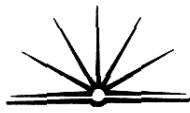


Dialogue can be defined as a conversation between two or more people who are exchanging ideas or opinions on a particular issue. While it could be said that dialogue is most effective when both or all parties have an equal say, this is a rare occurrence. Many factors can influence the balance of power within a dialogue and various techniques are used to assume control; purpose, status and context all influence the outcomes of a dialogue. The issue at hand is often unclear until all aspects have been identified. Dialogue teaches that there is more than the spoken word to a conversation but tone and attitude as a

means of expression. What a person is doing, their stance can alter the message trying to be conveyed. Sometimes it can be said that what's left out of a conversation is sometimes more important than what's put in. While 'Stolen' by Jane Harrison, the comic routine entitled 'Do Not Talk Over Me' by Guido Hatzis and 'My Fair Lady' based on Shaw's Pygmalion are very different texts; ~~it~~ ~~can~~ the issue at hand could be identified as the desire of one party to dominate or change another in their actions through a dialogue based on power and superiority.

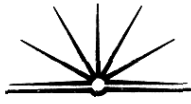
Harrison uses explicit dialogue



for a specific purpose. In scenes involving Jimmy and Ruby, Harrison's purpose is to contribute to the ongoing dialogue about the Stolen Generation by relating the experiences of many Aboriginal people through her characters.

The scene 'Unspoken Abuse I' in 'Stolen' highlights the loss of power in one character because of the abuse of others. Ruby's abuse is emphasised in the sing-song dialogue between her and the other children. However, their ~~children~~ childish exchange of conversation masks the true issue at hand and none of the children, especially Ruby, are able to articulate their true feelings.

"What did he give to ya?"



The children use questioning techniques in an effort ^{to} obtain information but Ruby answers their questions very literally refusing to give into their probing and at the same time avoiding her own grim reality.

"Gave me a doll."

The doll she clings to symbolises the innocence she has lost, and like it she is rendered dumb as she has "promised not to tell." The children's voices highlight the unseen supremacy ^{in control} over Ruby.

In contrast to a character having information she is unable to use is the 'Guido Matris' audio text in which a character is trying to express his opinion in a situation where



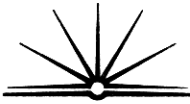
He does not have all the information. The relationship between the two participants in this dialogue should be based on a simple business transaction, and this is what the driver is expecting. Because of this expectation he adopts a business-like tone appropriate to his profession. However his colloquial language defines him as a blue collar worker "yep." He answers Guido's questions with polite factual information and his own short, sharp questions. At this stage of the conversation the driver's confidence is obvious by his emphatic questions and answers. However, his control of the conversation is quickly eroded as it occurs to him that Guido could be playing

a prank "...alright I'll go along with the joke."

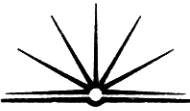
As the conversation progresses his tone becomes confused then impatient and finally frustrated.

The purpose of this dialogue is to provoke the driver into anger which is exactly what Guido does through the use of irrelevant, evasive dialogue. His repeated use of "my friend" in addressing the tow truck driver projects an arrogant tone and his exaggerated accent is condescending and sarcastic.

Because this is an audio text, emotions can only be expressed verbally. An emphasis is placed greater on the spoken word and its expression. Shifts in volume



and tone and attempts to speak over the other person are evident of the driver's state of mind. Verbal violence and insults are used by Guido in the third phone call in an attempt to provoke the driver into anger. The tower truck driver's tone is showing increasing signs of frustration and confusion at this stage of the conversation as he is often silenced before finding something to say back to his unknown attacker. Threats aimed at Guido are reversed into a putdown and are thrown back at the tow truck driver. This is how Guido resumes control and assumes a powerful position in order



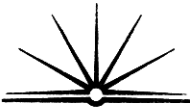
to achieve his purpose.

The tow truck driver's frustration and confusion come out in his volume and pauses where he is lost for words.

Because silence and mimicked insults aren't enough to eradicate his weak position, volume is his last resort.

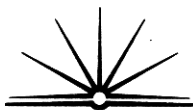
The tow truck driver who is almost a sacrifice for humor looks the opportunity in having an equal say because he does not have all the information.

Verbal violence and derogatory terms are also used in 'stolen' but for a "more sinister purpose. In 'Ruby's Descent into Madness' her awareness of the deplorable situation she



finds herself in is evident in the dialogue between her and her superiors. Harrison's graphic stage directions present us with a Ruby who has been physically abused but the extent of her emotional and mental abuse becomes understood through her interactions with the other characters.

"Don't want no trouble. Don't need no family of my own" the statements Ruby repeats are typical of the defensive, negative position she has had to adopt. The pleas and unheard cries for help as abuse is piled on her head. She continues to try to be heard until finally screaming to the one symbol of love she holds, her mum.

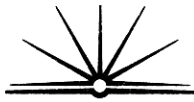


Her desperate cry "Where are you?" echoes her longing for her mother and her desire to be rescued and comforted.

'My Fair Lady' is based on Shaw's Pygmalion and like 'Stolen' it concerned with the attempts of one party to dominate and damage another.

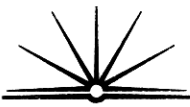
Professor Higgins is a specialist in genetics, and extracts information from dialogue to enhance his studies; rather than taking a genuine interest in people.

His relationship with a lower class flower seller Eliza Doolittle begins when he identifies her amongst a large group of people as being less than



human "crooning like a
bellious pigeon" and he even
accuses her of the "cold blooded
murder of the English language."

Their relationship is based on
Higgins's attempt to improve Eliza
by correcting her diction and
passing her off as a lady
in high society. In the
scene at the racecourse
Eliza fits perfectly into the
upper class because of her
appearance and begins
conversation as Higgins
leans back, smirking to
enjoy his triumph. While
her pronunciation is
perfect, the content of her
conversation betrays her
true origins as she speaks
of theft, alcoholism and



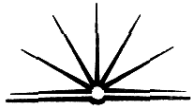
attempted murder.

"Rem as done it, pindled her in!"

By doing this she asserts her right to be herself and highlights the hypocrisy of those around her, who sum up her dialogue as the new "small talk". They encourage her to continue a little shocked but much more interested at her strange and amusing anecdotes.

In contrast to this polite but inappropriate dialogue is the scene involving Jimmy and the white voice which results in a violent exchange of words concluding with Jimmy's death.

Harris's purpose is to relate

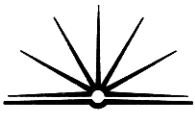


The experiences of many Aboriginal
males who have suffered abuse
and rejection after being taken
away from their families.

Harrison acknowledges the
angry young man Jimmy
has become and fills in
the beginning of his life to
give an accurate account
to the dialogue.

The two characters in this
scene highlight the black and
white racial issue of intolerance.
Their verbal exchange sums
up the fact that there is no
half way point, but that
the issue at hand is 'black
and white.'

The white voice uses American
racist insults in "coon", "nigger"
and "nig-nog". Although Jimmy's



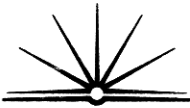
insults are just as vehement
are more insightful than the
white voices. The reader is able
to recognise this from Harrison's
account of their experiences.

"Genocidal maniac, raping and
killing our women. Get on a
boat and go back to where
you came from!"

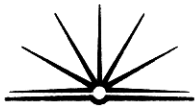
The scene ends when Jimmy
is finally physically hurt
by being labelled ignorant,
and he starts to insult himself.

The scene ends with Jimmy
pleading with the audience
to do something about the
situation in his suicide
note as he hangs from his
prison cell.

In contrast to this scene
is the scene involving Ruby



and her superiors. Ruby's relationship is symbolic of her status. In 'Ruby's Descent into Madness' the lady who stands by and condescendingly "encourages" Ruby to "try harder and 'do it better'" is seen to be on a level with the "steer" and "arsehole" who ~~change~~ change in to more specific character types who torment and use Ruby in different ways. The 'steer' and 'arsehole' physically stand by and abuse Ruby. The end of the scene makes it obvious that Ruby has been abused by her body language "as she wipes at her body obsessively" that the



has been raped and this is the elimination of any power she once held.

In contrast to this scene is the scene between Jimmy + his mother which highlights their disjointed dialogue. Their similarities are evident throughout the play as they mirror each other in the dialogue.

The pathos of the scene is evident ^{in silences and pauses} as the characters try desperately to reach one another.

Dialogue is an effective tool used to manipulate and control, as evident in the above texts. ^{It has been learnt that status + power are not the key to dialogue.}
"Stolen is not about blame but understanding and intolerance."

Although dialogue is used to degrade, hurt and insult others its potential for positive results is evident.