



A Comparative Study of the Linguistic and Other Prejudices in the Selected Works of Margaret Mitchell and Margaret Walker

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Abstract: In this paper, we talk about the representation of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in literary works. Up till the early nineteenth century AAVE was represented by non-native speakers, who were mostly white authors (Minnick, 2004). The approach of these authors towards the dialect is claimed to be derogatory. The linguistic prejudice against AAVE was a result of the social prestige attached not with the language variety but with its speakers, who had their origins in slavery. It was after Harlem Renaissance, when the African American writers started representing themselves that people got to know the real plight of the African Americans through their own stories. These writers also did a fairly authentic representation of the variety used by the African Americans and common people in the American South. Thus, this paper does a comparative analysis of one novel each, of an African-American and a European (White) American Author. It stylistically analyses the text of two authors coming from different racial backgrounds and studies and compares the linguistic features of their dialectal representation of AAE. This research work is a literary survey of data collected that tries to look at the biases for or against the African-American speech community. The works analysed are *Walker* (1966) by Margaret Walker and *Gone with the Wind* (1936) by Margaret Mitchell. The two authors will also be analysed through the lens of *Tajfel's* (1979) "social identity theory" which deals with *in-group* and *out-group* racism.

Keywords: African American English (language and literature), Stylistics, Discourse Analysis, Sociolinguistic research, Racial prejudice, In- group and out-group racism.

1. Introduction

Language and society are intertwined with each other where the former reflects the culture and practices of the latter, and in return, a particular society's thoughts and perceptions are reflected by the language they use, including the terms and phrases used for other people as well. Language is also a mark of a person's identity since it is not divorced from the people who speak it. This reflection of identity often leads to differential treatment towards a certain group of people who speak a language variety that is dissimilar to the dominant group.

On a different note, literature extensively uses language as a tool to depict its characters. "Language in literature is used to achieve a number of goals: (1) to connect the character with a particular region, (2) to identify the character as a particular type (e.g., belongs to a certain class), (3) to make the characters more authentic and more developed, (4) to evoke some feeling within the reader" (Green, 2002). Therefore, in order to appear from within or to sound original, authors often employ typical linguistic features in crafting voices for their characters. If we speak of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) then the early representation of this particular dialect, in literature, was primarily intended to add humour to the texts and up till the early nineteenth century AAVE was mainly represented by non-native speakers of the language, who were mostly white authors (Minnick, 2004). The approach of these authors towards AAVE is claimed to be derogatory as they believed this variety to be an ungrammatical, lazy and slang version of "Standard English". Birnbaum (1991) argues that the representation of AAE by white authors, in general, functions as a kind of "White black face". The white authors often stereotyped the African Americans linguistically and consigned them with a substandard position, because of their history of



slavery. But, [Preston \(1993\)](#) contends against such stereotyped beliefs and argues that even an honest attempt to represent AAVE by a white author is generally seen in a negative light (as cited in [Minnick, 2004](#)). However, there seems to be some truth in the early accusation against the white authors and the idea of having a negative attitude towards AAVE cannot be denied altogether. It was after the African American writers started writing about themselves, that people got to know about the true plight of the African Americans and we also, supposedly, started finding authentic renditions of African American English (AAE) in literary texts. Charles W. Chestnut was one of the earliest African American authors who wrote in AAVE and since then there was abundant representation from a native speakers' perspective as well.

The linguistic prejudice of the white authors and other speakers of Standard English, was a result of the social prestige attached not with AAVE but with its speakers. Since this variety of English has its origin in slavery, the attitude towards the slaves was transferred onto their language as well. Many writers and scholars considered it to be a mark of laziness, both mental and physical. People who think in deprecating terms for this variety, believe it to be simply incorrect and ungrammatical with unnecessary modifications and elisions of verbs and syllables. [Rickford and Rickford \(2000\)](#) argue against these prejudices and say that "*every human language and dialect whether they are hated or loved, prestigious or not- has regularities or rules of its own type*" and had there not been a regular pattern of rules then it would not have been acquired by the people and their subsequent generations. AAVE is not just a language but a mark of identity for the African Americans. Moreover, it provides solidarity to the African American community ([Smitherman, 2006](#)) and serves as a unifying factor for them. "It's the thing Black people love so much – the saying of words, holding them on tongue, experimenting with them. It's a love, a passion...."

So, it can be comfortably assumed that purists of any language have problems with even slightest variations from the "standard" norm. The early linguists and grammarians were all prescriptivist in nature. For instance, Prof. Higgins' character in *Pygmalion*, a play written by George Bernard Shaw, hated the "butchering" of English language and was not ready to accept any dialectical variation. Thankfully, the current age linguists are descriptivist and respect all the variations available. But the so-called authoritarians of language still have a negative attitude towards both the African Americans and their language.

It is true that "the definition of Blackness is constantly being invented, policed, transgressed and contested" ([Pullum 1999](#)) and there are a number of factors on which the language of a character and his/her representation in the text depend. Some authors, when using AAVE, focus on phonological features, some on vocabulary, while some make extensive use of grammatical features. Much scholarship has been done to analyse the representation of AAVE in various texts but there isn't much work on the direct comparison between the authors belonging to two different racial groups. While doing a discourse analysis, this paper intends to draw a direct comparison between the pioneer works of two female authors, Margaret Walker and Margaret Mitchell. The works are [Walker \(1966\)](#) and [Mitchell \(1936\)](#) respectively.

The two authors have been analysed through the lenses of [Tajfel's \(1979\)](#) "social identity theory" which deals with *in-group* and *out-group* racism. People believe themselves to be part of a group that increases their sense of pride and self-esteem. According to Tajfel's theory, the in-groups have a tendency to discriminate against the out-groups in order to enhance their self-image. When dealing with AAVE and its representation in the texts, we often face the problem of this "out-group racism" which is the "socially organised set of attitudes, ideas and practices that deny [a racialized group] the dignity, opportunities, freedoms and rewards that [the United States] offers White Americans". (Feagin and Vera 1995 as quoted in [Maggie and Karn, 1999](#)).

[Mitchell's Gone with the Wind \(1936\)](#) is a bestseller worldwide and received a lot of critical acclaim but her work is plagued with the attitude of out-group racism as "it bolsters white ego and sings hallelujah of white supremacy" ([Burks, 2004](#)). The novel revolves around Scarlett O' Hara, the eldest daughter of a well-to-do plantation owner in Georgia, in the Southern US. It portrays Scarlett's journey through the turmoil of the American Civil War and Reconstruction from a White person's perspective i.e. from the view point of a plantation owner. Slavery is not the main theme but is in the backdrop of the novel. The "slaves" here can be seen as "them". Walker's novel *Jubilee*, on the other hand, is written from the perspective of the "slaves". Here we see another Civil War heroine, Vyry, a biracial slave girl, who is the unacknowledged daughter of her master. [Walker \(1966\)](#) depicts the journey of Vyry's life during Slavery, the Civil War and the Reconstruction. Where on one hand, Walker deals



with the struggle and tortures through which Vvry and other slaves go during these periods, in *Gone with the Wind*, the members of the Ku Klux Klan are shown as honourable men. Mitchell, in her work portrays an "idealised antebellum South where the Blacks as slaves and the Whites as masters lived harmoniously" (Burks, *ibid*). Thus, the two novels have been chosen for comparison because the plot of both these novels are set in almost the same time period showing opposite points of view. The protagonist of *Gone with the Wind* (GWTW) is a white female written by a white female author and the protagonist of *Jubilee* is a mulatto woman written by a Black female author. Where in GWTW the African Americans are shown to be happy and content as slaves. *Jubilee* shows the struggles of slavery and discrimination faced by African Americans as a result of White supremacy.

Besides the portrayal of social struggles, the two novels are also a reservoir of the dialectal representation of AAVE. As mentioned earlier, the respective authors are biased in the representation of this variety as well. This paper gets into an in-depth analysis of its depiction in the texts. The features of AAE will be extensively analysed and compared in detail of the dialectal representation in the two texts. Linguists like Labov (1976), Morgan (2002), Rickford and Rickford (2000), Smitherman (1996) etc. have given an elaborate description of the features of the African American Vernacular English. The paper broadly adheres to Rickford and Rickford's (2000) depiction of the features of the variety, which they prefer to call the "Spoken Soul". Rickford, as quoted in Bailey et.al (1991), points out that linguists are often cautious to question any scholar's data. There is a tendency of keeping the source of the data confidential. And since there is no conventional technique, it becomes difficult to account for the differences and variations that occur in the phonological representation of AAVE. In fact, there is "no way of knowing to what extent differences in results between studies reflect different methods and data bases rather than actual linguistic differences" (Bailey et.al. 1991). If that is the case then how do we account for the authentic representation of Black English in the novels? The answer can be found in the authors' (in) consistencies in using any particular characteristic feature.

Moreover, authenticity (in a literary text) is concerned not only with the range of features but also with the way they are used (Green, *ibid*). This covers aspects like what features are used; whether they are used in an appropriate environment, and above all "what type of social message do they convey". The difference in representation of the variety may be accounted to several reasons. The two most important factors out of them could be a) the knowledge of the variety that a particular person has and b) his/ her attitude towards the variety.

1.1 Aim and Objective

This paper stylistically analyses the text of the two authors from different racial backgrounds and studies and compares the phonological and grammatical features of their dialectal representation AAVE. This research work is a literary survey of the data collected from the two texts. The main aim is to do a discourse analysis of the texts keeping the race of the authors in mind. The result will help us decide whether the occurrence of a particular spelling convention is deliberate or the particular author's individual style. Variations in grammatical features can be ascribed to various reasons and "are believed as major components of authors' artistic and linguistic strategies" (Minnich, 2004).

The two authors in the present study have been selected keeping few aspects in mind. First, both the authors are women. This controls the issue of stylistic variations that may have occurred due to differences in gender. The novels have been written with a feminist perspective where Scarlett and Vvry are two women struggling and fighting for their existence. The issue of temporality and space has also been controlled in the sense that the plot of both the novels is set in the American South. Both the novels start with the era of Slavery and move through the Civil War towards Reconstruction. The two novels of different authors were selected to substantiate the arguments made in the earlier sections, which assume that white authors fail to represent AAVE and its speakers appropriately in their texts.

2. Methods

This paper is a descriptive analysis of the phonological and grammatical features of the dialectal representation of AAVE in *Gone with the Wind* Mitchell (1936) and *Walker* (1966). The study restricts itself to only these two novels and is a direct comparison between the two for the features mentioned above. Sociolinguistic



methods for interpretation of data will be used in analysis of the features. It is also a discourse analysis of the dialogues used by and for the characters. For example, different characters in the novel might have different levels of education or might be of different age or may come from different regions. This should cause the style and register of the speakers to vary accordingly. Any author, while representing the variety, needs to be sensitive to such issues and variables. The sociolinguistic analysis also helped us understand the "solidarity and distance" (Minnick, *ibid*) of the authors with AAVE. An African American author is assumed and expected to identify with the variety and make fewer or no overgeneralization when representing Black English. It must be noted that for linguistic analysis we adhered to the documented features of AAVE listed in the works of other eminent scholars of Black English like Green (2002), Rickford & Rickford (2000), Smitherman (1986).

There is an imbalance between the data received from both the texts. Walker's novel revolves around Black people's lives so more examples of direct speech are found in her work. Mitchell's work focuses on White characters and has African Americans in the backdrop as "slaves" and consequently less of AAE direct speech. In *GWTW*, the African Americans do not have a life of themselves and the only thing that they have got to do is serve their "masters". For Mitchell, it is the language of the "slaves" i.e. the language of 'them' and not 'us' as can be analysed through the social identity theory.

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) posits that positive identity is maintained by affiliation with valued groups, and social comparisons that result in overall positive appraisals of identity. It is a social psychology theory that explains how people's self-concepts are based on their social group memberships. There are numerous instances of discourse in both the novels which prove that the people of both the races had a feeling of alienation with the other group. Later in the analysis of social factors we will find the white characters of *GWTW* are dominated with the idea of outgroup racism.

Before getting into the detailed analysis, random paragraphs from the two novels are copied here to look at the surface level appearance of the AAVE speech in their texts

'Dey cookie say Miss Meade done got wud early dis mawnin' dat young Mist. Phil done been shot an' Miss Meade she tuck de cah'ige and ole Tarbot an' Betsy an' dey done gone to fotch him home. Cookie say he bad hurt an' Miss Meade ain' gwine ter be studyin' about coming up hyah'. Gone with the Wind: 275

"Yassuh, yassuh I sho will. And Marster, just one minute. They's a favor I wants to ask you if I is allowed"..... "I'd like to have a pass to your other plantation come Sunday if you will let me go. I has to pass through town and I needs a pass and I wants to go early if you says it's all right with you. I has a sick cousin over there" Jubilee: 47

It is clear from the above examples that the passage from *Jubilee* is comparatively more comprehensible, even though it contains the exemplary features of AAVE. It suggests that the variety although different from SE was considerably similar. Walker uses some basic features of AAVE in her work and ignores the others. The passage from *GWTW* is relatively less graspable. Lot of broken sentences with pronunciation varying significantly makes it a little hard to read. Mitchell takes recourse mostly to the 'eye dialect' to underline the significant difference between AAE and 'Standard English' and Walker mostly uses basic grammatical features.

The following sections do a close analysis of the writing technique of both the authors. The analysis starts with a detailed investigation of the phonological features used in the respective texts. We start with *Jubilee* and then move on to *Gone with the wind*.

2.1 Phonological Features

Jubilee - Walker's focus was less on phonological representation of the dialect. She doesn't use a lot of features of AAVE's phonemic inventory. However, she is consistent in her representation of the phonological features even though they are less in number. The features are discussed below:

- In phrases like 'used to' where a verb is followed by the preposition 'to', the preposition is joined together with a change in the final vowel sound. /o/ is replaced by /a/ for e.g. 'usetā', 'hastā', 'liketā'. However, it should be noticed that 'how to' doesn't become 'howtā'. The reason is not grammatical but phonological. /to/ becomes /tā/ only when the preceding sound is a consonant. The /a/ ending is found in other phrases like 'mustā' - must have; 'hadnā' - had not; 'hurtchā' - hurt you.



- Deletion of unstressed syllables is another quintessential feature of AAVE and the text has numerous examples of words where the unstressed vowels are deleted. For e.g.

'twarnt- it wasn't	-	Sho-nuff- sure enough
'members- remembers	-	Ca-lina- Carolina
'zerves- preserves	-	'fore-before
'bout- about	-	Gov'mint – Goverment

- Monophthongisation of glides/ diphthongs- Glides and Diphthongs are generally changed into monophthongs in AAVE. But we do not find many examples of this feature in Walker's representation of the dialect and he spelling of the words with diphthongs are not altered. Either this isn't an important feature for Walker or she refrains from highlighting them. Yet, we do have very few examples of such sound changes as in words like:

Pizen'- poison

- Short prepositional phrases are often shortened to get a /n/ ending. Not a very common feature of AAVE but it finds abundant representation in Jubilee. For example:

Outen - out of More'n- more than

Cep'n- except for Bettern- better than -Gwine- going to

- No distinction between /e/ and /i/ -Rickford and Rickford (ibid) say that there is no distinction between /e/ and /i/ sound before nasals or between the two in monosyllabic words too. Walker uses both /i/ and /e/ sounds interchangeably to show the non- distinctiveness of the sound. /get/ is written as /git/ and /sit/ is written as /set/.

While analysing the data, it was found that besides the absence of some basic features from the text there are few but some inconsistencies in Walker's phonological representation of the speech.

- The inter-dental sound in the final position is often replaced by the fricative /f/ but this feature is absent in Walker's representation. Another phonological characteristic feature which hardly finds representation in Walker's dialect is the velar nasal /ng/ sound in the final position which is frequently replaced with palatal /n/ in the works of most authors, is replaced just once by 'n' for e.g. -'givin' instead of giving. When talking about Vry's inconsistencies, it has two variations of the same words present in her lexical representation - 'dassent'/ doesn't and chillum/ children.

Thus, Jubilee, as a piece of literary work, focuses more on the plot which depicts the plight of African Americans, especially women. The author doesn't aim for her work to serve as a reservoir of AAVE data base.

Gone with the wind (GWTW) - In contrast to Walker, Margaret Mitchell focuses mainly on the eye dialect to distinguish between Standard English and AAVE. She is aware with a lot of phonological rules and generously applies them throughout the text. Below is a detailed summary of features used in GWTW. The phonological features quintessential to AAVE described earlier have not been mentioned again to avoid repetition.

- Monophthongisation of Diphthongs- There are plenty of examples where the diphthongs are replaced with single vowel sounds.

Po'- poor	-	Fe'el- feild
Y'all- you all	-	Ah- I
Lak- like	-	Mah- my
Tek- take	-	Et- ate
Agin- again	-	dar-there



However, in her efforts to contrast between SE and AAVE, Mitchell sometimes changes monophthongs into diphthongs. For e.g. 'dead' is written as 'daid', an inaccurate representation as per the documented sources available, that I have referred to.

- Simplification of consonant clusters- The final consonant of a consonant cluster is often deleted by AAVE speakers and is represented likewise by the authors. The following examples are from GWTW.

jes'- just - Sen's- sends
ain'- ain't - Mos'- most
doan- don't

However, it must be noted that the final consonants of words like 'ain't' and 'don't', can't be deleted because the deletion of the final consonant is possible only when both or all the consonant sounds in the cluster, are either voiced or voiceless.

- Replacement of sounds - The voiceless fricative /th/ in the final position is replaced with /f/, /t/, /d/ or /v/ in the final position. Another typical feature of AAVE, this too finds ample depiction in GWTW.

Breaf- breath - Kilt-killed
Wid- with

- The fricative /v/ is often replaced with /b/

Nebber- never - Hab- have
Ober- over - lib- live
Cabe- cave - serbant- servant

- Consonant Replacement /ng/ with /n/

Fixin'- fixing
Gittin' – getting

- The vowel sound /o/ in the word final position is replaced with /er/

ter- to
fer- for
widder- widow

This feature hasn't been described by the studied scholars of AAVE but Mitchell is consistent in using it throughout the text for her African American characters. The only exception is Dilcey, a house servant bought by Gerald O'Hara.

- Deleting /l/ and /r/ after vowels

yo- your in Dilcey's speech - Buhnt- burnt
he'p- help - Wuthless-worthless
afta- after - Weahin'- wearing
Ca[r]ol- Carol - Eve'y- every
tawmnet- torment - Mahyin'- marrying

- Deleting the unstressed syllable

'sturb- disturb
'cept- accept
'bout- about



- Lack of distinction between /i/ and /e/-

git- get

agin- again

ef- if

- Contraction of Phrases like – 'less than' to 'less'n'

Besides the above-mentioned characteristic features there are various inconsistencies in Mitchell's depiction of AAVE. Such examples are discussed below.

- Open vowel sounds- The vowels of the speakers of AAVE in GWTW are more open. A lot of examples like 'drap me'- 'drop me'; 'whar's- where is' are present. But at the same time, we find there are numerous examples when the open vowels are closed. For e.g. 'what' becomes 'whut', and 'catch' becomes 'ketch'.
- Random spellings - Some words in Mitchell's work are randomly spelt probably just to denote the speaker's incapability at pronouncing them. Some of these words have complex syllable structure like 'horsepittle'- hospital, 'sojers'- soldiers, 'iggerunt'- ignorant, 'dif-funt'- different, 'wustest'- worstest. While others have been transcribed the way it is spoken by any speaker of the language, for e.g.- 'barbecue'- barbeque, 'fiah'- fire. Also 'after' is a word with two syllables. There isn't a consonant cluster hence there isn't a need for its simplification to make it - 'affer'.
- The following list of words again has some unsystematic changes which needs explanation. For e.g. – the deletion of the vowel sound in misery- 'mizry'; also the complete deletion of the vowel in 'nurse'- 'nnss'; 'unless' is changed into 'ness'- it's true that the unstressed syllable is deleted but then the left word should have been 'less. 'kain' instead of 'can't'- AAVE simplifies the diphthongs to mono vowel sounds but here the author reverses the rule which is arbitrary. The vowel changes and the final consonant sound of the 'stomach' – 'stummick' needs explanation and so does the replacement of spelling 'case' with 'kase'.

Thus, we see that Mitchell has elaborately used the eye dialect to represent the phonetic features of AAVE, yet she has over generalised a lot of characteristic features. Sometimes spellings of words are randomly altered just to contrast the difference even further. Such randomness is found only once in Walker when she writes 'liquor' as 'likker'. There is clearly an over representation in GWTW which seems to be done with a purpose of accentuating the difference between AAVE and SE.

3. Grammatical Features

Moving on to the grammatical analysis we found that Walker uses more of grammatical features than phonological to depict AAVE. Many scholars including [Green \(2002\)](#) maintain that AAE is not only spoken by African American's but also by White Southerners. Because poor white people were in close contact with the African Americans, they acquired the same language. Thus, the phonological and grammatical differences should majorly occur due to regional and class differences and not just racial differences in the American South. Validating the point, Walker doesn't differentiate much between a poor White's and an African American's speech.

3.1 Some of major grammatical features used by both the authors are discussed below

Jubilee - The past tense of the irregular forms of verbs are converted the regular way in Vvry's American South, for e.g. knowed, heered, marraigned, buyed. Some verbs are first changed into past and then further converted the regular way, e.g. - 'borned'.

GWTW- 'saw'- 'seed'

Single verb forms are used both for singular and plural verb agreement- Singular form of verb is used to mark present tense forms are generally same in all three persons-for e.g. 'They daddy is free.'; 'you was; 'I is'; We'uns is poor, I reckons, I wants, I knows, does you, I promises you, we'll be ables to get. The first-person singular auxiliary is also marked in the unmarked form with 'am' in Jubilee- 'I'm waiting'.



GWTW- I gives you; dey's folkses dyin' down dar; I is, I has; I needs; You says. "She a good mammy but you a young girl now and needs a good maid". Besides the verb agreement feature we come across another basic feature of AAVE which is visible in the sentence mentioned above and that is copula deletion. This grammatical feature is covered next.

Copula deletion- It is a very crucial but a little confusing feature for non-native speakers of AAVE and hence needs an elaborate discussion. AAVE deletes *is* and *are* depending upon their positions. Auxiliary verbs occur in the environment preceding *v-ing* and copula '*be*' occur in the environment preceding adjective, adverb, noun, preposition. The deletion of copula is also rule governed. Auxiliaries can occur in contracted, reduced or zero form such as '*s*', '*m*', '*ll* (*a*)', '*d*' and ϕ . Both the forms of '*be*' i.e. auxiliary and copula may not occur on surface level.

The rule is wherever Standard English contracts, AAE deletes the copula '*is*' and '*are*' and vice versa. Where SE cannot contract a verb, AAVE contracts. They are not deleted if they are stressed in Standard English [Smitherman \(ibid\)](#), [Labov \(1976\)](#) and [Green \(ibid\)](#). Copulas can also not be deleted when they are present in past tense. The auxiliary '*had*' occurs with verbs overtly marked for past tense. Even in the present tense, they cannot be deleted with 1st person singular pronoun and '*I am*' is often contracted as '*I'm*'. Copula is deleted in unstressed positions like '*Hetta been having*'; how you feeling. We find both – the contracted and the deleted form of auxiliary '*will*' - maybe he buy you and you'll work them to death, respectively. The next sentence is the example of the same feature: That's foolish talk you talking boy. The '*s*' in that's should have been deleted as according to the rule that AAVE deletes copula where SE contracts. Perhaps, such examples might also be idiolectal differences of the authors and their characters.

Mitchell is pretty much familiar with the copula deletion rules. The auxiliary '*be*' is not deleted in stressed position or with 1st person singular. "Cause ef you is, you ain' gwine git supper' and is deleted in positions where it isn't stressed. For e.g. ".....when she in a state". The auxiliary is also not deleted with 1st person "I is sorry to 'sturb you". The same speaker also says "And I'm gwine give you my Prissy fo' yo' maid". Thus, we see that both '*I is*' and '*I'm*' forms are present. These are some of inconsistencies found in Mitchell's depiction of the language. In the sentence 'She a good mammy but you a young lady and m prissy been maid fo' Miss India for a year' we also find the use of unstressed '*been*' to denote '*has been*'.

Plurality is not marked with '*s*' but instead '*them/dem*' is used- 3rd person plural pronoun in the accusative case (*them*) is used instead of the nominative case '*these*' for plural nouns. According to the rules described by Rickford and Rickford (*ibid*), AAVE omits the plural '*s*' but both the authors use it to mark plurality.

Jubilee – them white folks

GWTW- dem cheap niggers

Possessives- The possessive is marked by the juxtaposition of the two nouns i.e. the possessor and the possessed. In Jubilee we find an example- They daddy is free. If talking about Vry's idiolect then the possessive pronouns in all the three persons have the same form when getting accusative case- '*mine*', '*hern*', '*ourn*'.

GWTW- It's me own neck, so it is.

Use of *done* to show completion of an action- Again this feature can be found in the works of both the authors. Jubilee- I done lost my younguns.

GWTW- Poke done tole me; they cook done died.

Come before –*ing* is used to mark speaker's indignation or anger about an event. – In the example taken from Jubilee Old Tom is angry about the false efforts being made towards the freedom of the Negroes and he says "here come talking 'bout how us gwine be free"

Negation Concord- One of the most quintessential features of AAVE involves double or multiple negations. The negation markers are said to be pleonastic i.e. they do not contribute in giving meaning to the sentence. Examples from both the texts are given below.

Jubilee- Then he say he can't stand it no more. Naw, we ain't looking for none from nobody and ain't givin' nobody.



GWTW- We ain' gwine get nothin' ter eat 'cept possum an' greens.No ain'! Ah doan git no mo' fun outer having' Miss Beetriss lay me out dan y'all does.

Moving forward with the lack of consistency to depict AAVE we find that at one point Walker too, overgeneralises a grammatical feature. The present tense 's' which shows third person singular agreement is absent in AAVE according to Rickford (ibid) but Walker uses this feature for 1st person subject verb agreement which is inappropriate. For e.g. "I promises you". Thus, we see that there are instances where even African American authors use hyper salient features to accentuate the difference. Therefore, it would be unfair to only blame white authors for mis representation or overgeneralisations. However, in an interview with Maryemma Graham (Suman, 2017), we got to know the probable cause of such representations from Black authors. African American authors were often told by editors and publishers to edit their draft keeping the audience in mind which, at that time, was mostly white population. The other reason behind accentuated differences in Black authors depiction of AAVE can be a result of established spelling conventions by the early authors of African American variety. The African American authors who started writing later must have simply followed the transcripts available to them for easy readership among the audience.

Anyway, it would be fair to say that Mitchell's work has relatively more inconsistencies and we also find some quintessential features missing. Besides, at times there are overgeneralisations in forming plurals as well. For instance 'folkses' for folks.

Moving further with the grammatical analysis, we also deal with interrogatives and come across the following interrogative sentences in GWTW-

Is y'all aiming to go to Miss Wynders?

Is de doctah come?

African American English does not have subject verb inversion in forming questions. In the above examples, we see that Mitchell is using the regular Standard English rules to form interrogative sentences. She might not have been familiar with the intricacies of the grammatical rules.

Furthermore, there are various instances where Mitchell fails in employing the correct grammatical rule and the regular sentence structures are used instead. For e.g. "The cook done died and dey ain' bought a new one" or "Huccome po' white trash buy any nigger?" As double negation is used to form negatives so the sentences should ideally have been 'they ain' bought no new one and Huccome po' white trash bought no nigger?"

So, we see that Walker has also been sensitive to language differences which result due to factors like education and regional variations. The language of Randal Ware, in terms of grammar and pronunciation, is considerably different from that of Vvry and other plantation slaves, although some basic features of AAVE are part of his idiolect as well. Besides being sensitive to the difference in educational background, Walker has also underlined the regional differences in her work. The vowels in the speech of characters coming from Chicago and Alabama are more open when compared to those of the characters from the Deep South for e.g. 'nigger' vs 'naygur'; 'well' vs 'waál'. The difference in the two texts is also about the lack of distinction in the patois of individual speakers. Margaret Walker, when commenting on the comparison, said that she (Mitchell) does not distinguish between her cultivated Whites and uncultivated Whites. So, the problem in GWTW is that all the white characters speak in one way while the black characters in the other.

4. Sociological factors

However, if we narrow down upon the core differences between the two authors, then more than the linguistic variations it is their respective attitudes that bring Walker close to the African Americans while takes Mitchell away. Smitherman's (2000) statement that "Whites have so ruled the world that they almost made the 'darkies' also look at themselves in the same manner" holds true in Mitchell's case. Not only do the Whites refer to African Americans as 'trash nigger' or 'yon darkie' but even African Americans in Jubilee addressed other people of their race and sometimes even to themselves in the similar tone. The connotation however wasn't so derogatory. This as an example of in-group racism shown by Black people. It must be noted that the same terms like "nigger", "negro", "blacks" etc. which were used as derogatory remarks by white people for the African Americans were later



used as a symbol of pride by the AAs themselves at times. They started taking pride in being called "blacks" and "negro" and made it a mark of identity which also served as a unifying factor.

Another factor which shows that the white people treated the African Americans as them is the fact that they wanted the latter to always remain downtrodden. The white plantation owners made the "slaves" believe that education was not meant for them. Walker has highlighted this issue in *Jubilee* by showing that the African Americans were so brain washed that they too were against the idea of educating themselves. Echoing the white supremacist mentality, Innis Brown, Vvry's second husband, doesn't want Vvry's children to go to school as he believes education made "nigger", a fool.

A typical anti-African American attitude is visible in *GWTW* when even after getting freedom; they are shown to be wanting to go back to their white "masters" for security and are pleased to be commanded in return. Like most of the Southern Whites, Mitchell lived with the belief that the African Americans were happy to live as slaves where they were ordered and instructed by white people; As, presumably, they didn't have brain enough to decide for themselves. In *GWTW*, we find Sam, one of the freed slaves from Tara plantation, to be delighted to meet Scarlett again after the war, because 'dar warn't nobody to tell Big Sam whut ter do' so now his 'face glowed with relief as once more having someone to tell him what to do' on meeting his previous owner. A statement from Walker's novel is a befitting reply to people who hold such futile beliefs where she says 'no matter what a white planter said every slave craved freedom'. These incidents remind me of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, where Sophia's character comments on white people's mentality and says that "they have the nerve to try to make us think that slavery fell through because of us (Black people)..... Like us don't have sense enough to handle it" (Walker, 1980).

Scarlett's loud thought of Prissy further conveys Mitchell's opinion about the African Americans, whom she believes could nebbber be associated with any good or happy thing rather the "negroes", "were always so proud of being the bearers of evil tidings". There are many such glaring examples of outgroup racism for black people. Such incidents and discourse are proof of the social attitude and biasness that white authors, and white people in general, had against African Americans. In the entire plot of *GWTW* is highly racist, where the black population is shown as "them" and have to face outgroup racism. Mitchell was a wealthy, privileged, white Southerner and had a typical white supremacist outlook towards the African Americans. The entire story is narrated from a point where Scarlett O'Hara and the white plantation owners are shown superior to black people. The only good quality they presumably have is to be loyal to their "masters". *GWTW* has been criticized for "presenting too rosy a view of the south: a piece of documented partisanship; a work in which "the Old and its Lost Cause were glamorized, sanitized and merchandised" (Conde, 1996). From an outsider's perspective, Scarlett looks like an anti-hero and the novel might not have got a Pulitzer in the current times.

On the other hand, Walker's work is very impressive as she plays the role of both a novelist and a historian. She believed that history could be boring but narrating the same history through a story will reach out to more people and can be interesting at the same time. The character of Vvry is based on her own grandmother and thus, it presents a close observation of a slave's life. Besides covering the major issues of slavery, anti-slavery, civil war, reconstruction, and the great migration, she has also closely shown us the attitudes of house servants towards field niggers and the "poor white trash"; sale of "slaves"; the advertisements done by their masters for those runaway "slaves"; and also, the torturous way the poor slaves were "branded" as runaway; the atrocities of Ku Klux Klan; issue of mixed schools and many others.

5. Conclusion

Thus, we see that both the authors make use of slang, contractions, eye dialect and loosely structured sentences to distinguish the variety from SE, however, the difference lies in the frequency of usage. Mitchell is inconsistent in her representation of AAE and over-generalizes many linguistic features. Walker also tends to over-generalize certain linguistic features but it is less frequent and random. The differences between the two texts, in terms of linguistic features, are few and at times, Mitchell's dialectal representation is more elaborate and extensive than that of Walker's. But then again, it must be reiterated that the authors had to often succumb to the demands of the editors and publishers who published for a wider i.e. white audience. Both these works were published in a white dominated era, where it was hard for any black author to stick to their original draft if the



wanted it to be published. Thus, making conclusion solely based on linguistic features would not be a right thing to do. Hence, we get into extralinguistic and sociological factors as well.

We come across several terms and phrases which show that the white people looked down upon black people and treated them with outgroup racism. This alienation resulted in a clear division of 'us' vs 'them' in the both the racial groups. where Jubilee is about the atrocities of the plantation owners and of the members of the KKK, on the other *Gone with the Wind* portrays them as honourable men, which is obnoxiously surprising. The members of KKK have been glorified in this novel and their take on handling situations, justified. Mitchell appears to suggest that slavery was there for the welfare of African Americans. Scarlett O'Hara is a character who seems heroic if seen through the lens of white eyes but from an African American's perspective, she is a typical white female who believes herself to be at the centre of the world she lives, in while all others are at the periphery and the black people miles outside the peripheral boundary as well. Every wrong done or meted upon the African Americans have been justified and normalised in *Gone with the Wind* and this is the biggest problem with Mitchell's work and how it stands in stark contrast with a novel written by an African American author.

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Data availability

Data analysed in this study are not publicly available. However, these could be obtained from the corresponding author on a reasonable request.

Ethics Statement

This study was carried out and reported adhering to ethical standards. A written informed consent was obtained from the parents or caregivers of all the participants before initiating the study procedures.

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