



Silence as Existential Void and Psychological Warfare: A Comparative Study of the Dramatic Pause in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Pinter's *The Homecoming*

Maytham Abdulrazzaq Abbas

General Directorate of Dhiqar Education, Iraq.

Abstract in English

This paper presents the importance of silence as an effective means of expressiveness in 20th -century drama with references to Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter as the innovators of the Theatre of the Absurd. The main aim is to make a comparative study of aesthetics and role of silence in *Waiting for Godot* by Beckett and *Homecoming* by Pinter. Based on theoretical models of theatrical semiotics (especially Martin Esslin), the Theatre of the Absurd (which appeals to Camus and Sartre), and existentialist philosophy (which would be familiar to them), the paper analyzes the usage of communicative voids by both playwrights. This is important because it shows that the dramaturgies of silence used are different: the silence of Beckett is used to articulate metaphysical absurdity, inadequacy of language, solitude of existence, and addresses the silent universe, whereas the silence of Pinter is used to address the aspects of power relations and interpersonal conflict and ambiguity in a tactical pause and subtext. The findings demonstrate that the silence of Beckett is metaphysical and that of Pinter is psychological warfare and social criticism. Both change the lack of

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presence into deep existential utterance, accentuating various aspects of the contemporary human condition, one of the cosmic, one the social, adding to the comprehension of silence as a multi-purpose dramatic agency.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Resonant Silence: The Importance in 20th -century drama. Silence in the Twentieth Century Theatre The world, political, social and aesthetic orders of the twentieth century, existed in two processes changing the perception and use of silence radically. What earlier was virtually recognizable only negatively as a pause or the stopping of speech, silence was a potent but also very subtle and many-sided tool of expression by which to resolve the intricate emotional, psychological and philosophical considerations that could not be simple expressed. Playwrights began to explore the expressiveness of a void, and the meaning of a silence, and the message of non-speech was as significant, or even more so, than that of speech. This shift was symptomatic of more generalized cultural and philosophical processes- to some, there was a feeling that language was not up to the demands of the modern anxiety, and by the end of the influence of existentialist thinking that the same crowd had begun to doubt traditional sources of meaning even as they increasingly sought out what lay below the surface of human interaction. The silence became a blank screen onto which the fears, the alienations, the existential questions of the late 20 th century could project themselves in clashing lines, making audiences uneasy and demanding that they take part in the process, make themselves strain to hear not the words, but the silenced space between them. Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter are the giants of this enquiry into art theatrical silence. These two representatives of the post-World War II movement, which is known as the Theatre of the Absurd, redid the setting of the stage performance by subjecting it to silence and non-verbal communication, putting it in the very center of their technique. Their work was done under the spectre of world war and the destruction of old certainties that their plays grappled with the meaninglessness of human life, the process of meaningful communication and identity in an ever more indifferent universe. Martin Esslin coined the term Theatre of the Absurd and clarified that these authors did

not speak about absurdity, but rather delivered it on stage in unambiguous images and silent nothingness was the] primary bulk in creating these images (quoted in Matosoglu, 2012, p, 80). Despite similar departures (the rejection of realistic presentation and the fascination with existential material), Beckett and Pinter developed very different dramaturgies of silence, both based on their respective philosophical interests and styles of theatre. Their work signified the conclusion of the chance of communication by the destitute of language (Matosoglu, 2012, p.). 80) of a daily conversation broken by intervals, interrupted narrative, and immense silence, indicative of the emptiness of speech and of the complicated hardships that were simmer in the soul behind ordinary intercourse. Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter were both masters of bringing the concept of silence in the theatres; however, their applications of the concept are completely dissimilar, as each conveys the thought, aesthetics, and even soul of their creators. The essay draws a comparative analysis of the aesthetic and mechanism of silence in two masterpieces Beckett *Waiting for Godot* (1953) and Pinter *The Homecoming* (1965). It argues that Beckett uses silence as the main means of expression of metaphysical absurdity as he explores the ineffectiveness of language and the solitude and richness of the human situation in a meaningless and designless cosmos. His periods of withdrawal tend to deal with his battles with this existential emptiness. Comparatively, the silence of Pinter is better organized in social and psychic situations - pauses, tacit dissimilarity are applied to the investigation of power dynamics among the characters and their intra-psychic struggle, the unarticulated fears and underlying antagonism of human associations. His silences serve as tactical devices and explain the complexity and even the brutality of human relationship, which attracts the attention of what Othman (2024) refers to as employing nonverbal communication to describe the emotional and psychological state of his characters (p. 49). Comparing these divergent usages of communicative absence - the metaphysical silence of Beckett and the psychological and strategic silence of Pinter - this essay would like to cast some light on how these two dramatists transform absence into an effective form of existential expression, albeit to explore different aspects of contemporary human being. To explore the various dramaturgies of silence, this paper is divided into three major sections. In Chapter 2, Literature Review, I will give the background of the theoretical framework after which I will take into consideration some of silence in performance studies the Theatre of the Absurd and the existential theories. This will be succeeded by an

examination of some of the main critical standpoints regarding the power of silence in Beckett *Waiting for Godot* and in the case of Pinter *The Homecoming*, revealing some of the new interpretations and the existing scholarly information. The implication on silence shall be addressed in Ch 3 (The Discussion) which shall include a detailed comparative analysis of the plays with close accounts of the scenes, exchanges between characters, voice and silence patterns, in order to illustrate the difference in roles and functions of silence in the two plays. This chapter will also present the findings, the metaphysical placement of the condensation of Beckett, the psychological, and social aspects of the Pinter, and comment on the greater significance of the findings in the understanding of the dramaturgical form and recognition of the existential surrender in contemporary dramaturgy. A conclusion will be then concluded where the main points of the discussion will be summarized, some guesst-work on the future studies can be proposed and finally, the main thesis of the incommensurably different yet equally mighty utilisation of the unspoken will be re-asserted by Beckett and Pinter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Void definition: Theoretical Frameworks. To treat [acting] as approach, not as epiphanous altar-tending, as with other people (Puchner, 2000, p.270), to work with silence, using theory, in a more significant way, an interpretation of the meditative power of silence in the Theatre of the Absurd, in the work of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter should be so placed within the acting and inter-human relationship studies of the theatre, in the former case, and the studies of silence in the latter, as well as philosophies of existentialism. Silence in this dramatic world is not just the lack of sound, but rather a valuable semiotic tool, an intentional form of communication and an indicator of deep philosophical interest in words, meaning and human life.

Theatrical Communication and Semiotics of Silence

2.1.1. The practice of dramatic theory has traditionally dominated the debate in which the dialogue is the chief locus of meaning. However, the 20 th century was the time when the value of the communicative powers of the non-words including the nothingness of silence was significantly increased. Semiotically the silence can serve as an indicator having its basis in the context of the plot construction and its connection to the verbal manifestation. It may refer to uncertainty, thought, suppressed stress, discord, love, life is a cold and uncaring nothingness. The silence in drama, according to Othman (2024), refers to the intentional absence of a conversation, which can convey a meaning that is not necessarily in dialogue, and the silence may take the form of pauses, ellipses, and even complete

silence (p. 52). Scholars like Bert O. States approached the phenomenology of theatrical silence arguing that it is not nothing but a presence that has to be interpreted by the audience. The uncompensated effects of silence are, however, usually left in suspense, depending upon interpretation and inference, and including the viewers in the very manufacture of what they are viewing, in the manufacture of the meaning. Such uncertainty is an indication of the uncertainty and communication failure so often explored by the authors of the absurd. 2.1.2 Absurd and theater: context, concepts. The Theatre of the Absurd (that emerged in Western Europe after the Second World War) marked a new ground in exploration of silence. The theatrical writers of this school, including Beckett, Pinter, Ionesco, and Genet, responded to what they perceived to be the rejection of old values and certainties a response to a post-war world that had had a direct encounter with the Holocaust and the threat of nuclear annihilation. Martin Esslin (1973) in his classical work had defined the movement not based on a system of beliefs, but on a shared artistic technique whose goal was to present the sense of senselessness of human condition and ineffectiveness of the rationalist approach (p. 6). The degradation of language as the tool of dependable communication or truth was a higher concern in the first place. One of the reasons why the language is not valued, as Matosoglu (2012) concludes, is the impossibility of communication, which is brought to bear responsibility under the drama of absurdists (p. 80). Thus, the use of silences, pauses, empty words, repetition, contradictions, puns, irrational, illogical thinking, and lack of coherence, language disintegration are used in signifying communication failure (Matosoglu, 2012, p. 80). The plays do not have traditional plot, lost and isolated characters who have no reason to be lost and isolated, and convoluted, obscure and often meaningless dialogue, which makes the atmosphere where silence is the character of its own, and the depiction of the absurdity and emptiness of life. The Absurd, Anxiety, Language, Intersubjectivity: 2.1.3 Existentialism and Theatre. To a certain degree, existential philosophy is reflected in the Theatre of the Absurd (the major exceptions are Beckett, who did not subscribe to the direct labelling). Existentialist philosophers like Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre develop the main concepts of absurdist drama Ascetic sense in a world with no religious meaning (Camus absurd), the anguish of extreme freedom and responsibility to what one does (or even what one is), the inadequacy of communication and the constant fear that everything human beings say is false (Sartrean bad faith), and a disconnection between self and role, the

radical search to be literally true to oneself. As Esslin put it, Ionesco described the absurd as having no purpose... Without his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental origins, man is disorientated; all his activity became senseless, absurd, useless" (qtd in Matosoglu, 2012, p. 79). In such plays the silence is often the Camusian confrontation between human search of meaning and the cosmic silence of the universe. It is also sometimes a reflection of Sartrean ideas of bad faith, the sufferings of being-for-others, the inherent obliqueness of the consciousness of the other individual. Just as with language corruption, impossibility of language is a general existentialist rejection of the effectiveness of language in both manifesting a veritable experience and erasing the gap between people. Silence, therefore, is theatrical manifestation of existential loneliness, angst, and trouble in communication in a meaningless world.

2.2 Beckett Landscapes of Silence: Literature Criticism of Waiting to Godot.

The playwright who perhaps made us better acquainted with the esthetics of silence is Samuel Beckett. The minimal use of language, lengthy pauses, repetition of action, typify his production, in particular *Waiting for Godot*, and fill one with a feeling of being in a dead end, of existential waiting, and the boundaries to comprehend existence.

2.2.1 Metaphysics of Waiting: Godot and the Missing Middle.

The first silence of *Waiting to Godot* is certainly a critical dogma that no Godot comes. This lack of form gives the entire play its shape which represents a lack of external validation, metaphysical meaning and responses that the main characters, Vladimir and Estragon desperately seek. Their endless waiting can be regarded as a metonymic symbol of human condition trapped between a sense of hope and despair in a world that does not offer any sense of purpose and redemption. The fact that the who and what of Godot remain unknown indicates the overall metaphysical questioning in the play. Critics believe that Beckett uses this main gap, along with the universal interruptions, to emphasize the decay of communication and the life of mankind (Matosoglu, 2012, p. 82). The silence, the silence in question, is a positive, not just a negative, image of a metaphysical nothing.

2.2.2 Nothing to be Done Linguistic Failure and Repetition.

Waiting for Godot does not have any communication and change. It is a round, cyclical, hackneyed, misconception-laden, hypocritical mess, like the rest of us. The characters cannot cease to speak as they are attempting to cram the unused space and fill time, though their words hardly relate to each other and hardly drive things forward. The entropy of language is an amazing witness to the nonsense of the monologue of Lucky. The

frequent directions of stages at the time of silence break these strokes of speech, underlining that words are a weak tool to reveal the inner world of characters, and they cannot transform their circumstances. Matosoglu (2012) notes that these lengthy apologies and silence in *Waiting for Godot* are indirectly caused by the inability of these characters to communicate properly, their loneliness, and the lack of hope that they have (p. 83). The silence is stronger than that interrupted dialogue, a form of misunderstanding of the characters, the uselessness of any effort they can make to give expression to that meaning.

2.2.3 The embodiment of an embodied silence: Pause, gesture, physical stage. The application of silence is also applicable in the physical aspects of the stage in things in Beckett plays. The silences are not the result of improv; they are so carefully penned as to dictate the pace of the conversation and to add sound overage of vacuity between the characters. Non-verbal gestures - the taking off and putting on of hats and boots, the blindly going about, the sudden immobility - take as great a place as dialogue. This bodily manifestation of stillness and inaction is a graphic portrayal of all the strong visual imagery in the play, which as Esslin pronounced, depicts the absurdity of the human conditions in matter of movement and sound. The setting is kept to the bare minimum at the beginning, a country road and a tree, just to make the sense of emptiness and exposure all the greater, when the silence rings in a stark almost abstract landscape.

2.3 The Rooms of Tension by Pinter: The Fit of the Homecoming Scholarship. An example that is sometimes categorised as an Absurdist along with Beckett is Harold Pinter, who also found a varying relationship to silence, but within the context of psychological realistic and social relations. His silences are not so directly metaphysical, and more often they are used as a weapon of power struggles between people, concealing other intentions and creating an ambiance or danger and uncertainty.

2.3.1 Still So Subtle: The Force of the Pause, Subtext, Menace, and Strategy. One of his styles is the Pinter Pause. According to Othman (2024), these silences have a sense and are filled with the unexpressed, pre-conscious, and expressive of the negative (p. 51, quoted in Esslin, 1980). Pinter himself insisted that speech is often just a lie to conceal nakedness (qtd in Othman, 2024, p. 53), i.e. what he means is that what people say is less than what they say nothing about. Critics like Michael Billington emphasize that these pauses are important to creating a feeling of menace and ambiguity (Othman, 2024, p. 50). In the course of *The Homecoming*, there are breaks separating the dialogue, giving tense an opportunity to take its toll and silent

threats or wants to be heard or considered. They are strategic in their nature, in that the characters are able to project power, evade questions or reverse the situation towards their benefit. This is also confirmed by Matosoglu (2012) who stated that pauses made by Pinter are not only silence, but it is an active part of the conversation that carries unspoken message, threat or evasion (p. 86).

2.3.2 Communication as War: Hegemony, Evasion, and Language.

In this world created by Pinter, the words are rather a tool than a tool of connection. Avoidance, non-sequiturs, reversal and indirect conflict are other characteristics of dialogue in *The Homecoming*. Characters are hardly allowed to talk freely, instead they are cross-examined with each other through silence and pauses as much as the words that are said. Efforts are always made to dislike, threaten or evade voice, to close down. In the plays of Pinter, silence that forms a part of the subtext is employed to reveal the real feelings and intentions of the characters that are opposite of the voiced ones, as a tool of asserting power or domination in the relationship (Othman, 2024, p.57) (p.58). The breakdown of communication in this case reveals the power play and the ownership of land that characterizes the family relationship. According to Matosoglu (2012), silence and pauses used in *The Homecoming* serve to produce the effect of tension and ambiguity, in which characters speak in monologues, use language (a) as a weapon and (b) as a shield (p. 87).

2.3.3 Silence and Social Critique: Family, Gender and Class.

Although the silences Beckett uses are often more about the existential issues of everyone, *The Homecoming* setting of North London which is predominantly working-class has a great impact on Pinter and his sense of silence. To illustrate, silence in the play and failure to communicate the truths about patriarchy, misogyny, hatred among members of the family, and possession can be observed through silence and lack of communication. Critics have alluded that the specific form of silence that Ruth uses is one of how she can assert some power and agency within a male dominated home. Silence in *The Homecoming* is not only a psychological weapon of a person but also the device to criticize violence and dysfunction of silences both in the family and social paradigms.

Chapter 2.4 Bridging the Silence Comparative Perspectives and Critical Gaps.

Comparative analyses highlighting the contrast between the silence of Beckett and Pinter exist in all situations. According to Matosoglu, silence is a very important dramatic device employed by both Beckett and Pinter, but in the cases of Beckett, silence usually leads to a metaphysical gap, and in the case of Pinter, silence is employed to seek the meaning and power of human interaction. This is also

arguably the implication of Othman in discussing the silences of Pinter as apparently rendered in social and psychological realism as opposed to the frequently metaphysical abstraction of Beckett silences. Nevertheless, both the dramatists have transfigured the tradition - creating silence as a negativity into a Catholic core and this is one of the most intricate fields in this paper. cogent research and novel frameworks have demonstrated rancid exploring sectors. Although the literature covering both dramatists on each of them is extensive, the research focus can be a general question of their works and times and delve into the differences in details. Efficiency of selection design criticism of creations of the performances also compels an affluent area. Chapter 3: Discussion: Voicing the Void - Comparative Analysis. This chapter offers a comparative study of *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett and *The Homecoming* by Harold Pinter in regard to how each writer has made a unique application of silence and the modes of communication vacuity as existential modes of presentation. Continued on the theoretical frameworks and critical approaches that have been introduced in the literature review, the current discussion challenges some textual evidences in both plays to show how silence works differently; articulating metaphysical meaninglessness in Beckett, and to indicate psychological conflict and power relations in Pinter. What does it feel like to be an antimatter? <|human|>3.1 The Echoic Experience of the Antimatter: On Mourning and Echo (pp. 141-155). *Waiting of Godot the Play of Metaphysical Waiting* (pp. 156-177 4). Silence in *Waiting to Godot* is not a lack, on the contrary, it is a potent entity that pervades the structure of the play, its words, and its message. It is a great articulation of the metaphysical nonsense Beckett explores, the clash between the meaning-seeking of man and the noticeable apathy or silence of the cosmos. This silence can be clearly seen in the massive emptiness of the play, the break down of the language and the constant stress on the existential isolation. 3.1.1. Scene Analysis: Dialogue and Existential Pause Decomposition. An example of uselessness of language in the play is the dialogue between Vladimir and Estragon. Their conversations are discursively repetitive and circular, full of non-sequitur and misunderstanding. They speak in order to pass the time, to escape the silence but their utterances rarely become structures of meaning, or forms of connection, or acts. Imagine how they have talked and talked about going: "Estragon: Well, shall we go? / Vladimir: Yes, let's go. / (They do not move)." This is what is meant by repetition, which is nothing and nothingness, and the silence afterwards, which emphasizes the barrenness of their dialogue and the

stasis of their position. This lack of language is further highlighted by the carefully created hesitations and pauses, the silences in the play. Those are not naturalistic drags but constructed structural rhythms which underline the distance between understanding, the gravity and the seriousness of the existential horror unmentioned. The dissolution of language, the absence which is more powerful than the acting out which has brought it about, is the climax of Lucky and his recitation, a flow of broken ersatz intellectual babble that finally degenerates into gibberish. According to Matosoglu (2012), the presence of the long silences and the intervals signify that the characters are unable to communicate sufficiently and are lonely and desperate (p. 83). The characters comprise Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo, Lucky, and the Boy (3.1.2). The characters themselves assume different elements of this fight against salience and meaninglessness. The central two, Vladimir and Estragon, are specially bonded, holding on to each other, along with their waiting game, rituals of movement, all the defenses against the encroaching Nullity, parchment-thin Language and response. Even the fact that the two are interdependent adds importance to the need of a human to have someone to share with, yet, due to their inability to communicate (though they attempt to), it only helps to point out how isolated they are. Pozzo and Lucky are even more purely represented in relation to power, of dehumanization, and even there there is the dynamism of exchanges that is haunted by eclipsing or blighting. Pozzo, bombast is turned into the tyrannical insensitivity of sightlessness and powerlessness, and the dumb Lucky (excepting his violent speech and dance) is the culmination of verbal and human defiance. The Boy at the end of every act is a hope which at first glance retrospectively fails, but which in turn through his words indicates that hope that helplessness and hopelessness is not merely expressed as a mythos of Godot, but it is that which kept me in the eternally repeating cycle of waiting and absence of But then his recitation becomes also repetitive, and adds further to the silence of fulfilling the hope and meaning. Every character is doomed to struggle with the silence in his/her/her own manner; silence of Godot, silence between words as well as silence of an empty universe. 3.1.3 Themes Resonances: Time, Meaninglessness, Hope, and Despair. Waiting For Godot Silence Waiting For Godot is one of the most discussed plays of Samuel Beckett, in which waiting on Godot is an essential element. It is time-bound, but the rhythm is painfully sluggish and the loop a hollow and repetitive circle of deeds and utterances which lead nowhere. The silence is a repetition of the barrenness of this

period, the nothing which occurs. This directly applies to the theme of meaninglessness where in the absence of a Godot or some definite purpose to live, the characters are absurd and this is reflected in the breakdown of language to create some sense of order or meaning of any kind. The play has been defined by Esslin (1973) as a dramatic representation of the metaphysical pain in man (p. 57). However, in this hopelessness, there is a faint hope, which is represented in the waiting. The silences are not only desperate but also hopeful, although weak. The play will not help us out of the tension, and at the very end they and we are left hanging in a void between hope and despair, in the last tableau of the play, the silent wave of Vladimir and Estragon, who cannot go on, who cannot go on.

3.2 Homecoming to Silence: Psychological Warfare in, "The Homecoming"

3.2.1 The Language in, "The Homecoming"

Language is one among the determinants of psychological and psycholinguistic analysis. In "The Homecoming", a play by playwright Harold Pinter, a completely different, and yet equally problematic, landscape of silence is provided. In this case, silence is not so much an area of metaphysical vacuity as it is a parallel to complex, frequently violent, human relationships. It is playing a more strategic game in a given social situation, and that is of a lower-middle-class North London family, and therefore it is revealing the tensions in psychology, establishing power, concealing its motives, and making the air heavy with the implicit threat. The privacy of Pinter is turned into a weapon, and it is integrated into the scheme of familial and sexual influence.

3.2.1 Perceptive Analysis: Tactical pauses and silence between the author and readers.

Unlike the pauses that Beckett uses as a kind of existential interruption, Pinter uses pauses and silences as a method of a never-ending dominance game. Clogging with evasion and brusque topics change of subject, everyone talks about nothing clear with silence usually being used to underscore threatening advances or to show superiority. Just imagine those that are there in the play when Teddy takes home his wife, Ruth. The first shot is rude, with clumsy pauses which do not even appear to be greetings but rather suspicion and even territoriality. The hinting, threatening tales of Lenny, which Max is being grilled, Teddy, about the heart of Ruth, Ruth's own self-chosen silences, her own measured answers, all this suggests how language and the absence of it can be used as a weapon. According to Pinter, the author employs silence to manipulate the rhythmic and speed of his plays to force the audience to transcend the text and read the subtext (Othman, 2024). The subtext of "The Homecoming" is an underground struggle to war of violence,

sexuality and a power game in a small space of the family home. The silences are never blank spaces but are filled with these unsaid conflicts producing what Billington (2007, cited in Othman, 2024, p. 50) termed an impression of threat and uncertainty. Character Analysis: Max, Lenny, Sam, Joey, Teddy and Ruth 3.2.2 The leader of the house is named Max, who feel that he is the master of the house and is established as the dominant male in the house. Both characters, says Cleeves, possess, and use silence and language differently, according to their location in the family and their psychological harm. The old patriarch Max is an old man full of bluster and bully-but he has silent moments that often show him to be a weakling, or a trickster. Lenny, the pimp, has the force of violence and the temptation of innuendo, and he uses pregnant pauses as a way of increasing the menacing threat and the obscurity of his stories--true or not? The driver Sam is more of an enigma and his dumb stoicism is part of his marginality. Joey the would-be boxer is more of a physical object, mute in most cases because he does not understand or he is simply there like a stupid ox. The outward scholar Teddy only tries to maintain a geographical separation of pure thought, and in his silences we largely know that there is a bridge of uneasiness, avoidance, horror at venturing into the family own life. The most accomplished when it comes to using silence perhaps is Ruth, the outcast who turns out to be the center of power. Her silence, her calculateness, her strategic pauses propel the family machinations in such way that she can negotiate the sexual politics, the head games before, finally, cashing in on it. Her silence is turned into a weapon and a secret. 3.2.3 Themes: Power, Sexuality, Territory, Dysfunctional Family. Silence in The Homecoming In The Homecoming, silence is primarily an important aspect: It is a very strong dialogue, in which the monologue of solemn influence, violence (both verbal and physical) and sexuality, the question of territory (the city of London, rivalry between adopted son and father) each of which is innate in a very dysfunctional family. The politics of domination is enacted by communicative strategies, non-verbal and verbal, and by silence to instigate intimidation, push boundaries or provoke and assert boundaries. Silence, as Othman (2024) describes, was regularly used to create power and control in the relationship according to Pinter in his plays (p. 58). Sexuality is sexuality, having a brutal transnationalism but being blunt and crudely represented on hush hush, such as desires and commodities in the workplace regarding sexual tensions or negotiations. The home the house of the title of the play is the scene of the battlefield and silence and presence are the weapons with

which characters claim the territory. The episode of almost arrhythmia, with its dead air, avoiding, non-sequiturs, is eloquent regarding the degree of dysfunction and non-communication, which suffocates the family tree. The silence speaks volumes on how there are unspoken resentments, rivalries and psychological violence that define their relationship.

3.3.1 Contradicting Absurdities: Metaphysical vs. Psychological/Social _.

The essence of the difference lies in the nature of the absurdity that the playwrights develop with the help of their use of silence. Beckett confronts an absurd of metaphysics: the silence of the machinery of the universe, the deprivation of intrinsic meaning, the futility of words about the existential solitude. His silence is a statement of a state of humanity which is largely beyond all social circumstances. Instead, Pinter explores some form of emotional and social absurdity in his work: the inability to comprehend others, the impossibility to connect with others at intimate levels, the violence and rivalry of human relations, all of that reverberate in his works. This is a deficiency specific to the processes of family life and social order, under which is the threat and ambivalence of the everyday. As Matosoglu (2012, p. 90) and Othman (2024, p. 62) suggest, the silence of Beckett is metaphysically abstract in the context of which the silence of Pinter is social- and psychologically-real.

3.3.2 Silence functions: Typology of Comparisons.

Even though both playwrights rely on silence in creating mood, characterization, communicating themes, as well as in structuring the play construction, one can say that the the purpose with which they use silence differs:

Atmosphere: The silence in Beckett is created to create an atmosphere of stillness, hopelessness, metaphysical angst. The silence of Pinter sounds as a tension, threat, ambiguity, mental discomfort.

Character: With the help of Beckett, the silence is a method of expressing existential loneliness and the limits of consciousness. At Pinter, silence is a connotation of hidden intentions, mental depth and tactics.

Theme: The silence of Beckett helps to strengthen the themes of meaninglessness, waiting as a failure of language. Pinter uses his writing to communicate the themes of power, domination, territoriality, sexuality and the conflict of communication.

Form: Beckett has utilized silence and pause as essential rhythmic and structural elements, and he emphasizes on circularity and stillness. Pinter is more dynamic in his use of pauses, in which he is more inclined to emphasize power transitions, or to add and release tension in scenes.

3.3.3 Absence of Audience: Interpretation and Affect.

Both e playwrights dramatise the role of the audience through silence, however, this is a di ffer ent

dramatisation. Beckett silences are often a call to existential thought processes in that he compels audience members to grapple with the same issues of meaning and purpose that are currently plaguing the characters. It is unclear what is being called upon to be interpreted, but also indicates that there is a similarity between the human condition of not knowing. Pinter silences require the audience to take the effort to make connections: to discern some underlying message, to find the hidden motives, to mediate the psychological complexity of his characters. That is the effect that it has, it is always so uncomfortable, tense and challenging to the intellect as you attempt to figure out the power relationships that are so creepy. This also makes the viewer complicit in the watching, and possibly judgment of the brutal encounters being acted out. 3.3.4 Going back to Theoretical Implications: Silence as Power, Style, Scream of Existence. These two plays are analyzed to add to the concept of silence as a good dramatic power rather than absence. Both Beckett and Pinter demonstrate that silence can be made part of the structure of dramatic composition as such to fulfill a structural and thematic purpose. In them silence is a semiotic, and ridden with complex contextualized meanings. Such differences also exist in terms of their respective intervention to existentialism on the stage: where, in the work by Beckett the confrontation of the emptiness of the universe is staged, in the work by Pinter the anxieties generated by the intersubjectivities, and its play of power of social constructions. Their work supports the view that silence is an extremely versatile and strong instrument of existential expression, expressing the fears, uncertainties and inability to communicate of the modern state of affairs, in various forms - one cosmic, one socially and psychologically dramatic.

Abstract in Arabic

يقدم هذا البحث أهمية الصمت كوسيلة تعبيرية فعّالة في دراما القرن العشرين، مع التركيز على صامويل بيكيت وهارولد بنتر بوصفهما من أبرز مجدّدي مسرح العبث. يهدف البحث إلى تقديم دراسة مقارنة للجماليات ودور الصمت في مسرحية بيكيت في انتظار غودو ومسرحية بنتر العودة إلى الوطن. وبالاستناد إلى النماذج النظرية في السيميائيات المسرحية (وخاصةً مارتن إسلين)، ومسرح العبث (المتصل بفلسفة كامو وسارتر)، والفلسفة الوجودية، يحلّل البحث كيفية استخدام كلا الكاتبين للفراغات التواصلية في نصوصهما.

تبرز أهمية الدراسة في إظهار اختلاف طبيعة الصمت لدى الكاتبين؛ إذ يستخدم بيكيت الصمت للتعبير عن العبث الميتافيزيقي، وعجز اللغة، وعزلة الوجود، ومخاطبة الكون الصامت. بينما يوظّف بنتر الصمت ليعزز علاقات القوة والصراع الشخصي والغموض عبر "التوقف التكتيكي" والدلالات الخفية.

وتُظهر النتائج أن صمت بيكيت ذو طبيعة ميتافيزيقية، في حين يمثّل صمت بنتر حرباً نفسية ونقداً اجتماعياً. يحوّل كلٌّ منهما غياب الكلام إلى خطاب وجودي عميق يكشف جوانب متعددة من الحالة الإنسانية المعاصرة إحداهما كونية، والأخرى اجتماعية—مما يعمّق فهم الصمت بوصفه أداة درامية متعددة الوظائف.