

Mechanisms in Harold Pinter's The Caretaker

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Abstract - Harold Pinter has explored human subjectivity and the process of its development especially in the domain of language in his play *The Caretaker*. He has used the dramatic language in the traditional sense. He chose to capture everyday speech and has rendered an authentic reality of life through his overturned use of language. As in real life, he has focused on the vocal elements such as silence, pause, and repetition and has used them in the statements. The paper focuses on these statements and discusses the concepts of psychosis or neurosis of the characters in their conversation with others wittily.

Keywords: Dramatic, language, silences and pauses, psychosis, Pinter

I. INTRODUCTION

Harold Pinter was a well-known Nobel Prize-winning English playwright, screenwriter, director and actor. Born in 1930 in Hackney, East End of London, he was brought up in a working class Jewish family. His family was disrupted by war and his father worked very hard as a tailor to support his family. He grew up in a working-class neighborhood. At that time, like all the children in England, Pinter witnessed the World War II. Thus he learned living with inevitable terror, a theme which appears in much of his work. During the second World War, Pinter had a bitter experience of being evacuated from London to Cornwall for safety of children. After returning to London, he studied in Hackney Downs Grammar School. In the following years, he attended the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

In 1948, Pinter had to face the military draft. He declared that he was a conscientious objector because he had witnessed war and saw it as a great evil, which dominated Pinter's mind and life. These experiences of his childhood followed by his removal from his family for the fear of Nazi air raids intensified the feeling of insecurity, which remained with Pinter till his death in December 2008. All such experiences and images of war became the everlasting motifs and obsession of his drama.

Pinter considered human existence in terms of purposelessness, nothingness, suspended sense, lack of meaning, and the challenge to one's identity. One of his well-known style led to the adoption of the term 'Pinteresque', commonly used to describe dark threatening situations in which people become losses of their own internal feelings, desires and guilt, even though their lives seem superficially normal. His later plays forced the audiences to understand the darkest realities of life and compelled the audience to participate in the conflict

between torture and the tortured, which is a familiar facet of Pinter's dramaturgy.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pinter's works have been associated with many dramatic forms such as comedy of menace, dark comedy, and theatre of the absurd, the *avant-garde* and supra-realistic drama. This may be, to some extent, true because critics convincingly refer to some aspects related to those forms. Critics have focused on the most important technical components of his drama such as: dynamics of language, silences, and pauses, various characteristics of his dialogues, non-verbal communication, and sub-textual overtones. Some critics have analysed his plays and characters some sociological, cultural and historical perspectives. Several critics have discussed Freudian aspects of Pinter's characters. A few critics have dealt with the concepts of power, dominance and subservience sporadically. For example, Prentice (2000) has explored the theme of power struggle and the relationship between the dominant and the subservient in Pinter. Whether they are or scorn Pinter, however, finds it to be a mistake to get too much involved in what critics say. The reason is as Thompson (1961) states, critics are not able to see a play "as it is by itself, distinctly and simply".

Begley (2005) asserts that "Pinter perplexes crystal-clear distinctions between the modern and post-modern and that Pinter combines these two schools of thoughts". Watt (1998) calls the playwright a post-modernist and links his drama to post-modernist mode. He considers Pinter to be "problematically related to high modernism as to be the opposite of the modes associated with high culture". Quigley (2001) states that Pinter's 'voice' is successively the one used by an avant-garde artist, the high modernist, and the post-modernist (ed. Raby 2001). While condemning critics of supplying 'meaning', Almansi and Henderson (1983) claim that Pinter is a master of 'deception'. As a complex playwright, therefore, Pinter requires serious critical studies. Peacock (1997) cites Pinter saying that "Politicians don't interest me. It horrifies me," but his later drama, speeches and interviews uncover his political stance. Grimes (2005) considers Miller's *Broken Glass*, written in 1994, to be an inter-text of Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes* (1996). Both plays display cursory plot descriptions, and Grimes (2005) remarks, both attempt "to deal unmistakably with the role of the Holocaust and its implications for individual conscience and the human capacity for good and evil".

III. PINTER USES OF LANGUAGE

Harold Pinter's players are actively one of the most mysterious elements. All thinkers like that the subject throughout history concur that it is also the most important. Indeed, Drama is action which is derived from Greek "to do", "to act". The dramatic art performed by characters on a stage before an audience, after that only the modes of production and a collective form of reception. The dramatic texts, is like that other form of literature, is directly influenced by this collaborative production and collective reception. From the beginning itself every one of writers or practitioners should be returned to the plumb-line of Aristotle's writings on the drama. He has defined tragedy as 'an imitation of action', and left it to posterity to work out exactly what he meant. Every one of the playwright are enacting their work or context in front of the audience. The audience gave some suggestions or their opinion of the whole curve of its action, should parallel some fundamental rhythm or movement of nature. The action of a good play has often been compared to another playwright and to making a wave towards the sea shore: small shot at first, swelling higher and higher, with a steady rising and falling movement, at its highest peak breaking and crashing on the shore, then the sudden final falling away. In Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1957), the party was started all are acting joylessly, the young man was beating his drum very seriously and he finally knew that, the people are going to be fighting with me. This is what he knows; he stopped his drum beat, when the lights go off. The dark situation the two gentlemen were fighting with the young man and finally an elderly lady entered the room. They were stopped the fighting. Every human being is normally breathing and beating his heart; the cycle of the seasons; of a human life; from the single day the act of coitus; they are all valid comparisons. In another way of art from the process can be realized in the great symphony.

Pinter's one of the wittily and absurd play *The Caretaker* (1960), the play has begun to think and he can arrange, the characters or dialogue. He may have vague yet insistent general ideas of what he wants the play to be, and its action grown from that. The expanding action, the climatic action, combined possibly with a reversal, where the action was round to its opposite, the falling action and resolution, will be mapped out before a word of a play is written.

IV. DRIVER OF THE PLAY

In many plays the central character striving for his objective is the one who guns the action forward. But this is not always the case, and someone must be there to do it. There is a toy called Action Man, and in a sense every good play has its action man. At each stage, a play needs a driver, a galvanized, an activator, a doer, a powerful will, someone who makes things happen.

V. MENACE, SILENCES AND PAUSES

A well-known characteristic of Pinter's dramatic writing, and another perpetrator of menace, is the infamous 'Pinter

pause'. Its most common incarnations are as the simple indication 'pause', the more significant 'silence' and the less obvious three trail dots all slipped into scripts at appropriate moments. To Pinter's mind, their presence is a matter of common sense and they are 'not formal conveniences or stresses but part of the body of the action'. He states that if actors play his scenes appropriately 'they will find that a pause or whatever the hell it is- is inevitable'. The writer has sought to dismiss the critical emphasis that has been placed upon these distinguishing features of his drama:

The Pause is a pause because of what has just happened in the minds and guts of the characters (...) And a silence equally means that something has happened to create the impossibility of anyone speaking for a certain amount of time until they can recover from whatever happened before that silence. At face value, then, these pauses, short pause, silences and trail dots are simply codes for actors and their directors, suggested pointers to the rhythm of each scene. They add weight to a scene and their very conspicuous presence in the script acts as a form of score, providing a suggested tempo at which each scene might be played. Consider, for example, the density of pauses following the entrance of Aston in the second act of *The Caretaker*. During the previous five minutes of the action, Mick is physically overpowering Davies and has persistently browbeaten him with a barrage of questions and accusations. Included in this verbal assault are there brief speeches characterized by short, staccato sentences and clauses piled one on top of the other in quick, uninterrupted succession. Then, Aston walks casually in with Davies's recovered bag:
Silence.

A drip sounds in the bucket. They all look up.
Silence.

Mick: You still got that leak

Aston: Yes

Pause

It's coming from the roof.

Mick: From the roof, eh?

Aston: Yes

Pause

I'll have to tar it over.

Mick: You're going to tar it over?

Aston: Yes

Mick: What?

Aston: The cracks.

Pause.

Mick: You'll be tarring over the cracks in the roof.

Aston: Yes.

Pause. (Pinter, 1960)

The following verse of menace that has been built up in the scene between Mick and Davies is shattered abruptly in a silence, reduced and released by the comic effect of the three characters visually responding in unison to the drip and laid to rest by a series of pauses. But these short gaps in the slow, repetitive and meaningless dialogue between the

two siblings not only participate in indicating to the audience something about the nature of Mick and Aston's relationship, they also announce the beginning of the next movement in the drama something the more discerning directors will want to pursue.

Suspense can be targeted word by word. A new investigator tries to help get a perishing man's final words, to ensure that he'll name his murderer. An incredible statesman, right now senile, struggling to acquire by using a conversation in the house regarding commons: every term, every pause enhances the pain and also tension in the situation. The good writer was given a lot of suspense, since he strikes the audience with a shocking selection of terminals. A new character conversation with another little by little and also considerably, although along with astounding psychological detail, is very suspenseful. Albee is often a grasp the following. Although a character doesn't need to get state to have viewers hanging upon each and every term. Within Pinter's *The Caretaker*, Aston, within his lengthy conversation at the conclusion in the minute react, details exactly how they has been artificially granted electrical surprise remedy inside a medical center. He is not able to phrase the consequence upon his brain. Although his initiatives take action hold the theatre in total silence.

VI. DRAMATIC AMBIGUITY

Dramatic ambiguity inside plotting casts its own unique spell. In Harold Pinter's play the play *The Collection*; does Stella sleep with Bill in Leeds? They might have got, or even they will often have got simply spoke of that. Their spouses usually are determined to learn the response, nevertheless the participate in never ever gives that. It is left start. In the very same author's *Old Times* Deeley as well as his wife's Anna to own his spouse as a result of appreciated recollections with their early existence with each other. Although does those situations genuinely transpire? When they try and cover, and in many cases gain access to every other's recollections, so when many years have got past, the past gets to be available to very different interpretations. This uncertainty enhances the tension. An author's ambivalence to his person as may have strong stunning effects, since could his ambivalence to their own professed idea. Brecht imposed a good iron Marxist willpower in his thrashing anarchic character. This specific stress designed a new simple ambiguity inside his plays that actually leaves them available to diverse parts. Certainly, condition Communism has not believed comfortable using them. Although their own power in the theatre is undeniable.

Pinter's dramatic dialogue is not however confined to the spoken word. What is not said is just as important as what is, often more so. The loaded pause, the action going on within the silence, has considerable dramatic force. Dramatic dialogues come down to a struggle for dominance, in which silence can be used as a sword or a shield. A pause in a dialogue by Harold Pinter can be full of emotional violence. But although Pinter is a brilliant exponent of it, he did not invent the highly-charged pause. It has always been

part of the tension of dramatic dialogue, and it can have many resonances. Skillful writing and acting will enable an audience practically to see thoughts, especially on television. They become almost tangible. You can watch, say, a complete mental reevaluation; a growing towards, a falling away; someone going far away in space or time, and then returning and all between the lines. Once again this constitutes an action.

VII. MECHANISMS OF PSYCHOSIS OR NEUROSIS

Pinter was one among the Exponents of psychoanalytic approaches to the dramatic art. He implemented these ideas in *The Caretaker*; who has narrates the dilemma of suppressed by the modern man, which was first performed at the Arts Theatres Club. In this play he portrait the psychosis, identity, overturned use of language. He was written many plays; most of his play used male characters only. In this play there are three acts and three male characters. The male character only moved to the next session or another level. *The Caretaker*, Aston moved into the next level. Pinter shows the inner psyche of Davies. He has explored and good ideas to bring into the human mind. He focuses on his play the problem of a middle-class man. He caught the slight threat of psychological disturbance of human beings, especially his lies in the exploration of the inner world of the human psyche and overturned the language. He explained very deeply into the human ideas on psychological recesses of an individual overturned quest for life itself, trying, thus to draw the meaning and reason behind the thinking prototype of an individual. He himself deep into the psychosis of the characters and portrays them with amazing realism.

Pinter has planned to control characters mind and their activities but their mind is loitering here and there and that is not sat in appropriate place. Pinter psychoanalytic approach explores how subjectivity is formed in the psyches of those watching via screen representations. According to Lapsley and Westlake delineate two separate phases in the use of psychoanalysis in the cinema. The first, which they call the structuralist phase, is concerned with the mirror stage; the second places emphasis upon fantasy and desire and is denoted as the poststructuralist phase (Lepsley 1988:78). Andrew considers a psychoanalytic approach to be a theoretical advance on structuralism because it shifts the emphasis from how objects are reproduced in cinema to the production of subjects: Only by shifting the discourse to another plane and invoking another system could modern theory develop. Questions about the connections cinema maintains with reality and art. It subsumed under the consideration of cinema's rapport with the spectator. A new faculty, the unconscious, instantly became a necessary part of any overarching film theory, and a new discourse, psychoanalysis, was called upon to explain what before had been of little consequence, the fact and the force of desire" (Andrew 1984:134).

The caretaker of Mick is an elderly person as a white skin. Aston and Davies are also treated as a caretaker. Pinter's

portrayal of Mick is of an intruder, and the conqueror in the guise of Aston and Davies is no one else but society. Mick struggles hard to avoid his ill-treatment but unfortunately he is unable to avoid his destiny. Society wanted him to be a conformist, so it shattered his identity as well as his individuality when he refused to be so. The drive to surveillance “proceeds towards a centralized individuation’ whose main support and instrument is documentation ‘and a continuous punitive action on potential behavior that behind the body itself, projects something like a psyche” (Focault 2006).

These psychoanalytic methods are already encouraging throughout examining the most popular and also formless potential fight regarding authors and also literary concepts. Harold Pinter offers flawlessly taken care of your complex tracts regarding the human being's psyche throughout they enjoy this Caretaker. This enjoy can be an education within the psyche of people whom drop the power for realistic concern about staying suffering from painful experiences. This Caretaker is really enjoying throughout the three acts with three characters, Mick, Aston and also Davies. Mick and also Aston are generally siblings. Mick, that's the younger from the couple, is in their delayed twenties, though Aston is in their beginning thirties. The two siblings manage to be living there regularly; will not take virtually any attention regarding the area. At the start Aston brings Davies, any gray persona, in the space. Davies offers lost not merely their home but their identity. Davies can be an old man, primary any despondent, lonesome life. He has simply no wife young children or property while he shows up before that start from the enjoy the Caretaker. They received the responsibility of any caretaker although he is not able. He is afraid regarding blacks, the bathroom, addressing the door, breezes, trying to keep the window unlock at night, as well as the other locations making, afraid perhaps to be able to acknowledge their panic from the entire world, he makes unreal testimonies regarding the impossibility regarding going through this without generating what the exact amounts to your pilgrimage to be able to Sidcup, an outing he confirms just about every reason for taking his time. Davies doubts their electric powered health and also gas range.

Pinter constructs an in depth perspective from the agitation along with the problems of the middle-class male. As well as they have wedged the particular modest posts of the emotional turmoil of individuals, in particular he lies in the particular search from the interior planet of the human psyche and feeling. They explore the particular emotional recesses of a personal journey of lifetime themselves, seeking, so in order to sketch the meaning and function driving the particular considering style of human being. Pinter is completely to handle the particular delicate tracts of the human psyche in the participate in *The Caretaker* is usually a coaching in the psyche of people exactly who get rid of the ability intended for usual thing to consider about being afflicted by disturbing experiences.

Pinter provides suitably provided a delicate portrayal of Davies annoyance that makes the particular participate in an appealing emotional examine from the protagonist's neurotic doubts and aching doubts. Freud and the supporters, on the other hand, be connected repressed developments usually are wanting of the person towards aspiration which, in Davies' circumstance, symbolizes the preoccupation using and haunting fear of demise. Along with his astonished creativeness and neurotic head, he commences to a lot of terrifying images via tenuously matching things immediately after being persuaded that they have been cornered in the electric fireplace and burning up from the propane natural stone and there seemed to be simply no option of Whim. The mismatched temperaments of Davies and lack of communication between people that makes you feel split up. With the word alienation recently referred to a number of next to emotional condition, in Davies circumstance it is. Pinter used his play *The Caretaker* there are three acts and three characters. Mick and Aston are siblings and the other man Davies. Davies is working as a room cleaner. Aston is a young gentleman. He is the only person has moved in this play the next level. Davies his understood characteristics that are rescued by Aston from being compacted by his fellow worker at his working place due to his refusal of taking the rubbish bucket out. Aston brought the old homeless and penniless Davies to his untidy room full of useless items, ranging from paint buckets, screws, a shopping trolley, and planks of wood, screws, and an old broken electric toaster to a Buddha statue on the gas stove.

Even though he had been subjected to an electro-shock treatment method on different people's betrayal associated with him this is Aston's personal decryption, as well as even though he implies that he does not have confidence in individuals, he is able to really feel warmth for Davies. As being a mother or perhaps a benevolent figure, Aston tries to offer that peevish, persistent previous male along with anything he wants or even may need. Providing Davies to help their shrine Aston first presents cigarettes, and then a bed, shoes and boots, income, smoking jacket, and then the job of your caretaker. Davies's responses to any or all these kinds of presents appear like that of your baby: He welcomes cigarettes for their water line which he certainly not smokes however prefers to pretend to help smoking.

Aston and Davies entered the room Aston opened the cigarette packet and take one and he starts smoking. He asked to Davies to take one but Davies answered, and who has used to smoke in a small pipe. He took a cigarette and broke it put onto the pipe and he continuous to his job. After that he complains about the bed because of a series of reasons: First, it is draughty there. Second, there is a gas stove which frightens him: in the bedroom next side the broke stove was dumped it might fall upon him. He raised many questions and moved to the next level of the play. Davies is also good responses to the young man. Mostly he called Aston “mister” this is the great ideas Pinter used in this play. Pinter has portrayed the old gentleman psychology in many ways. He was taking care of the siblings and

changes their activities. First of all Davies wants to change beds with Aston. However, Davies accepts money and a smoking jacket without any discontent. As for the last offer, the position of caretaker intimidates Davies because he has changed his name to Jenkins and now he is frightened that he may be caught and put into prison if he answers those doorbells: they might be looking for him. Unlike Aston, Mick, the younger brother, never shares his brother's humane attitude towards this rootless tramp, which is unwilling to answer even the simplest of his questions:

Aston: Welsh, are you?

Davies: Eh?

Aston: Your Welsh?

Pause.

Davies: Well, I have been around, you know... what I mean... I been about...

Aston: Where were you born then?

Davies: (darkly). What do you mean?

Aston: Where were you born?

Davies: I was...uh oh, it's a bit hard, like, to set your mind back...see what I mean...going back...a good way...lose a bit of track, like...you know... (Pinter 1960:23)

The bankruptcy that Pinter's characters experience is their oscillating either between the three Orders or being trapped within one Order such as the Imaginary, and thus suffering from psychical disunion: neurosis or psychosis. The neurosis phenomena, from which nearly all of Pinter's characters suffer, can be in different forms such as obsessions as is seen in the case of Aston and Davies, both of whom show the symptoms of "inversion, isolation, reduplication, cancellation and displacement" (Lacan 1977: 5). On the other hand, if subjects follow the true path, then their basic needs will result in a demand and a Desire simultaneously, because while directing his/her demand, the subject splits from his/her imaginary identification and starts demanding. This indicates the entrance into discourse and thus the birth of Desire. At this point there occurs the sense of lack of object which is not separated from Desire. As a result, via demand the infant gets rid of an inarticulated situation and moves towards being a speaking subject. For the neurotics, the problem is centred on repression: Lemaire says that "the neurotic represses his symptom's signified." There is a "loss of symbolic reference of the signifier's constituting the central points of the structure of his complex" (Lacan 1977:227). Thus, internal conflicts occur as a result of repression in neurotics, who may develop some obsessions as in the example of Aston, who collects anything with the idea that they might be useful one day. Aston's junk-filled attic has a place for everything that he thinks valuable. Interestingly, the last thing he intends to buy is a jigsaw that may be handy when he realizes his dream that is, building a shed in the garden. He clings onto an illusion that he will build a shed in the back garden one day. Aston will go to use in this shed for making food preparation. Aston will never realize this illusion although he repeatedly talks about it to Davies. He cannot bring himself to build the shed but he constantly procrastinates on it, which is his way of clinging to life. However, in the end he decides to get rid of Davies since

Davies has turned out to be a trouble maker for him. First and foremost, Aston is obsessed with Davies's groaning in his sleep: This dream element is important because it leads us to the repetition compulsion. Repetition compulsion causes the traumatic neurosis to repeat the distressing situation of his/her experience in the dream. As for Davies's dreams, he repeats his painful emotions in his dream by groaning. This disturbs Aston, who probably remembers his own traumatic experience at the hospital. The second disturbance caused by Davies is his insults about Aston's brain treatment. For Davies it is not a hospital but a nuthouse. Davies's last insult comes when he calls Aston's dream shed stinking.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The *Caretaker* exploits a symbiotic double fear, the outsider's fear of the insider, seen in Davies, the tramp, and the insider's fear of the outsider, seen varyingly in the behavior of Mick and Aston, the two brothers in the West London flat. Davies, by moving in, hopes to gain territory in becoming the dwelling's 'caretaker' yet risks fear of the unknown. The analysis of psychosis and neurosis between him and Mick, the younger brother, is a struggle over axes of power, with each positing an alliance with the 'third man', Aston, incapable of using power because his illness disables him. But the ambiguities of the psychosis deepen in the position of the third man. The third person who has taken his own decision to manipulate others. Here Aston, the persecuted, institutional victim of frontal lobotomy, becomes a source of paranoia in the other two men who hate each other and fear the alliance of the hated other with 'the third man' who they wish to care for. Both wish to be 'caretakers' to ensure the exclusion of the other. Both fear the shifting of alliance.

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