

Tutorial letter 202/2/2017

**Genres in Language and Literature:
Theory, Style and Poetics**

ENG2602

Semesters 2

Department of English Studies

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Assignment 02: Prose, Poetry, and Drama

BAR CODE

Dear Student

PRE-EXAMINATION INFORMATION

The examination will be a two hour paper. You will be expected to write two essays. The paper will be divided into two sections: a section on language and a section on literature. You will be expected to answer one question per section.

NB: Please manage your time carefully. You would have to write one essay per hour. Keep this in mind when preparing for the exam.

The section on language will have a question on Persuasive Prose and a question on Conversational Analysis. You will be expected to answer one of these questions.

The section on literature will have a question on Prose Fiction, a question on Poetry, and a question on Drama. You will be expected to answer one of these questions.

Even though you will have a choice in the exam, we suggest that you do at least some preparation on all the sections, and perhaps prepare at least two units per section in detail. If you only prepare one unit per section there is a risk that you could find the question on the unit that you prepared to be difficult. If, on the other hand, you are prepared to answer a question on more than one unit per section, you would be able to switch to answering on a different unit.

In each unit, you can expect the following types of questions:

Persuasive Prose: you will be given a short passage from an unseen persuasive text (such as a newspaper article, an advertisement, a political speech, etc.). You will have to write an essay in which you analyse the passage: this means that you will have to outline briefly **what** the passage is about, **why** it has been written, and **who** the target audience is, and then to explain in detail **how** it has been written. Your essay should focus on **how** the author **uses language** to persuade his/her target audience.

Conversation: you will be given an excerpt from a real life conversation which you will be asked to analyse according to specific aspects and features of Conversational Analysis. Refer to the 'Conversational analysis additional resource' document under the 'Additional Resources' tab on myUnisa for a survey of the key facets of this section.

Prose fiction: you will be given a short passage from an unseen prose fiction text. You will have to write an essay in which you analyse the passage, discussing in detail how it uses language, for example, to portray character, shape, tone and setting, for thematic and symbolic effects, etc.

Poetry: you will be given a poem from the list of poems provided under 'Additional Resources' on myUnisa. You will have to write an essay in which you analyse the poem, discussing in detail how it uses language to present and explore its main themes and concerns.

Drama: you will be given an excerpt from an unseen play. You will be expected to write an essay in which you analyse how the passage uses language, for example, to form imagery or reveal the qualities of the characters in relation to the passage's main themes and concerns.

Use the following additional guidelines to help you prepare for the examination:

- Read your study guide and the prescribed book. Make notes of the important features of each genre of writing.
- Read as widely as possible, including newspapers, magazines, novels, short stories, poems and dramas. Write notes on the texts that you read, outlining the way they use the strategies that are appropriate to each genre.
- Pay attention to general features of language use, such as point of view, register, diction, tone, irony and figures of speech as you analyse extracts from texts in preparation for the examination.
- Write sample essays in which you examine the way each extract in the reader uses the conventions of its genre.
- Remember to time yourself as you write these sample essays since you will be expected to write two essays in two hours in the exam.

Good luck with your preparations!

RESPONSES TO ASSIGNMENT 02**QUESTION 1: POETRY**

The assignment consisted of **THREE** questions. You were required to answer either Question 1, Question 2 or Question 3. If you had chosen Question 1, you would have been required to answer a question on Poetry.

Dear Student

In this question you were requested to respond the question below:

Read Study Unit 4 in your study guide before beginning this assignment. The activities in your study guide will train you to provide a relevant and insightful reading of the poem and will guide you in tackling such important aspects of the poem as the poetic subject, form and argument, diction and mood, main ideas and tropes, and poetic language.

Study Sasha Maharaj's poem below entitled "Worthless" (2016). In a carefully constructed essay, analyse how the poet uses poetic devices (tropes and schemes), diction, syntax and other language functions to make a point about relationships.

http://www.poetrysoup.com/poem/worthless_777833

(Maharaj, Sasha. 2016. "Worthless." http://www.poetrysoup.com/poem/worthless_777833 Accessed: 19 April 2016.)

We expected you to focus on the following keywords :

- **Essay**
Your response to this question should be formulated in a well-structured essay as outlined in Tutorial Letter 301. In this module you are not allowed to use subheadings for your essay, it should be evident in the manner in which you phrase your paragraphs and the content thereof what each paragraph serves as.
- **Carefully-worded**
This clarifies that you are not going to be assessed on content and structure only but on cohesion and correct grammatical use of language as well. (Please refer to the Assessment Criteria in Tutorial Letter 101 for further information.)

- **Analyse**

We expect you “to examine critically, so as to bring out the essential elements” (Dictionary.com) of the poem. This means that you were not expected to list, but to give an in-depth discussion that shows your understanding of the poem’s essence.

The next list contains terms that should become part of your daily vocabulary if you are going to succeed in this module.

- Schemes
- Tropes
- Diction
- Syntax
- Language techniques

You need to

- understand the meaning of each feature (aspect)
- know how to identify each feature
- be able to discuss how each identified aspect functions to carry the theme across

Please refer to the poetry slides under Additional Resources on MyUnisa for further assistance.

What follows is an example of a response that you could have written. Since there are varied interpretations of any sample of literature, not all possible responses to the poem can or will be explored. However, all well-substantiated arguments will be duly credited during the marking process.

Note how the essay flows uninterrupted by subheadings as you were also expected to write.

The poem explores the myriad of feelings one undergoes after the end of a love relationship. Different literary devices have been employed to reveal these and to make a point that relationships can be very painful and destructive to one’s sense of self.

Already with the title the poem presents the reader with a suggestion of low self-esteem as the speaker declares being “worthless”. A person who has this view of him/herself feels no sense of value to others which also transfers to being of no value to oneself. The suffix “-less” which means without, guides towards this conclusion. This feeling of not being important is then qualified with diction that is related to destruction through metaphors created by “broken”, “damage”, “ripped”, “torn” and “pieces” until it culminates in “deceased”. A vivid image of devastation builds up to a crescendo, starting with the least worrying word “broken”. Usually what is broken, like a car, can be fixed therefore the word is not alarming because it gives an idea that the speaker’s hurt spirit can be healed. However when “damage” is mentioned accompanied by the heavy “d” alliteration in “damage is done” the reader begins to realise the gravity of the situation related to the heavy sound, which draws attention to the phrase that describes this situation that raises concern.

The build-up is accentuated by the ending of each line where in the first one, the speaker “can’t feel”. This describes the extent of the internal pain that renders her numb. The next line ends in “barely breathe” which also reveals the extent of the damage, intensifying the gravity of the situation for the reader who realises that the “damage done” could be life-threatening. The severity of the “damage” is clarified in the metaphor “ripped apart”; it is the heart that is referred to, the reader may imagine a piece of cloth “ripped” into two parts which explains why the speaker feels she can “barely breathe” if this is what has happened to her heart. The next emotive word is “torn” and it magnifies the pain felt by the speaker where the heart is not only “ripped apart” but “torn to pieces”. Being torn was already sympathy evoking, however by mentioning “pieces”, the speaker paints a vivid picture of something shattered into fragments and this minimizes the possibilities of restoration.

The internal destruction-related diction combined with the external reinforcing diction reveals how disastrous a love-relationship can be when it comes to the end. Not only does it hurt but it destroys the heart, as revealed in the external diction that keeps describing deteriorating stages of devastation that culminate in a “deceased” heart, which eliminates all hope of resuscitation unless a miracle happens.

The speaker flashes back to the past when the former couple were in the last throes of their dying relationship. The lines rhyme in pairs in the next two stanzas, reflective of a couple. The flash-back is also evidenced in the word “recalling” and this is not just an isolated experience but a continuous action as alluded to by the word “keep”. If the speaker replays the agonizing messages in her mind the implication is that the pain will not dissipate because she keeps hurting herself with each recollection. This shows that the end of a love relationship cannot be easily put aside and therefore takes a long time to recover from, if one does recover at all. The excruciating pain that the speaker experiences when she recalls the messages is alluded to in this alliteration: “messages in my head/making me”. With the repeated “m” sound one imagines the murmur of someone moaning in deep pain, which explains why the speaker “[wishes she were] dead”; all because a romantic relationship came to an end.

The intensity of the anger and hate in the messages is heightened by the repeated use of the word, “so”, which is already an adverb that describes a high degree. Through its repetition the emotions that have led to the speaker’s torment are reinforced. The word “filled” also adds to this reinforcement to heighten the degree of hatred in the messages, thus justifying once more why the speaker wishes to escape all this by being dead. All this leads to the conclusion that the ending of a romantic relationship can leave one partner feeling ravaged.

Blame is implied in the last line of stanza two where the speaker says “I must be the reason”. By using “must” she reveals a strong conviction that she is the cause for the waning love, which leads to the conclusion that she blames herself. The reader cannot be faulted for assuming that this conviction emanates from the messages where she may have been blamed since they are filled with hatred and anger. Even if the accusations are not made directly, the fact that she interprets the messages as being full of such negative emotions alludes to such accusations being present, even if they are subtle or hidden.

The third stanza confirms what may have been a suspicion up till now, that sometimes the end of a relationship is not a mutual agreement, but happens while the other party wishes to try and make things work. This is referred to when the speaker says: “I never wanted it to end this way”. This suggests that even if the speaker may have accepted the end of the relationship, she is not happy with the circumstances that have led to the end. The next line: “there’s so much more I needed to say” supports the previous claim. Maybe she wishes for a chance to explain herself so that the partner can stop being angry and hurting her, this is alluded to in the extreme adverbs she uses in succession: “so much more”. Each quoted word by itself already means a high degree and by placing them in succession the speaker highlights to the highest degree her need for justification. This makes the reader aware of how crudely the relationship has ended, when one partner still had a lot to say but did not get the chance, implying that sense of cruelty present in some relationships that are supposed to be romantic but eventually become toxic.

The reader is introduced to the former lover for the first time in this stanza, through the pronoun ‘he’. The speaker also reveals what she believes to be the cause of the break-up. The fact that she “[guesses] he had just had enough of [her]” is proof that the break-up was not a mutual agreement and they did not reach a state of closure because she is still uncertain as to the real reason. In the previous stanza she blamed herself with conviction; now she is uncertain about his part and chalks it up to lack of interest. By adding the word, “just”, in the phrasing of the possible reason, the speaker trivializes the reason because if someone “just” does something it is either out of impulse or for no plausible reason, but following a whim.

The speaker concludes the third stanza by revealing her attempts at resuscitating the relationship. By “apologizing” she was already humbling herself, possibly implying that sometimes in relationships one partner has to be humble to correct whatever is wrong. In her case she does it to the extreme as implied in “immensely” and the fact that her infinite apology does not make him change his mind links back to the word “just”; it is very difficult to apply logic to an irrational situation, therefore her apologies will not change the whim of lack of interest. The speaker’s attempt to revive the relationship shows that she still wants it to continue.

The final stanza brings the poem back to where it began, with the speaker feeling internally dead because of her broken heart. This is communicated through the paradox in the first line of the last stanza where she says: “So here I am alive, yet dead inside.” Anyone who sees her going on with her daily business will assume that she is still alive, however her heart is crushed making her emotionally dead. The idea that she did not want the relationship to end is reiterated when she refers to trying her “best”, which is the most one can do. If that fails one is left powerless, as in her case. She also asserts this by claiming that she “know[s]”, she could have used “thought” if she was uncertain. However, by stating it emphatically like this, the speaker shows with certainty that she tried her best. This leads to the conclusion that in some relationships, even if you try your best, if the other party no longer wants to salvage the relationship, there is nothing that can be done, as her best attempts were in vain.

The speaker’s efforts have left her drained of her very essence, evidenced in the phrase, “completely worthless”. The extreme is again adopted in this description to reveal how much confidence the speaker has lost in herself. “Completely” means entirely which conjures up an image of someone who is a shell because she has lost all feelings of self-worth. The speaker’s problem is not resolved because nobody is aware of her agony, as indicated in the last line: “Falling apart and still nobody notices...” This quote implies that rejection in a romantic relationship can be a stealthy killer that sneaks up on you without anybody being aware and since it all happens emotionally (inside the heart), people around may not be privy to the sufferer’s torment. The ellipses as the concluding part also alludes to this unresolved problem, they also reflect that she has still not accepted that the relationship has ended therefore there is no resolution.

The poet has used schemes and tropes to comment on the pain brought about by a romantic relationship that ends without proper closure. Through the diction it becomes clear how traumatic relationships can be, especially to the partner that still wants the relationship to continue.

TOTAL: 100

Wishing you well in your studies!

Lungelwa Phakathi

QUESTION 2: PROSE

The assignment consisted of **THREE** questions. You were required to answer either Question 1, Question 2 or Question 3. If you had chosen Question 2, you would have been required to answer a question on Prose.

Below is an extract from the short story *The Thief: A Story* (1956) by Dan Jacobson. The extract describes the games played between a father and his children and how these games reflect the way that power is structured in the family. Write an essay with an introduction, body and conclusion (without sub-headings) on the extract in which you show how literary features of the passage (such as diction and characterisation) function to show **who has power** in the family and **how** this power is **maintained**.

Ensure that you support your discussion with quotes from the passage and explain how the quotes support your statements. Do NOT discuss anything in your essay that you cannot relate to theme of power.

But sometimes, watching the children at their perilous play with their father, even the mother would be afraid. She would lift her eyes from her book, or unwrap the towel which had been muffling the sun's rays to a yellow blur on her eyes, and her heart would sink with fear to see them run and stand breathing behind some tree while their father prowled on tiptoe towards them. So frail they seemed, with their bony elbows poking out from their short-sleeved blouses, and their knees large and round below the dress or khaki shorts that each wore. And he seemed so determined, so muscular in the casual clothing he wore in the evenings after he came home from work, so large above the children. But she accepted his violence and his strength, and she never protested against the games...She seemed sunken under her husband, under his wealth, under his strength; they had come down upon her as the sun did where she lay at the side of the swimming bath, and she questioned them no more than she could have questioned the sun.

(Jacobson, Dan. 1956. "The Thief: A Story." *Commentary*. <https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-thief-a-story/> Accessed: 19 April 2016.)

For this assignment, you were asked to write an essay on the given extract, describing the games played between a father and his children, in which you show how literary features of the passage (such as diction and characterisation) function to show **who has power** in the family and **how** this power is **maintained**. What follows is a discussion on how this assignment might have been approached. You will notice that this discussion also follows the WHAT, WHY, HOW method of writing a critical analysis.

Firstly, your essay should have begun with an **introduction**, which should signal the purpose of the essay to your reader. For example:

The given extract describes the games played between a father and his children. In this essay, I will be analysing the given passage in order to determine how the games played reflect who has power in the family and how power is maintained. **(Note that this introduction very basically rephrases the assignment question in order to show an understanding of what the question asks and WHAT the passage is about. It also briefly addresses the question of WHY the text has been written, which is to explore the theme of power. You do not have to rephrase the assignment question to do this as long as you similarly signal in a succinct way what your essay aims to accomplish in line with the assignment instructions).**

You would then have needed to read through the passage very carefully in your planning stage, working through each line, to determine what is pertinent to your discussion, in other words HOW the passage develops the theme of power. The ideas you glean in this way will provide the substance to the **body** of your essay.

Reading through the passage carefully, you should have considered very carefully what the games played in the family have to do with power. You have been told that these games **reflect** the way that power is structured in the family, meaning that the way in which the games are described reveals this. Therefore the first question you could have asked is: how are these games described?

Below follows a discussion on HOW the extract develops themes; the substance derived from this discussion is one example of what belongs in the **body** of an essay for this assignment:

Note: I have underlined the linking words and phrases that give the ideas below logic and cohesion, and the phrases which highlight that analysis is taking place. You should not underline these words in your essay, but please note the importance of these phrases in showing how ideas are linked and how the passage is not simply being paraphrased.)

Notice the **diction** used to describe the games; the games are referred to as 'their perilous play' and we are told that watching these games, 'even the mother would be afraid'. These are indications of undercurrents of danger in the games, though what the danger consists in is something that is not specified. It is enough to note that there is a force in the family with such power over the other family members that it can only be challenged at the risk of 'peril'. The mother's fear is one indication of this, and also shows that the character of the mother is not the family member who has power over the others. That it is the father who wields power in the family is evident in the fear of the mother and in the emphasis on the powerlessness of the children as they play the games. Imagery and diction suggest that both the children and the mother are powerless, as I show below.

The father's movement is described as prowling; we are told he 'prowled on tiptoe towards them'. The image suggested in the diction used here is predatory, as if the father were preying on his own children rather than simply playing with them. Furthermore, adjectives used for the children as they play, such as 'frail' and 'bony', suggest their powerlessness by emphasising physical weakness, and these contrast with the adjectives used for the father, such as 'determined', 'muscular' and 'large'. The image of the father conjured by the word 'loomed' is of an object of size and power that dwarfs that which it looms over, and this emphasises the power of the father over the children. Therefore, regarding the relationship between the father and the children, it can be said that power is maintained over the children through physical strength and size, but the way power is maintained over the mother is more complicated.

The 'fear' mentioned at the beginning of the passage already signals the fear the mother has for her husband, not for herself, but on behalf of her children. Yet early images and diction associated with the mother already give indications of the origin of her own powerlessness to act against her husband. The images are of her reading a book and lying down in the sun; these are images of non-activity and leisure. Her heart 'sinks' with fear to see the children threatened; fear does not enable a rise to activity, but a 'sinking'. The significance of these images of inactivity are further elaborated upon in the last lines of the passage, where we are told of her 'acceptance' of her husband's 'violence and...strength' for no other reason than that she does not question or challenge the structure of power in the family. The simile of the sun is highly important here, as we are told that the source of her husband's power over her, his wealth and strength, 'had come down upon her as the sun did'; this suggests that the mother accepts the power of the father as being as 'natural' as the sun. Other indications of non-activity and sinking down, as in the words 'she seemed sunken under her husband' and 'she lay at the side of the swimming bath' suggest the mother's complacency. In other words, the author suggests that power is maintained on the one hand through violence, strength and economic status ('wealth') and on the other hand through the unwillingness of the mother to challenge his power because it is accepted as natural, despite being 'perilous', 'predatory', and violent.

Your **conclusion** should then sum up the main points of your argument, without introducing new information, as follows:

The language in the passage thus reveals that the father maintains power over his wife and children through his violence, size, and wealth, and that the physical frailty of the children and the complacency of the mother further entrench this power structure. The negative connotations of this structure are suggested in the words used in connection with the games, such as 'perilous', 'prowling' and 'fear', suggesting criticism of this structure.

TOTAL: 100

Regards

F. Ismail

QUESTION 3: DRAMA

The assignment consisted of **THREE** questions. You were required to answer either Question 1, Question 2 or Question 3. If you had chosen Question 3, you would have been required to answer a question on Drama.

In Athol Fugard's play, *Boesman and Lena* (2000), a destitute Coloured couple battles hardship in apartheid South Africa. The opening scene of the play presents Boesman and Lena walking to find new dwellings after having been evacuated from their shanty town dwelling by Afrikaners. Boesman walks fast but stops to wait for Lena who eventually catches up with him. While they sit to rest, Lena begins to scold Boesman and to lament about their predicament.

[*She looks at Boesman*]

Why did you walk so hard? In a hurry to get here? 'Here', Boesman! What's here? This ... [*the mud between her fingers*] ... and tomorrow. And that will be like this! *Vrot!* This piece of world is rotten. Put down your foot and you're in it up to the knee.

That last *skof* was hard. Against the wind. I thought you were never going to stop. Heavier and heavier. Every step. This afternoon heavier than this morning. This time heavier than last time. And there's other times coming. '*Vat jou goed en trek!* Whiteman says *Voetsek!*' *Eina!*

[*Boesman is watching her with undisguised animosity and disgust.*]

Remember the old times? Quick march! Even run ... [*a little laugh*] ... when they chased us. Don't make trouble for us here, Boesman. I can't run anymore.

Quiet, hey! Let's have a *dop*.

[*Lena registers Boesman's hard stare. She studies him in return.*]

You're the hell-in. don't look at me, *ou ding*. Blame the whiteman. Bulldozer!

Another laugh.]

Analyse the characters' speech and actions in terms of how they contribute to the dramatic nature of the dialogue. Include in your analysis the effect of tone, humour and sarcasm in conveying an atmosphere of tension. Write in essay format and organise your ideas logically.

(Fugard, Athol. 2000. *Port Elizabeth Plays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 194.)

Thank you choosing drama for your Assignment 02. I hope you enjoyed the experience of writing on a dramatic text. Well done if you earned a pass mark. If you did not, I encourage you to pay greater attention to the information in this tutorial feedback letter. Whether you passed or failed this assignment, this feedback will assist you to prepare for the exams. So read it carefully and note where you made mistakes and how you can fix them.

The assignment task required you to analyse the extract from Athol Fugard's play, *Boesman and Lena*. You were given the context of the extract, which should have guided you in writing a proper introduction. A proper introduction should give an overview of what the extract is about and what your essay will focus on. Your essay should have focused on the dramatic nature of the "dialogue" between Lena and Boesman. I will explain later why it is still a dialogue even though only Lena does the talking. To explain the extract as a dramatic dialogue, you had to look at two important dramatic elements: (1) the character's speech; and (2) the characters' actions. In your discussion of both speech and actions, you also had to explain how stylistic features such as tone, humour and sarcasm contribute in illuminating the tensed relationship between the characters. Your essay had to be logically presented, with clear arguments around the assignment task.

To begin with, it is important for us to re-state what a dramatic dialogue is. Without understanding the meaning of this term, you would not have been able to give an adequate answer to the question. As explained in your study guide, “dramatic dialogue involves an interaction between characters and shows the relationships between them” (Levey *et al*, 2013: 66). This means that in a play, what two characters say to each other and do on stage is critical to defining the relationship between them. This relationship can be cordial or hostile, loving or hateful, etc. To determine what type of relationship is at play, you need to pay close attention to the kind of language the characters use when talking to each other. Remember that language is not just about speech; it also includes gesture or body language. This is where the characters’ actions towards one another also become crucially important in conveying how they feel about each other. Having understood these important matters, let us now consider some important arguments you should have included in your essay. I am going to outline them below in numerical order so that you can easily understand them. This does not mean that in an exam you should number your arguments. As often instructed, you must write in paragraphs, with each paragraph having a clear argument and also linked to the rest of the essay.

1. Lena’s idiolect contributes to the dramatic nature of the dialogue in that it tells the reader the degree of her displeasure with Boesman for making her walk very fast as they escape the wrath of the white man. As explained in your study guide, an idiolect refers to the distinctive features of a person’s speech (Levey *et al*, 2013: 66). To express her anger with Boesman, Lena uses several questions, exclamations and action words. For example, when she says to Boesman: “Why did you walk so hard? In a hurry to get here? ‘Here’, Boesman! What’s here?” These speech markers indicate that although she and Boesman are a couple, Boesman is always taking the lead and does not really care about how Lena feels about things. Lena’s questions and exclamations convey deep resentment for Boesman’s domineering and uncaring attitude towards her. However, the tone of her voice suggests a mockery of Boesman, as she implies that all that speed was just to get ‘here’ – a place where there is nothing but a muddy swamp of land. The stage direction indicates that she points to the mud between her fingers. This is a sarcastic gesture by which she indirectly points out Boesman’s stupidity and lack of a better plan to improve their lives. Already we begin to see the tension rising between these two characters as Lena’s anger propels her to say and do things that Boesman will likely not find funny.
2. Lena’s speech is characterised by a mixture of English and Afrikaans words. She constantly code-switches from English to Afrikaans, which suggests that although she uses English, Afrikaans is her first language. In the dialogue, she resorts to Afrikaans to express her dissatisfaction with her present predicament. For instance, she says “*Vrot!* This piece of world is rotten. Put down your foot and you’re in it up to the knee”. The word “vrot” is an Afrikaans word for “rot”. By referring to what she considers as the rot in the world in both Afrikaans and English, Lena doubly emphasizes the injustices she and Boesman have suffered as a result of being racially classified as non-white in apartheid South Africa. But, Lena’s anger is directed not only at the system which discriminates against her on the basis of race but also at Boesman who fails to understand her need for rest. She states with a great deal of disillusionment:

That last *skof* was hard. Against the wind. I thought you were never going to stop. Heavier and heavier. Every step. This afternoon heavier than this morning. This time heavier than last time. And there’s other times coming. ‘*Vat jou goed en trek!* Whiteman says *Voetsek!* *Eina!*

Here again, she uses Afrikaans to express her suffering. The white man's cruelty has turned them into nomads, constantly on the move in search of shelter. When the white man says "Vat jou goed en trek" (Take your stuff and move), they have no option but to obey him. He even uses the word, "Voetsek", when addressing them, which further dehumanizes them. Lena quotes the white man by using his own language, and this adds dramatic effect to the dialogue because it highlights the unequal relationship between whites and non-whites in apartheid South Africa. The white man, although not present on stage, becomes an (off-stage) character in the play through whose inhumanity Lena and Boesman now experience a strained relationship.

3. Lena's act of laughing in the course of narrating her sad story also contributes to the dramatic nature of the dialogue because it is a sarcastic laugh aimed at poking fun at Boesman for cowering under the might of the white man. For example, she laughs when she reminisces how they were chased away from their shack:

Remember the old times? Quick march! Even run ... [*a little laugh*] ... when they chased us. Don't make trouble for us here, Boesman. I can't run anymore.

This kind of humour is called sadistic humour, for Lena is not laughing because the situation was funny; she is rather laughing out of frustration with a life that has no stability. For this, she blames both the white man and Boesman. Thus, she tells Boesman "Don't make trouble for us here...I can't run anymore".

4. Boesman also contributes to the dramatic nature of the dialogue by his actions. It is interesting to note that in this dialogue, only Lena uses speech to convey her thoughts. Boesman speaks using his body, his eyes mainly. When Lena recalls how the white man chased them away, Boesman does not say a word to counter her story. He just watches her with "undisguised animosity and disgust". The act of watching her is his way of keeping control of her activities, almost like keeping her under his strict surveillance, lest she does something "stupid". The animosity and disgust in his look may suggest that he disagrees with her version of the story or the style in which she tells it. The fact Boesman chooses not to respond to anything she says suggests his sense of masculine superiority, not considering her worthy of having a conversation with. Lena is however not passive to his reactions: she "registers Boesman's hard stare" and "studies him in return". These are bold acts which symbolise her subtle resistance to Boesman's domination. It is significant that while the two of them are struggling to overcome their victimization by apartheid's discriminatory practices, Lena is fighting her own battle to resist male chauvinism and its oppressive mechanisms. Each character is therefore subjected to oppression, except that Lena's is a double oppression (from apartheid and from Boesman).
5. To bring it all together, Lena and Boesman's speech and actions in this extract reveal not only the tension in their relationship as woman and man but also the tension in their relationship with the white man who represents the apartheid system. The tone, humour and sarcasm in the dramatic dialogue work effectively to convey these two levels of tension.

Remember that when you write an essay on drama, you must use the appropriate academic register in order to adequately convince your reader of your groundedness in the genre. Also always consult your study guide for information about the relevant aspect of drama you are dealing with e.g. for this assignment you had to read Unit Five of the study guide which explains dramatic dialogue. Doing research (and I do not mean a Google search) will also help you to understand the topic you are working on. However, do not go and just copy information off internet sites and submit, as this will constitute plagiarism and you will earn a fail or a 0%. Rather use the insights you have gathered to steer you in the right direction in putting together an independent response to the assignment task.

TOTAL: 100

I hope this feedback will help you in your exam preparation.

Best wishes

Naomi Nkealah