“of mens and them”: Caribbean English in V. S. Naipaul’s “Love, Love, Love, Alone”

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ISSN: 0873-0628 ANGLO SAXONICA SER. III N. 4 2012

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1. Linguistic variation in literary texts

Though literary discourse is typically dominated by standard language in the speech communities that have developed a linguistic norm (Kloss 52; Joseph 77), literature is known to exploit other, non-standard linguistic varieties, which often intertwine the unmarked or expected language of a literary system.[1]

Such interweaving of different dialects has a long tradition in fiction and was theorised, as far as the novel is considered, as soon as the 1930's, by Mikhail Bakhtin. According to this author, modern European novels reflect the internal stratification of modern national languages into various regional and socio-ideological varieties. This phenomenon was designated *raznorecie*, which was translated into English as heteroglossia, a term now common in criticism (Bakhtin 271-2). Besides refuting the fiction of linguistic homogeneity at the level of the community, the notion of heteroglossia denies the idea of a uniform linguistic behaviour at the level of the individual, implying that "the speech of any one person is filled by many different voices or linguistically constructed personae" (Duranti 75).

Despite attested changes in literary history (cf. Blake), the functions of non-standard regional and social dialects in fiction are usually mimetic, comic and/or ideological (Delabastita 306-316). In the first case, linguistic

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* The analysis reported in this article was first presented in the *9th International Conference on the Short Story in English* (Faculty of Letters of the University of Lisbon, 21-25 June 2005).

[1] I am not considering the particular case of literature written in dialect, in which a non-standard variety functions as the unmarked language.

heterogeneity is intended to enhance the credibility of the characters or groups of characters that are portrayed in the fictional text (e.g. the servant Joseph in *Wuthering Heights*); in the second case, it aims at generating humour by means of more or less stereotypical and stigmatized linguistic behaviour on the part of comic and mostly rustic personae (e.g. Fluellen, the Welsh captain in *Henry V*); and in the third case, heterogeneity is most often intended to evince mechanisms of inclusion, exclusion or regional or national assertion by means of linguistic behavior (as can be claimed to happen as well in both previous examples).

In the particular case of Anglophone literature, the use of non-standard regional and social dialects has a long tradition, and it may have been mainly intended, at the beginning, to portray rustic and comic characters (Blake). In his pioneering study on the subject — *Non Standard Language in English Literature*, published in 1981 — Norman Blake concludes that this stylistic resource was introduced in English literature as early as the late fourteenth century, when the necessary conditions for the literary exploitation of linguistic diversity were emerging. By that time linguistic variation was generally recognized in the Anglophone speech community, and the belief that some forms of linguistic behaviour are inherently better than others — described by James and Lesley Milroy as the ideology of standardisation (1, 19) — was being established.[2]

The Canterbury Tales, written in the late thirteen hundreds, is generally acknowledged as the earliest literary experiment with different varieties of English. Thanks to Tolkien's pioneering analysis of the treatment of late medieval Northern English in "The Reeve's Tale" (1934),

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[2] Evidence that varieties of English were differently assessed is indeed to be found as soon as the fourteenth century. The earlier text bearing witness to this new socio-linguistic reality is probably the *Polychronicon*, a compendium of universal history written in Latin in the early thirteen hundreds, in which Ranulph Higden claims that "All the language of the Northumbrians, and especially at York, is so shrill, cutting, and grating and ill-formed, that we southern men can that language barely understand" (translated into Modern English by Algeo - 166). The "Second Shepherd's Pageant", probably composed by the end of the century, provides evidence of the same sort: though set in Yorkshire and written in a Northern variety, it stages the pretence of a character to be a "yomen, (…) of the king" by means of a "southern tooth" (i.e. a southern accent) (cf. Mossé, *Tome I* 364; Mossé, *Tome II* 93).

Chaucer has been shown to attribute Northern linguistic features quite coherently and exclusively to the two Northern and, for some, comic characters, namely two undergraduates attending the University of Cambridge (Strang 160); this exploitation of dialect is accompanied by the use of linguistic features indicating low-class, as malapropisms, oaths and peculiar attribute expletives, of which Chaucer makes use throughout the whole text (Blake 36).[3]

Chaucer's early experiment was followed by others and intensified from the Renaissance onwards; and the literary use of regional and social varieties of English — which were to be enriched by the plethora of new Englishes emerging from the British colonial expansion and from the more recent globalisation — has subsisted in different literary genres and authors to our days. To name just a few and very obvious examples, that is the case of Shakespeare, Dickens or Shaw, in Britain; Mark Twain or Faulkner, in the United States; or the Nigerian Wole Soyinka within Anglophone post-colonial literature(s).

In this last case, as in that of the Anglophone diaspora literature, linguistic heterogeneity has gone beyond the use of mere different varieties of English: the multilingual situations resulting from migrancy into or from Anglophone communities has led to the juxtaposition of different languages as well.[4] Since it is not accounted for by the notion of heteroglossia, this more expanded use of the traditional polyglossic literary device, to which

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[3] The Northern linguistic traits in "The Reeve's Tale" are phonological — e.g. Northern *bathe* vs Southern *bothe* for Modern English *both;* grammatical — in particular the use of the verbal —*s* inflexion in the North and —*th* suffix in the South; and lexical — e.g. the use of the Northern word *fonne* for *fool* (Crystal, *Stories of English* 163-168). The comic significance of these features is denied by Crystal, who, unlike various predecessors (e.g. Strang, Blake), claims that they "are not part of any satire at the expense of the characters" but "simply characterizing the speakers" (*Stories of English* 168). The authorial or scribal status of the Northernisms in Chaucer's text and their respective implications have also been reassessed more recently by Simon Horobin (*J.R.R Tolkien*).

[4] Though reinforced by the expansion of English through the globe, multilingualism has of course a longer tradition in English literature — Shakespeare's *Henry V* is a case in point (cf. Delabastita's article mentioned above and included in the list of works cited below).

the intertwining of Portuguese in diasporic Luso-American literature also bears witness,[5] has brought about the more embracing concept of heterolingualism. This has been defined as "the use of foreign languages or social, regional, and historical language varieties in literary texts" (Meylaerts 6).

Though linguistic variation has earned the attention of writers, of literary critics and, more recently, of translation studies researchers (cf. Meylearts), it is first and foremost the object of study of linguistics (in particular of dialectology, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis). In fact, apart from producing systematic descriptions of the multiple varieties that function in particular language communities, linguistic studies have also conceptualized and explained the different dimensions of heteroglossia and heterolingualism. The notion of linguistic repertoire, originally introduced by Gumperz, seems to be particularly useful in this context, since it denotes the "totality of linguistic forms regularly employed in the course of socially significant interaction" (*Linguistic and Social Interaction* 137), both at the level of the community and the individual (Duranti 71), the choice of which depends from the particular situation of the interaction — sex, age, social and educational provenance of producer and addressee, subject matter, etc.. Equally useful for the understanding of linguistic variation in literature may prove the concepts of code-switching (the "juxtaposition (…) of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems" — Gumperz, *Discourse Strategies* 59) and code-mixing (the mixture or hybridization of the varieties that are at the disposal of each individual in a language community — McArthur 131). In fact, they describe with more precision many of the instances of heteroglossia or heterolingualism in fictional texts.

It was the conviction that the teachings of linguistics can prove useful in the analysis of language variation in literary texts that has prompted the study of V. S. Naipaul's "Love, Love, Love, Alone" described below.

2. V. S. Naipaul's "Love, Love, Love, Alone" as a case study

As far as the recreation of different varieties of English in literary texts is concerned, the Trinidadian-born and Nobel prize winning V. S. Naipaul

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[5] E.g. *Sixty Acres and a Barn*, by Alfred Lewis, or *Barnacle Love* by Anthony de Sá.

seems not to be exceptional: he is simply a successful example of those West Indian writers who choose Standard English for narrative and non-fiction, and Caribbean English — to which the label "low prestige" is still so often attached (Mühlhausen 43) — for dialogue (Blake 191; Walder 44). Such exploitation of the linguistic and social contrasts between Standard and Caribbean English was inaugurated as soon as 1719 by Daniel Defoe: his Friday, a Carib, spoke Pidgin English in *Robinson Crusoe* (e.g. Why you angry mad with Friday, what me done?).

This very distributional pattern of Standard and local English is to be found in "Love, Love, Love, Alone", the text considered in this paper (henceforward "Love, Alone").[6] Published in 1959, "Love, Alone" is part of *Miguel Street*, a collection of loosely connected short stories focussing on the inhabitants of a Trinidadian neighbourhood which has been described as "a memoir of childhood, recalled in exile" (Erapu ix). "Love, Alone" tells the story of a couple of European new comers, depicting the violent attitude of the man, Toni, and the subsequent return of the woman, known as Mrs. Hereira, to her rich husband. As mentioned before, this text illustrates the linguistic pattern that turned out to be typical of Naipaul's works: we find Standard British English invariably used in the narrative sections, as for instance in the initial lines of the story — "About nine o' clock one morning a hearse and a motor-car stopped outside Miss Hilton's house. A man and a woman got out of the car" (100); and a different kind of English, clearly non-standard and local, is generally used in dialogue, as shown in the following example — "Hat said, 'Is a man and a woman. She pretty pretty, but he ugly like hell, man. Portuguese, they look like.'" (101).

Despite such affinities with Naipaul's other works, the heteroglossic pattern of this short story seems to deserve further attention. In the first place, because the narrator is also a local character participating in dialogue, a scenario that is not accounted for in criticism when Naipaul's use of standard and non-standard language is described; in the second place, because of the semi-autobiographical character of the novel, which

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[6] This text was introduced to me by Isabel Mealha, my colleague at the University of Lisbon, whose generosity I would like to thank.

associates the narrator with Naipaul himself; and finally because "Love, Alone" is a short text (3979 words long), enabling a detailed analysis of its language and thereby allowing for an empirically supported discussion of the strategies used to represent the Caribbean local variety and the motivations that may underlie them.

The analysis of the text is presented in the sections below.[7]

3. Caribbean English in "Love, Alone"

Language names are known to be portmanteau labels for a range of different varieties (Joseph 6). But this is also true, and maybe even particularly so, as far as the variety known as Caribbean English is concerned. In fact, the Anglophone Caribbean corresponds to a multiplicity of islands with rather diverse settlement histories, which have resulted in (i) new contact varieties that are a mixture of English and other transported African and sometimes European languages, (ii) regionally marked uses of English and (iii) different language situations.

In many of these speech communities there is a particular language continuum, with a local creole functioning as the low language or basilect, to use the terminology developed by Le Page and De Camp (1960), and Standard English as the high language or acrolect. Such standard was until late in the twentieth century undoubtedly Standard British and less frequently American English, since claims of a or of various standard local Englishes are very recent and still a motif of debate (Mülhausen 43). Between the creole and the standard there are several varieties mixing them both to varying degrees and known as mesolects, which are used according to situation and speaker's educational level.

Furthermore, the sociolinguistic history of Trinidad, where "Love, Alone" is set, is particularly complex, even for Caribbean standards. According to Singh (96-97), it was "claimed by the Spanish in 1498, settled by the French from 1763, seized by the British in 1797 and officially ceded to them in 1802". Apart from this multiple European presence, to which

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[7] This analysis has informed Xavier's 2010 discussion of the translation of "Love, Alone" into Portuguese.

Portuguese immigrants may be added, and from recent communities of Chinese and Lebanese, Trinidad has received slaves and freed slaves of African descent, who spoke different creoles; a considerable number of East Indians, who came into the island as indentured labour during the 19th century and brought with them their native languages, as Bojhpuri; and finally refugees from different parts of the American continent and other Caribbean Islands.

This very mixed population gave rise to an English-based Creole, with mostly English vocabulary but a particular grammar resulting from the native languages of the subordinate groups, i.e. the African slaves and their descendents, and from the contact situation itself. Both Wells (578) and Holm (462) consider that this Creole is the first language of virtually all Trinidadians born after circa 1940.

The form of Caribbean English that Naipaul is representing in "Love, Alone" must be either this Trinidadian Creole or a mesolectal local variety. This conclusion can be drawn from the following facts:

(i) The local characters in the story are low class. This is clear from their occupations — there is a garbage collector and a milkman — and from the narrator's comments on the new-comer Mrs. Hereira: "This lady didn't fit in with the rest of us in Miguel Street. She was too well-dressed. She was a little too pretty and a little too refined" (102).

(ii) Furthermore, chronological references in the text point to post-Second World War times. Mention is made to a radio ("It look like all they have is that radio" — 102); the title of the text derives from a calypso referring the abdication of Edward VIII, which took place in 1936 ("Is love, love, love, alone / That cause King Edward to leave the throne" — 105); and a recent war is pointed as the possible source of the aggressive behaviour if Mrs. Hereira's companion ("It is the war, you know. He was a sailor and they torpedoed him twice" — 104).

So "Love, Alone"'s local characters, as a rule very young, were most probably members of a speech community that already presented a single Trinidadian English-based Creole and its mesolectal varieties as the local vernacular. This is therefore the variety of Caribbean English represented in the story.

4. Users of the local vernacular in "Love, Alone"

Caribbean English in "Love, Alone" is almost exclusive of dialogue — the narratorial voice only uses it when reporting another character's speech (103). It is not, however, characteristic of all participants in dialogue, as shown below.

There are eight characters intervening in dialogue: (i) five steady inhabitants of Miguel Street — i. e. the narrator (a fatherless young boy), his mother, Hat (a local young man), Boyee (a milkman) and Eddoes (a garbage collector); (ii) Sergeant Charles, a policeman with a very short intervention in the text; and (iii) the two European new-comers, Mrs. Hereira and her companion, Toni.

Miguel Street's steady inhabitants use, with no exception, Caribbean English. Examples are given below:[8]

Narrator	What happening, Hat? (103)
Narrator's mother	What happen now? (111)
Hat	If that dog ever get away it go have big trouble here in this street. (102)
Boyee	I telling you, Hat. (108)
Eddoes	You ain't know what you talking about, Hat. (108)

This variety of Caribbean English also appears in the single utterance of Sergeant Charles, who is most probably a local too: "Boys, the Super send me. That blasted man ring up again" (101). And curiously this same non-standard form of English is used by the European Toni, as shown by the following example: "Toni would look at us and laugh and say, '[…] Now, what this man playing at?'" (113). This fact should not however surprise us — it happens only at the end of the story, when, after having been left by Mrs. Hereira, Toni tries to get the locals' support.

Standard English, on the contrary, appears in Mrs. Hereira's utterances, in accordance with her European descent — e.g. "Help me! Help me! He will kill me if he catches me!" (103).

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[8] The characters' utterances are presented in full in the Appendix to this paper.

The single real surprise in this whole scenario is the use, by the narrator, of different varieties: the narratorial voice writes Standard English, but the character participating in dialogue speaks the local Caribbean vernacular. This process can be described as an instance of code-switching and exposes a complex linguistic repertoire.

5. Recreating Caribbean English in "Love, Alone"

Naipaul recreates Caribbean English in his text by means of traits belonging to the various levels of linguistic analysis.[9]

As to vocabulary, local particularities are very scarce. Only 4 of the 860 words in the local characters' utterances seem to be typically Caribbean, namely:

1) *calypso*, a term denoting a popular West Indian type of song (105);
2) the adjective *pretty pretty* (101); and
3) the adverb *good good*, used twice (110).

The last two examples are the product of reduplication, a word formation process known to be particularly productive in creoles (Crystal, *Cambridge Encyclopedia* 347).

Signs of a local pronunciation are more important. Not in spelling, but by means of a comment made by the narrator on his mother's speech (103):

> At first my mother was being excessively refined with the woman, bringing out all her fancy words and fancy pronunciations, pronouncing comfortable as cum-foughtable, and making war rhyme with bar, and promising that everything was deffynightly going to be all right.

In this single period local stress patterns are alluded to ("cum-foughtable", "deffy¬nightly"), as well as a merger of the vowels in *war* and *bar*. And

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[9] In the discussion of this issue I am ignoring a few non-local marks of orality and substandardness. That is the case of expletives as *damn* or *bastard*, contractions as *shouldnta* or *ain't* and the suppression of unstressed vowels as in *fraid* instead of *afraid*.

since this character's speech shares so many characteristics with that of the other locals, this comment may be interpreted as an economical sign of a particular Trinidadian accent.

It is however at the level of grammar that the peculiarities of Caribbean English are mostly marked. Fifteen morphosyntactic particularities distinguishing this variety from Standard English have been identified. They are the following:

1) suppression of the possessive inflexion – e.g. "on the **boy** bed" (mother's utterance, 109);
2) unmarked plural in nouns – e.g. "Normally my mother referred to males as **man**" (narrator's metacomment, 103);
3) use of Standard English countable nouns as uncountable and vice-versa – e.g. "How **much** white **people** you know?" (Eddoe's utterance, 108), "I ain't see those people bring in any **furnitures** at all" (Hat's utterance, 102);
4) a simplified system of personal pronouns and possessive determiners – e.g. "I see **she** when I was delivering milk up Mucurapo way" (Boyee's utterance, 101), "**You** life in trouble and you thinking about scandal" (mother's utterance, 110);
5) suppression of preterit and past participle forms of verbs – e.g. "Boys, the Super **send** me" (Sergeant Charles's utterance, 101), "How a pretty nice woman like that come to get **mix** up with a man like that?" (narrator's utterance, 102);
6) partial regularization of the verb *to be*, which presents *was* as the single preterit form – e.g. "If somebody did marry you off when you **was** fifteen…" (mother's utterance, 112);
7) suppression of third person *–s* inflexion – e.g. "It **look** like all they have is that radio" (Hat's utterance, 102);
8) suppression of the verb *to be* as copula – e.g. "You not king Edward, you hear" (mother's utterance, 105);
9) suppression of the verb *to be* as aspectual auxiliary – e.g. "What happening, Hat?" (narrator's utterance, 103);
10) interrogative structures with no Subject / Verb inversion – e.g. "How **you could** let a man like that disgrace you so?" (mother's utterance, 104);

11) interrogative structures without the auxiliary *do* – e.g. "How you know she ain't married to Toni?" (Hat's utterance, 108);
12) suppression of empty or prop subject *it* – *e.g.* "Is a man and a woman" (Hat's utterance, 101);
13) adjectives used with adverbial function – e.g. "Know him **good good**" (Eddoes's utterance, 110);
14) *do* co-occurring with *be* with no emphatic meaning – e.g. "You see what a dirty thing a white skin **does be** sometimes?" (Hat's utterance, 105);
15) replacement of the existential *there+be* construction with *it+have* – e.g. "**It have** a lot of things I could sell them." (Eddoes's utterance, 102).

This long list of grammatical particularities distinguishing Caribbean from Standard English is certainly worth noticing, as it unveils an important difference to the usual pattern of representation of non-standard varieties in literature. In fact, since they do not seek linguistic realism, writers of literary texts tend to reduce the recreation of socio– and dialects "to a limited number of stereotypes" (Blake 14) – and that is not the case of Naipaul in "Love, Alone". He displays an unusual consistency in the representation of the local vernacular that I will consider in more detail in the following section.

6. Consistency of the portrayal

Despite the sheer number of characteristic traits mentioned above, consistency in the portrayal of Caribbean English in "Love, Alone" can be better assessed by means of a quantitative account of the effective usage of the linguistic features detailed in the previous section within their potential universe – i.e. the local character's utterances. This is possible as far as 13 out of the 15 traits listed above are concerned.[10]

Table 1 below summarizes the relevant information. It presents the number of sentences with potential usage of the traits considered

[10] "The English language was mine; the tradition was not" (*Jasmine* 19).

(column 1), the number of sentences actually showing it (column 2), the number of patterned exceptions found in the text (column 3) and finally the resulting consistency rate (i.e. effective usage x 100 / potential usage).

Grammatical trait	Potential usage	Effective usage	Patterned excepcions	Consistency rate
suppression of the possessive inflexion	2	2	—	100%
unmarked plural in nouns	5	1	—	20%
simplified system of personal pronouns and possessive determiners	147	4	—	0,2%
suppression of preterit and past participle forms	22	11	8 (to be; aspectual markers)	86%
was as the single preterit form of the verb *to be*	2	2	—-	100%
suppression of third person -s	22	18	3 (to be)	95%
suppression of the verb *to be* as copula	21	11	6 (impersonal constructions)	76%
suppression of the verb *to be* as aspectual auxiliary	16	14	2 (kept to indicate past tense)	100%
interrogative structures with no Subject / Verb inversion	18	18	—	100%
interrogative structures without the auxiliary *do*	14	13	1 (negative form)	93%
suppression of empty or prop subject it	6	6	—	100%
do + *be* with no emphatic meaning	3	2	—	66%
replacement of existential *there*+*be* with *it*+*have*	6	6	— —	100%

Table 1 - Consistency rate of Caribbean English grammatical traits in “Love, Alone”.

The data just presented confirm that throughout "Love, Alone" most traits considered are either entirely (6 out of 13) or very (5 out of 13) consistent. That is the case of the suppressions of the possessive inflexion, of the verb *to be* as aspectual auxiliary and of empty or prop subject it, to name just a few. This high consistency should be highlighted, since it defies, once again, the received idea that in literary works non-standard language tends to be not only reduced to stereotypes, as mentioned above, but also used most fully when characters are introduced or at moments of stress and "played down" elsewhere (Blake 12-13).

Yet, Table 1 also reveals that the use of a minority of the grammatical items considered (2 out of 13) is not consistent at all: that is the case of the simplified system of personal pronouns, which displays a consistency rate of just 0,2%.

This might, of course, be a simple consequence of the literary nature of the text. It is my conviction, however, that the low(er) consistency rates of (i) the unmarked plural in nouns, (ii) the simplified system of personal pronouns and possessive determiners, (iii) the suppression of the verb to be as copula and (iv) *do+be* with no emphatic function are meant instead to recreate the mesolectal varieties that separate the most extreme forms of the local Creole (the basilect) and Standard English (the acrolect) in the Trinidadian speech community.

This interpretation finds support in the following facts:

1) Miguel Street's steady inhabitants are not the very base of the local society, as shown by a comment of Hat's on Toni ("He behaving like some of those uncultured people from John-John" — 106-107); so they would not be the purest speakers of the Trinidadian Creole.

2) Just like the narrator, local characters are shown to dispose of a complex linguistic repertoire and an acute linguistic self-consciousness. Evidence of their heteroglossia lies in the narrator's metacomment on his mother's language ("At first my mother was being excessively refined with the woman, bringing out all her fancy words and fancy pronunciations […]. But after the woman had come to us about three or four times my mother relapsed into her normal self" —103), and in what may be considered instances of hypercorrection in her discourse. Such movements "of a linguistic form beyond the point set by the variety of language that the speaker has as target" (Crystal, *Dictionary of Linguistics* 221-222) are to

be found in the speech of the narrator's mother during her first encounter with the European neighbour. The first instance of such hypercorrection is mentioned by the narratorial voice — "Normally my mother referred to males as man, but with this woman she began speaking of the ways of mens and them" (103-104); the second one lies in her unique and faulty uses of the verbal —s inflexion at that precise moment and the superlative inflexion of an invariable adverb — "The onliest thing with this boy father was that it was the other way round. Whenever I uses to go to the room where he was he uses to jump out of bed and run away" (104).

It is my contention, therefore, that the portrayal of Caribbean English in "Love, Alone" is, as a whole, in accordance with the descriptions of the Trinidadian speech community available in linguistic literature.

7. Functions of Caribbean English in "Love, Alone"

Equally important in the analysis of linguistic variation in literary texts is the identification of its motivations. In this particular case, the functions of the Trinidadian English-based Creole in "Love, Alone" seem to be primarily mimetic.

This conclusion is not only supported by the absence of any comic associations with the language of the local characters, but also reinforced by the strategy Naipaul uses to recreate the local variety of English in the text, i.e. by his resource to a few lexical items, some indirect signs of a local pronunciation and a consistent use of multiple grammatical traits considered typical of Caribbean creoles in linguistic literature (Crystal, *Cambridge Encyclopedia* 347).

In fact, the multiple strategy summarized above allows for an undeniable proximity to linguistic reality: as in Naipaul's text, the Trinidadian creole's vocabulary is mostly English; as in the text, the Caribbean variety differs from Standard English especially as far as morphosyntax is concerned; and, as in the text, the characteristics of Trinidadian creole are used with different degrees of consistency along the post-creole continuum, i.e. according to speaker and situation. Thanks to this accuracy, the linguistic behavior of the local characters in "Love, Alone" certainly contributes to their credibility; the precision of the portrait therefore points to a predominantly mimetic function of Caribbean English in "Love, Alone".

Another significant trait in Naipaul's strategy is the restriction of the very common technique of resorting to deviant spelling as a means to recreate non-standard pronunciation. In fact, though an altered orthography is present in both dialogue (*fraid*, *shouldnta*) and the narrator's metacomment (*cum-foughtable*, *deffy¬nightly*), it is very scarce and for the most attached to marks of orality and not to particularities of the local variety. Naipaul thus avoids a common technique of depicting non-standard language that has been proven to bear stigmatizing effects (Todd, 73; Sebba; Bucholtz, 1456) and he thereby refrains from any tangible negative assessment of the local vernacular. This seems to suggest, once again, the primarily mimetic function of the Trinidadian English-based Creole in the text.

Though less evident, we can also claim an ideological function for the local vernacular. In fact, the code-switching pattern of the narrator — who uses Standard English in the narratorial mode and the local Creole when participating in dialogue — suggests, when interpreted against the semi-autobiographical component of *Miguel Street* (Erapu ix), that by means of this text Naipaul integrates Caribbean English in his very own linguistic repertoire.

8. Conclusion

The analysis just presented was prompted by the conviction that the study of language variation in literary discourse would benefit from the teachings of linguistics, even though linguistic realism is not a goal of literature. This confidence seems to have been justified in the particular case of "Love, Alone".

In fact, (i) the close inspection of the corpus under analysis that is typical of empirical approaches to linguistics, (ii) the attention given to technical descriptions of the linguistic situation of the Caribbean, in particular of Trinidad (Le Page and De Camp; Holm; Wells; and also Crystal, *Cambridge Encyclopedia*), and (iii) the consideration of the concepts of linguistic repertoire, code-switching and hypercorrection, have unveiled a precision in the recreation of the Trinidadian English-based Creole in "Love, Alone" which critics consider to be uncommon in literary texts. The theoretical and methodological framework I have resorted to has

therefore allowed for the confident identification of a counterexample to the typical portrayal of non-standard language based on "a limited number of stereotypes" and revealed the extent of the mimetic function of Caribbean English in Naipaul's story.

The analysis presented in this article has furthermore suggested an ideological function in the recreation of the Trinidadian Creole in "Love, Alone". In fact, if we accept an autobiographical component in *Miguel Street*, as some critics do, the use of Standard and Caribbean English by the narrator suggests that the English language Naipaul explicitly claimed as his is probably less monolithic than implied in critical literature so far.[10]

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Appendix
The utterances of "Love, Alone"'s local characters

Character	Utterance number	Text
Narrator	1	How a pretty nice woman like that come to get mix up with a man like that? (102)
	2	What happening, Hat? (103)
Mother	1	The onliest thing with this boy father was that it was the other way round. Whenever I uses to go to the room where he was he uses to jump out of bed and run away bawling — run away screaming. (104)
	2	Now, tell me, Mrs. Hereira, why you don't leave this good-for-nothing man? (104)
	3	Is a damn funny sort of love. (104)
	4	I wouldn't know about heart, but what I know is that he want a good clout on his backside to make him see sense. How you could let a man like that disgrace you so? (104)
	5	They shoulda try again. (104)
	6	Look, I just talking my mind, you hear. You come here asking me advice. (104)
	7	You come here asking me for help, and I just trying to help you. That' s all. (104)
	8	All right, then. Go back to the great man. Is my own fault, you hear. Meddling in white people business. You know what the calypso say: Is love, love, love, alone That cause King Edward to leave the throne. Well, let me tell you. You not King Edward, you hear. Go back to your great love. (104-105)
	9	Mrs Hereira, everybody fraid that dog you have there. That thing too wild to be in a place like this. (105)
	10	You do him something? (108)
	11	Toni look like the sort of man who could kill easy, easy, without feeling that he really murdering. You want to sleep here tonight? You could sleep on the boy bed. He could sleep on the floor. (109)

	12	Well, I really give up. (109)
	13	I think you taking this love business a little too far, you hear. (109)
	14	You better call the police. (110)
	15	Like you fraid police more than you fraid Toni. (110)
	16	Scandal heIl! (110)
	17	You life in trouble and you thinking about scandal. Like if this man ain't disgrace you enough already. (110)
	18	Why you don't go back to your husband? (100)
	19	What happen now? (111)
	20	Who you going back to? (111)
	21	Even after what he print in the papers? (111)
	22	Don't be so sure. He know Toni? (111)
	23	You know, Mrs Hereira, I really wish you was like me. If somebody did marry you off when you was fifteen, we wouldnta been hearing all this nonsense, you hear. Making all this damn fuss about your heart and love and all that rubbish. (112)
	24	Look, I didn't want to make you cry like this. I sorry. (112)
	25	Toni is a big man. You mustn't worry about him. (112)
Hat	1	Is a man and a woman. She pretty pretty, but he ugly like hell, man. Portuguese, they look like. (101)
	2	God, he is a first-class drinking-man, you hear. (102)
	3	Boy, you wouldn't understand. If I tell you wouldn't believe me. (102)
	4	If that dog ever get away it go have big trouble here in this street. (102)
	5	You know, it just strike me: I ain't see those people bring in any furnitures at all. It look like all they have is that radio. (102)
	6	Is easy to put two and two and see what happening there. (103)
	7	You too small to know, boy. Wait until you in long pants. (103)
	8	Is a good thing for a man to beat his woman every now and then, but this man does do it like exercise, man. ***
	9	Is a good thing too. I feel that if I look at him long enough I go vomit. You see what a dirty thing a white skin does be sometimes? (105)

	10	I wonder how long this thing go last. (106)
	11	He behaving like some of those uncultured people from John-John. Like he forget that latrines make for some purpose. (106-107)
	12	We have to do something about Toni. (107)
	13	He just too damn drunk. (107)
	14	Is taking advantage. We shouldnta do it. The man ain't have feelings, that's all. (107)
	15	That's a relief, anyway. (107)
	16	Boyee, you know you getting too damn big too damn fast. How the hell a little boy like you know about a thing II that? (107-108)
	17	How you know anyway that Mrs Hereira leave she husband? How you know that she ain't married to Toni? (108)
	18	White people don't do that sort of thing, putting advertisement in the paper and thing like that. (108)
	19	I know it! I know it! I know it a long time now. (109)
	20	Now I ask you, why, why a woman want to leave a man like that for this Toni? (110)
	20	Who will tell me why they ever have people like Toni in this world! (113)
Boyee	1	You know, Hat, I think I see that woman somewhere else. I see she when I was delivering milk up Mucurapo way. (101)
	2	Hat, you know the advertisements people does put when their wife or their husband leave them? (107)
	3	I telling you, Hat. I used to see that woman up Mucurapo way when I was delivering milk. I telling you so, man. (108)
	4	Is the selfsame woman. (110)
Eddoes	1	It have a lot of things I could sell them. (102)
	2	You ain't know what you talking about, Hat. How much white people you know? (108)
	3	Yes, Christiani. Doctor fellow. Know him good good. Used to pick rubbish for him. (110)
	4	Yes, know Christiani good good. Good house, nice car. Full of money, you know. It have a long time now I see him. Know him from the days when I used to work Mucurapo way. (110)

Sergeant	1	Boys, the Super send me. That blasted man ring up again. CharlesTake it a little easier. (101)
Mrs. Hereira	1	Help me! Help me! He will kill me if he catches me. (103)
	2	I can't understand what has come over Toni these days. But it is only in the nights he is like this, you know. He is so kind in the mornings. But about midday something happens and he just goes mad. (103)
	3	It is a stupid thing to say to you or anybody else, but I like Toni. I love him. (104)
	4	He has many good qualities, you know. His heart is in the right place, really. (104)
	5	No, I know Toni. I looked after him when he was sick. It is the war, you know. He was a sailor and they torpedoed him twice. (113)
	6	You mustn't talk like this. (104)
	7	I didn't ask for advice. (104)
	8	I don't want your help or advice. (104)
	9	I hope I never come back here again. (105)
	10	It isn't my dog. It' s Toni' s, and not even I can touch it. (105)
	11	Toni is thinking about leaving Trinidad. We could start a hotel in Barbados. (106)
	12	As soon as Toni gets well again, we will go for a long cruise. (106)
	13	Toni is really a disciplined man, you know. Great will power, really. We'll be all right when he gets his strength back. (106)
	14	He's going mad! He's going mad, I tell you. He will kill me this time sure. (108)
	15	He grabbed a knife and began chasing me. He was saying, "I will kill you, I will kill you. (108)
	16	It is the first time he threatened to kill me. And he was serious, I tell you. (113)
	17	Toni has forgotten all I did for him. He has forgotten how I took care of him when he was sick. Tell me, you think that's right? I did everything for him. Everything. I gave up everything. Money and family. All for him. Tell me, is it right for him to treat me like this? Oh, God! What did I do to deserve all this? (108-109)

	18	I am all right now, really. I will go back and talk to Toni. I think I did something to offend him. I must go back and find out what it is. (109)
	19	No, no. Not the police. (110)
	20	The scandal – (110)
	21	I don't feel anything about him. And I just can't stand that clean doctor's smell he has. It chokes me. (111)
	22	I have decided to leave Toni. (111)
	23	Nothing. Last night he made the dog jump at me. He didn't Iook as if he knew what he was doing. He didn't Iaugh or anything. I think he is going mad, and if I don't get out I think he will kill me. (111)
	24	My husband. (111)
	25	Henry is like a boy, you know, and he thinks he can frighten me. If I go back today, he will be glad to have me back. (111)
	26	Toni was Henry's friend, not mine. Henry brought him home one day. Toni was sick like anything. Henry was like that, you know. I never met a man who liked doing good works so much as Henry. He was all for good works and sanitation. (111-112)
	27	No, it isn't you, it isn't you. (112)
	28	I have left about a week's food with Toni. (112)
Toni	1	Hello there, boys. (105)
	29	You have Angela's radio there. I charging rent for that, you know. Two dollars a month. Give me two dollars now. (113)
	30	You know about Angela's radio, eh, boys? You know about the radio? Now, what this man playing at? (113)

Abstract

Though literature is dominated by standard language, it often makes use of other linguistic varieties. This polyglossic device has been a resource of Anglophone literature since the 14th century, with mimetic, comic and/or ideological functions, and earned the attention of literary critics and, more recently, of translation studies researchers.

However, though linguistic realism is not a goal of literary texts, it seems reasonable to claim that the analysis of the linguistic variation in literature will benefit from the teachings of linguistics. Such conviction is tested in this paper by means of an analysis of V. S. Naipaul's semi-autobiographical "Love, Love, Love, Alone", set in Trinidad, in which Standard English is used by non-local characters and the narratorial voice and Caribbean English is brought into dialogue by Trinidadian characters, including the participant narrator.

The scrutiny of the text and the consideration of both technical descriptions of the linguistic situation of Trinidad and the concepts of linguistic repertoire, code switching and hypercorrection have unveiled a consistency in the recreation of local English that critics consider untypical of literature and shown that the English language Naipaul claimed as his was probably less monolithic than implied so far.

Keywords

Caribbean English; Heteroglossia; Linguistic variation; Non-standard language; V. S. Naipaul

Resumo

Ainda que o texto literário seja dominado pelo padrão linguístico de uma comunidade, a literatura recorre frequentemente a outras variedades da mesma língua. Esta diversidade linguística é usada com funções miméticas, cómicas e/ou ideológicas e tem sido objecto de estudo da crítica literária e, mais recentemente, visto constituir um desafio importante para o tradutor, dos estudos de tradução.

No entanto, e apesar de o realismo linguístico não ser uma prioridade do texto literário, a análise deste fenómeno poderá beneficiar também dos ensinamentos dos estudos linguísticos. Esta convicção é confirmada pela análise de "Love, Love, Love, Alone", texto semi-autobiográfico de V. S. Naipaul em que a norma padrão britânica (nas passagens narrativas e falas das personagens não locais) alterna com o inglês das Caraíbas (usado pelas personagens locais, incluindo o narrador participante).

De facto, a análise do texto e a consideração das descrições da situação linguística das Caraíbas anglófonas e dos conceitos de repertório linguístico, *code-switching* e hipercorrecção permitiram identificar uma consistência na recriação do inglês local que a crítica em geral considera atípica do texto literário e concluir que a língua inglesa que Naipaul reclamou ser sua é, afinal, menos monolítica do que se defendia.

Palavras-chave

Heteroglossia; Inglês caribenho; V. S. Naipaul; Variação linguística; Variedades sub-padrão