operating simultaneously at the primary and secondary degrees of delicacy respectively. For example, the ethnolexemes *wide-mouth* and *shopman* mark Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian Englishes as sites of cultural difference from, say, British English. However, as signifiers of social identity, these ethnolexemes not only allude to the marginalization of women in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian cultural contexts, but also point to the fact that they are negatively ‘Othered’ to putative patriarchal norms.

Except for the category of loan-words, which is only attested in Zimbabwean literature, the nativization strategies in Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures are similar. As I pointed out, nativization strategies -- which include lexical transfer and linguistic hybridization -- refer to words and grammatical structures appropriated from the colonizer’s language but made to bear the burden of the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian socio-cultural experience. For example, at the lexico-semantic level, and except for semantic underdifferentiation attested only in Trinbagonian literature, the

processes of capturing and remoulding the English language to new usage in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literary contexts are loanshift, lexico-semantic duplication and redundancy, ellipsis, conversion, clipping, translation equivalence, analogical creation, and coinage.

At the syntactic level, except for syntactic variation relating to non-distinctive use of gender, prepositional substitution, variant forms of response to yes-no questions, emphatic deixis, and thematization, the following categories of syntactic variation attested in Zimbabwean literature are also found in Trinbagonian literature: deletion of function words; reduplication; non-inversion of subject and verb in forming questions; undifferentiated tag questions; the use of the progressive aspect with mental processes; non-distinctive use of pronouns, concord, and tense; double subjects; and resumptive references. However, I also pointed out that owing probably to the extensive creolization of English in the Trinbagonian context and the survival of West African and East Indian linguistic habits in the West Indies, the following additional categories of syntactic variation are attested in Trinbagonian literature: deletion of prepositions; non-distinctive use of articles and determiners; non-distinctive use of relative pronouns and the genitive; deletion of the '-ly' morpheme; and subjectless sentences. Because the syntax of Trinbagonian English has been influenced by West African and Indian languages, I also attempted not only to supply the West African sources of these variations, but also to compare them with similar innovations in anglophone West African and Indian literatures.

The lexico-semantic and syntactic similarities between Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian Englishes are hardly surprising. As Tony Obilade has observed, "any language removed from its native environment is likely to undergo severe changes in direct proportion to the degree of its psychological and sociological separation from its native speakers" (176-177). The transplantation of English from Britain to Zimbabwe and Trinidad and Tobago thus presupposes that the language has to obey certain laws

of geolinguistic mutation in these host environments. The similarities are also owing to the common linguistic features shared by the substrate African and Indian languages, and the tendency of Zimbabweans and Trinbagonians to simplify English syntactic structures. Consequently, several of the lexico-semantic and syntactic features shared by Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian Englishes are also to be found in such varieties as West African, East African, and Indian Englishes.

Thus, while features of the new varieties of English may be non-standard in formal terms, they nevertheless help build a very strong case for regarding English as a language with multiple cultural identities and traditions. In this regard, the linguistic features of Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian Englishes are systematic and predictable, giving these Englishes a linguistic status quite distinct from the dominant code of so-called standard English. These Englishes can then be construed as dialects made up of their own rules which function regularly to promote communication not only among characters belonging to various classes, races, and social strata in Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures, but also quite likely among various segments of the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian populations.

In the area of the power and politics of English, certain sociolinguistic features differentiate Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures. For example, because the function of race is more complexly nuanced in Trinbagonian literature, the archive of racist discourse also includes the colonized versus the colonized, whereas in the Zimbabwean context racist discourse is negotiated via the manichean opposition between the colonizer and the colonized. Also, in contrast to the sociolinguistic experience in Zimbabwean literature where 'legalese' is a form of repressive discourse the colonizer uses to manipulate, disenfranchise, and exert social power over the colonized, the same discursive strategy is employed in Trinbagonian literature by the well-placed colonized not only to erode cultural norms but also to exert social power over other colonized subjects.

However, Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures exhibit certain similar sociolinguistic phenomena concerning the power and politics of English. On the one hand, this study has revealed that the socio-psychological differences between the colonizers, the elites or the dominant classes, and the dominated groups in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian contexts are often reflected in the sociolinguistic behaviour of these groups. For example, the analyses carried out in this dissertation demonstrate not only how members of the dominant class use English as an accommodation strategy (e.g., Clopas Tichafa's boss's linguistic behaviour in *Harvest of Thorns* and Galahad's in *The Lonely Londoners*), but also how they use the language to maintain their communicative and social distance, thereby enforcing asymmetrical power relationships and neutralizing cultural norms. In this instance, English becomes a powerful weapon which creates new social stratification in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian contexts. This trait is manifested, for example, in the linguistic behaviour of Clopas Tichafa in *Harvest of Thorns* and Auntie Beatrice in *Crick Crack, Monkey*.

On the other hand, the use of basilectal English and Creole by dominated groups not only exposes the tension and conflict between dominant and dominated groups in the Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian contexts, but also reveals, in certain domains, the dominated's contempt for, and anger toward, the dominator. Specific varieties of English thus become codes that symbolize the solidarity of the dominated groups and their resistance to dominant discourses. Examples of this feature from Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures include the ordinary people's reaction to the Waddilove students in *The Mourned One* and the shopkeeper's and other ordinary folk's reaction to Auntie Beatrice's smugness in *Crick Crack, Monkey*. However, the analyses also demonstrate how the linguistic codes of the dominated groups also become the vehicle by which they are further exploited and subjugated by the dominant class. This feature is exemplified in Tichafa's and Msindo's social interaction with

their white bosses in *Harvest of Thorns*, and teacher Lal's domination of Tara and Bipti in *A House for Mr. Biswas*.

One can thus generally conclude from the foregoing observations that the construction of Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian identities in and through language can be read as a mode of resistance to the homogenizing, assimilative practices of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Consequently, to the extent that the linguistic differences (from other works of English, especially the acrolectal variety) in works of post-colonial literatures are consciously employed as synecdoches of cultural and social differences from the (neo)colonizer, their presence in the text functions as resistance. Such linguistic and socio-cultural differences subvert the assumption that the right and best way to do things, including saying and writing things, is the (neo)colonizer's way. Thus, the detailed documentation provided in this study of the range of these linguistic differences establishes that, while there is no single, stable Zimbabwean or Trinbagonian identity that is constituted in the language of literary texts to set up in contrast to an imperial British or American one, the fact of differences is indisputable. In the Saussurean mode, just as the meaning of *hot* differs from *hit* and *hat* because of the variant vowels, so variations in the linguistic practices of post-colonial writers cumulatively establish different meanings (identities/subjectivities) from those of the users of the hegemonic or putative standard linguistic code.

At this juncture, it is pertinent to ask the question: What are the values of an interdisciplinary project such as this one for both linguistics and literary studies? For example, linguistically speaking, this study is an attempt at describing and analyzing Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures by employing certain methods of sociolinguistics. This dissertation is thus of direct relevance not only for non-native English teachers and learners, but also for teachers and learners who use English as their native language. In this direction, Braj Kachru has noted that studies such as this one help to show (a) how English has been nativized in non-native English contexts;

(b) how stylistic innovations are determined by the socio-cultural context; and (c) the implications of using English for cross-cultural communication (“Non-native Literatures in English” 148).

However, from a literary standpoint, the nativized forms of English analyzed in this study, for example, have implications for cross-cultural communication as mentioned above. As I noted in chapter two, African and West Indian literatures are contact literatures written primarily by non-Western bilingual users of English in typically un-Western settings where English is primarily used as an additional or complementary language to the various mother tongues. Such literatures are therefore bound to exhibit stylistic characteristics which vary considerably from those of the traditional canon of English literature. These stylistic variations -- especially those pertaining to loan-words, lexico-semantics, linguistic hybridization, and syntax -- often defeat or are contrary to the linguistic expectations of Western critics and readers. Consequently, one implication of this study is that it would enable non-African and non-Caribbean critics and readers of African and West Indian literatures to develop a double vision and become aware of aspects of divergent forms and norms of these literatures since such literatures have generally evolved out of the Afro-Caribbean or Afro-diasporic historical, cultural, and geolinguistic experience. Kachru has aptly remarked that

the initiation of English into new culturally and linguistically dependent communicative norms forces a redefinition of our linguistic and contextual parameters for understanding the new language types and discourse types. Those who are outside these cultures must go through a *variety shift* in order to understand both the written and spoken modes of such varieties. One cannot, realistically speaking, apply the norms of one variety to another variety. (*Alchemy* 93, original emphasis)

The point is thus worth reiterating, at least for the benefit of non-African and non-Caribbean readers encountering Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures for the first time, that the linguistic differences in these literatures act as a synecdoche for cultural and social differences, reminding such readers that different socio-cultural values are doubtless at work in the texts.

If meaning in post-colonial theory of literary writing is, according to Ashcroft, “a social accomplishment characterized by the participation of the writer and reader ‘functions’ within the ‘event’ of the particular discourses” (“Constitutive Graphonomy” 59), this dissertation has further implications for teachers and scholars of literature. The pertinent questions relate to whether there are signals of identification or disidentification with imperial politics that can be related to Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian writers’ linguistic practices and what effect their linguistic choices are likely to have on readers outside the authors’ original cultures and those who are part of these cultures. These questions are, in turn, discernible from fictional characters and their interactions and the authors’ narrative attitudes to fictional characters and sometimes plots, themes, settings, and so on. This particular implication extends and concretizes the significance of linguistic texturing discussed in the last two chapters.

As I pointed out in chapter two, the African writer’s very decision to use English is engulfed by ironies, paradoxes, and contradictions (JanMohamed “Sophisticated Primitivism” 20). This is further complicated in Zimbabwean literature by the semiotic distancing of Zimbabwean writers from basilectal English and the speeches of characters in their novels. The ironies and paradoxes in a colonial text, such as Lessing’s *The Grass is Singing*, transcend the issue of language. For example, as Katherine Fishburn indicates, the setting and plot of this novel invite a manichean reading; this novel that takes place in Africa and is about Africa does not focus on the lives, fears, dreams, foibles, or strengths of the Africans, but on their white colonizers. Of the many Africans that Mary Turner, the novel’s protagonist, actually encounters in

this African country, only one, her servant (“boy”) Moses, takes on an identity that might distinguish him from another African or even the landscape itself (3). And even though Moses is endowed with a basilectal variety of English that confirms his low social status, this characterization through language is inconsistent, as a slippage into acrolectal English sometimes occurs in his speech repertoire. For example, Moses uses the following standard English questions and directive in his interaction with Mary Turner: ‘Did Madame go to bed last night?’ (GS 195); ‘Did Madame stay up the other night?’ (GS 195); ‘Madame should not walk around in the dark bush by herself’ (GS 193); and ‘Why is Madame afraid of me?’ (GS 205).

Because of the linguistic distancing of Zimbabwean writers from basilectal English and the concomitant privileging of standard or Queen’s English, the dialogues and speeches of characters are somewhat strained and artificial in many respects. Even characters who are custodians of traditional cultures and others who belong to the lower echelons of society, who are expected to speak mesolectal or basilectal varieties of English in certain contexts, display inconsistency and inauthenticity in their dialogues and speech repertoires. For example, the speeches of Lobengula, the Matebele king, in Samkange’s *On Trial for My Country*, are often crafted in acrolectal English, which is inconsistent with his traditional stature and role. The following extract from Lobengula’s speech clearly approximates acrolectal English:

‘My prayers, like those of our priests, were ignored. The sky did not fall on the earth and the sun continued each day to rise in the east and set in the west. The gallant uMncumbata there invited me to take over the leadership of the nation as king, but I refused. I refused because, as I have said, I wished everything on earth to perish with the king, and also because I did not wish to involve the nation in a civil war with those who might have had a better claim to my father’s stool than I.’ (TC 14)

In his other novel, *The Mourned One*, many of the characters -- e.g., Nwemba, Gore,

and Marimba -- engage in an extravagant discourse that signals an affiliation with imperial culture. In addition, Samkange's incessant struggle to translate Shona and Ndebele words into English signals a pandering to Western sensibility. However, Samkange's translation technique also stems from his efforts to make Shona and Sindebele words intelligible to the non-Zimbabwean reader.

As I indicated in chapters two and three, many critics are of the view that Marechera pays no homage to his native Shona orature, while he seems to assume a universal linguistic and literary experience. The result is that both the narrative idiom and dialogues of characters in *The House of Hunger* are decidedly anglicized. In Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*, only Lucia and Anna produce discourses that one can connect to the Shona linguistic heritage. Other illiterate characters, like Ma'Shingayi, the narrator's mother, speak a kind of English that approximates the acrolect presumably to indicate fully competent linguistic behaviour in Shona that context and other information in the text make clear she must be speaking. And as I noted in chapter three, the linguistic behaviour of Nhamo, Nyasha, and even the narrator, out-English the native speaker's idiom of English. In spite of his lament that anglophone Zimbabwean writers have not done enough to integrate Shona and Sindebele orality into their literary writings, Chinodya's characters in *Harvest of Thorns* also display inconsistency and inauthenticity in their speech repertoires. While Tichafa and Msindo are set up as the loci of the uneducated Shona linguistic behaviour, the speeches of other characters in the novel leave much to be desired. For example, it is quite inauthentic that Benjamin's illiterate mother would converse with his son in standard English. However, as I indicated in the case of Ma'Shingayi in *Nervous Conditions*, Benjamin's mother's acrolectal English is a narrative device probably used to manifest her competence in Shona.

Even in Hove's *Bones*, a novel deliberately designed to reflect a Shona rather than a European sensibility, the dialogues of characters like Marita and Janifa oscillate

repeatedly between acrolectal and mesolectal varieties of Zimbabwean English. Dan Wylie thus points out that Hove does not “seem to be attempting a ‘dialectal’ English, constructed on the grammatical structures of Shona, in as thoroughgoing and variant a manner as, say, Gabriel Okara’s attempt to transliterate Ijaw in *The Voice*, or Amos Tutuola [‘s transliteration of Yoruba] in *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*. Whatever the mother-tongue influence, Hove is also drawing on specific registers of English” (57).

The contiguity of the linguistic practice in Zimbabwean literature studied to the dominant code and norms of British English thus signals an identification of these writers with imperial culture. This affiliation is hardly surprising because the attitude of language and educational planners in Zimbabwe has been to promote a native speaker’s model, such as British English (Morrison 190; Ngara 144-145; Schmied 22, 178). However, as I indicated in my discussion of linguistic texturing in Zimbabwean novels analyzed in this study, the degree of identification with imperial politics varies from writer to writer.

Although each reader brings his or her own unique life experience, attitudes, politics, and cultural baggage to the reading process, which is always a complex phenomenon, the affiliation of Zimbabwean writers with the hegemonic code of the dominant culture facilitates Western readers and critics to identifying positively with the themes, plots, and characters of these novels. Again, the identification of Western readers with Zimbabwean literature cannot be monolithic. For example, while these readers are bound to be more familiar to at least the linguistic aspects of texts such as *The Grass is Singing* and *On Trial for My Country*, whose language practice is close to the Eurolect, their degree of psychological distancing from a text such as *Bones*, which approximates more to the Shona culture, will be more marked. Of course, the converse is likely to be true for Zimbabwean readers.

Although Zimbabwean literature can be read as a quest for cultural identity (“Who are we?”), and social identity (“Who am I?”) the facts of history and

geo(demo)graphy have combined to make the angst of identity more telling in Trinbagonian literature described in this study. Similar to Northrop Frye's delineation of the Canadian imaginative sensibility in general, the quest for identity in Trinbagonian literature, in addition to being perplexed by the question 'Who am I?', is also haunted by "some such riddle as 'Where is here?'" (220).

To be sure, three of the writers looked at in this study -- Naipaul, Selvon, and Philip -- write from exile in Western countries such as Britain and Canada. The other two writers -- Hodge and Lovelace -- are also not securely settled in their homeland of Trinidad and Tobago. For example, as Liz Gerschel explains, Hodge has "travelled widely, living in France, Denmark, Spain, Senegal, and Gambia. Her interest in travel has since taken her throughout Europe, to the USA and the USSR [Russia]. . . . Like other Caribbean writers 'in exile' she became aware both of rejection by the people of the 'mother country' and of the distance between [herself] and these people whom [she] thought [she] was part of" (79). Similarly, Lovelace's social and physical world takes in both Trinidad and Western countries, particularly the United States.

Trinbagonian literature analyzed in this study thus conforms to Biodun Jeyifo's concept of interstitial or liminal post-coloniality which "defines an ambivalent mode of self-fashioning of the writer or critic which is neither First World nor Third World, neither securely and smugly metropolitan, nor assertively and combatively Third Worldist. The very terms which express the orientation of this school of post-colonial self-representation are revealing: diasporic, exilic, hybrid, in-between, cosmopolitan" (53). The location of Trinbagonian texts analyzed in this study at the interstices of multiple cultures and traditions thus calls for a re-evaluation of the construction of cultural identity in the Trinbagonian context. If these texts conform to a hybrid aesthetics, then the authors can be designated as cultural mulattos.

For example, the linguistic aphasia -- the alternate communication of language and silence -- characteristic of Philip's *Looking for Livingstone* can be attributed to her

cultural dislocation and displacement from Trinidad and Tobago. As Carol Morrell points out, Philip, born in Trinidad and Tobago, and now living in Canada, is an exiled woman. Her voluntary emigration to Canada has resulted in a distancing from her childhood experiences of family and community in Trinidad. However, because of the colour of her skin and the subtle but systemic racism in Canada, Philip does not readily blend into the Canadian society (9). It is thus quite ironic that Philip's narrator in *Looking for Livingstone*, in her confrontation with Livingstone in Africa, would employ acrolectal English in that setting. It is also quite paradoxical that when Arwhal advises the narrator to weave words into her tapestry of meaning, the words chosen valorize the dominant code of standard English. As I pointed out in my discussion of linguistic texturing in *Looking for Livingstone* in the previous chapter, the Caribbean demotic that is interspersed with the essay and poetry of *She Tries Her Tongue* is virtually non-existent in the former work. This shift in linguistic orientation probably marks Philip's closer allegiances to imperial culture. In other words, the narrator's use of acrolectal English in *Looking for Livingstone* is an indication of Philip's own crisis of identity, especially the erosion of her "active sense of self" as West Indian caused by "dislocation" and "migration" to Canada (Ashcroft *et al.* 9). The narrator's use of acrolectal English also signals an identity shift in terms of "a transfer of legitimacy from filiation to affiliation" (Said *The World* 24), from Philip's filial bond to her mother tongue (Creole) to her affiliation with imperial culture and aesthetics even if modified in another post-colonial location such as Canada. To put it another way, the linguistic aphasia of Philip's narrator in *Looking for Livingstone*, her crisscrossing the borders of acrolectal English and silence, marks Philip's own estrangement from a distinctive Creole cultural identity.

As I indicated in my discussion of the power and politics of English in the previous chapter, Philip uses acrolectal English as a counter-discourse to the hegemonic discourses of colonialism and neo-colonialism in *Looking for Livingstone*. The choice

of Queen's English in that text is thus a deliberate counter-discursive strategy Philip's protagonist employs to reverse the colonizer/colonized power relationships.

Consequently, as I implied in chapter two of this study, and in my discussion of linguistic texturing in Philip's text in the previous chapter, Philip employs demotic language in *She Tries Her Tongue* and has used a more Afrocentric language when it suited her purposes.

As I indicated in the last chapter, Creole, for Naipaul, functions mainly as a language of characters and dialogue. Standard English is thus the staple of the narrative idiom in *A House for Mr. Biswas*. And even though the majority of characters (e.g. teacher Lal, lawyer Seebaran, F.Z. Ghany) in the novel speak Creole, they still uphold English-based social practices that would reproduce their middle-class privileges. The subjectivity of Naipaul's implied author, structured by a manichean opposition between Queen's English and Creole, whereby the former functions exclusively as the carrier of the narrative voice, mirrors Naipaul's closer allegiances with imperial culture. In polyglossic terms, Queen's English stands for the High variety, in opposition to the Low varieties symbolized by Creole and Hindi respectively. Naipaul's affiliation with Queen's English thus simultaneously marks his identification with the hegemonic code and culture and distancing from a Trinbagonian cultural identity.

Paradoxically, Selvon, who also spent several years in Britain and Canada, is able to show through his linguistic practice that oral and literate cultures can live side-by-side while gaining each other's respect. Selvon is able to achieve this feat by foregrounding Creole as the language of narration. By using Creole as a medium of narration, Selvon, like Lovelace and Hodge, makes a political statement that Creole functions as an alternative to the European cultural identity and literary tradition which have been imposed on him.

In spite of their valorization of Creole, Selvon and Hodge in their fiction also seem beset by a crisis of identity, especially in their attitudes to their fictional

characters. For example, in *The Lonely Londoners*, Selvon's West Indian immigrants are forever engaged in a socio-psychological battle to fashion a new identity in London. In many respects, their conversations, negotiated in Creole, mirror their attempts to maintain a psychological connection between their West Indian homelands and the English society in which they are located in the narrative present of the text. Their Creole, however, simultaneously marks their sociolinguistic differences from British norms on the one hand and socio-cultural alienation in London on the other. In certain instances, their attempts to blend into English society by adopting the British accent often sharpen their angst about identity. For example, on the occasion when Galahad puts on "the old English accent" as an accommodation strategy, his attempt at racial harmony is rebuffed, as the woman "pull the child along and she look at Galahad and give a sickly sort of smile, and the old Galahad, knowing how it is, smile back and walk on" (LL 88). Selvon's fictional characters' angst about identity thus signals the author's own uneasy hybridity -- a subjectivity torn between Western and Creole cultural identities -- rather than an identification or disidentification with imperial culture.

The conflicting linguistic situation in Hodge's *Crick Crack, Monkey* is reflective not only of the heteroglot complexity of the author's identity, but also of the sociolinguistic situation in Trinidad and Tobago generally. Simon Gikandi has observed that each character in *Crick Crack, Monkey*, and each social class or caste, is defined by, and associated with, a particular speech community. Tantie speaks the Creole version of the English language; Ma's language reflects her ancient African and slave roots; and Auntie Beatrice's utterances reflect her middle class, colonial image. It is against the background of, or in relation to, these language forms (*langue*) that subjects must articulate their individual utterances (*parole*) (211-212). However, similar to the linguistic and cultural predicament of a West Indian writer like Hodge, "Tee [the narrator of *Crick Crack, Monkey*] is structured by a set of oppositions, none

of which offers her true identity: her Creole world is makeshift and marginal; her desired colonial universe is artificial” (Gikandi 216).

Because Lovelace is concerned with a culture of resistance that informs the lives of black communities in *The Dragon Can't Dance*, the majority of his fictional characters speak a language appropriate to their social background. In other words, apart from the linguistic behaviour of Pistach and probably the professor of English at the University of West Indies, the speech repertoires of his characters do not exhibit traces of identity crisis. Even then, Lovelace admits, in an interview with Nigel Thomas, he feels a tension between modulating English and Creole in the narrative idiom of his works. He says, *inter alia*: “You want insofar as English is the language you are oriented to, to use it as widely as possible. But you come to English with your language, which, while oriented to English, isn't as widely understood; but it is that that gives character to what you're saying. And so you see the struggle is to embrace these two aspects of language. It's not like someone speaking on the street in Jamaica or in Trinidad” (19). In order to make himself understood by a large non-Caribbean audience, and similar to the linguistic practice of Naipaul and Selvon, the Creole Lovelace develops in *The Dragon Can't Dance* is a highly stylized adaptation of authentic speech. In other words, “No effort is made to capture pronunciation features and speech rhythm, and ‘Creole’ passages are almost always given in standard orthography” (Mair 139).

In accordance with the inverted pyramidal structure of linguistic texturing proposed in the last chapters, therefore, the linguistic practices of writers like Philip and Naipaul in the works studied in this dissertation are indicative of an identification with imperial culture, while the linguistic choices of Hodge, Lovelace, and Selvon, at least because they foreground Creole by interlarding it in the narrative voice, set up a disidentificatory dialectic to the dominant culture. Given the fact that Philip and Naipaul privilege standard English in their novels analyzed in this study, non-

Caribbean critics and readers are more likely to be attuned to their works. For example, speaking specifically about Naipaul, Jean D'Costa notes that the former "has succeeded in reaching the widest range of SE [Standard English] audiences on both sides of the Atlantic and in the Commonwealth" ("Expression and Communication" 134). D'Costa sees an apparent relationship between Naipaul's audience and his manipulation of language because it would appear that his fiction is best seen as "an explication of Caribbean culture to the outer audiences, rather than as an address to both" (134).

Closely related to the implications of this study for the interface of linguistics and literature is the whole question of whether a literary text represents the way in which varieties of spoken English function. There are two sides to this issue. According to Josef Schmied, "A major problem for linguists is to determine the extent to which the language used in literary works can be judged to be representative of the linguistic realities in which they are set. Literary works are after all a special category of text written with a particular aim, within a certain tradition, and according to certain literary, sociological (and even marketing) conventions" (132). Basing his argument on the assumption that "writers are usually not linguists and their view of the world and communicative processes is not based on scientific analysis but on participant observation, allied with linguistic creativity," Schmied concludes that "it would clearly be a fallacy to treat literary language as an authentic representation of sociolinguistic reality" (133). However, after analyzing part of Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*, Schmied says, albeit in a contradictory manner, that "Although the literary texts quoted here may be regarded as illustrating African varieties of English, literary texts are unreliable sources of linguistic or sociolinguistic data" (133). Schmied's argument is faulty in the sense that the fact that creative writers are not linguists does not mean they are not privy to the linguistic nuances and shibboleths of their societies, even though such writers may not accurately reproduce the social diversity of speech types in their works. As Peter Roberts notes, "one has to bear in mind that the artist specifically sees

himself [sic] not as a recorder of the precise, objective details of society, but as provocative and catering to the emotional response in his [sic] audience by using suggestion and creativity” (135). It is also crucial to add that a writer like Merle Hodge is a trained linguist.

In contrast to Schmied’s discounting of literary texts as reliable sources of sociolinguistic reality is the majority view that literary texts are of some use in studying the way in which varieties of spoken English function. Kachru has recently indicated that “contact linguistics will gain greater insights about linguistic creativity by considering . . . [literary] texts as data for making language-related generalizations” (“Englishization” 136). Commenting specifically on the Zimbabwean situation, Ngora notes that the “[Zimbabwean] novel is a reflection of life, its material is made out of what the writer has observed in life and society; and so the language which . . . writers use is a reflection of the way Shona and English are spoken in their society” (103).

If, according to Larraming, the West Indian novel can be simply defined as “a novel written by the West Indian about the West Indian reality” (38), Roberts states emphatically that the choice of dialect for the West Indian writer becomes a matter of depicting that reality:

The various forms of language in any West Indian society are not simply alternative ways of saying the same thing, but they are forms provoking unusually strong emotional reactions when compared with variant language forms in other societies. West Indian literature, reflecting as it does the life of West Indian classes, colonialism, and racial conflicts, has language in primary focus. Language is both the artistic medium, and part of the subject matter. The writer, therefore, has to manage language in such a way as to show distinctions between generations, racial groups, social groups, religious groups, the educated, the uneducated, and the pretentious parvenus. (143)

In this direction, many of the examples of linguistic hybridization and nativization strategies furnished in this study are not idiolectal (that is, coined *ad hoc* by the authors), but are representative of typical Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian Englishes since they are attested not only in Ngara's (1982), Magura's (1985), and Winer's (1993) studies based on empirical analysis of varieties of English in those societies, but also in such dictionaries as *A Dictionary of South African English* and *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage*.

In the final analysis, my own position is that a sociolinguistic analysis of literary texts is often impressionistic and based on a restricted number of texts. Furthermore, the attempt of creative writers to represent sociolinguistic reality by simulating and synthesizing varieties of spoken English in their works sometimes results in inconsistency and inauthenticity. For example, Roberts' analysis of Louise Bennett's pronunciation-influenced orthographies illustrates the latter problem (118-119). Given these shortcomings, literary texts cannot be expected to represent the whole picture, but they do provide snapshots of how language functions in some aspects of a particular society. Sociolinguistic studies of literary texts, useful as they are, leave much scope for further empirical research on the complex relationships between language, culture, and society.

The insights offered in this dissertation notwithstanding, more comparative studies are needed on the cultural and literary implications of using English in the 'Inner' and 'Outer' circles (Kachru "Sociolinguistic Realism" 11-12). The following questions are pertinent in this respect: Could a detailed analysis of other literatures of the Outer Circle -- for example, the literary production of India, Malaysia, Singapore, etc. -- reveal additional sociolinguistic similarities between these literatures and African and West Indian literatures? In other words, are there networks of sociolinguistic similarity among the literatures of the Outer Circle? What, if any, sociolinguistic features are shared by the literary texts of so-called Third World writers on the one

hand, and writers representing disenfranchised and marginalized voices in certain Inner Circle countries, for example, the Aboriginals of Australia, the Natives of Canada, the Maoris of New Zealand, and African-Americans in the United States, on the other? Could an Inner Circle literary text, such as *The New Ancestors* (1970), set in West Africa, but written by the Canadian, Dave Godfrey, embody similar sociolinguistic and cultural sensibility and experience as texts written by Africans and West Indians?

Furthermore, although I have broached the question of language and gender in my analysis of nativization strategies in Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures, the scope of the dissertation has militated against further probing of the subject, especially as it impinges on, and extends, our understanding of the power and politics of English in these literatures. Given the prodigious advances that have been made in research on language and gender, especially in Western feminist scholarship, and the power of English in consolidating male dominance and giving men representational prominence, the relationships among gender, language, and communication merit further investigation and critical inquiry not only in Zimbabwean and Trinbagonian literatures, but also in other post-colonial literatures in English.

I therefore intend to accord language, gender, and communication in post-colonial literatures an utmost research priority in my post-dissertation study. The research options I currently see for the analysis of language, gender, and communication in post-colonial literatures can be summarized in the following series of questions: In the analysis of language and gender in post-colonial literatures, in what ways is the English language loaded against women? In other words, how does the language dismiss, restrictively define, and deprecate women? Could linguistic devices such as agent-deletion, collocation/grouping, binarisms or binomial expressions, relationality, semantic pejoration, elliptical devices, and gratuitous modifiers give us insight into the marginalization of women in post-colonial literatures? Could discourse strategies such as questions and directives, interruption, topic control, patriarchal

dichotomy of social activities, and modes of address reproduce male dominance in verbal interaction between women and men in post-colonial literatures? Could women also use these strategies as instruments of resistance and counter-patriarchal discourse? Have they evolved others? Given the fact that words are not the only way to dominate in social interaction, how are paralanguage and non-verbal communication, as signs and symbols of male dominance, and gestures of female submission and resistance, important in analyzing the politics of gender in post-colonial literatures?

Given the continuing spread and influence of English as a global language, these and other questions are sure to dominate critical debates on post-colonial literatures in the foreseeable future.

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