

Inefficacy of Language: A study in Beckett's Play –Waiting for Godot

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Abstract

Language is what determines the regulated world, the signification of which provides the foundation of our culture, our activities and our relations. It defines our identity as a form of reassurance. It deals not only with the impossibilities of knowing the motivation of human beings, but also presents the problem of communication between human beings. Speech is, undoubtedly, the proof of existence as well as a manner of contending silence, solitude and death, and it is man's unique heritage. Absurd dramatists' use of language probes the limitations of language both as a means of communication and as an instrument of thought as there can be no definite meanings in a world deprived of values, principles and virtues. They have chosen to write in a language devoid of content to become the adequate representation of stagnant life; they present language as an inefficient tool to express one's thought, to comprehend the world, or to define one's self. So Samuel Beckett metalized the absurdity of modern life and human condition in his play. He displayed that with the advent of the twentieth century and its idiosyncrasies, the already taken-for-granted defined character has turn to the most passive of all, bewildered, disillusioned, alienated, dislocated, and purposeless. This creature may provide a new language, new ideas, new approaches, and a new vitalized philosophy to transform the modes of thought and feeling of the public at large in a not too distant future. The present paper aims to reveal the labyrinth of language since it is the symbol of human existence. So it is used here as a symbol of absurdity.

Key words: absurdity, existence, communication, inefficient, deterioration, gestures.

Introduction

The postwar generation throughout Europe and America experienced the terrible shock of disillusion. The world was in a state of chaos and disintegration. It is in such a stifling atmosphere that many labels in the sphere of drama came into being, e.g. the theatre of the grotesque, existentialism, nihilism, the theatre of the absurd-ism the theatre of cruelty and others. Initially most of these experiments were received with suspension and ironical grin. The breakdown of economic system has

much to do with the breakdown of social and moral values. Martin Esslin (2004:2-36) said that the pessimism, frustration and essence of alienation pervade everywhere. Foulkes (1967,15) assert that " the mood of despair and frustration [...] seems to press so heavily on the world..."

The dramatists of the twentieth century epitomize the sufferings of the modern age-sufferings which have a universal application. The most profound and daring writer associated with this development in drama reflecting the man condition in twentieth century is Samuel Beckett who has gone considerably further than any of his contemporaries. That is to say, he shows that the vacuum between what is shown on the stage and the on looker has become so unbearable. He rightly points out that the mode of our present-day life has become far more cruel and horrible than ever before. Literature is the transcript of that horror. He believed that everything is transitory. He adds that the spiritual is rejected and nothing remains but animal motivations. Esslin (1961:391) says in this regard , "the absurdity of human condition itself in a world where the decline of religious belief has deprived man of certainties."

Eugene Ionesco insists upon the nothingness and absurdity of life. So does Samuel Becket. They feel that life is full of decoys. Fail, fortune, success, youth and love are mere words, full of sound and fury signifying nothing. We are all alone. We are alienated. We have lost all communication with the rest of mankind. There is hardly any action, and the dialogue is repetitive and contradictory – language lik everything else, is incapable of giving meaning to an absurd world. In short, language has substantially lost communicability. The aim of this paper is to reveal the weaknesses of language which represents the existence of human beings, their life, and their culture.

1. The Essence of Language in Waiting for Godot

Samuel Beckett mostly involves himself and his works in the system of language in many of his plays. He tries to reform the nature of reality in his own way. The irony in his works is that, to speak is to exist, but so as to speak one must utilize the system of language and words, which have no intrinsic meaning. (Michael, 2003 :1), aptly comments on Beckett as he says " he is, however, a writer who confronts the realities of existence through a language that he himself deems to be ultimately ineffectual". He further comments that "everything in Beckett's world appears to be in decline and this erosion affects the characters physically and emotionally", (ibid .3). As it is implied in the play, the only usage of communication is just to prove their existence as Estragon says, "We always find something, eh Didi, to give us the impression we exist" (ibid .14). Beckett's outlook of postmodern existence can be viewed as

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somehow bleak, helplessly hopeless and ironic where language does not have a certain meaning. *Waiting for Godot* illustrates the desire to prove one's existence and make sense of the world. However, language is an inadequate system in reaching any abstract truth and more important than that, a word is only a representation of a truth, not the truth itself. Therefore, we can imply that, the denial of the truth stems from the fact that there is no absolute truth in the world and also it is not too inapt to cast doubt on the absolute itself too, but still we draw our own subjective picture of truth in order not to get ourselves trapped in the mysterious complexities of the world around us. (ibid. 107).

Samuel Beckett has chosen to write in a language that always points out that the world is absurd and chaotic, that man is alone and in despair. He demonstrates that language is the fundamental means of deception. But his language is used as a system devoid of content which moves only with itself. It is a mixture of ambiguity, complexity, fragmentation in dialogue, pastiche, irony, black humor, and allegory. It also focuses on cultural aspects. It was completely obscure, a farrago of pointless chit-chat. Also its dialogue consists of incoherent babblings. Beckett places "emphasis on new moves and even new rules for language games, having exceeded and subverted the old rules and limits enabling him to convey meaning through nonsense (Afroghe, 2010:177) .

Beckett's language is a mixture of elements rarely found together in the same narrative. It is "murky, baffling, circular, contradictory, full of offensive details, furious violence and sardonic, terrifying insights into the meaninglessness of human life."(Lawrence and Raymond, 1979: 4-5). His language is difficult to interpret for its general verbosity by the difficulty of the words and phrases. It is serious because it, mainly, deals with complex and oddly tragic characters who cannot reconcile the unreality of the seen world with the reality of the unseen.

Language is reduced by Beckett making it nothing more than a deserted castle whose gaping cracks let in the wind and rain. He, however, uses it just like the body and the mind of his characters, considers it as a faulty and inadequate tool. Speech, another mark of man's finitude, breaks down within the individual. Moreover, it sometimes leads to deterioration and often to total failure of communication with others.(Michael, 2003: 17-24).

Since Beckett uses language to show the function of language in human existence, the speech patterns of the characters: recurrent vocabulary, pronoun shifts, sound effects, etc., re-enforce the major themes and the mixed tone of the play- in other words, the comic effects of language used by characters grimly underline the themes of tedium

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and absurdity that dominate the plays. In *Waiting for Godot* Vladimir is the character who gropes for meaning, but the meaning does not appear. His attempts are reduced to incoherence and, finally, silence by his partner, Estragon. (Esslin , 1961:86).

Although works of the theatre of the absurd, particularly Beckett's, are often comical their underlying premises are wholly serious, as Hutchings (1991:28) declares, "The epistemological principle of uncertainty and inability in the modern age to find a coherent system of meaning, order, or purpose by which to understand our existence and by which to live.

Through Lucky's speech, Beckett places" emphasis on new moves and even new rules for language games, having exceeded and subverted the old rules and limits (Afroghe, 2010 : 177). These enable him to convey meaning through nonsense and pave the way for the better reflection of the absurdity and misery of post modern era.

2. Labyrinth of Language

Beckett reveals in his plays the fallibility of language as a medium for the discovery and communication of metaphysical truths. The dialogue, between the characters, is studded with words that have no meaning for normal ears. These words reconcile themselves with reason that makes the dialogue often baffling. Beckett makes it difficult to demonstrate which comes first, memory deterioration or language disintegration, one clearly accompanies the other. Thus, in Lucky's case a traumatized memory is combined with partial aphasia and ultimately total silence. This situation manifests itself in stuttering (acacacademie; anthropometric; qua-quaquaqua, (Beckett, 2002:10) in stammering (etabli tabli tabli, ce qui suit qui... etc.(ibid.52-53).

In addition to the aphasia and stuttering there is some evidence of a certain amount of speech disintegration that are ellipsis and stammering which are observable in Pozzo's speech from the stress of Vladimir's criticism,

I can't bear it...any longer...the way he goes on

...you've no idea...it's terrible...he must go...

(he waves his arm)...I'm going mad (He collapses

his head in his hands)...I can't bear it...any longer..."(ibid. 22-23).

Hesitancy in speech is observable in both Estragon and Vladimir in the former this fumbling for words appear to emanate from embarrassment: "That's to say...you understand...the dusk...the strain...waiting...I confess...I imagined...for a second..."(ibid.16). Language disintegration such as these on the individual level is the sign

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of the general inadequacy of speech to cope with a variety of situations and of the in coordination between speech and memory or thought.

One of the major causes of misunderstanding among the characters proceeds from faulty communication due to types of imprecision such as ambiguity, misconstruing a question, confusion of sounds, etc. Waiting for Godot opens on an ambiguous note, "Nothing to be done," that does not lead into a dialogue but into monologues- Estragon discussing his shoes, Vladimir their tedious existence and their inability to alter it. Again misunderstanding arises from ambiguous syntax when Pozzo asks "Are you friends?" Estragon interprets, this is to mean "Are you and Vladimir friends?", and Vladimir has to explain that Pozzo is asking whether Vladimir and Estragon are friends of his.(ibid.97).

Beckett, in his use of language, reveals the fallibility of language as a medium for the discovery and communication of metaphysical truth. He insures that his writing remains a constant struggle, a painful wrestling with the spirit of language itself. The themes of Waiting for Godot and other plays persist the difficulty of finding meaning in

"a world subject to incessant change, his use of language probes the limitations of language both as a vehicle for the expression of valid statement- an instrument of thoughts or truth" (Esslin, 1967 :84).

Language in Beckett's plays serves to express the breakdown, the disintegration of language. Where there is no certainty, there can be no definite memory. So it is not an instrument of thought and exploration of being. As a result of lack of communication, each man following his own thoughts, while the silence and pauses isolate words and phrases and the repetitions remind us how monotonous, repetitive and tedious life is. So Beckett used language not as a divine instrument but as mere senseless buzzing. It is used "in a world that has lost its meaning, language also becomes a meaningless buzzing."(ibid.83). Language is used like difficult music heard for the first time as Niklaus Gessner once said in his "The Inadequacy of Language", through which he has tabulated ten different modes of disintegration of language; they range from simple misunderstanding and double-intenders to monologues (as signs of inability to communicate), clichés, repetitions of synonyms, inability to find the right words, and telegraphic style (loss of grammatical structure, communication by shouted commands) to the farrago (medley, hotch-potch, indiscriminate mixture of different elements) of chaotic nonsense and the dropping of punctuation marks, such as question marks(ibid.86) as indication that language has lost its function as a means for communication, that questions have turned into statements not really

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requiring an answer. So the uniqueness of Beckett's plays lies in his peculiar way of using common man's language or everyday language. Ordinary conversation is quite evident in his effective use of tautology, malapropism, spurious logic, verbal inconsistencies, incorrect grammar, which are so peculiar with common-place conversation. So language is used in an empty and meaningless manner with no real desire to communicate. Consequently, we find in Beckett's plays hollow sound effects that support the themes of horror and conversational emptiness. Staccato sound repetitions occur in such phrases as "Dis, Didi"(ibid.18) and in Vladimir's lullaby which is comprised of words "Do do do" and "Bye bye bye bye,"(ibid. 71) repeated over and over. So the 'dialogue' of the play *Waiting for Godot* and others shows the use of language reflects egocentricity. Therefore the characters fail to communicate, and their use of language seems to become more and more trivial. Beckett appears to be saying that communication through silence and gesture as in the pantomime is just as effective and perhaps more so than communication through the spoken word. Knowlson has a very apt remark to make in this regard. He points out: "we are left with an image of two creatures, seeking to communicate in a world where real communication is virtually impossible."(Knowlson, 1978:113).

As the dialogue of the play shows, language is a faulty mirror of reality, and, furthermore, their use of language reflects egocentricity. Therefore, they fail to communicate; their use of language seems to become more and more trivial. Beckett appears to be saying that since language is used in the manner of the characters of the play, we might do better to choose the other side of paradox, condemnation to silence. Thus, communication through silence and gestures as in the pantomime is just as effective and perhaps more so than communication through the spoken word. So Beckett elaborates a theory of speech that compels him to be silent about the very tasks that he has undertaken. He demonstrates the choice of silence as the choice some makes when he faces with the failure of speech (ibid.).

Language had to become a vehicle of conventionalized, stereotyped, meaningless exchanges. Words fail to express the essence of human experience not being able to penetrate beyond its surface. Beckett continued first and foremost an onslaught on language, showing it as a very unreliable and insufficient tool of communication. He uses conventionalized speech, clichés, slogans and technical jargons, which is distort parodies, and breaks down.

The characters talk to each other, but fail to communicate. Language (notably in the form of clichés) is a form of reassurance, but not real

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connection occurs, instead language is a noise to fill the void created by the absence of meaningful human contact,(Esslin, 1967:45). Hence the presence of clichés in the discourse of the characters points toward the fact that in real life most verbal exchanges are equally devoid of real communication.(*ibid.*) Repeated phrases, lines, words and the fact that the second act repeats the first act are used to signify the senseless repetition and relentless flow of time inherent to human existence. “The dialogue has the peculiar repetitive quality of the cross-talk comedians’ patter”.(*ibid.*46). So the character's speeches are a parody of philosophical jargon and scientific double-talk.

Language deals not only with the impossibility of knowing the motivation of human beings in their actions; it also presents the problem of communication between human beings, which preoccupies Beckett, Adamov and Ionesco. The fights between the characters of these writers are essentially an attempt to achieve contact. At the end they recognize the impossibility of such contact, even through the conflict. “If you crammed a ship full of human bodies till it burst, the loneliness inside it would be so great that they would turn to ice – so great is our isolation that even conflict is impossible.”(Brecht, 1953:291-292).

Language, which Beckett views as deficient, is one of the principal vehicles for expressing rational and artistic activity, and, despite everything, communication does come about through it. Thus, ironically enough, it is through language itself that Beckett exhibits for us the limitations of language and it is through reason that he shows the limitations of reasons (*ibid.*).

Beckett uses a language based on patterns of concrete images rather than argument and discursive speech. And since language is trying to present a sense of being, it can neither investigate nor solve problems of conduct or morals or communication. A part from the general devaluation of language in the flood of mass communication, the growing specialization of life has made the exchange of ideas on an increasing number of subjects impossible between members of different spheres of life which have each developed their own specialized jargons. That is why communication between human beings is often shown in a state of breakdown. Esslin says in this regard, “language has run riot in an age of mass communication. It must be reduced to its function – the expression of authentic content, rather than its concealment”(Esslin, 1967:399).

3.1 Inefficacy of Language for Conveying Thought

Since Beckett’s characters are deliberately drawn as generalized characters, their speeches have the function of not individualizing, but

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generalizing them by means of recurring words and phrases in their speeches which portray the same puzzled frustrated but determined men in speech of comprehending the world and themselves through their narratives. All the characters vacillate between hope and despair concerning the completion of their quest. Robinovitz asserts that "these characters can be linked when they set out with the same naïve belief, that with a little more effort their quest will be ended"(Rabinovitz, 1993:76). All of them express their belief in progress and hope to move forward in their quest, just to contradict themselves by sinking into despair, but they are late to rekindle their hope afterwards. For them, language becomes a buzzing sound, empty and meaningless. In the play *Malone Dies* Malone says:

" All I heard was one vast continuous buzzing. The volume of Sound perceived remained no doubt the same, I had simply lost the faculty of decomposing it. The noise of nature of mankind and even my own, were all jumbled together in one and the same unbridled gibberish" (Beckett, 1959:50).

And in *Molloy*, Molloy says

"... The words I heard, and heard distinctly, having quite a sensitive ear, where heard a first time, then a second and often a third as pure sounds, free of all meaning, and this is probably one of the reasons why conversation was unspeakably painful to me. And the world I uttered myself... where often to me as the buzzing of insect "(Beckett, 1959:50).

In *Unnamable* the Unnamable agrees, with Malone that he sees no difference between man's language and the sound of beats; "the sounds of beasts, the sound of men, sounds in the daytime and sounds at night... all sounds, there is only one, continuous, day and night"(ibid.390).

The conversation between the characters seems to be void at meaning. There is no apparent meaning in it, because their life is meaningless and also their world has no apparent meaning. Beckett's language is totally separate from knowledge or truth. This meaninglessness can be expanded to all Beckett's language. His characters engage in ridiculous language to pass the time and to give them the impression that they exist. But Beckett's language reveals that man is essentially bewildered, disoriented and lost. In spite man longs for knowledge, he has only the words of his speech to use, and these are inadequate. Words are little suited to knowledge since each word is surrounded by the undertones of its own history. Words are inadequate

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for piercing the essence of reality. Lawrence and Raymond (1979:292) say in this regard, "Language has become void; therefore words can only demonstrate their emptiness ... Thus literature becomes the inaudible game of a solipsist".

Beckett's use of language is designed to devalue language as a vehicle of conceptual thought of ready-made answers to the problem of the human condition. His plays are drained of meaningful dialogue. "The dialogue is studded with words that have no meaning for normal ears; repeatedly it announces that it has come to a stop, and will have to start again; never does it reconcile itself with reason"(Graver and Federman, 1979:93).

Speech is the basis of existence. It, like the body and the mind, is a faulty and inadequate tool. Speech, another mark of man's finitude, breaks down within the individual – moreover, it sometimes leads to deterioration and often to total failure of communication with others" (Butler, 1961:17-24).

Ellipsis and stammering are observable in the character's speech, for example, Pozzo's speech from the stress of Vladimir's criticism : "I cannot bear it... any longer... the way he goes on... you've no idea... it's terrible"(Beckett, 2002:22-23). A certain character talks as a baby talk causing a lack of comprehension on the part of his listener. Moreover, hesitancy in speech is observable in the character's speech. Estragon speaks with Vladimir: "Er... you've finished with the... er... you don't need the... er bones, sir?"(ibid. 18). Consequently, language disintegration such as this on the individual level is a sign of the general inadequacy of speech to cope with a variety of situations and of the in-coordination between speech and thought.

Language, with which Beckett wrestles, is his medium and it is its inadequacy haunts him. He makes his task more difficult by occupying himself with suffering creatures. They suffer from partial aphasia which manifests itself in their stuttering (quaquaquaqua) (ibid.51), acacacademie d' anthropopometrie and in the repetition of phrases such as " cequi suit qui suit qui suit" (ibid.52).

Beckett wanted to restore the language of gesture and movement, to make inanimate things play their part in the action and to relegate dialogue to the background. He called for a true language of the theatre, which would be a wordless language of shapes, light, movement, and gesture. He uses language based on patterns of concrete images rather than argument and discursive speech.

Words as conventional symbols, have failed to express the thoughts and ideas of the dramatist personae of an absurd drama. Beckett's plays

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show how language has been disintegrated in diverse: monologues, telegraphic style, repetition of synonyms, violation of orthodox grammatical structure, clichés and platitudes, etc. Language has, thus, become non-verbal. It breaks down. Characters talk not to express their thoughts, but only to kill time. There is no conventional elan"

(Graver and Federman (1979:93) say in this regard "The dialogue is studded with words that have no meaning for normal ears, repeatedly, the play announces that it has come to a stop and will have to start again ; never does it reconcile itself with reason."

The speeches of the characters subvert the conventional function of speech to individualize characters because their language contributes to their anonymity, and because their speeches, like their actions, are similar to each other, giving the sense that the same puzzled and frustrated voice. Beckett presents language as an inefficient tool to express one's thoughts to comprehend the world, or to define one's self. Hence, the efforts of the characters to comprehend the whole or to comprehend the thought or to define the self are doomed to failure. Their attempt to comprehend the world fails because if the world is unreadable and its sense unattainable, human effort to create it is doomed to failure,(Cerrato, 1993:27).

This never-ending conflict also makes the lucid man suffer, for he recognizes the futility, but his need for order and system does not let him give up the struggle. Thus, Esslin points out, "Conscious being inevitably entails suffering"(Esslin, 1967:114). There are different modes of disintegration of language observable in "Waiting for Godot". They range from simple misunderstanding to dropping of punctuation marks. This indicates that language has lost its function as a means of conveying thoughts because no truly dialectical exchange of thoughts occurs in it. In a purposeless world that has lost its ultimate objectives, dialogue, like all actions, becomes a mere game not to convey the thought but to pass time. Beckett's characters are "isolated existence", each of whom is "immured in his own consciousness" (Kern, 1970:185). On the other hand, Beckett dwells on the limitation of consciousness, which makes the possibility of knowing others completely impossible. Since his characters are "unable to know each other except as possibilities"(ibid.186). fragmented and imperfect relationships emerge. Therefore, "the limitation of human consciousness" that Beckett portrays, in "Waiting for Godot" appears "as a factor separating [man] from universe" (Szante, 1972:9). and from one another.

3.2 Inefficacy of Language for Passing Time

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Time is another recurring theme in the works of Samuel Beckett who regards it as an enemy that ruins people and carries them to their ultimate end, which is death. So time and death are closely interrelated for him. He calls time “the double-headed monster of damnation and salvation” (Beckett, 1931:1). Consequently time is considered as a destructive power in his works. Time is also treated as a void which needs to be filled up in verbal or non-verbal ways. Time is an infinite emptiness that stretches without any beginning or end; therefore, characters cannot differentiate yesterday from today, and memory fails them since time is composed of days almost identical with each other. Beckett also elaborates on memory in relation to time; memory is unreliable since it is impossible to remember past events as they happened. What one remembers is just distorted pictures of past events because “people deform the days by altering the pictures of past actions which reside in the memories stored in the mind”(Ben-zui, 1986:24). Therefore, it is impossible to be sure about past events.

In *Waiting for Godot*, the two tramps, Estragon and Vladimir, who represent all humanity, utter remarks that any one of us can utter. These two men speak to each other without understanding. They do this to keep busy. To pass time, they talk and talk about Godot, whom really don't know much about.

Vladimir : Ah yes, the two thieves. Do you remember the story ?

Estragon : No.

Vladimir : Shall I tell it to you ?

Estragon : No

Vladimir : It will pass the time (pause)....

(*Waiting for Godot*,2002:42).

Words are intrinsically inadequate for thinking and communicating; they are nothing but words, without representational content. Winnie in *Happy Days* says, “...I look and I see pictures, creatures, emitting sounds that are a kind of language I no longer understand or even register”(Calder, 1964:141).

In *Waiting for Godot* the subject of the play becomes an example of how to pass the time in a situation which offers no hope. Thus, the theme of the play is set by the beginning:

Estragon: Nothing to be done.

Vladimir: I'm beginning to come round to that opinion (*Waiting for Godot*.2008:1)

Although the phrase is used in connection to Estragon's boots here, it is also later used by Vladimir with respect to his hat. Essentially it describes the hopelessness of their lives.

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Vladimir: That passed the time.

Estragon: It would have passed in any case. And later when Estragon finds his boots again;

Vladimir: What about trying them.

Estragon: I've tried everything.

Vladimir: No, I mean the boots.

Estragon: Would that be a good thing?

Vladimir: It'd pass the time. I assure you, it'd be an occupation,(ibid.68).

Since passing the time is their mutual occupation, Estragon struggles to find games to help them accomplish their goal. Thus, they engage in insulting one another and in asking each other question. They talk and talk about Godot, whom they really don't know much about. On a road, beneath a tree ravaged by winter, in a barren, desolate place, they are waiting for Godot, but this gentleman will never come. Their dialogue is studded with words that have no meaning for normal ears. The upshot of Waiting for Godot is that the two tramps are always waiting for the future, their ruinous consolation being that there is always tomorrow, they never realize that today is today. In this Beckett says:

" they are like humanity, which dawdles and drives away its life, postponing action, eschewing enjoyment, waiting only for some far-off divine event, the millennium, the Day of judgment", (Graver and Federman, 1979:94).

Of course, virtually all conversation between Vladimir and Estragon arises out of desire to pass time.

To make time pass, it requires precisely a kind of freedom which Vladimir and Estragon, paralyzed by the passivity of their life, have already forfeited. They are bored and anxious to kill time. They are talking not for conveying their thoughts or ideas but simply to kill time. They babble incessantly, but they arrive at no conclusion. They speak about radishes and carrots; they play at Pozzo and Lucky; they have recourse to exercise, and yet time is static.

The main way in which Vladimir and Estragon confront their ennui is with the invention of a succession of various games designed to make time pass imperceptibly while waiting for Godot. But the invention of games and other diversions is not only a means of killing time it is also a means by which the characters give themselves the impression of existing up. Of course, virtually all conversations between Vladimir and Estragon arise out of their desire to pass the time. These games and other diversions are primarily undertaken to while away the time and to confirm existence, they are also away, unsuccessful way of trying of

escape the oppressiveness of silence and the feeling of solitude that tend to engulf the individual, (William,1991:28) says in this regard , "To speak one must utilize the system of language and words, which have no intrinsic meaning. "

3.3 Self-Alienation and Language

Beckett has written in the absurdist tradition and he is one of the famous Absurdist. the first common theme observed in his works is the theme of alienation, isolation, and loneliness. According to the absurdist in general and to Beckett in private, man was doomed to alienation since the illusion that there existed common values or rights and wrongs forming a consensus in society was irreparably broken. Many people agreed with Nietzsche that God was dead, which made them feel utterly alone as if in a desert, and each man has his own desert. Recognizing that God didn't exist and he was ultimately alone in this indifferent Godless universe was traumatic for man.(Brecht.1953:291-2) points out,

"If you crammed a ship full of human bodies till it burst,
the loneliness inside it would be so great that they would
turn to ice ... so great is our isolation that even conflict is
impossible. "

Man was doomed to isolation in such a universe, for there was not a common and firm ground on which human beings stood together safely. This ground which had seemed firm and safe was broken into pieces and each one had to stand on his ground alienated from his or her fellowmen. Hence lack of communication, lack of sympathy and love, and man's sense of solitude are reflected in the works of absurd writers. Nietzsche in Zarathustra says,

"The number of people for whom God is dead has greatly
increased and mankind has learned the bitter lesson
of the falseness and evil nature of some of the cheap
and vulgar substitutes that have been set up to take his place"
(Nietzsche, 1955:279)

Beckett also deals with the problem of identity leading to a sense of alienation in *Waiting for Godot*. He emphasizes in "Waiting for Godot" and others man is fated for failure in his search for his self since self is not fixed but fluid and indefinable. As Esslin argues

"in Beckett's work, the problem is one of ever-changing identity
of the self through time... so the self at one moment in time
is confronted with its earlier incarnation only to find it
utterly strange", (Esslin, 1986:79).

In *Waiting for Godot* Beckett deals with the problem of the elusiveness of the self, starting with the loss of his touch with his familiar

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self, and with the world, which was once familiar to him, and this causes him to feel greatly anxious. "The color and weight of the world were changing already, soon I would have to admit I was anxious."(Kern, 1970:97). He feels a great confusion coming over him.

In Beckett's play, each protagonist is involved in a quest, the quest for the central self, but in the final stage, he fails in all his quest; he has nothing to do except completely withdraw within his mind and look for his central self in his consciousness, therefore he has no contact with the outside world. All outside is zero, man cannot help his fellowmen even to his death, consciousness lacks external reference; one looks inward like Hamm thrice, blinded to find an impossible end. Thus, man becomes as a tottering statue, eroded by the wind of anguish, despair, and misery

alone in his misery, enclosed and in the narrow
limits of his ego without any hope of escape other than
death – expected, accepted and at times deliberately sought
out as the final refuge", (Graver and Federman, 1979:140).

Beckett proclaims the ridiculousness of language, it repeats tirelessly that man's last resource is language. The downfall of language is linked to the treachery of objects and it is the collapse of reason that is implied in the treachery of words. Beckettian tragedy is a tragedy of tortured reason. Whereby language itself is totally disrupted. So language has become void; therefore, words can only demonstrate their emptiness. Thus, literature becomes the inaudible game of a solipsist. Hooti,(2011:330) says in this regard , "As a matter of fact, it is a new era of endeavor whose activities are unclear and whose meaning and implications and not yet well understood" .

Beckett's characters, in their extreme and elemental environment or universe, start their long speech by asking questions, but they don't know the answers to their questions either. So they have to use language which is the only available weapon in their hand to search for their self, but neither self nor world... is knowledge through words, and yet we have only words with which to know. It is impossible for man to comprehend everything about the world, but it is against man's nature to accept it and yield to the irrationality surrounding him. However, words are adequate neither for the comprehension of the world nor for the attainment of a unified self. For them, language becomes a buzzing sound, empty and meaningless. Man's language is as incomprehensible as the language of bees. Beckett sees no difference between man's language and the sound of beasts. Esslin (1961:84) says in this regard "A word that has lost its meaning, language also becomes a meaningless buzzing"

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Beckett presents language as an inefficient tool. Man is alienated from others and the irrational universe which they fail to comprehend simply because of the deficiency of language. Certain societal phenomenon appears through the language of the play; just as disintegration and mock integration are mirrored in the speech of the characters also are social disintegration and mock integration as reflected in the pronoun shifts in the following passage

Vladimir: You must be happy too, deep down, if you only knew it.

Estragon: happy about what?

Vladimir: to be back with me again.

Estragon: would you say so?

Vladimir: say you are, even if its not true.

Estragon: what am I to say ?

Vladimir: say, I am happy.

Estragon: I am happy.

Vladimir: so am I.

Estragon: so am I.

Vladimir: we are happy.Estragon: we are happy. (silence.) what do we do now, now that we are happy?

Vladimir: wait for Godot. (Wating for Godot . 38-39).

4. Conclusion

Disintegration of language is achieved through various methods in Absurd drama: The use of meaningless words uttered mechanically with no logical links or grammatical structure occurs in absurdist's plays. These dramatists make little use of language as a means of influence. Language which seeks to present a meaning, characterization is hardly achieved. Furthermore, the absurdist's usually show their disbelief in language as an instrument of communication in the employment of purely theatrical effects.

Beckett pre-occupied with the failure of language to communicate the menaces of life and its meaninglessness and consequently he uses language as an atmosphere of entrapment. His endless and futile speech is the history of the human spirit. He replaces customary plot, structure and language with fragmentary, contradictory and often nonsensical dialogue in order to present a world of chaos that mocks established institution and conformity.

Beckett has used cliché-laden language; he used the language of gesture and movements to make inanimate things play their in the action, and to relegate dialogue. He reduced language to a very subordinate role. His language becomes the adequate representation of stagnant life and

meaninglessness – it relates to life without action, describes man deprived of history.

Samuel Becket mostly involves himself and his works in the system He tries to reform the nature of reality in his own way. The irony in his works is that to speak is to exist, but so as to speak one must utilize the system of language and words, which have no intrinsic meaning. In most of his work "truth" is somehow closed off from the reader. He is however, a writer who confronts the realities of existence through a language that he himself deems to be ultimately in ineffectual. Everything in Beckett's world appears to be in decline and his erosion affects the characters physically and emotionally. Therefore language is an inadequate system in reaching any abstract truth and more important than that, a word is only a representation of a truth, not the truth itself.

ملخص البحث

اللغة هي التي تحدد صورة العالم المنظم، وتكمن أهميتها في أنها تعد أساس نشاطاتنا وعلاقاتنا وتحدد هويتنا من اجل الطمأنينة، ولا تتعامل فقط مع عدم إمكانية معرفة حافز البشرية، بل أيضا مع مشكلة التواصل بينهم. فالكلام – وبدون شك – هو إثبات الوجود وهو الأسلوب الذي يصارع الصمت والعزلة والموت. فهي إذا ميراث الإنسان الفريد، وقد استعمل المسرحيون العبثيون اللغة مبرزين عجزها لتحقيق التواصل أو بوصفها أداة للفكر بعد تجريدها من معناها كون عالمها مجرد من القيم والمبادئ والفضائل. وقد جردها العبثيون من المحتوى كي تكون خير تمثيل لحياة راكدة ومن هنا برزوها بوصفها أداة عاجزة من التعبير عن فكرة الفرد وتميز هويته ومعرفة عالمه. وكشف الكاتب عن إن قدوم العشرين انعكاس عن الكائن البشري فجعله أكثر سلبية لكونه كائن مندهشا غير واع معزولا وبدون هدف. عندها استعمل لغة وأفكار ومداخل وفلسفة خاصة لنقل صور شعور وفكرة عام ومن هنا يهدف البحث إلى إظهار تفاهة اللغة كونها رمز وجود الإنسان وعبثيته.

المفاتيح: العبثية، الوجود، التواصل، عدم إمكانية، التفكيك، والإشارات.

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