



## Heteroglossia in G.H. Musengezi's *The Honourable MP* (1984)

Nyasha Mboti and Cuthbeth Tagwirei

### Abstract

This article illustrates how heteroglossia functions in G.H. Musengezi's (1984) satirical play, *The Honourable MP*. Heteroglossia describes the coexistence, as well as the clashing, of distinct voices within a text. It can be shown that while the playwright has a distinct (and seemingly dominant) voice operating in the play – expressed mainly via the sets of characters he creates and the roles he creates for them, as well as through the play's general *mise en scène* – there are other voices in the play as well, operating *in spite* of the playwright's wishes. The 'other' voices specifically function through *exceeding* the playwright's, simultaneously confirming and contradicting the central message of the play. It is not what the writer says in the end that is important, but what is made out of what is left after the writer has had his/her say. Meaning finally resides in the surpluses of the text. Audiences ultimately hear what they hear, what they think they hear, and what they want to hear. The ear, rather than the voice, is finally transcendent.

**Keywords:** Bakhtin, carnival, ear, G.H. Musengezi, hearing loss, heteroglossia, *The Honourable MP*

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