

## ABSTRACT

It Divide Up in Little Worlds:  
Dialogue and Discourse Analysis of Selected Novels by Samuel Selvon

Karen Mah-Chamberlain

Samuel Selvon's fiction uses a mixture of linguistic features in the dialogue of the characters and in the discourse of narration. Critics have interpreted similarities between narrative levels in the novels as bridging the world of privileged, Standard English literate readers and writers and the world of labouring-class, Creole-speaking subjects. The presumption is that harmony between the language of characters and narrators reflects progressive language attitudes on the part of the author. Unexplored is the possibility that the authorial presence or voice may be using language representation to critique or make fun of both the narrator and the characters.

Drawing on literary and sociolinguistic methods of narratology, this thesis compares the language of direct speech and narration in *A Brighter Sun*, *Those Who Eat the Cascadura*, *The Lonely Londoners*, *The Housing Lark*, *An Island Is a World*, and *Moses Ascending* to explain how various strategies for language representation reflect ideologies and values in specific communicative contexts.

In addition to providing a method for detailing the political and artistic significance of particular linguistic features, this analysis contributes to the interpretation of the novels by revealing the representational relationships between the author, the narrators, and the characters. Examining the novels'

portrayal of the intertextual relationships between spoken narratives and written fiction leads to the conclusion that Selvon's fiction is metadiscursive.

The finding that language is both the medium and the central concern of the author's work generates a new approach to Selvon's novels and to the study of the language of Caribbean literature.

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