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The Non-Verbal as a Means of Communication in Three of Harold Pinter's Plays: The Dumb Waiter, The Homecoming and The Lover

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The more acute the experience, the less articulate its expression...so often, below the word spoken, is the thing known and unspoken.

Harold Pinter

[M]ost of the time we're inexpressive, giving little away, unreliable, elusive, evasive, obstructive, unwilling.

Harold Pinter

There are two silences. One when no words are spoken. The other when perhaps a torrent of language is employed...The speech we hear is an indication of what we don't hear. It is a necessary avoidance, a violent, sly, anguished or mocking smokescreen which keeps the other in its place. When true silence falls we are still left with echo but are nearer nakedness.

Harold Pinter

[W]hat matters is not so much what is said or done, but whether a character is talking or not, moving or remaining still.

David T. Thompson

Position, gesture and movement is rich in statement. By these essential means [the] characters can 'speak' without knowing it themselves...[Pinter] has contrived the means to make an audience 'see' this physical language for themselves. He uses posture and movement with unavoidable directness, with inventiveness, controlled complexity and, where necessary, with ambiguity

John Russell Brown

[Pinter touches] an uneasiness his audience knows from their experience of themselves.

K. Worth

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RÉSUMÉ DE SYNTHÈSE

L'étude que j'ai élaborée se propose d'examiner la fonction communicative du langage non-verbal dans trois pièces du dramaturge Harold Pinter, soit The Dumb Waiter, The Homecoming et The Lover. Le langage non-verbal sera considéré à partir de trois grands axes d'analyse : son sens, l'utilisation qui en est faite et l'importance qu'il revêt dans les textes. L'analyse, dont les conclusions viseront à éclairer l'ensemble de son œuvre, s'en tiendra surtout aux trois pièces mentionnées, bien qu'un survol de différentes études sur Pinter s'avérera utile. Il est à noter, cependant, que l'absence d'études traitant explicitement du langage non-verbal chez Pinter justifie en partie la démarche proposée ici. En général, la critique pinterrienne s'est surtout attardée aux aspects verbaux de la communication, aux parentés entre la langue « littéraire » et le langage commun, aux répétitions etc.

La communication non-verbale revêt une importance toute particulière dans la vie quotidienne, notamment dans la mesure où elle conditionne nos relations interpersonnelles. Dans nos relations avec les autres, les pauses dans la conversation, les silences et les gestes sont généralement pris pour acquis, sous-estimés. Or, ceux-ci sont souvent plus significatifs, plus authentiques et révélateurs, que les mots que nous prononçons. Les pièces de Pinter sont une bonne illustration de ce phénomène. Ici, comme dans la vie quotidienne, le non-verbal s'avère souvent un pont vers le refoulé, l'inconscient. Mais que le processus soit conscient ou non, il permet d'exprimer des sentiments et d'affirmer une identité propre. Loin de s'avérer une simple alternative au langage verbal, le non-verbal s'articule comme un langage propre, autonome. En ce

sens, je suis d'avis que les pièces de Pinter sont surtout préoccupées par le non-dit des personnages, par ce qu'ils refoulent, plutôt que par ce qui est déclamé. Bien qu'une analyse sérieuse de l'œuvre de Pinter ne saurait faire abstraction des aspects verbaux et du logos inhérent aux pièces, le sens de celles-ci doit être cherché en priorité au sein d'une matière refoulée, latente, au sein de propos implicites, et non-verbaux, chez les personnages.

L'étude se divise en cinq parties.

Introduction

Chapitre 1 : le langage du silence, ou « langage silencieux »

Chapitre 2 : le langage du corps

Chapitre 3 : le langage visuel

Conclusion

Chacun des trois chapitres est divisé en cinq sections qui contiennent une introduction, une conclusion, de même que trois sous-sections. L'étude s'amorce avec une exploration du « langage silencieux » (chapitre 1), catégorie dans laquelle je regroupe les points de suspension, les tirets, les pauses et les silences explicites. Chaque manifestation du « langage silencieux » est distincte et revêt un sens particulier. Ce « langage » se définit essentiellement par une absence de bruit, de mots ou d'exclamation. Ceci n'implique pas une absence de rétorque. Ces moments, bien que silencieux, sont chargés d'émotion, et sont le lieu privilégié de la réflexion et de l'analyse. Les points de suspension, en tant que manifestation d'une hésitation exemplaire chez les personnages, se veulent

un bref moment où ceux-ci sont soit à la recherche du mot juste, celui qui parviendra à exprimer leur pensée, soit dans le processus de refouler ou encore de camoufler une pensée.

Les tirets, plus incisifs que les points de suspension, ont une durée plus étendue. Ils altèrent le rythme et la continuité d'une réplique. Les tirets prennent souvent la forme d'idées persistantes, obsessionnelles, parfois grossières, qui sont lancées dans le but de détraquer le cours d'une conversation. Ils peuvent également exprimer l'avènement d'une interruption externe de l'action.

Le silence, la réplique sans mots, exprime l'inexprimable et l'inexprimé. Son sens n'est pas stable mais fluctuant et ses fonctions sont multiples. Parfois de façon consciente, parfois inconsciemment, les silences peuvent devenir une force d'intimidation. Souvent, ils servent à préparer les personnages, de même que les spectateurs, à l'introduction d'une nouvelle idée, d'un nouveau thème, surtout lorsque insérés à la fin d'une réplique. Les personnages ont ainsi la chance de récupérer, de souffler, suite à une réplique particulièrement violente. Les silences sont souvent vécus comme un inconfort chez certains personnages, qui sentent le besoin de les remplir d'une série de balbutiements, de bruits hagards.

Contrairement aux silences, les pauses dénotent une continuité dans le processus de réflexion. La pause vient généralement altérer le cours d'une conversation verbale ou de l'action. Ici également, elle permet aux personnages de souffler, de récupérer et de préparer leur rétorque. Les pauses permettent de révéler l'état d'esprit des personnages de même que la tension qui les habite et

qui se trouve à la source de sentiments d'insécurité, de frustration, d'hésitation, de confusion et d'incertitude.

Suite à cette première partie, l'étude se propose d'examiner le « langage du corps » (chapitre 2). Cette catégorie englobe les mimes, les gestes, les rituels, les jeux, les manies, de même que la nonchalance et la violence physique. Le langage du corps est essentiellement gestuel : il parvient à exprimer l'indicible. Il dévoile, en ce sens, sa nature universelle, une nature qui transcende l'univers des mots et des silences. Ici encore, le corps permet de représenter ce qui est refoulé par les personnages. Le mime est à la base même du langage corporel conçu comme langage universel. Fondé sur la gestuelle, il dévoile le contenu latent des relations entre les personnages de même que le sens caché derrière leur comportement externe.

La violence physique connaît plusieurs formes et se manifeste à des degrés divers dans le théâtre de Pinter. Elle peut être externe, interne ou verbale. La violence externe se manifeste comme une agression sur autrui. Le but recherché ici est la souffrance, la peur, la coercition ou encore la domination. La violence interne est celle que l'on profère sur soi. Elle implique généralement une retenue, un refoulement des sentiments, de même qu'une absence de réaction physique. Le caractère passif de ces manifestations n'en diminue en rien la violence.

La nonchalance physique est conçue ici comme une forme de violence sur autrui. Contrairement à la violence externe, elle ne s'opère non pas par l'agression mais bien par l'absence de reconnaissance d'autrui. Un personnage

fait usage de nonchalance physique lorsqu'il ignore un autre personnage ou encore lorsqu'il lui refuse un statut qui revenait de toute évidence à ce dernier de plein droit. Toute forme de communication semble suspendue ici.

Les rituels, jeux et manies sont exprimés à travers des gestes, de même qu'à travers l'action dramatique. Ceux-ci partagent les mêmes caractéristiques essentielles et servent généralement un but commun. Les rituels, publics et privés, permettent la communion avec un groupe. Les rituels et les jeux permettent aux personnages d'entreprendre des actes qui paraissaient impensables dans leur vie quotidienne. Ceux-ci permettent de traduire des sentiments collectifs reliés au confort et à l'appartenance. Du reste, l'analyse de ces phénomènes nous permet de mieux comprendre la nature intrinsèque des personnages de même que la nature des relations qui les unissent.

Dans la poursuite de l'étude, il sera également question du langage visuel (chapitre 3). Cette catégorie rassemble les décors, les costumes et les accessoires. Le langage visuel est essentiellement conditionné par la perception du public. Or, il faut voir que cette perception de l'auditoire ne peut faire autrement que de s'entremêler à celle du metteur en scène et des comédiens. Ce va-et-vient dans le jeu des perceptions est une composante essentielle de l'interprétation des pièces de Pinter, comme de toute production dramatique. Néanmoins, il ne faut pas perdre de vue que ce langage ne s'en trouve pas moins subordonné à l'intention de l'auteur.

Sous le mot « décor » sont regroupés les espaces, l'architecture, les meubles, les couleurs ainsi que la « qualité » de l'amphithéâtre. Dans les pièces

de Pinter, le décor possède une importance toute particulière, notamment dans la mesure où il reflète et conditionne l'ontologie des personnages. L'analyse de cette influence contribue grandement à notre connaissance de ces derniers.

Les costumes sont également très riches en signification. En tant « qu'uniformes symboliques », ils peuvent être considérés comme des signifiants externes renvoyant à l'intériorité des personnages. Au niveau intradiégétique, les costumes prennent souvent la forme de masques servant à camoufler la vulnérabilité des personnages.

Les accessoires, tout comme le décor et les costumes, sont des outils importants de communication. Ils sont utiles dans la mesure où ils réitèrent et renforcent le sens des pièces. Que ce soit sous la forme d'une arme ou d'un outil de séduction, ils reflètent l'état d'esprit des personnages qui les manipulent, et peuvent ainsi devenir le symbole de l'animosité, de la malhonnêteté ou encore le véhicule de la domination etc. Ils possèdent, en ce sens, une valeur symbolique et métaphorique qu'on ne saurait négliger.

Pour conclure, on pourrait affirmer que le mélange particulier d'ingrédients que l'on retrouve dans les pièces de Pinter s'apparente à un bouquet de fleurs sauvages confectionné avec une subtile circonspection et un souci du détail sans pareil, de sorte que nous trouvons là l'articulation d'une esthétique toute singulière. L'étude de son oeuvre doit donc toujours tendre vers une connaissance toujours renouvelée de l'ensemble des composantes de chaque pièce. L'étude du langage non-verbal chez Pinter s'engage, à mon avis, dans cette direction.

ABSTRACT

In this study, I examine the non-verbal language as a means of communication in three of Harold Pinter's plays: The Dumb Waiter, The Homecoming and The Lover, by looking at its meaning, importance and use. I achieved this through close analysis of (mostly) these three plays as well as relevant studies of Pinter's work that have been previously done. I say whatever "relevant studies of Pinter's work that have been previously done" because, as far as I could find, there has not been much done on the non-verbal in Pinter. Yet, a large number of books, essays and articles have been written on Pinter's verbal means of communication, such as how close Pinter's speech is to real life, its repetitions, coherence or lack of it, etc. The Pinter plays analyzed in this study were randomly chosen; the point here is that the theory in this study is not only limited to the plays analyzed, but can actually apply to any of Pinter's work.

Non-verbal communication is an important aspect of our everyday life. It is part of our everyday interactions with one another. We hardly ever stop to think of the meaning of a pause in a conversation, or someone's silence, or gesture, or the way a person carries him/herself. Yet all these silent means of expression or modes of communication are revealing, more genuine and more reliable than the actual words spoken.

In Pinter's plays, the non-verbal means of communication are no less important than in real life. In life as in Pinter's theatre, non-verbal language constitutes an essential pillar of communication. It's a bridge to the subconscious, or the hidden. It is a conscious or unconscious mode of self-expression and a means of conveying feelings.

Yet, non-verbal language is not a substitute for verbal language. It does not merely fit where verbal language fails. Non-verbal language is a language of its own. In my opinion, Pinter's plays are more about what is not being said than what the characters actually say. The hidden or implied is more significant than that which is deliberately uttered. That is not to say that any aspect of Pinter's theatre should be ignored. All components in Pinter's plays should be considered together with special attention to the non-verbal language to perceive fully the point that Pinter is trying to make.

I have divided this study into five main parts (plus a Bibliography of course). These are a general Introduction, followed by Chapter One: Silent Language, Chapter Two: Body Language and Chapter Three: Visual Language, as well as a general Conclusion. Each of these three main chapters is, in turn, divided into five sections. Each contains an introduction and a conclusion, as well as three sections pertinent to the content of that particular section.

The study first looks at Silent Language (Chapter One), which includes dots and dashes, silences as well as pauses. Each of these types is distinct from the other and has a different meaning and function. Silent language is an absence of a sound, word or input, not an absence of a response. Like any other, it is a "moment of language" in which much emotional and thinking processes as well as analysis and reflections silently occur.

Dots like small pauses that are indicated in the text by three dots. They last for a short duration of time and constitute a brief hesitation where the actors or characters look for specific words to convey their meaning. They are also used

to replace a word or to end a sentence when the characters are unwilling or incapable of putting their thoughts and feelings into words. Dashes are longer, harsher and more abrupt than dots. They are indicated in the text by a dash and make a sharp break in the continuity of a sentence. Dashes are like strong persistent thoughts or indignant reactions by one of the characters that interject the flow of conversation. They could also be a break in a conversation due to external interruptions that cause a halt in conversation and a shift in attention.

A silence, the "line with no words in it," expresses "the unspoken and the unspeakable." Silences (indicated by the stage direction "silence") have many different meanings and serve various functions. Silences could be unconsciously self-imposed, consciously self-imposed, or directly or indirectly imposed on one character by another. Thus, silences are means used by characters–whether consciously or unconsciously--to intimidate, subdue, overpower, or suppress others. In addition, silences show unwillingness and/or inability of communication between the characters. Silences signal an end to a conversation, prepare characters and audience for a new line of thought or new topic of conversation, give them time to recover from what was said as well as to reflect on it before replying or moving on. Silences also function as a means of showing disapproval, refusal or unwillingness to communicate with others. Silences are very uncomfortable for some characters and so they seek to fill them with noise and aimless chatter.

Unlike silences that end a conversation or a line of thought, pauses (indicated by "pause") indicate a continuing thought process. A pause is a break

of physical or verbal inaction. The time of inaction is taken by the characters to sort out their feelings, gather their thoughts, reflect on what others say, recover from shock, or plan their next move or response before replying or resuming the conversation. Pauses reveal the speaker's emotional state and reflect the mounting tension between the characters that might cause their feelings of insecurity, frustration, hesitation, confusion or uncertainty.

The study then proceeds to examine Body Language (Chapter Two), which includes mime and gestures, physical violence and physical aloofness as well as rituals, games and habits. Body language is "gestural." It sometimes achieves what words and silences fail to accomplish. Words can be inadequate, deceptive and misleading, and silences are sometimes hard to analyze and interpret due to their depth and complexity, but body language and the meanings of gestures are universal. Body language reveals to the audience what the characters—whether consciously or unconsciously—try to conceal. These instinctive reactions and involuntary responses reflect the characters' inner feelings and moods.

Mime is the essence of body language and depends on gestures, which are universal. No words are necessary in mimes, for the actions speak louder than any word could. Mime is quite informative; through the characters' silent interactions, we begin to see the kind of relationship they have and understand the meaning behind their underlying behaviours.

Physical violence comes in different types (inward, outward or verbal), in different forms as well as in different degrees. Outward physical violence is the

aggression directed towards another, with the intent to afflict pain, instill fear, coerce, dominate or vent one's frustration. Inward physical violence is that which is directed towards oneself, by restraining oneself or holding back from acting or reacting. It is choosing to be in total control of oneself and showing no emotions or feelings whatsoever. This violent suppression of emotions is considered a violent act. Physical aloofness and inward physical violence are sometimes mistaken one for the other. Whereas inward physical violence is a violent act towards oneself, physical aloofness is a violent act towards another. Unlike outward physical violence, though, physical aloofness is committing a violent act towards another by actually holding back from, ignoring or disregarding another, and thus cutting all means of communication, even ones that can be potentially as harmful as outwardly physical violence.

Rituals, games and habits are mainly indicated by actions or gestures rather than words. They, mostly, share the same characteristics and purposes. There are public and private rituals, most of which are also a means of bonding with others. Ritualistic habits and games allow the doers/characters to do things that might go against their beliefs and that they would normally not do in their everyday course of life. They give the doers/characters—whether consciously or unconsciously—feelings of comfort, belonging or reassurance. By analyzing the characters' rituals, habits and games, we gain a better understanding of them as well as their relationships, needs and behaviour.

The study then proceeds to examine Visual Language (Chapter Three), which includes setting and clothing as well as props. Visual language mainly

depends on our perception of what we (the audience) see on the stage. Yet, one can say that we integrate our perception of the play as well as the stagecraft with that of the actors and the director because the performances of the actors and the decisions of the director compromise our interpretation of the play and opinions of the characters. Nevertheless, all that the audience sees on the stage—be it setting, clothes or props--communicate to them the author's intention regarding the characters and their underlying behaviour.

Setting includes the space, the architecture, the furniture and the colours as well as the quality of the room. It is the basis on which we form a first impression. In Pinter's plays, the setting bears great significance on the characters and reflects on their existing conditions of being. Understanding how the setting reflects on and affects the characters helps us get a better understanding of them.

Clothes have many functions and are used in Pinter's plays as uniforms that befit the characters, what they do, how they live and the games they play. Clothes are also used in Pinter's plays as masks that, in hiding nakedness, reveal the characters' vulnerability. Clothes have an important communicative value and affect the way the audience perceives the characters and the way the characters perceive each other.

There are many types of props, be it hand props, personal props, costume props or ornamental props. Like setting and clothes, props too have great communicative and indicative value in Pinter's plays, which go beyond their immediate and apparent meaning. They support, strengthen and reinforce the

meaning of the plays. They are used in such ways—for example, as weapons or tools for seduction--to reflect the characters' emotional and behavioural states, such as animosity, crookedness, irritation, dominance, insecurity, etc. Their symbolic and metaphoric value clarifies the characters' behaviours in particular as well as the whole play in general.

The special blend of ingredients in Pinter's plays are like a bouquet of rare, wild flowers, arranged in a special way; only he can produce that outcome of aesthetic, exquisite and ethereal effect. For a better understanding and appreciation of Pinter's works, all aspects and components have to be thoroughly analysed and taken into consideration together.

INTRODUCTION

Language is a vehicle of expression. It is the means by which we communicate with others our feelings, concerns, values, beliefs and sentiments. There are many levels of language as communication; the main one is verbal language. Sometimes, however, verbal language can be confusing, ineffectual, misleading and confining. "Psychologists have long noted that, in communication between people, the rational verbal interchange is only the most superficial facet of multilevel communication" (Gordon, Stratagems to Uncover Nakedness, 3).

As a means of communication, verbal language is often never enough. Verbal language fails one and often lets one down for various reasons: First, verbal language becomes useless when we are unwilling to use it as a means of communicating with others; it becomes a means through which we hide our nakedness, our true selves, our thoughts and our feelings. According to Pinter, "[o]ne way of looking at speech is to say that it is a constant stratagem to cover nakedness" (Gordon, ibid, 4). For example, in The Homecoming, Teddy never communicates verbally his true feelings or thoughts to the others. Yet, certain involuntary actions betray him, and reveal his inner feelings. Second, verbal language becomes a cage when we are unable to use it as a tool or vehicle of expression; when we fail in our attempts to express ourselves or communicate with others through words alone, we become trapped in our isolation and frustration. In his essay, John Pesta states that Pinter believes that "[f]ailure to communicate is a sign of man's isolation within himself" (Pesta, 134). This is quite obvious in The Dumb Waiter, where we see Ben not only unwilling to communicate through words with Gus (out of fear of being punished or

reprimanded), but also incapable of using words to convey his feelings of anxiety, frustration, insecurity and apprehension. Third, unless we all speak and understand the same verbal language or tongue, we will not be able to communicate with one another; the words used by one will mean nothing and will sound like gibberish to the other.

True to our human nature, we do what we always do best when we are forced into a conversation: if we do not wish to communicate our thoughts and feelings with one another, we bombard others and are bombarded with a torrent of empty, meaningless words and we engage in trivial, inconsequential small talk instead of opening up and expressing our true feelings. In an interview, Pinter stated that "[p]eople fall back on anything they can lay their hands on verbally to keep away from the danger of knowing and of being known" (Gordon, Stratagems to Uncover Nakedness, 4). We hide our true selves, or rather cover our nakedness, and we rationalize that we are simply trying to protect ourselves from being hurt, ridiculed or criticized

When verbal language fails us, it becomes a broken vehicle or an inadequate tool that distorts, restricts, frustrates and traps; thus, it is neither fit nor reliable to express accurately thoughts, convey feelings or communicate concerns. Its weakness and ineptness can lead us to resort to another, more reliable, genuine and accurate means of communication: the nonverbal. The subtle and effective use of non-verbal communication is especially well illustrated in Harold Pinter's plays.

Because verbal language can be deceitful and unreliable, it serves as a great contrast to non-verbal language: whereas one camouflages, conceals and hides behind torrents of empty words, the other is more revealing and more imposing in its soundlessness and silent gestures. It is easy to miss what is communicated to us verbally, be it because we are incapable of understanding the language or the hidden meaning of words, or because we do not listen, or are unwilling to listen to others, or because we are pre-occupied with our own thoughts. Yet, it is usually hard to miss or turn a blind eye to what is communicated to us non-verbally--that which falls in and assaults our line of vision. In Pinter's plays, we often see that the verbal conceals. We will now look at how the non-verbal reveals.

Contrary to verbal language, non-verbal language is universal, understood by all. It reveals because it reflects genuine, spontaneous and involuntary actions, reactions and emotions. On the one hand, verbal communication stands for our unwillingness and/or our inability to communicate through words; thus, we—consciously and/or unconsciously--might resort to the non-verbal to express ourselves. On the other hand, the non-verbal does not *merely* fit where the verbal language fails; it is a language in its own right, not unlike sign language or mother-infant language. Non-verbal language is a part of our normal everyday communication--whether or not we are a hundred percent conscious of the fact--that has meaning and function. It is a language characterized by its stillness, soundlessness, wordlessness, impression and gesticulation; thus, it is neither surprising nor unusual for some people to be unaware of its existence. The

"unconscious" is to psychoanalysis what "non-verbal communication" is to language. Both--the unconsciousness and non-verbal language--belong to the same category: that of the hidden, inner truth, which springs on one and catches one—actors, audience, characters--unawares.

Close attention to non-verbal language can therefore reveal important dimensions of the author's vision and intention--in this case, the author being Harold Pinter. Pinter uses the various modes or constituents of non-verbal language in order to reveal, unmask the characters of all but the naked truth.

> [T]he apparently bizarre behavior of characters, who shift back and forth between psychological and symbolic modes; the pervasive sense of menace; the silences...though they are all significant devices for conveying Pinter's vision, are not the substance of what is conveyed. They are means rather than ends.
> (Ganz, 12)

"Means" to what? To give us insight into what the characters are, want or fear. That is the end of Pinter's use of non-verbal language. Unlike novels where the author uses the narrator's voice as a tool to describe in details the characters' actions, feelings and thoughts, the dramatist cannot do that in his plays. Rather, the dramatist has to resort to different means of communication appropriate to his genre. So, he might rely on nonverbal language. In Harold Pinter's plays, there is a lot of emphasis on the non-verbal—silences, gestures and settings—which he uses as a means of communication. Pinter's use of the non-verbal is not just naturalistic, but symbolic; its use is a conscious technique on Pinter's part, as a means of communication—or, sometimes, non-communication--between the characters, but of communication between the playwright and the

audience. It is also the playwright's subtle way of revealing important information to the audience about the characters, their environment and their relationships.

It is certainly undeniable that Pinter's theatre is true to everyday life and everyday speech—whether realistic or symbolic--with all its misunderstandings, difficulties, absurdities, imperfections, obsessions and paranoia. In a program note to a production of his play The Infernal Machine, Jean Cocteau wrote that "the point is not to put life upon the stage, but to make the stage live." Harold Pinter, who succeeds in making the stage live through his plays, skilfully achieves Cocteau's goal of dramatic philosophy. Through his techniques, Pinter creates his own reality on the stage, which is as imperfect, frightening, confining and chaotic as the real world. More specifically, Esslin states that "Pinter's theatre is a theatre of language...Words, in Pinter's plays, become weapons of domination and subservience, silences explode, nuances of vocabulary strip human beings to the skin" (Esslin, Peopled Wound, 42). He also states that "Pinter's clinically accurate ear for the absurdity of the ordinary speech enables him to transcribe everyday conversation in all its repetitiveness, incoherence, and lack of logic or grammar" (Esslin, Theatre of the Absurd, 243). Pinter sees the absurdity of speech and registers it in his small talk, be it the "delayed-action effect resulting from differences in the speed of thinking between people...the misunderstandings arising from inability to listen; incomprehension of polysyllabic words used for show by the more articulate characters; mishearing; and false anticipation" (Esslin, ibid, 243).

Non-verbal language, however, is also quite important, if not more important, in Pinter's work. "Perhaps Pinter's greatest contribution is to rediscover the wordless quality of our language, to recover what Rilke called "language where languages end" (Hollis, 123). It seems that Pinter's use of the different levels of non-verbal communication is more important than that of most other writers'. For example, unlike many other absurdists--whose "central tenet...is the breakdown, even the impossibility, of communication in our time" (Hollis, 13)—Pinter "does not believe that communication is impossible but fearful" (Pesta, 134). People often do not want to be understood. Unlike other playwrights, Pinter does not merely illustrate the frequent breakdown in verbal communication, or point to the failure of language. Rather, through subtle techniques, Pinter demonstrates the "deliberate evasion of communication" by the verbal (Pesta, 134). He does not need to overtly direct the audience's attention to the avoidance of or the breakdown in communication and the reasons underlying it; these are quite apparent in the characters' actions, reactions and surroundings. What he sets up in its place is non-verbal language, which is one of the supporting pillars in Pinter's work, without which his work weakens, if not collapses. It is also like a fabric that Pinter weaves, without which his unique tableaux become full of gaps and holes. In addition, it is an essential ingredient in Pinter's recipe, without which his exceptional form of drama would lose its special flavor.

Non-verbal language in Pinter can be broken down into several components. It includes: 1) *Silent language*, which includes silences, pauses, dots and dashes. 2) B*ody language*, which includes mime, gestures, physical violence, physical aloofness, rigidity of character and rituals—sexual or otherwise. 3) V*isual language*, or stagecraft, which includes setting / scenery, lighting, sound effects, furniture, clothes and props.

Through a close study of three of Harold Pinter's plays, The Dumb Waiter, The Homecoming and The Lover, as well as through specific use of some of Pinter's other works, I shall illustrate and analyze the manifestation, importance, meaning and function of all of these types of non-verbal communication in his works.

CHAPTER ONE:

SILENT LANGUAGE

1.1.INTRODUCTION

Silent language is not an absence of a response, but an absence of a sound, word or input in response—whether forced or by choice--which is detectable by the auditory sense. There is, however, another sense that can detect the role of silence. "Silence is more than an absence and Pinter's gift has been to create dramatic representations of silence as a presence" (Hollis, 17). Silent language to communication is like a silent letter in a word; the fact that it is not pronounced does not mean it does not exist. Its role or function is not always obvious or tangible; yet, like the subconscious, it is present. One has to take into consideration that, in many cases, words that have silent letters are derived from other languages where these letters play a role. The silent mode of communication is the powerhouse of the emotional and thinking process, where the inner feelings, thoughts, conflicts, analyses and reflections silently occur over varied time-intervals. "Silence itself is a form of response and not a neutral stance...[It] is defined in relationship to words, as the pause in music receives its meaning from the group of notes round it. This silence is a moment of language; being silent is not being dumb; it is to refuse to speak, and therefore to keep on speaking" (Quigley, The Pinter Problem, 55, 57). Almost all animals can make sounds. Without silent language as a means of communication, humans lose what distinguishes them from other living creatures: their humanity and their ability--during silence--to analyze, sort out and comprehend the meaning of their actions, reactions, thoughts and feelings.

Silent language in Pinter consists mainly of three types, which are silences, pauses, as well as dots and dashes. Peter Hall, who successfully directed many of Pinter's plays, said in an interview that he not only asked the actors to learn the words, but also "to be absolutely aware" of what he called "Harold's shorthand." Pinter's shorthand is his technique of using silences, pauses as well as dots and dashes. Critics recognize that Pinter "has his technique...: If there is a pause in the proceedings, for a small pause he puts three dots; for a large pause he puts "Pause"; for a very long pause he puts "Silence" (Hall, 16). Each one of these different "pauses" has a specific purpose and function that distinguishes it from the others, and which changes the whole meaning of the context at that moment. Esslin states that "Pinter's pauses and silences are often the climaxes of his plays, the still centres of the storm, the nuclei of tension around which the whole action is structured" (Esslin, in Ganz, 56). It is in these dots, dashes, silences and pauses—long or short—that most of the real action takes place. Hall was quite aware of this "precise musical notation" in Pinter's text; he writes:

> The longest break is marked *silence*: the character comes out of it in a different state to when he or she began it; the next is marked *pause*, which is a crisis point, filled with the unsaid; and the shortest is marked with three dots, which is a plain hesitation. The actors had to understand why there are these differences. They chafed a little but finally accepted that what was not said often spoke as forcefully as the words themselves. The breaks represent a journey in the actors emotions, sometimes a surprising transition.
>
> (Billington, 176)

Silent language is based on genuine thoughts and feelings; understanding its force and power in communication is essential to communicating in general and to understanding Pinter's work in particular. For example, in the last part or scene in The Caretaker, we see an incredible piece of writing that combines the use of dots, pauses and a silence before the curtain comes down. The character Davies makes a detrimental error when he tries to play the two brothers—Mick and Aston--against each other, and to replace either of them. When Davies realizes his fatal mistake, he tries to pledge his loyalty to one brother, then the other, but alas, it is too late. In this last scene, we see Davies frantically trying to convince Aston—after having failed with Mick--to keep him on, promising anything and everything. The greatness of this scene is not so much in Davies' use or choice of words, but rather in Pinter's use of all these non-verbal means of silence to communicate Davies' distress, hopelessness, anxiety and despair.

Davies: I just came back for my pipe.
Aston : Oh yes.
Davies: I got out and...half way down I...I
suddenly...found out...you see...that I hadn't
got my pipe. So I came back to get it. ...
Pause. He moves to Aston.
That ain't the same plug, is it, you been...?
Pause.
Still can't get anywhere with it, eh?
Pause.
Well, if you... persevere, in my opinion, you 'll
probably...
Pause.
Listen. ...
Pause.
You didn't mean that, did you, about me
stinking, did you?
Pause.
Did you? You been a good friend to me. You
took me in. You took me in, you didn't ask me

no questions, you give me a bed, you been a mate to me. Listen. I been thinking, why I made all them noises, it was because of the draught, see, that draught was on me as I was sleeping, made me make noises without me knowing it, so I been thinking, what I mean to say, if you was to give me your bed, and you have my bed, there's not all that difference between them, they're the same sort of bed, if I was to have yourn, you sleep, wherever bed you're in, so you have mine, I have yourn, an that 'll be all right, I'll be out of the draught, see, I mean, you don't mind a bit of wind, you need a bit of air, I can understand that, you being in that place that time, with all them doctors and all they done, close up, I know them places, too hot, you see, they are always too hot, I had a peep in one once, nearly suffocated me, so I reckon that'd be the best way out of it, we swap beds, and then we could get down to what we were saying, I 'd look after the place for you, I'd keep an eye on it for you, for you, not the other...not for...for your brother, you see, not for him, for you, I'll be your man, you say the word, just say the word. ...

Pause.

What do you think of this I'm saying?

Pause.

Aston : No, I like sleeping in this bed.

Davies: But you don't understand my meaning!

Aston : Anyway, that one's my brother's bed.

Davies: Your brother?

Aston : Any time he stays here. This is my bed. It's the only one I can sleep in.

Davies: But your brother's gone! He's gone!

Pause.

Aston : No. I couldn't change beds.

Davies: But you don't understand my meaning!

Aston : Anyway, I'm going to be busy. I've got that shed to get up. If I don't get it up now it'll never go up. Until it's up I can't get started.

Davies: I'll give you a hand to put up your shed, that's what I'll do.

Pause.

I'll give you a hand! We'll both put up that shed together! See? Get it done in next to no time! Do you see what I'm saying?

Pause.

Aston : No. I can get it up myself.

Davies: But listen. I'm with you, I'll be here, I'll do it for you!

Pause.

We'll do it together!

Pause.

Christ we'll change beds!

Aston *moves to the window and stands with his back to*

Davies.

You mean you're throwing me out? You can't do that. Listen man, listen man, I don't mind, you see, I don't mind, I'll stay, I don't mind, I'll tell you what, if you don't want to change beds, we'll keep it as it is, I'll stay in the same bed, maybe if I can get a stronger piece of sacking, like, to go over the window, keep out the draught, that'll do it, what do you say, we'll keep it as it is?

Pause.

Aston : No.

Davies: Why...not?

Aston *turns to look at him.*

Aston : You make too much noise.

Davies: But...but...look...listen...listen here...I mean. ...

Aston *turns back to the window.*

What am I to do?

Pause.

What shall I do?

Pause.

Where am I going to go?

Pause.

If you want me to go...I'll go. You just say the word.

Pause.

I'll tell you what though...them shoes...them shoes

you gave me...they're working out all right...they are all right. Maybe I could... get down. ...

> Aston *remains still, his back to him, at the window.*
>
> Listen...if I ...got down...if I was to...get my papers...would you...would you let...would you...if I got down...and got my....
>
> *Long silence.*
>
> *Curtain.*
>
> (Pinter, Complete Works: Two, 84-87*)*

During those instances when the dots are used, we see Davies frantically struggling in his search for the right words to use, those words that would be most effective in pleading his case and convincing Aston to let him stay. What Davies knew, and Aston was not well aware of, was that Davies' offer had already been turned down by Mick; Aston was Davies' last chance--the one thing, or rather person, that stood between him and the street. Those brief moments where the dots were used spoke volumes of hesitation and vulnerability. In some instances, Davies let his sentences trail; it is quite possible that he was overwhelmed by his emotions of fear and anxiety at being turned out. It might also be his subtle technique in the art of persuasion, where, by leaving some of his sentences unfinished, he was counting on Aston to fill in the blanks, thus ensuring that Aston was listening to him and processing what he was saying. Davies might also be hoping that, in the process, it dawned on Aston that, had he been in Davies' shoes, he would have had that same common universal feelings of distress and worry, which was quite evident—whether consciously or unconsciously--in his arguments.

The extensive use of pauses here is also an effective technique. It is like an overload or a saturation that grabs our attention and forces us to listen to what is not being said and to the array of emotions and expectations that take place

during the pauses. During these pauses, we see Davies waiting expectantly for any sort of a favorable response from Aston to the arguments he was making. He was giving Aston the chance to respond, since Aston did not feel free to jump in, or to cut him off. It is also quite possible that Davies was using the time that a pause allowed to study Aston and the effects of his words on him, before planning his next words--all that done rapidly, of course.

As to the long silence that ends the play, it is just one of many instances of "silence" that leaves Pinter's audiences and readers speechless. Just by reading this last scene—not only the words, but also the dots, pauses and silence—one can clearly see Davies' distress; a drowning man holding on to nothing to save his life; a manipulative man--pathetic, base and human--demeaned by himself and another. It is quite hard in those agonizing breaks in the text--when all the emotional turmoil is taking place--not to hear ones deafening heart beating violently.

In this chapter, I shall analyze the use of dots and dashes, as well as conduct an in-depth analysis of the silences and pauses to illustrate their meaning, importance and function in three of Pinter's plays: The Dumb Waiter, The Homecoming and The Lover.

1.2.DOTS AND DASHES

Dots and dashes are an integral part of Pinter's writing technique, no less so than silences and pauses. It is important to understand that one will often

encounter these three different forms of silence together in many of the scenes, for Pinter uses them extensively. They add to the richness and understanding of the texts. Yet, as I already mentioned, it is important to keep in mind the distinction between these three different types of silences. No one is more aware of the importance of the distinction between these silent means of communication than Pinter himself. In his speech, "Between the Lines," Pinter talked about the reason why The Caretaker, which ran for a year in London, found more acceptance when first performed than did The Birthday Party, which ran for only a week. He said:

> In The Birthday Party I employed a certain amount of dashes in the text, between phrases. In The Caretaker I cut out the dashes and used dots instead. So that instead of, say: 'Look, dash, who, dash, I, dash, dash, dash': the text would read: 'Look, dot, dot, dot, who, dot, dot, dot, I, dot, dot, dot, dot.' So it's possible to deduce from this that dots are more popular than dashes and that's why The Caretaker had a longer run than The Birthday Party. The fact that in neither case you could actually hear the dots and the dashes in performance is beside the point. You can't fool the critics for long. They can tell a dot from a dash a mile off, even when they can hear neither.
>
> (Gale, Butter's Going Up, 273)

Whether Pinter was serious or joking about his remark concerning the critics is not quite clear. One can almost say he was serious in a joking manner. Often comedy is a funny way of telling the truth. In this case, Pinter told the critics what he thought in an amusing and a playful way. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that there is a distinction between dots, dashes, pauses and silences; that is something that Pinter is well aware of and quite serious about. Not only is there

a distinction between these different types of individual silences, but also among the individual categories; for example, in Pinter's world there is a difference in meaning and function between two dots and three dots. Like all else in Pinter's work, dots, their number, use and function are precise and calculated.

> Kenneth Haigh, who played James [in the stage version of The Collection], remembers Pinter giving Michael Hordern, who was Harry, a note which has since become the stuff of legend. 'Michael,' said Pinter at one point, 'I wrote dot, dot, dot, and you're giving me dot, dot.' It sounds absurd. But Hordern, far from being bemused, instinctively grasped Pinter's point: that there is all the difference in the world between a long pause and a short pause, and that much of the meaning of Pinter lies in the musical rhythm as well as the stage picture.
>
> (Billington, 141)

Some might find this amusing, but Pinter's meticulousness, when it comes to writing, is far from being done for entertainment purposes. Only by understanding his techniques and closely analyzing his work can we begin to see the importance of this distinction between the different means of silent communication and how they reflect on the characters and their environment.

Pinter's dots are equivalent to "small pauses." These dots are small breaks in the text that last for a short duration of time. In a way, the function of dots in Pinter's plays is not unlike the function of ellipsis in, for example, quoting a passage. In both cases, we omit unnecessary words, sometimes even phrases. Dots constitute those brief moments where one hesitates or looks for a specific word to convey to another what one really means. Dots could also replace a word or a remainder of a sentence when one is either unwilling to or incapable of finishing what one is saying. Sometimes, one simply assumes, or takes for

granted, that the person one is talking to understands what one wants to say; so one does not feel compelled to finish the rest of the sentence. One just lets the sentence trail, confident that no words are necessary; this exists in one's everyday conversations. For example, one hears others ending their sentences with some of the following: "you know...," "you know how it is..." or "you know/understand what I am saying/talking about...".

In The Homecoming, the dots indicate Ruth's hesitation and her careful search in her choice of words, weighing the effects they have on her father-in law, for at that point Ruth is uncertain how Max would feel if he knew about her past.

> Ruth: I'm sure Teddy's very happy...to know that
> you're pleased with me.
> *Pause.*
> I think he wondered whether you would be
> pleased with me.
> Max : But you're a charming woman.
> *Pause.*
> Ruth: I was...
> Max : What?
> *Pause.*
> What she say?
> *They all look at her.*
> Ruth: I was...different...when I met Teddy...first.
> (Pinter, The Homecoming, 49-59)

Not only was there hesitation in Ruth's breaks in speech, but also embarrassment and wonder. The pauses here, which will be discussed later in this chapter, reflect on Ruth's internal struggle and decision making. At that point, Ruth did not know the exact kind of family her in-laws were, with all their pasts, secrets and hidden skeletons. The pauses indicate the time Ruth needed to plan the depth of and direction in which she wanted to take the conversation while the

dots indicated her hesitation and brief breaks in speech in which she was carefully choosing her words.

In that same scene, we see Teddy dismissing Ruth's reference concerning her past, and instead singing her praises and the great life they shared back in America. The scene continues as follows:

> Teddy: No you weren't. You were the same.
> Ruth : I wasn't.
> Max : Who cares? Listen, live in the present, what are you worrying about? I mean, don't forget the earth's about five thousand million years old, at least. Who can afford to live in the past?
> *Pause.*
> Teddy: She's a great help to me over there. She's a wonderful wife and mother. She's a very popular woman. She's got lots of friends. It's a great life, at the University... you know it's a very good life. We've got a lovely house...we've got all...we've got everything we want. It's a very stimulating environment.
> *Pause.*
> My department... is highly successful.
> *Pause.*
> We've got three boys, you know?
> (Pinter, ibid, 50)

It is doubtful that Teddy is bragging; he does not seem to be the type. Yet, it is obvious that he lacks self-confidence. He is painting a colorful and bright picture of his life with Ruth in America—a picture that is quite different from the one Ruth paints. He wants to lead his family to believe that he has made it, that he has got it all—the perfect life, the perfect wife, the perfect job in an excellent department, and the perfect three boys. Teddy feels the need to show his family that he has risen above them and his old self, the Teddy they once knew. Teddy is simply waiting for his family's praise, approval and recognition, which will feed his

feelings of self-worth and self-esteem; only then will his "success" mean anything to him. To achieve that, Teddy has to close his eyes to the imperfections in his wife or the problems he might be having in his marriage and paint with clever strokes a flawless picture of his life. Like his father, he cannot afford to live in the past; who knows what hidden skeletons would be revealed. In those brief breaks in his speech that are indicated by the dots, we see him inwardly and silently struggling to find the right words, but as always in control of his outward emotions. The pauses indicate the time Teddy waits to see the effects of his words on his family members and judge their reaction. He might have been even waiting for their admiration and adulation.

In The Homecoming, after Joey had failed to go all the way with Ruth—be it as a result of his impotence or Ruth's calculated unwillingness—Lenny called Ruth a tease and Teddy defended her, suggesting that it was perhaps Joey who did not have the right touch. Lenny defends Joey's honor and pushes him into telling a story about his latest conquest.

> Lenny: Joey? Not the right touch? Don't be ridiculous. He's had more dolly than you've had cream cakes. He's irresistible. He's one of the few and far between. Tell him about the last bird you had, Joey.
>
> *Pause.*
>
> Joey : What bird?
>
> Lenny: The last bird! When we stopped the car...
>
> Joey : Oh, that...yes...well, we were in Lenny's car one night last week...
>
> Lenny: The Alfa.
>
> Joey :And er...bowling down the road...
>
> Lenny: Up near the Scrubs.
>
> Joey : Yes, up over by the scrubs...
>
> Lenny: We were doing a little survey of North Paddington.

Joey : And er...it was pretty late, wasn't it?
Lenny: Yes, it was late. Well?
Pause.
Joey : And then we...well, by the kerb, we saw this parked car...with a couple of girls in it.
Lenny: And their escorts.
Joey : Yes, there were two geezers in it. Anyway...
Pause.
What we do then?
Lenny: We stopped the car and got out!
Joey :Yes...we got out...and we told the...two escorts...to go away...which they did...and then we...got the girls out of the car...
Lenny: We didn't take them over the Scrubs.
Joey : Oh, no. Not over the Scrubs. Well, the police would have noticed us there...you see. We took them over a bombed site.
Lenny: Rubble. In the rubble.
Joey : Yes, plenty of rubble.
Pause.
Well...you know then we had them.
Lenny: You've missed out the best bit. He's missed out the best bit!
Joey : What bit?

(Pinter, ibid, 66-67)

In this scene, Lenny and Joey's story does not seem to make much sense; it is quite unbelievable and unrealistic. Joey uses dots extensively to buy time; he uses the brief time provided by the breaks/dots to fabricate his story, or to quickly try to come up with the rest of the story based on the cues given to him by Lenny. Sometimes, when Joey is stuck, he lets his sentence trail, or merely echoes what Lenny had said, and there is a pause as if he has forgotten, or is trying to remember the events of that night. Of course, Lenny comes to his rescue and fills in the blanks; this provides Joey with the perfect opportunity to make it look as if it jogged his memory. Thus, Joey repeats what Lenny says, then briefly stops before proceeding with the story until he hits another mental hurdle and awaits

Lenny's rescue, and so on. It is quite obvious that Joey has no clue what Lenny is talking about; the breaks in the conversation show his hesitation, confusion and utter loss. At times, Joey sounds even embarrassed. The pauses show Joey's confusion and effort to take the time to try to figure out what Lenny is talking about before proceeding on. The dots, our main concern here, show his loss, hesitation and effort to find the right and most vague words to proceed with the story without being called a liar. For example, when he says: "well...you know...then we had them," that, coming from someone who, as Lenny puts it, is "irresistible" and who's had "more dolly than [Teddy has] had cream cakes," just confirms that this incident did not happen anywhere other than in Lenny and Joey's imagination. It also hints at Joey's inexperience or innocence when it comes to sex—that, of course, coupled with his recent failure with Ruth. When Lenny rhetorically asks Joey: "You satisfied? Don't tell me you're satisfied without going the whole hog," (Pinter, ibid, 68), Joey responds: "I've been the whole hog plenty of times. Sometimes...you can be happy...and not go the whole hog. Now and again...you can be happy...without going any hog" (Pinter, ibid, 68). In those instances of dotted silence, Joey is choosing his words carefully, lest he says something that shows that he is green. He does not fool Lenny, who simply stares at him with probable disbelief; after all, it is Lenny who helped him fabricate that story to save face!

In The Lover, there is a scene where Sarah's curiosity gets the better of her; she is curious as to where she fits in Richard's "extramarital affair."

Sarah : Richard?
Richard: Mnn?

Sarah : Do you ever think about me at all...when you're with her?
Richard: Oh, a little. Not much.
Pause.
We talk about you.
Sarah : You talk about me with her?
Richard: Occasionally. It amuses her.
Sarah : Amuses her?
Richard (*choosing a book*): Mmnn.
Sarah : How...do you talk about me?
(Pinter, The Lover, 170)

In the first instance where the dots are used, Sarah sounds hesitant; she searches for the least offensive and most delicately-put statement, so as to clarify what she is asking. It is as if she is afraid of hearing the answer she will get. After a pause, Richard reaches a decision and decides to give Sarah a more specific answer. In the second instance where the dots are used, we see Sarah's vulnerability yet determination in asking that bitter-sweet question, which on the one hand might sooth her pride and rest her insecurity and jealousy, but on the other hand, might hurt her feelings.

In all those instances when Pinter uses dots, he means those brief moments that smoothly fit in the text and allow the characters, as in real life, to search for the right words, or--unconsciously—hesitate. Any other form of a break at these points would not have been suitable; a dash would have been too harsh, whereas a pause or a silence would have been too long.

To turn to the next type, the silences indicated by dashes seem to be longer in duration than those indicated by dots, which makes these dash breaks in the conversation seem untimely and sometimes even hard to follow. In

addition, dashes do not seem to fit in the text as smoothly as dots do; they seem to be abrupt and harsh. Dashes make a sharp break in the continuity of the sentence. Dashes are more like interjections—a strong persistent thought that breaks the flow of a conversation and explodes out of turn, or an after-thought that invades the stream of consciousness and interrupts the flow of conversation. Dashes can also be an abrupt stop in one's conversation due to an external interruption--be it physical, verbal, or simply a noise.

In The Dumb Waiter, Ben relates to Gus an incident that he read in the newspaper. Ben interrupts his narrative a couple of times to go back to the source of his story—the newspaper—to verify the facts.

Ben (*slamming his paper down*): Kaw!
Gus: What's that?
Ben: A child of eight killed a cat!
Gus: Get away.
Ben: It's a fact. What about that, eh? A child of eight killing a cat!
Gus: How did he do it?
Ben: It was a girl.
Gus: How did she do it?
Ben: She---
(*He picks up the paper and studies it.*)
It doesn't say.
Gus: Why not?
Ben: Wait a minute. It just says---Her brother, aged eleven, viewed the incident from the toolshed.
Gus: Go on!
Ben: That's bloody ridiculous.
Pause.
Gus: Bet he did it.
Ben: Who?
Gus: The brother.
Ben: I think you're right.
Pause.
(*Slamming down the paper*)

> What about that, eh? A kid of eleven killing a cat and blaming it on his little sister of eight! It's enough to---
> (*He breaks off in disgust and seizes the paper*).
> (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 843)

In the first instance where a dash is used, Ben abruptly stops the flow of his narrative so as to verify the facts he is telling Gus. In the second instance, again, Ben stops, searches for a certain piece of information, then reads it, so as to give the correct information. In both examples, Ben stops talking quite suddenly before searching for the information, which takes more time than the use of dots would allow; thus it is only appropriate to use a dash here. In the third instance, the use of a dash is of a different nature. Ben breaks off his sentence because he is overwhelmed with emotions, more specifically disgust. The stage direction confirms that; it reads: "He breaks off in disgust." Whereas Ben's feeling of disgust is quite evident, it is ridiculous, given the nature of his job. Breaking the sentence off with an abrupt dash here seems befitting for the emotional state of aversion. The use of dots, in this case, would have not been appropriate. Dots seem to go with softer, gentler, more hesitant and more vulnerable emotions.

In The Dumb Waiter, we see Gus constantly getting on Ben's nerves; one way in which Gus accomplishes that is by constantly wondering and questioning. For example, after much speculation about the place they are in, their job and Wilson, Ben grabs the paper so as not to have to talk to Gus any more. When Gus asks Ben how many times he has read the paper, Ben gets offended.

> Ben (angrily): What do you mean?
> Gus: I was just wondering how many times you'd---
> Ben: What are you doing, criticizing me?
> Gus: No, I was just---

Ben: You'll get a swipe round your earhole if you don't watch your step.
Gus: Now look here, Ben---
Ben: I'm not looking anywhere! (*He addresses the room.*) How many times have I---! A bloody liberty!

(Pinter, ibid, 848)

In this example, we see in the first three instances where the dash is used that Ben interrupts Gus. Ben has no intention of giving Gus the chance to explain, clarify or defend himself. Ben is on the offensive because he thinks that Gus is criticizing him and attacking his character. The use of a dash in these instances is quite appropriate, for it is the suitable technical tool to be used in bringing Gus to a sharp halt. This technique also applies later in the same scene, when both Ben and Gus are interrupted, on more that one occasion, by the loud noise—"clatter and bang"--of the serving hatch, or rather, the "dumb waiter."

Gus: [I]t was the girl that made me think—
(*There is a loud clatter and a racket in the bulge of wall between the beds, of something descending* [...])
[...]
Gus: What do you think of that?
Ben: Well—
(*The box goes up. Ben levels his revolver.*)

(Pinter, ibid, 848)

In the fourth instance of the quote on the previous page, when Ben uses the dash in this scene, it is actually Ben himself who breaks off his sentence, in indignation, before he swears. Ben's ire and irritation are the result of being criticized by the annoying, clown-like Gus, which Ben finds unfathomable and quite unacceptable. Ben's strong feelings about the issue are quite apparent; not only because of a combination of his emotional tone as well as his gesture of

addressing the room—as if the furniture would have joined him in his indignation—but also because he withheld an emotional eruption or explosion. By abruptly and sharply withholding or cutting off his strong emotions--instead of expressing them, then following them with a brief break before proceeding to swear in anger--Ben seems to be much more powerful than if he had simply finished his sentence in an explosion.

In The Lover, in one of the few instances where we see the use of a dash, we are tempted to overlook it, thinking that it is insignificant. In this scene, Richard/Max starts to wonder and question Sarah about their affair, while Sarah attempts to reason with him.

> Sarah: Darling. You don't really think you could have what we have with your wife, do you? I mean, my husband, for instance, completely appreciates that I -
> Max : How does he bear it, your husband? How does he bear it? Doesn't he smell me when he comes back in the evening? What does he *say*? He must be mad. Now what's the time – half–past four – now when he's sitting in his office, knowing what's going on here, what does he *feel*, how does he bear it?
> Sarah: Max –
>
> (Pinter, The Lover, 182)

In the first instance, we see Sarah's sentence cut off by Max/Richard. He is so disgusted and overwhelmed by his emotions that he can hear no more of Sarah's empty words and pleas. Yet, in the second instance, it is Sarah who seems shocked with emotions. She follows Max's name with a dash as if howling his name in horror and disbelief at what he is saying. The break in Sarah's sentence indicates her inability to speak.

Dots and dashes, like anything else in language or punctuation, have their own meaning, purpose and function. Each has its own uses; they can not be used interchangeably. If used properly, as they are by Pinter, their presence adds much to the text and better conveys the speaker's meaning.

1.3.SILENCES

The " 'line with no words in it' ...has all the ambiguity and complexity of true poetry, and it is also a metaphor, an image of overwhelming power" (Esslin, in Ganz, 56). To learn the meaning of a word, one usually consults a dictionary. The explanations seem to vary from one dictionary to the other; some are better than others, and some are more contemporary or modified than others, yet the fundamental meaning is always the same. One definition of silence, in a contemporary dictionary, is: "n. stillness, absence of noise; refraining from speech. –v.t. make silent" (Webster's New Dictionary, 346). Another definition of silence, in an older dictionary, is: "1. n. Abstinence from speech or noise, failure to mention or avoidance of mentioning something, taciturnity, absence of sound, oblivion, order to cease talk. ... 2. v.t. Reduce to s. by stifling, overpowering, confuting, &c. ... silent a, keeping or marked by or given to or done in s., soundless, mute, tacit, taciturn" (Pocket Oxford Dictionary, 771). Whereas the latter definition is more clear than the former, both are reliable sources that convey an accurate meaning of the word. Yet, a dictionary definition is not enough to comprehend the different dimensions of the word; one has to look at

the application of the word in everyday life or, at least, a simulation of it, such as in the theatre. According to Martin Esslin, "*drama* is a kind of poetry that *can* find room for the emotional charge of the unspoken line. What speaks on the stage is the situation itself: the characters who confront each other in silence; what has gone before and the expectation, the silence of what will happen next" (Esslin, in Ganz, 56).

Through the analysis of the different types of silences as well as their meanings, functions and application in Pinter's plays, one will come to see their importance. In The Language of Silence—which is a study of "silences as a multidimensional mode of expression intentionally chosen by [playwrights] to convey both structure and statement" (Kane, 15)—Leslie Kane suggests that "[I]n the play, as in life, silence is a moment in language" (Kane, 17). It has specific meaning and purpose. It is a means "to express the unspoken and the unspeakable" (Kane, 14):

> The dumb silence of apathy, the sober silence of solemnity, the fertile silence of awareness, the active silence of perception, the baffled silence of conclusion, the uneasy silence of impasse, the muzzled silence of outrage, the expectant silence of waiting, the reproachful silence of censure, the tacit silence of approval, the vituperative silence of accusation, the eloquent silence of awe, the unnerving silence of menace, the peaceful silence of communion, and the irrevocable silence of death illustrate by their unspoken response to speech that experiences exist for which we lack the words.
>
> (Kane, 14-15)

There are various types of silences and they have a variety of meanings. There are the silences that are unconsciously self-imposed; those are born out of fear

of getting hurt or ridiculed; these silences show inability to communicate. There are the silences that are consciously self-imposed; those silences are born out of the desire for self-preservation and show an unwillingness to communicate. There are the silences that are imposed on one by others, whether directly or indirectly; those silences are born out of reverence, awe, or fear for one's safety and well-being and show both inability and unwillingness to communicate. Thus silences could be the means by which one—consciously and/or unconsciously--shows unwillingness and/or inability to communicate. In addition, silences could be a means to intimidate, subdue, overpower or suppress another—that is, they are a means of establishing authority and gaining the upper hand. In his book Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction, Mark Knapp states that silences could sometimes be imposed by the nature of the environment, the duration of a given event, or self-imposed (Knapp, 359-360). Knapp further contends that silence "can mean virtually anything—anything that can be said verbally at least. Silence is charged with those words which have just been exchanged; words which have been exchanged in the past; words which haven't or will not be said, but which are fantasized; and words which may actually be said in the future....The meaning of silence, like the meaning of words, can only be deduced after careful analysis of the communicators, subject matter, time, place, culture" (Knapp, 360).

Silences serve all these functions and more in Pinter. In Butter's Going Up, a critical analysis of Harold Pinter's work, Steven Gale states that silences "signal the conclusion of one line of thinking and the beginning of a new subject

of conversation" (Gale, 274). Silences could be a technical cue that the playwright uses to signal to the characters and the audience alike to prepare them for a new line of thought or of conversation. Silences give both the characters and the audience time to recover from whatever was being said, to reflect on it and digest it before replying or moving on to other topics of conversation—meaningful or otherwise. The silences could also function as a means of a character's disapproval of another, or refusal or unwillingness to communicate his/her thought and/or feelings or to join in a conversation. A character's silence can render the character inaccessible and leaves the other character or characters with no other choice than to either carry on the conversation without the adamantly silent character until they hit another silence, or to move on to another topic of conversation. Knapp lists some of "the many interpersonal functions served by silence" as:

> (1) punctuation or accenting—drawing attention to certain words or ideas; (2) evaluating—providing judgements of another's behavior, showing favor or disfavor, agreement or disagreement, attacking (for example, not responding to a comment, greeting, or letter); (3) revelation—making something hidden known or hiding something by silence; (4) expression of emotions—the silence of disgust, sadness, fear, anger, or love; (5) mental activity—showing thoughtfulness and reflection or ignorance through silence.
>
> (Knapp, 360-361)

Silence is a device to fill up the deafening and uncomfortable space or sound of silence. "Harold writes in silence as much as he does in words; he defines silence by the noise on either side of it and the literal communication on either side of it" (Hall, 16). The character who receives the silence sometimes feels the

need to fill it with noise, usually in the form of aimless chatter, or by listening to music, or talking or singing out loud; anything to fill the overpowering silence. For example, in The Dumb Waiter, Gus more often than not fails to engage the reserved and unwilling Ben in a conversation. Thus, Gus gets into one-sided conversations, and rambles on about various irrelevant topics--a detailed description of the "crockery", his assessment of the room they are in, the bed sheets, etc. Gus' aimless chitchat is nothing but a sort of a noisy silence, which, instead of hiding, speaks volumes about his nervousness, anxiety and maybe even his loneliness. "There is the silence which lies behind language and which always threatens to break into our conversations in embarrassing ways. This is the silence that is most evident when the world is at its noisiest. This is the *silence which emerges when the most important things are left unsaid*" (Hollis, 15). Silences are also what Pinter ends his plays with. The most powerful silences are those last silent tableaux that Pinter draws at the end of his plays, as we saw in The Caretaker (Pinter, The Caretaker, 87); they fall heavily on the audience's ears, leave a lasting impression on its memory and provoke its thought. Last, but not least, there is the eternal silence of death that transports us into another realm of being and carries us to a new meaning of silence that is imposed, mystical and inevitable.

Pinter's The Dumb Waiter opens with a very long silence; nonetheless, there is a lot of action going on that provides the audience with information about both characters; it is more like a "mime" within the play. In the opening scene, Ben's use of the newspaper shows his impatience, annoyance, irritation, displeasure and

contempt toward Gus. The first silent scene tells the audience a lot about Ben--that he is impatient, irritable and grouchy. Later in the play, therefore, when Ben shows his vexation with Gus, the audience is not really surprised. In that same opening scene, Gus is introduced as childlike, curious and clownish. In a way, Gus' first silent, clown-like appearance parallels his last silent appearance, where he stumbles into the room stripped of everything: "his jacket, waistcoat, tie, holster and revolver" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 165). Whereas the first short silence silently reveals essential information about the two characters which is worth a thousand words, the last silence poses many questions and evokes thought and reflection on the immediate scene at hand as well as how it reflects on and fits into our everyday world. In this last "long silence," a wide spectrum of emotions—confusion, frustration, outrage, bafflement and alarm—must bolt through the characters as well as the audience/readers. For this final scene, words cannot explain this wide range of emotions that understandably vibrates through the two characters and which must have met its resonance in the audience. Pinter therefore uses silence to convey it all. This situation is an example of one of the many moments in life where words fail us, where they cannot express the extent of our emotions.

In The Homecoming, Lenny recounts to Ruth a story of his encounter with a certain Lady who had a proposal for him, his refusal because she was diseased with the pox, as well as her persistence in pursuing him and his ensuing violence towards her—he says he beat her up and even considered killing her. After a pause, Ruth was more interested to know how Lenny knew that the Lady was diseased, to which Lenny's response was:

Lenny: How did I know?
Pause.
I decided she was.
Silence.
You and my brother are newly-weds, are you?
(Pinter, The Homecoming, 31)

In the pause, Lenny is a little perplexed at the unexpected question Ruth has chosen to ask, for it is not the response he was seeking to provoke. He then comes up with: "I decided she was" and follows it with a silence. In the silence, Lenny is daring Ruth to challenge his authority on the subject, or to question his credibility or his decision on the issue. Lenny provides Ruth with ample time, probably half expecting some sort of a response or a come-back. When Ruth does not respond—be it because she took Lenny's word for it or did not want to get into that conversation with him or did not believe him—Lenny is forced to move on to another topic of conversation, thus ending this one unsuccessfully for him. Either Lenny is making up the story, or he can truly tell that the girl was diseased just by looking at her; in which case, this should give both Ruth and the audience a hint about Lenny's line of work. It is quite possible that Ruth figures that out and is thus both incapable of and unwilling to resume this conversation. It is also possible that Ruth does not want to continue that line of conversation lest Lenny find out about her past, so she meets his silent challenge with a silence of her own. All of these possible different interpretations are contained in the silences. This non-specific, deliberate open-endedness allows any interpretation by the audience.

Later in that same scene between Ruth and Lenny, Ruth, who flirts outrageously with him, seems to be testing him, based on his story of the diseased Lady.

Lenny: Excuse me, Shall I take this ashtray out of your way?
Ruth : It's not in my way.
Lenny: It seems in the way of your glass. The glass was about to fall. Or the ashtray. I'm rather worried about the carpet. It's not me, it's my father. He's obsessed with order and clarity. He doesn't like mess. So, as I don't believe you're smoking at the moment, I'm sure you won't object if I move the ashtray.
He does so.
And now perhaps I'll relieve you of your glass.
Ruth : I haven't quite finished.
Lenny:You've consumed quite enough, in my opinion.
Ruth : No, I haven't.
Lenny: Quite sufficient, in my opinion.
Ruth : Not in mine, Leonard.
Pause.
Lenny: Don't call me that, please.
Ruth : Why not?
Lenny: That's the name my mother gave me.
Pause.
Just give me the glass.
Ruth : No.
Pause.
Lenny: I'll take it, then.
Ruth : If you take the glass...I'll take you.
Pause.
Lenny: How about me taking the glass without you taking me?
Ruth : Why don't I just take you?
Pause.
Lenny: You're joking.
Pause.
You're in love, anyway, with another man. You've had a secret liaison with another man. His family didn't even know. Then you come here without a word of warning and start to make trouble.
She picks up the glass and lifts it towards him.

Ruth : Have a sip. Go on. Have a sip from my glass.
He is still.
Sit on my lap. Take a long cool sip.
She pats her lap. Pause.
She stands, moves to him with her glass.
Put your head back and open your mouth.
Lenny: Take that glass away from me.
Ruth : Lie on the floor. Go on. I'll pour it down your throat.
Lenny: What are you doing, making me some kind of proposal?
She laughs shortly, drains the glass.
Ruth : Oh, I was thirsty.
She smiles at him, puts the glass down, goes into the hall and up the stairs.
He follows into the hall and shouts up the stairs.
Lenny: What was that supposed to be? Some kind of proposal?
Silence.

(Pinter, ibid, 33-35)

In this scene, we see a test of will or a tug of war between Lenny and Ruth. Lenny insists on removing the ashtray in spite of Ruth's objection; it is as if by doing that he asserts himself or his authority. Ruth gives him this little victory, but calls his bluff on his macho-display. Ruth lets him remove the ashtray, but, when it comes to taking her glass before she is done with it, Ruth stands her ground. She makes outrageous proposals to Lenny and walks out on him; this is Ruth's way of showing Lenny who is the boss. Her forward, flirtatious and aggressive manner, pnctuated by pauses during which she seems to dare him to respond, causes Lenny shock, surprise, discomfort and confusion. Lenny asks Ruth several times what that was supposed to be, and if she was making him some sort of a proposal. Ruth simply laughs, smiles, ignores Lenny, then walks out on him, leaving his unanswered question echoing in the silence that follows. Like Lenny, we are left a little unsure of what had just passed between those two. We take the few moments offered by

the silence to digest what happened. Ruth has had her fun with Lenny; when she is done, she is unwilling to resume the conversation or game she is playing. Lenny is left in those few silent moments unsure of what to think, and probably a little perplexed as well as outraged that Ruth is not willing to respond. In this scene, during the many pauses, we see a battle of wills—Lenny's versus Ruth's--where each measures up his opponent, weighs his options, test how far he/she can go or plan the next move. Yet, it is in the final silence that we see Lenny left defeated.

In The Homecoming, we see Max, on numerous occasions, praising his old friend MacGregor and putting down Sam, who on more than one occasion gives us the feeling that he does not like MacGregor—Sam, too, would like Max's praise and affection. What makes things harder for Sam is that he knows MacGregor is not worthy of Max's esteem, for MacGregor betrayed Max with Jessie—Max's wife. It is quite obvious that Max is not aware of this and does not respect Sam's occupation and regards him as an invalid and a burden. He may harbour old feelings of resentment towards Sam for not having, in his opinion, shared the family responsibility. Yet, it is possible that Max's feelings of resentment are also exaggerated for certain purposes and used by Max as domination tactics to remain the head of the family.

> Max : It makes the bile come up in my mouth. The bile—you understand? (*To Ruth*) I worked as a butcher all my life, using the chopper and the slab, the slab, you know what I mean, the chopper and the slab! To keep my family in luxury. Two families! My mother was bedridden, my brothers all invalids. I had to earn the money for the leading psychiatrists. I had to read the books! I had to study the disease, so that I could cope with an emergency at every stage. A

> crippled family, three bastard sons, a slutbitch of a wife […] I've got a lazy idle bugger of a brother won't even get to work on time. The best chauffeur in the world. All his life he sat in the front seat giving lovely hand signals. You call that work? This man doesn't know his gearbox from his arse!
>
> Sam: You go and ask my customers! I'm the only one they ever ask for.
>
> Max : What do the other drivers do, sleep all day?
>
> Sam: I can only drive one car. They can't all have me at the same time.
>
> Max : Anyone could have you at the same time. You'd bend over for half a dollar on Blackfriars Bridge.
>
> Sam: Me!
>
> Max : For two bob and a toffee-apple.
>
> Sam: He is insulting me. He is insulting his brother. I'm driving a man to Hampton Court at four forty-five.
>
> Max: Do you want to know who could drive? MacGregor! MacGregor was a driver.
>
> Sam: Don't you believe it.
>
> Max *points his stick at* Sam.
>
> Max: He didn't fight in the war. This man didn't even fight in the bloody war!
>
> Sam: I did!
>
> Max: Who did you kill?
>
> *Silence.*
>
> Sam *gets up, goes to* Ruth, *shakes her hand and goes out of the front door.*
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 47-48)

The final silence, in this case, is Sam's way of ending the conversation. He is unwilling to enter into one of his and Max's arguments that go nowhere, other than in a vicious circle. Sam refuses to answer Max in words; instead he meets Max's question with what seems to be his—Sam's—preferred answer: silence. To confirm his intention—that he has given his response and is unwilling to resume that conversation—Sam leaves. At that point neither the other characters nor the audience understand the reason behind Sam's strange choice of an answer. Some might think that he is tired of arguing with Max; others might believe that Sam

knows that it is a lost cause, for he is bested by Max and the memory of the dead MacGregor. Only later in the play do we begin to understand his behaviour, especially when MacGregor's name is mentioned. Sam knew a secret about MacGregor and Jessie. He preferred to keep silent rather than to blurt it out; that is, until Sam could not respond with silence anymore.

> Sam *comes forward.*
> Sam (*in one breath*): MacGregor had Jessie in the back of my cab as I drove them along.
> *He croaks and collapses.*
> *He lies still.*
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 78)

Sam blurted out the truth to gain power over Max when he saw that history was repeating itself—except this time it was out in the open—the family was negotiating to have Ruth stay on as the family whore. According to the actors who played the other characters, they feel that Sam was not dead. When John Normington--who played Sam's role in one of the productions—asked whether Sam was dead or not, Pinter responded: "You're not dead, but you're no longer living. You're just lying there" (Normington, 140). Collapsing could be just another silent way of answering all the questions that were sure to follow. Collapsing and lying still—equivalent to holding one's silence—was Sam's choice at that moment (unless, of course, he fainted or had a stroke!)

Another example of silence from The Homecoming illustrates that a silence does not necessarily have to follow words, but, rather, it could be the result of an action or an unexpected appearance. Teddy and Ruth's unexpected homecoming leaves Teddy's family members—with the exception of Lenny—speechless, or rather stunned to silence.

> Teddy *and* Ruth *come down the stairs. They walk across the hall and stop just inside the room.*
> *The others turn and look at them.* Joey *stands.* Teddy *and* Ruth *are wearing dressing-gowns.*
> *Silence.*
>
> (Pinter, The Homecoming, 40)

In this silence, Teddy and Ruth are being assessed, especially in that they are coming downstairs wearing their pyjamas. A million questions are going through Max's head, some of which he voices once he gets over the surprise of Teddy and Ruth's appearance. As to Teddy and Ruth, their silence is of a different type; it is that of anticipation of what is to come next. However they were feeling, or whatever they were thinking, Max's reaction would have been the farthest from their minds. At first, Max ignores them and asks if anyone knew they were in the house. Then, he calls Ruth "a dirty tart", "a smelly scrubber", "a stinking pox-ridden slut", "a filthy scrubber off the street", a "disease" (Pinter, ibid, 41, 42). Max seems to have shut his ears; he is so involved in name-calling and pointing fingers that he does not even hear Teddy tell him that Ruth is his wife and that they are married. Rather he continues to insult Ruth and Teddy and repeatedly orders others to "Chuck them out" (Pinter, ibid, 42). This is one of the many instances when silence actually breaks into a conversation in an embarrassing way, and where the most important things are left unsaid (Hollis, 15). Max shuts his ears to Teddy's explanations. Outwardly, he screams, hurles insults and calls names. Inwardly, he is hurt for not having been asked to be a part of such an important event in Teddy's—his first born's--life; he feels left out. Later, Max tells Teddy that he would have given him a white wedding and gladly borne the expenses. "You're my first born. I'd have dropped everything. Sam would have driven you to the reception in the Snipe,

Lenny would have been your best man, and then we'd have all seen you off on the boat" (Pinter, The Homecoming, 48, 49). Not only is Max left out, but he is not given his place as the head of the family. It is also possible that Max feels jealous or envious that Teddy has something—a wife--that he probably cannot have anymore. After all, at the end of the play, he is reduced to a whimpering and snivelling pauper who is begging for Ruth's affection or attention and ready to accept whatever crumbs she throws his way. All this seems to come together, like pieces of a puzzle fitting together to complete a picture; this may not at first be very obvious to the audience after Max reacts the way he does to seeing Teddy and Ruth for the first time in his house. He makes a lot of noise to cover up what he is not really saying.

"The silence that is a refusal to communicate is one of the dominant images of Pinter's plays" (Esslin, Peopled Wound, 239). For example, in Pinter's The Dumb Waiter, Gus continues to talk about things in general, and to ask Ben specific questions about Wilson and their job in particular.

> Gus (*Slowly in a low tense voice*): Why did he send us matches if he knew there was no gas?
>
> *Silence.*
>
> *Ben stares in front of him. Gus crosses to the left side of Ben, to the foot of his bed, to get to his other ear.*
>
> Ben. Why did he send us matches if he knew there was no gas?
>
> *Ben looks up.*
>
> Why did he do that?
>
> Ben: Who?
>
> Gus: Who sent us those matches?
>
> Ben: What are you talking about?
>
> (*Gus stares down at him.*)
>
> Gus (*thickly*): Who is it upstairs?
>
> Ben (*nervously*): What's one thing to do with another?
>
> Gus: Who is it though?
>
> Ben: What's one thing to do with another?

(*Ben fumbles for his paper on the bed.*)
Gus: I asked you a question.
Ben: Enough!
Gus (*with growing agitation*): I asked you before. Who moved in? I asked you. You said the people who had it before moved out. Well, who moved in?
Ben (*hunched*): Shut up.
Gus: I told you, didn't I?
Ben (*standing*): Shut up !
Gus (*feverishly*): I told you before who owned this place, didn't I? I told you.
(*Ben hits him viciously on the shoulder.*)
I told you who ran this place, didn't I?
(*Ben hits him viciously on the shoulder.)*
(*Violently*) Well, what's he playing all these games for?
That's what I want to know. What's he doing it for?
Ben: What games?
Gus (*passionately, advancing*): What's he doing it for? We've been through our tests, haven't we? We got right through our tests, years ago, didn't we? We took them together, don't you remember, didn't we? We've proved ourselves before now, haven't we? We've always done our job. What's he doing all this for? What's the idea? What's he playing these games for?
(Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 853)

This is one of the many instances when Gus questions power and authority. He questions the value and worth of the organization, as well as that of Wilson. He questions Wilson's motives, the endless tests as well as their--his and Ben's--deteriorating conditions. He questions the car halt, the stories in the newspaper, the malfunctioning toilet and even the soccer games. Ben, on the other hand, does not question, but blindly accepts things as they are. He gets angry with Gus for questioning. Questioning upsets the order of things for Ben. He does not even question the stories he reads in the newspaper: "It's down here in black and white" (Pinter, ibid, 842), therefore it must be true and credible. That is enough

for him, for he sees things in black and white--no grey, no colours--or he has been trained to see it thus. "Gus questions power, Ben conforms to it" (Knowles, 28). Ben meets Gus' incessant questions either with silence, as in this case, or by blowing up in Gus' face: "What's the matter with you? You're always asking me questions. What's the matter with you?...You never used to ask so many damn questions. What's come over you?...Stop wondering. You've got a job to do. Why don't you just do it and shut up?" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 847). Ben does not want to deal with reality; by constantly wondering and questioning, Gus is forcing Ben to face reality. One can see Ben's nervousness and unwillingness to engage in a conversation with Gus in the way he silently "stares in front of him" or silently "looks up." Those instances of staring, looking up or fumbling are in themselves moments of silence that allow Ben the opportunity of not communicating with Gus. Ben's silence (or unwillingness to communicate with Gus here) is as much self-defense as it is an attack on Gus.

There is an instant in The Dumb Waiter where we see a different type of silence, this time the silence of disapproval. In addition to the job-related stress, Gus becomes frustrated with the impossible orders and the harsh criticism they were getting, that adds to his stress. He screams up the tube: "WE'VE GOT NOTHING LEFT! NOTHING! DO YOU UNDERSATND?" (Pinter, ibid, 854). Of course, Ben's reaction to that is to manhandle Gus and order him to stop.

> Ben: Stop it! You maniac!
> Gus: But you heard!
> Ben (*savagely*): That's enough! I'm warning you!
> *Silence.*
> (Ben *hangs the tube. He goes to his bed and lies down.*

He picks up his paper and reads.)
Silence.
(The box goes up.)
(They turn quickly, their eyes meet. Ben *turns to his paper.)*
(Slowly Gus *goes back to his bed, and sits.)*
Silence.
(The hatch falls back into place.)
(They turn quickly, their eyes meet. Ben *turns back to his paper.)*
Silence.

(Pinter, ibid, 854)

Here are four different silences. In the first silence, we sense Ben's outrage, disapproval at Gus' behavior. We also sense Ben's fear at this display of open defiance by Gus and his apprehension about a consequential reprimand. As to Gus, his silence is of a different kind, that which carries the burden of the whole world on his shoulders, or that which lives in oppression with no hope of justice or light. Gus' silence is a result of a broken spirit that knows it has no way out. In the following silences, Ben shows his refusal to comment on what had just taken place; he confirms his unwillingness to communicate by hiding behind his newspaper. Gus, on the other hand, uses the silence to come to terms with this new situation that adds more constraints to an already strained situation. When they hear the noise made by the hatch, their eyes meet, Gus hopeful, waiting for encouragement from Ben to say something; whereas Ben conclusively kills that weak hope and turns to his paper. Gus' silence is that of self-defeat, whereas Ben's silence is that of self-preservation.

Silences constitute an important element in our everyday conversations; their importance and use are well illustrated in Pinter's plays. Their wordlessness is loaded with meanings and charged with emotions.

1.4.PAUSES

There are many ways in which Pinter uses silences, but perhaps the most common is the pause (Hollis, 14). We will start by looking at a dictionary definition. One dictionary definition of the pause is: "n. stop or rest.-v.i. cease for a time" (Webster's New Dictionary, 276). Another definition of pause is: "1.n. Interval of inaction or silence (give one a p., cause him to hesitate); break made in speech or reading...2.v.i. Make a p., wait" (Pocket Oxford Dictionary, 582). A pause as we know it from a dictionary definition is a break for a moment or more, of physical or verbal inaction, taken as a result of reflection on what had been said, or hesitation to proceed in an on-going conversation. Yet a dictionary definition is not enough to comprehend the full extent of the importance of pauses in silent language in general, and in Pinter's work in particular. When Pinter asks for a pause, "he indicates that the thought processes are continuing, that an unspoken tension is mounting" (Esslin, in Ganz, 56). These tensions--characterized by their underlying hesitations, confusion and uncertainty of what is to come next or how one is to proceed--are unpredictable and pose a risk of exploding in any direction. In Pinter's plays, when Pinter writes " 'pause' it means something different than 'silence,' and three dots are different from a full stop" (Pinter, in Ganz, 25). In fact Peter Hall, who successfully directed many of Pinter's plays, was so sensitive to Pinter's "kind of writing" that he "once held a dot and pause rehearsal for the actors in The Homecoming" (Pinter, ibid, 25).

> I did once have a dot and pause rehearsal. It drove the actors absolutely mad. I said, " You don't remember the phrases." Exactly as if an actor in Shakespeare had learned his text without knowing

> where the ends of the lines are, which is the whole phrasing unit....So I said, "We will now sit down and have a word rehearsal, sitting where you are, and each of you will tell me where your dots are and where your pauses are and where your silences are." And we went right through it. It only happened once. It was just to try and make the actors understand that we were dealing with something which was highly formed and highly wrought. And our first responsibility was to know what it was....I think people who hear that I held a dot and pause rehearsal perhaps misunderstand its purpose. It wasn't done to imprison the actor, but to add to his knowledge of the text.
>
> (Hall,16-17)

In an interview, Pinter commented on this famous rehearsal by stating "Although it sounds bloody pretentious it was apparently very valuable....I do pay great attention to these points" (Pinter, in Ganz, 25).

Through the analysis of the different types of pauses, as well as their meaning, function and application in Pinter's plays, one will come to see and understand the importance of pauses as Pinter himself did. In silent language, pauses are no less important than silences. In comparison to silences, pauses and hesitations are relatively short in duration (Knapp, 359). "Pauses range in length from milliseconds to minutes" and

> seem to be subject to considerable variation based on individual differences, the kind of verbal task, the amount of spontaneity, and the pressures of the particular social situation....The frequency and length of pauses may also be due to certain predispositions to certain listeners, adaptations to certain audience situations, the number of potential speakers and one's desire to speak.
>
> (Knapp, 355, 357)

There seem to be many criteria that go with the use of pauses and there are various types of pauses. "The two major types of pauses are the unfilled pause

(silent) and the filled pause. A filled pause is simply filled with some type of a phonation such as 'um,' 'uh,' stutters, false starts, repetitions and slips of the tongue" (Knapp, 356). According to research, it has been found that filled pauses impair performances; that is, in an argument, characters may maintain control by filling the pauses, yet by doing that they decrease the quality of their conversation (Knapp, 356). In using filled pauses, the characters cut off other characters, show impatience with them, or break their concentration. Whereas these techniques work to their advantage, keep them in control of the conversation and undermine the other character or characters, they back-fire in rendering the already-inadequate means of verbal communication even more limited. The Lover is full of examples of these filled pauses. It is as if these filled pauses give the characters the perfect opportunity to escape from a full, detailed answer, especially when the topic of the conversation is the lover or the mistress. For example, in the opening scene, Richard asks Sarah a few questions about her lover, so as to accommodate him.

Richard (*amiably*): Is your lover coming today?
Sarah : Mmnn.
Richard: What time?
Sarah : Three.
Richard: Will you be going out...or staying in?
Sarah : Oh...I think we'll stay in.
Richard: I thought you wanted to go to that exhibition.
Sarah : I did, yes...but I think I'd prefer to stay in with him today.
Richard: Mmn-hmmn. Well, I must be off.
He goes to the hall and puts on his bowler hat.
Richard: Will he be staying long do you think?
Sarah : Mmmnnn...
Richard: About...six, then.
Sarah : Yes.
Richard: Have a pleasant afternoon.

Sarah : Mmnn.
Richard: Bye-bye.
Sarah : Bye.

(Pinter, The Lover, 161)

It is quite obvious that Sarah is unwilling to talk to Richard about her plans with her lover. She answers Richard's questions only when they are unavoidable; otherwise, she responds with filled pauses. Not only does the use of filled pauses indicate Sarah's unwillingness to divulge any information about her afternoon with her lover, but it also shows her unwillingness to show her state of emotion concerning the anticipation of that meeting.

Pauses like silences can have different meanings as well as different functions. In The Language of Silence, Leslie Kane states that

> [a]ccording to the playwright, the pause is an inevitable aspect of communication...pauses are used variously to allow for meditation on the spoken dialogue, to convey continuing thought process, to contribute to the developing tension and to forestall saying something. In the pauses the characters hide, judge, redefine, rearm or hesitate momentarily to receive needed confirmation.
>
> (Kane, 144)

In a pause, much goes through a character's head. "Pauses may be the overt manifestation of time used to make decisions about what to say and how to say it, or they may represent disruptions in the speech process" (Knapp, 362). In a pause the characters try to sort out their feelings, gather their thoughts, reflect on what had just been said, recover from shock, or plan what is to be said next before responding or proceeding in a conversation. "The speaker may be reflecting on decisions about the immediate message or may even be projecting into the past or future—that is, "I don't think she understood what I said earlier" or

"If she says no, What do I say next?" (Knapp, 357). Making use of pauses is like playing a game of chess: one tries to figure one's opponent's next move, and thus, one tries to think of one's response or next move, if not one's next several moves. One tries to build a case of "what if...then...," and tries to think of one's counteractions or counter-responses to one's opponent's various moves or actions. According to Knapp, however, some pausing behavior might involve what is described as "a disruptive behavior," where instead of

> representing time for planning, the pause may indicate a disruption due to an emotional state which may have developed from negative feedback or time pressures. These disruptions may take many forms; fear about the subject matter under discussion, desire to impress the listener with verbal and/or intellectual skills, pressure to perform other tasks simultaneously, pressure to produce verbal output immediately.
>
> (Knapp, 357)

Whatever the specific function, all pauses reveal the emotional state of the speakers. They reflect their involvement in what they are saying or their reaction—emotional or reflective-- to what is being said to them. Pauses allow the speakers' previous words to echo through that interval of silence and thus give both the characters and the audience alike time to absorb the spoken words. "To be filled, to be meaningful, Pinter's silences and pauses have to be meticulously *prepared*: Only if the audience knows the possible alternative answers that might be given to a question can the absence of a reply acquire meaning and dramatic impact" (Esslin, in Ganz, 58). Knowing the dynamics of the characters as well as their fears, insecurities and frustrations at not being willing or able to say what they really want to say, and seeing them incapacitated

by their verbal handicap and as a result brought to a halt, render their pauses more remarkable. It is in that particular silent "moment" that the unspoken becomes like "an articulate energy which gives resonance to the spoken words" (Schroll, 83). For example, towards the end of The Homecoming, before going to the airport, Teddy bids his family members goodbye. Just as he is about to leave, Ruth calls him.

> Teddy *goes to the front door.*
> Ruth: Eddie.
> Teddy *turns.*
> *Pause*
> Don't become a stranger.
> Teddy *goes, shuts the front door.*
> *Silence.*
>
> (Pinter, The Homecoming, 80)

This is the first time Ruth calls Teddy by his nickname, a name that she apparently is accustomed to calling him. The pause that follows is charged with anticipation and wonder as to what is to follow. Many questions race through our minds—characters as well as audience/readers alike. Is this an intimate moment shared by Teddy and Ruth? Does the one word hold a private message that only those two would understand? Is it a plea to be snatched away from this mad-house? Is it an apology for the decision made? Or is it a final farewell? As the anticipation and expectations build up in this silent moment, we are nonetheless left a little unsure as Ruth utters her next words: "Don't become a stranger." With those cold, general words, Ruth is saying goodbye to her husband and shutting the door on the life she knew with him. In the silence that follows, we reflect on Ruth's meaning and choice of words, before the new situation/living arrangement is put into action between Ruth and the other male characters.

According to Gale, "[p]auses demonstrate a continuing thought process and contribute to developing tension by exposing the intensity of the thought which has not broken into a verbally communicable pattern" (Gale, Butter's Going Up, 273, 274). For example, in Pinter's The Lover, when Sarah insists that Richard admit that he has a mistress, Richard tells her: "I haven't got a mistress, I'm well acquainted with a whore, but I haven't got a mistress. There is a world of difference....Just a common or garden slut, not worth talking about" (Pinter, The Lover, 167). Sarah pauses several times to reflect on what Richard has said before she states that Richard's affair "[s]ounds utterly sterile" (Pinter, ibid, 168). On a conscious level, Sarah is surprised to hear that Richard's "affair possesses so little dignity" (Pinter, ibid, 169). On a subconscious level, Sarah is probably piqued that Richard would choose for a lover someone very unlike herself. She is probably hurt that Richard would describe her--the lover--as a "whore." She takes those pauses to think over Richard's answers and resume her questioning.

"Pauses in a dialogue serve many purposes in Pinter, from actual lapses in the conversation to indications of extreme emotional involvement. However they are used they tend to emphasize the subject matter" (Gale, Butter's Going Up, 273). Ruth's description of her home in America, in Pinter's The Homecoming, is a clear example. Her description "is not long in actual word count, but the time it takes her to relate it is drawn out by the pauses between her statements" (Gale, Ibid, 273), not to mention dots and a silence.

> Ruth: I was born quite near here.
> *Pause.*
> Then...six years ago, I went to America.
> *Pause.*

> It's all rocks. And sand. It stretches...so far...everywhere you look. And there's lots of insects there.
> *Pause.*
> And there's lots of insects there.
> *Silence.*
> *She is still.*
>
> (Pinter, The Homecoming, 53)

One can almost hear Ruth's emotions echoing in the stillness of the pauses. The pauses make America sound even more barren, bleak and austere than the words make it out to be. Between those few words, the pauses paint volumes of grim images in Ruth's head, and thus reflect her feelings of unhappiness about and dislike of America. Ruth's description of America is a reflection of her life with Teddy over there. If there is beauty to the place, Ruth cannot see it. She is associating the grimmness of the place with the bleakness of her marriage; this is obvious in her choice of words to describe America: the rocks are barren, where no life grows in them; the sand is abundant and cheap, but cannot hold in a storm; the insects sting and can carry diseases. The final silence after these pauses could show there is simply no more to say.

Another kind of pause that falls heavily on the audience's ears because it echoes a previous phrase is present towards the end of Pinter's The Dumb Waiter. Ben is giving Gus the instructions for the upcoming job to be performed and Gus repeats them. It feels as if one hears a sound and its echo. Meanwhile, Ben forgets to instruct Gus to take out his gun.

> Ben *frowns and presses his forehead*
> Gus: You've missed something out.
> Ben: I know. What?
> Gus: I haven't taken my gun out, according to you.
> Ben: You take your gun out--

Gus: After I've closed the door.
Ben: After you've closed the door.
Gus: You've never missed that out before, you know that?
Ben: When he sees you behind him--
Gus: Me behind him--
Ben: And me in front of him --
Gus: And you in front of him--
Ben: He'll feel uncertain--
Gus: Uneasy--
Ben: He won't know what to do--
Gus: So what will he do?
Ben: He'll look at me and he'll look at you.
Gus: We won't say a word.
Ben: We'll look at him.
Gus: He won't say a word.
Ben: He'll look at us.
Gus: And we'll look at him.
Ben: Nobody says a word.
Pause.

(Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 853)

For a brief instance, Ben and Gus switch roles--Ben repeats the sentences after Gus. It stops because Gus is still bewildered and shaken that Ben forgot to tell him to draw his gun. They follow the same pattern until Gus breaks it again by saying "uneasy" instead of "uncertain." On a subconscious level, "uneasy" is what Gus feels. For the rest of that quotation, Gus does not repeat what Ben says, but rather fills in the blanks or makes sentences of his own. The pause terminating the quotation gives the audience time to absorb the seriousness of their dialogue. It also anticipates the last silence in the play, which will leave the audience staring at a tableau of Ben aiming his gun at Gus. This passage, in a way, foreshadows what is going to happen at the end of the play.

In The Homecoming, the scene where Teddy and Lenny meet for the first time after six years is full of pauses and each has a different meaning and function.

Teddy: Hullo, Lenny.
Lenny: Hullo, Teddy.
Pause
Teddy: I didn't hear you come down the stairs.
Lenny: I didn't.
Pause.
I sleep down here now. Next door. I've got a kind of study, workroom cum bedroom next door now, you see.
Teddy: Oh. Did I...wake you up?
Lenny: No. I just had an early night tonight. You know how it is. Can't sleep. Keep waking up.
Pause.
Teddy: How are you?
Lenny: Well, just sleeping a bit restlessly, that's all. Tonight, anyway.
Teddy: Bad dreams?
Lenny: No, I wouldn't say I was dreaming. It's not exactly a dream. It's just that something keeps waking me up. Some kind of tick.
Teddy: A tick?
Lenny: Yes.
Teddy: Well, what is it?
Lenny: I don't know.
Pause.
Teddy: Have you got a clock in your room?
Lenny: Yes.
Teddy: Well, maybe it's the clock.
Lenny: Yes, could be, I suppose.
Pause.
Well, if it's the clock I'd better do something about it. Stifle it in a way, or something.
Pause.
Teddy: I've...just come back for a few days.
Lenny: Oh yes? Have you?
Pause.
Teddy: How's the old man?
Lenny: He is in the pink.
Pause.
Teddy: I've been keeping well.
Lenny: Oh, have you?
Pause.
Staying the night then are you?
Teddy: Yes.

(Pinter, The Homecoming, 25-26)

The first pause is a very awkward one. After a long estrangement—with no or little contact—what would one say after the first hello? We see the two brothers assessing each other, perhaps noticing any apparent changes or differences. They are almost getting reacquainted and reconciling the image of the person in front of them with the person they used to know, or were familiar with years ago. Teddy then comes up with the first logical and appropriate thing to say that comes to his mind. Lenny answers him briefly, then they hit the second pause, which seems uncomfortable. Teddy's attempt at starting a conversation that could hold its own for a little longer than a couple of sentences fails. Lenny, on the other hand, is deciding how much information he needs to divulge about his new sleeping arrangement.

In the third pause, one can just imagine how uncomfortable Teddy and Lenny must feel once that conversation was exhausted. The more pauses they encounter, or rather create, the more discomfort and pressure they must feel "to produce verbal output" (Knapp, 357) as soon as they can come up with something else to say. Teddy asks the next most logical question: "How are you?" Yet, instead of giving a general answer—a sort of an update—Lenny resumes talking about the same topic of conversation--his sleeping difficulty. It is apparent that, at that point, Lenny does not want to fill Teddy in on the past six years of his absence; he is stalling.

In the fourth pause, Lenny is mulling over what the source of the tick that has been keeping him up could be; a question raised by Teddy. On the other hand, Teddy is thinking over the different possibilities that cause his brother's

restlessness—where the tick is concerned. Being the only doctor of philosophy in the family, Teddy must feel the pressure to come up with a plausible solution to Lenny's problem, especially since Lenny brought it up and it was assumed that he was waiting for an answer. This is Teddy's chance to use the pause to his advantage and to try to impress Lenny by his thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. He asks if Lenny has a clock.

In the fifth pause, Lenny is thinking about Teddy's diagnosis of the case, which he considers before coming to some sort of a decision concerning the clock. He does not take Teddy's word for it at face value—this is confirmed later when he talks about the same topic with Ruth. However, he does not rule this possibility out; he is willing to test Teddy's hypothesis by "stifling" the clock.

Now that that line of conversation has been exhausted—a problem posed, a solution proposed, a decision made—the two brothers generate one new pause after another, before they have even had the chance to say anything. Teddy volunteers a piece of information and Lenny answers him with a question, or Teddy asks a question and Lenny answers him only briefly. We see that they both realise that the conversation is not going anywhere, for the pauses are uncomfortable, stressful and anxiety-producing; subsequently, going to sleep is their escape mechanism from that uncomfortable encounter. It comes as no surprise, therefore, when we learn later that there is no love lost between these two brothers, only much antagonism. They remind us here of two animals that are circling around each other, trying to figure out what the other is really up to. Both are quite capable of communicating, yet neither is willing. This difficulty in

communicating and the antagonism between the two brothers—more apparent on Lenny's part--is even more obvious later in the play when they argue over Lenny's cheese-roll (Pinter, The Homecoming, 63). By Teddy's own admission, he deliberately took it. The friction between Lenny and Teddy at that point is full of pauses and silences that emphasise an underlying discord, bitterness and animosity between them which is displayed more outwardly by Lenny than Teddy here at their first meeting as well as at their other unpleasant encounter over the cheese-roll (Pinter, ibid, 63-65).

Pauses constitute an important element in our everyday conversations; like silences, their significance and use are central in Pinter's plays. Pauses are shorter than silences, but the duration of time they provide in a conversation is quite necessary and essential in communicating to us things about the speakers which cannot be indicated by dialogue.

1.5.CONCLUSION

Silent language--composed of silences, pauses as well as dots and dashes--is a language of its own. Its wordlessness and silence do not imply absence or inadequacy of communication, but rather a moment in language (as Quigley calls it) where one makes a choice of responding to others through silence, rather than through words. It is a language based on genuine thoughts and sentiments. It is essential in communicating with others as well as in understanding Pinter's work.

As I said at the beginning, silent language takes three forms—dots and dashes, pauses as well as silences. Dots and dashes are an essential part in Pinter's writing technique. They are quite distinctive from one another. Dots are small breaks in the text that last for a very short duration of time and show a character's hesitation or search for just the right word. As to dashes, they are also short breaks in the text, but are longer in duration than dots. More often than not, dashes are abrupt, harsh and even untimely. They show a character's shock, "voiced" dismay or desire to interrupt.

The use of silences is an important element in our conversations, as well as in Pinter's plays. Various types of silences have different meanings and functions. Although silences are wordless lines, they are, however, rich with thoughts, inner conflicts, and sentiments. They provide the speaker as well the listener with time to sort out their thoughts, reflect on their feelings and settle their inner conflicts before moving on to something new. More importantly, silences are a means by which we--consciously and/or unconsciously--show unwillingness and/or inability to communicate with others.

Equally, the use of pauses is an important element in our conversations, as well as in Pinter's plays. Like silences, the various types of pauses have different meanings and functions. Pauses give us enough time to sort out our immediate feelings, gather our thoughts, reflect on the conversation we are engaging in, recover from shock, or plan our next response, before proceeding in our conversation. Pauses are not as long in duration as silences, yet they are

long enough to allow for quick yet thorough and in-depth analysis of the situation or conversation at hand.

Silent language is like a family with various members; all are related yet each has its own meaning, function and tactics, which makes each and every member important and essential in this mode of communication.

CHAPTER TWO:

BODY LANGUAGE

2.1.INTRODUCTION

Pinter's "theatre of language" is not only that of words, misunderstandings, communication or lack of it, silences and pauses, but also that of body language. Pinter's "language of drama," as Brecht demanded, is "gestural" (Esslin, People Wound 43). It is a vehicle for expressing, whether consciously or unconsciously, fear, concern, distress, confusion, insecurity, anxiousness or nervous habits. Sometimes body language achieves what words and silences fail to attain.

Words are sometimes not necessary to reveal to the audience what the characters—whether consciously or unconsciously—mask or try to conceal. Physical reactions may perform the same task. These are involuntary responses—especially in the cases of Pinter's characters—that are usually instinctive, born out of a complex, sometimes a life-long caution against emotional involvement. Through them, Pinter makes the audience aware of and sensitive to the characters' every mood, be it irritation, silliness, detachment, indifference, withdrawal or arrogance; body language allows Pinter to do this subtly in a silent or unspoken manner, rather than through words. In such instances, words are not necessary. The audience can relate to a character's venting of emotions through body language, rather than through words, for this is common human behavior. When words fail the characters, which causes their frustration at the situation at hand as well at themselves for their inability to communicate, this frustration can manifest itself through body language. The difference between verbal and non-verbal is that, while the verbal is more often than not controlled and calculated, the non-verbal is an involuntary display of

emotions, where the character is no longer in control. In this sense, the non-verbal is the more honest of the two because it catches the character by surprise; it manifests itself based not on thought but on a pure, unguarded display of emotions.

Verbal language is used in various ways as means of establishing authority or rising above one's status, as we see in many of Pinter's plays.

> Pinter uses language as a vehicle and instrument of dramatic *action.* Words become weapons in the mouth of Pinter's characters. The one who gets hold of the more elaborate or more accurate expression establishes dominance over his partner.
>
> (Esslin, ibid, 43)

These words, however, are often paralleled by actions and gestures which are even more powerful. Sometimes when words are not spoken (which as I argued in Chapter One is a form of the verbal) the actions or gestures at that moment speak louder than those unspoken words. These actions and gestures, more often than not, are natural reactions and involuntary responses which spring from the unconscious and could not be controlled. Freudian slip to verbal language is like a spontaneous action or an involuntary gesture to body language; both are products of the subconscious and are involuntarily manifested in word or deed.

There are reasons why verbal communication can be misleading in many ways, the most important of which is some people's inability or unwillingness to open up or speak what is really on their minds, lest they be judged, hurt or ridiculed. They would, then, wind up alone, outcast and miserable. Hoping to avoid such a fate, they, more often than not, say anything insignificant and trivial, or make general, small, inconsequential talk, so as to keep from really having to

communicate. Pinter believes that people "fall back on anything they can lay their hands on verbally to keep away from the danger of knowing, and of being known" (Pinter, in Ganz, 26). For example, in The Dumb Waiter, Ben discusses with Gus the news that he reads in his newspaper, which he probably read many times--at one point, Gus asked him how many times he read that paper (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 848)--rather than have a meaningful conversation, or at least answer Gus' questions. In The Lover, Sarah and Richard live out a fantasy life. We never see them discussing their feelings, concerns or fears. Richard at one point decides that their masquerade should come to an end, but, when he tries to make his intentions known to Sarah, she refuses to listen. Instead she tries to dissuade him and then seduces him by playing one of their games. As in the above examples, the characters in Pinter would do anything to avoid a real conversation with a real confrontation. The use of words as a shield, however, makes them an impossible means of communicating the truth and one may feel obliged to find another means, an alternate outlet for the truth. This is one of the reasons why we have to examine the other means of communication in Pinter: those which are non-verbal--instinctive, spontaneous, honest and revealing, those where the person's thoughts and feelings are there for all to read, if not see, those that strip the persons and reflect their vulnerability and insecurity, as well as those that simply allow one to know and be known.

There is also the "defectiveness of communication between characters—who talk past each other rather than to each other" (Esslin, in Ganz, 35). For their own reasons, they do not want to listen or make sure that the other characters

understood what they said or meant; rather, their brains are in constant motion thinking, planning, analyzing; this is why we should watch their actions, for, more often than not, actions speak louder than words. Sometimes there is "complete contradiction between the words that are spoken and the emotional and psychological *action* that underlies them" (Esslin, in Ganz, 37). It would seem more logical to trust the actions rather than words in this case. The words here could be misleading, insincere, merely to fill a purpose.

According to Martin Esslin, "Pinter is far from wanting to say that language is incapable of establishing true communication between human beings; he merely draws our attention to the fact that in life human beings rarely make use of language for that purpose, at least as far as spoken language is concerned" (In Ganz, 38). On the one hand, Esslin is correct in thinking that characters in Pinter rarely make use of language for the purpose of communication; yet, on the other hand, some humans are not equipped or are incapable of using language as an effective tool to communicate with others, or as a vehicle of expression.

For some, verbal language is a handicap, just like, for example any other physical handicap. They might want to express themselves or convey their feelings and thoughts; yet, they nevertheless find themselves unable, impotent and paralysed. On the one hand, this might breed frustration, which in turn leaves them speechless (silent), and pushes them to be incoherent, inarticulate and to utter absurdities. On the other hand, it might lead them to resort to another means of communication; that is, another way for their inner thoughts and feelings to manifest themselves, a subtle yet a spontaneous way to freely express themselves,

even if unconsciously—that is body language. More often than not, people are not aware of their handicap, and of their substituting non-verbal communication for verbal communication.

Body language, thus, is another important form of the non-verbal in Pinter's plays. In Pinter's world, body language is a means of portraying the human condition. It includes mime, gestures (posture, body movements, facial expressions), physical violence, physical aloofness, habits (scratching, adjusting clothes or hair, fiddling with objects, checking behavior) as well as games and rituals (verbal, sexual or otherwise). We shall look at all of these forms.

2.2.MIME AND GESTURES

Mime is the purest form of body language; it forms its core or essence. Mime depends solely on gestures that are universal. Simply, from a silent sketch—a mime—one can tell about the character or characters involved in the action, their situation, their feelings, their fears and their dilemmas. This brings to mind Samuel Beckett's plays Act Without Words, Part One and Act Without Words, Part Two, where one sees the character(s)' dilemmas, appreciates their frustrations, laughs at their blunders and sympathises with their failures. We understand what the characters are doing, what they are thinking and how they are feeling at different times, even though no words are spoken. The same occurs in Pinter.

Pinter's The Dumb Waiter opens with a very long silence; nonetheless, there is a lot of action going on that provides the audience with information about both

characters; it is more like a "mime" within the play. The mime ends with stage direction “Silence” which indicates total stillness and absolute inaction of the characters.

> *Ben is lying on a bed, left, reading a paper. Gus is sitting on a bed, right, tying his shoelaces, with difficulty [...]*
>
> *Silence.*
>
> *Gus ties his laces, rises, yawns, and begins to walk slowly to the door, left. He stops, looks down, and shakes his foot.*
>
> *Ben lowers his paper and watches him. Gus kneels and unties his shoelace and slowly takes off the shoe. He looks inside it and brings out a flattened matchbox. He shakes it and examines it. Their eyes meet. Ben rattles his paper and reads. Gus puts the matchbox in his pocket and bends down to put on his shoe. He ties his lace, with difficulty. Ben lowers his paper and watches him. Gus walks to the door, left, stops, and shakes the other foot. He kneels, unties his shoelace, and slowly takes off the shoe. He looks inside it and brings out a flattened cigarette packet. He shakes it and examines it. Their eyes meet. Ben rattles his paper and reads. Gus puts the packet in his pocket, bends down, puts on his shoe, and ties the lace.*
>
> *He wanders off, left.*
>
> *Ben slams the paper down on the bed and glares after him. He picks up the paper and lies on his back, reading.*
>
> *Silence.*
>
> (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 842)

Ben, who is lying on a bed reading a newspaper, uses the paper to show his displeasure with or contempt towards Gus. He lowers it long enough to watch the comic Gus, then "rattles" or "slams [it] down" long enough to glare at him before picking it up again. Ben's use of the newspaper shows his impatience, annoyance and irritation towards Gus, and his actions speak louder than words. Later in the play, when Ben shows his aggravation and vexation with Gus, the audience is not

really surprised. This first scene tells the audience a lot about Ben: that he is impatient, irritable and grouchy.

In that same opening scene, Gus is introduced as childlike, curious and clownish. First of all, he is having difficulty in tying his shoelaces. He seems to act with a certain gullibility. He takes out of his shoe "a flattened match box" and from his other shoe "a flattened cigarette packet." He shakes them, looks inside the flattened cigarette packet as if expecting to find something in there, a smokable cigarette, perhaps! Gus' behaviour is quite absurd and irrational. "We laugh not only because Gus finds an object in one of his shoes but because he *then* finds an object in the other shoe" (Diamond, 55). In a way, Gus' first silent, clown-like appearance parallels his last silent appearance, where he stumbles into the room stripped of everything: "his jacket, waistcoat, tie, holster and revolver" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 854).

What is important to notice is the relationship between Ben and Gus; it is quite obvious, even this early on in the play, that this is not a smooth relationship. It has been suggested by Elin Diamond that "Pinter's Gus and Ben are closer to another derby-hatted comedy team, Laurel and Hardy, whose mime often resembles Chaplin's" (Diamond, 53). For example, one might wonder why Gus constantly looks at Ben to watch his reaction after he does something clownish. When their "eyes meet" Gus knows that he will see disapproval, impatience and ridicule in Ben's eyes. Yet, like "Laurel, Gus simply acts, oblivious to criticism" (Diamond, 55). Ben confirms his suspicion or, rather, knowledge of Gus by reacting in a way that reflects his irritation, disapproval, impatience and mockery;

the look is then extended to a physical action or gesture: Ben rattles the paper and goes on reading. Just by lowering the paper and watching Gus with what must have been a condescending look, Ben's bias is betrayed—Ben's behaviour towards Gus shows what he really thinks of Gus. "Like Hardy, Ben's disdain makes him seem dominant" (Diamond, 55). It is as if Ben is certain he will see Gus making a fool of himself, one way or the other, which is the expected behavior.

In The Dumb Waiter's last tableau, we see a silent scene, not unlike the opening scene of the play, and we hear the silent echoes of that self-same scene reverberating in our ears, yet with much graver implications.

> (*The door right opens sharply. Ben turns, his revolver leveled at the door.)*
> (Gus *stumbles in.*)
> (*He is stripped of his jacket, waistcoat, tie, holster, and revolver.*)
> (*He stops, body stooping, his arms at his sides.*)
> (*He raises his head and looks at Ben.*)
> (*A long silence.*)
> (*They stare at each other*).
>
> (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 854)

This scene speaks volumes of confusion, surprise and indecision among a wide spectrum of emotions. True to his clownish nature and representation, Gus does not walk into the room, rather, he "stumbles" in. He is "stooping" with his "arms at his sides"; this is a clownish goofy-like position intended to make us laugh, yet we do not find it amusing and we do not laugh. Gus' body position is that of surrender and despair. He raises his head and looks at Ben, then they stare at each other in silence; each is trying to read the other's thoughts and intentions. So many stares were exchanged before between Ben and Gus, mostly those of scorn, annoyance,

defiance, triumph or even stupidity. Yet, this last stare that passes between the two is of an entirely different kind. It is rather difficult to put its entire meaning into words. It is of the kind that speaks volumes of pain, suffering, injustice, humanity, compassion, survival, fear, conflict, regret, betrayal, confusion and much more. Ben and Gus need no words to settle this confrontation; their eyes say it all. Each knows what must be done and that it will be done; only we are left in the dark.

Mime, however, is a silent act or a performance or a silent sketch, like those of Laurel and Hardy or Charlie Chaplin or even the mime players performing on the corners of streets. It's a bunch of gestures composed of many individual ones that come together to produce an "act," not unlike a symphony. We usually look at these individual gestures, movements and facial expressions to understand the meaning behind the underlying behaviour. For example, in The Lover, Sarah is waiting for her lover and preparing herself and her surroundings for his arrival.

> Sarah *comes downstairs into the living-room...She hastily looks at herself in the mirror [...] Looks again in mirror, smooths her hips. Goes to window, pulls venetian blinds down, opens them, and closes them until there is a slight slit of light. There are three chimes of a clock. She looks at her watch, goes towards the flowers on the table...She briefly attends to the flowers, sits on the chaise longue, crosses her legs, uncrosses them, puts her legs up on chaise longue, smooths her stockings under her skirt* .
>
> (Pinter, The Lover, 174-175)

Sarah checks herself in the mirror, then she rechecks herself again after she changes her shoes. She sets the mood for her encounter with her lover; everything has to be just right. She adjusts the blinds till the lighting in the room

is dim enough, she sets the tea-tray and she arranges the flowers. After looking in the mirror, Sarah smooths her hips; this could mean one of two things. Either Sarah is admiring her figure and her dress, hoping to see a reflection of that admiration in her lover's eyes, or she is self-conscious about her hips; most women, if not all, would have no difficulty recognizing these possibilities. When the clock chimes three, Sarah checks her watch so as to make sure that it is the right time; the time when her lover, whose arrival she is anxiously awaiting, would grace her with his presence. Lovers, for whom every minute is of the essence, would appreciate Sarah's anxiousness and anticipation. When all is ready, Sarah then sits on the chaise-longue, assuming different poses and practicing different positions to seduce her lover. The readers or the audience do not need words to understand Sarah's actions and gestures; their meanings are universal.

Towards the end of The Homecoming, Teddy says his good-byes to his family members, then leaves; Ruth stays behind. The silent scene that follows hints in a way at how things are going to be like around that household.

> Teddy *goes, shuts the front door.*
> *Silence.*
> *The three men stand.*
> Ruth *sits relaxed in her chair.*
> Sam *lies still.*
> Joey *walks slowly across the room.*
> *He kneels at her chair.*
> *She touches his head, lightly.*
> *He puts his head in her lap.*
> Max *begins to move above them, backwards and forwards.*
> Lenny *stands still.*
>
> (Pinter, The Homecoming, 80)

Teddy runs away instead of fighting for his wife and trying to preserve his life with Ruth that he claims to appreciate. Sam lies still, passive and paralyzed, unable to cope with the situation. Like Teddy, he too runs away from the problem, in a less subtle way. Ruth sits comfortably, like a regal queen; while the three men—Lenny, Max and Joey—cluster around her, like footmen awaiting her orders. Ruth is in control; she has them all in the palm of her hand and they all know it. She satisfies a need in every one of them, and she is planning on becoming indispensable to them. Joey--who does not care whether or not he "get[s] all the way" with Ruth, and who in this case seems happy without going "the whole hog"—has found in Ruth a substitute for his mother. Like a little child, he kneels by her chair and contentedly puts his head in her lap. Ruth, in turn, like a doting mother, lightly strokes his head. Lenny, as seen often in the play, "stands still" and watches from afar; he is more like a *voyeur*. His behaviour also conforms to his line of work—a pimp. He is the negotiator. When everyone, or all sides, get what they want, he watches and observes from a distance; he is no longer part of the game, and he does not conform to the rules of the game. As for Max, he prowls like an animal, going back and forth; he seems restless and anxious. The picture that assails his eyes seems to worry him; he recognizes that they have been had by Ruth and her cunning. Ruth will get everything she wants and she will only give exactly what she wants to give, nothing more and nothing less. He feels insecure about his place in this new picture. Max's *soucis* are reflected in his speech that follows, before he "*falls to his knees, whimpers, begins to moan and sob. He stops sobbing, crawls past* Sam's *body round her chair, to the other*

side of her" (Pinter, Ibid, 82), tells her he is not an old man and begs her for a kiss. Ruth ignores Max, continues to stroke Joey's head, lightly, while Lenny stands watching. This wordless tableau tells us that the power has been handed down from Max to Ruth; the household becomes a matriarchy. In the end, they all get what they think they have wanted all along; yet we see the real picture.

Mime and silent gestures are the purest examples of the saying: "Actions speak louder than words." In those wordless yet full of action instances, we rely on our perception and understanding to comprehend the meaning, reason and purpose of those universal actions and gestures, for which no words are needed.

2.3.PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AND PHYSICAL ALOOFNESS

Physical violence comes in different types (inward, outward or verbal), in different forms (hitting, grabbing, or coercing) and in different degrees (mild or strong). It too is a form of speech.

Physical violence, as it first leaps to our minds, is aggression or violation directed towards another, with the intent to hurt, frighten, coerce or simply vent one's own frustration; this is outward physical violence. For example, in Pinter's The Homecoming, one sees an old man's—Max's--last attempt to control his grown-up children through violence, physical or verbal--whether for real or in jest. At the beginning of the play, Lenny is calling Max names, is answering him back and is being disrespectful. Max threatens to beat Lenny up with his stick, but all he does is meet Lenny's mockery with silence (Pinter, The Homecoming, 7). On the other

hand, later in that act, Joey calls Max "an old man" in front of Ruth, so Max "*hits Joey in the stomach with all his might.*" Max also hits his brother Sam with the stick when he tries to help him, after he—Max--falls down "*with the exertion of the blow*" (Pinter, Ibid, 42). Max hits Joey here for saying much less than what Lenny said to him earlier; it is possible that Max is afraid of Lenny! It is more probable however that Max is compelled by Ruth's presence here to defend his image of authority-figure so as to impress her. His constant physical aggression and threats of violence show his frustration and reflect his feelings of weakness and waning authority. Violence—physical or verbal--seems to be Max's way of communicating with his family members; and, except for Lenny—who meets his father's physical violence with verbally sharp retorts--the others seem to accept Max's violence. Max recognizes Lenny's strength, appreciates and fears it. He also admires Teddy's intellectual standing and appreciates that like himself Teddy is a father of three boys. As for Sam and Joey, Max recognizes their weaknesses and shortcomings; he sees them as weaker than himself and knows he can beat them and put them down with words or deeds. By beating those that he knows he can take down, he asserts his strength to himself and to Ruth—because he feels insecure about his age and waning strength. Max respected and looked up to his friend MacGregor who was strong in his eyes, even though he might have suspected his betrayal and infidelity with his wife. Yet Max shows no respect whatsoever for his brother, Sam, whom he knew he could trust. It is a question of power. The violence therefore is a means of communication and intimidation as well as self-expression.

There is another type of physical violence that is often overlooked, which is the inward type, directed towards oneself. Inward violence has a different intent than the violence directed against another. It occurs when one restrains oneself or holds back from acting or reacting. It is somewhat like taking no action or, rather, choosing to take no action. One can almost say that there is comorbidity between inner violence and aloofness; one can be mistaken for or masked by the other. In general, Teddy might be thought of as aloof, mostly because he is in control of himself and his feelings and reactions; this is especially true when Teddy's behavior is contrasted to that of other members of his family, who exhibit outward violence. Max is constantly using his stick, Joey is a boxer who depends on his physical prowess and Lenny does not actually exhibit physical violence on the stage, yet recounts stories about himself involving violence. In contrast, Teddy's self-control is evident when Ruth refuses to go back with him to America. Instead of showing emotions, he says nothing; in fact, he helps the family out in the negotiations—which makes one wonder if he has an ulterior motive.

The effort at self-control may be called violent because it often requires a violent suppression of one's urge to express emotion. For example, in The Homecoming there is one scene where Teddy displays his feelings, still in a subtle way, only because he thinks he is alone and unobserved. In that scene, Ruth decides she wants go for a walk to get some air. Teddy tries to dissuade her, arguing that it is late and he wants to go to bed, but will not do so without Ruth; yet he fails.

Ruth: Can I have the key?
He gives it to her.
Why don't you go to bed?
He puts his arms around her shoulders and kisses her.
They look at each other, briefly. She smiles.
I won't be long.
She goes out of the front door.
Teddy *goes to the window, peers out after her, half turns from the window, stands, suddenly chews his knuckles.*
Lenny *walks into the room from* U.L. *He stands. He wears pyjamas and dressing-gown. He watches* Teddy.
Teddy *turns and sees him.*
Silence.

(Pinter, The Homecoming, 24)

One gets the feeling that something is amiss between Teddy and Ruth. She wants to go for a walk; he does not want her to, yet, instead of telling her exactly what is on his mind and how he feels, he comes up with lame excuses why she should not go for a walk; he beats around the bush, then ends up giving in. It is clear that open communication is not one of the strong suits in their marriage.

Teddy puts his arms around Ruth and kisses her, maybe thinking or hoping that a show of affection will dissuade her from her intent—going for a walk, all alone at that late hour. They briefly look at each other and Ruth smiles—Weary? Triumphant? Reassuring?—before announcing that she was not going to be long. Ruth's response was not what Teddy expected; this shows in his behavior that follows. Teddy goes to the window, peers after Ruth, then "suddenly chews his knuckles." Teddy's behavior--inflicting mild pain on himself--shows his tense concern, fear and frustration, first at having failed to convince Ruth to do his bidding, and second at something larger, a greater terror which

comes to the surface only for a moment and then is suppressed. Rather than strongly voicing his objection outwardly, he directs his anger and frustration inwardly, but the way he does it opens avenues deep into Teddy's emotions.

Lenny watches Teddy chewing on his knuckles; Teddy realizes that he is caught. Yet, nothing is mentioned about this silent display of emotion; they both remain silent. In the silence, they are both assessing each other and the situation. Lenny decides not to comment on Teddy's behavior. Teddy, on the other hand, is probably upset at having had someone see him display his emotions, which he subsequently tries to hide—later, he does not even raise any objection at his wife's decision to remain behind as the family's courtesan.

It seems that Teddy has always been this inward. Later in the play, when he takes Lenny's sandwich on purpose, as he readily admitts to Lenny, Lenny tells him: "I will say, you do seem to have grown a bit sulky during the last six years. A bit sulky. A bit inner. A bit less forthcoming. It's funny, because I'd have thought that in the United States of America [...] I'd have thought you'd have grown more forthcoming, not less" (Pinter, ibid, 64). Teddy does not reply, keeping himself tightly under control. He gives away no indications. Many critics believe that Teddy is the most vicious of the lot, for various reasons. I believe what makes him dangerous is that one never knows what he is thinking, or how he will behave in any given situation.

Violence, with its different forms and types, seems to be the natural outcome of a simple equation, triggered by a chain of events or circumstances in some individuals' lives, especially like those characters in Pinter's plays. Some of those

characters are low to middle class individuals "of low intelligence" who are over-worked, underprivileged, uneducated or disturbed, with unresolved issues or baggage from their pasts. They feel alienated or isolated from their surroundings. It becomes harder on them when they are not even understood by their own kind. When those feelings of solitude and aloneness set in and when all the bridges of verbal communication seem to be cut off, the characters become frustrated. Their frustration ultimately turns into anger and inevitably into outward violence, in any of its various forms. Violence becomes the characters' way of unintentionally dealing with their frustration, handling a given situation or being in control. For example, it is used by some of the characters to establish authority--when words fail them--to intimidate, to be in control either of another character or of a situation, or as a means of proving manhood. The Dumb Waiter is a good example illustrating this point. Esslin says that the "natural trappings" of The Dumb Waiter describe

> no more and no less than the process of alienation to which men are subjected in a highly organised industrial society, which denies to the individual, particularly the individual of low intelligence and insight in the lower ranks, any real understanding of its working; and the frustration this engenders, the violence into which this frustration is bound to erupt.
> (Esslin, Peopled Wound, 70,71)

The characters' inability and/or unwillingness to communicate with one another, their aloofness from one another as well as the constant confinement and the strain of life put on them, breeds agitation, impatience, nervousness and frustration, which in turn breeds violence, the only possible outlet to acting out their repressed feelings.

In The Dumb Waiter, Ben and Gus' constant confinement, along with their inability to communicate together, renders them irritable, restless, impatient, anxious and testy with one another. This causes Ben's menacing behaviour, which takes several forms. Unlike Gus who is constantly trying to express himself and communicate with Ben, Ben is the silent type. He is aloof, unapproachable and non-communicative. Whether in an angry fit or in coldness, Ben holds and keeps Gus at arm's length. He seems to have little patience for words; whether that is because of his nature, habit, fear or as a result of his confinement, it is hard to say. On more than one occasion, he manhandles Gus and threatens to use violence on him, which ranges from grabbing and mild hitting to actual striking. For example, after his argument with Gus over the use of "Light the kettle" or "Put on the kettle," Ben's impatience rises in the face of Gus' stubbornness, and words fail him, so he resorts to violence. Ben grabs Gus with two hands by the throat, at arm's length and screams "THE KETTLE, YOU FOOL!" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 847). Violence is Ben's constant answer: it is his means of intimidating Gus and establishing authority over him--but then again, given his line of work, it should not be very surprising--as well as to acting out his frustrations. Outright violence is not Ben's only tactic, however, for Ben tries to establish his authority over Gus through various alternate methods of intimidation, be it glaring, narrowing his eyes, staring at Gus, rattling the newspaper, stating that he is the senior partner, and even resorting to physical violence—slapping Gus' hand, grabbing and shaking Gus. For Ben, survival of the fittest means the fittest in physical ability and conformity, not in mental keenness or skills.

On the other hand, Gus tries to overthrow Ben's authority by unsuccessfully using language, in different ways, as a means of defence. Gus' attempt to use language fails however, for Ben resorts to a stronger weapon. Gus' words are faced with Ben's silence, physical violence or physical aloofness. One of Gus' attempts is to use a speech that is above his low/middle class. For example, when he says: "I'm quite taken with crockery" (Pinter, Ibid, 843), he is trying to rise above his status. One can see the difference between Gus' normal speech and the more elevated speech he is trying to take up. Gus says:

> Gus: He's laid on some very nice crockery this time, I'll say that. It's sort of striped. There is a white strip.
> *(Ben reads.)*
> It's very nice. I'll say that.
> *(Ben turns the page.)*
> You know, sort of round the cup. Round the rim. All the rest of it's black, you see. Then the sacuce's black, except for right in the middle, where the cup goes, where it's white.
> *(Ben reads.)*
> Then the plates are the same, you see. Only they've got a black stripe—the plates—right across the middle. Yes, I'm quite taken with the crockery.
>
> (Pinter, Ibid, 842-843)

Ben just ignores Gus' statement; any attempts by Gus to rise above his status are either ignored or undermined by Ben; Ben is not impressed. Ben's aloofness towards, inattention to and disregard of Gus is a form of violence. By sometimes holding back, even if reacting or communicating in anger or actual physical violence, Ben is cutting all means of communication, even the negative unhealthy ones.

Or we see Ben playing along with Gus' verbal game, so as to beat Gus even at his own game. This too is a form of violence. When Ben and Gus have the argument about whether one says "Light the kettle" or "Put on the kettle," their argument develops into a question of establishing authority through the use of language. The absurdity of the argument is enhanced by the fact that each of them says the phrase that they deny is in use.

Gus: I can light the kettle now.
[...]
Ben: Go on, go and light it.
Gus: Eh?
Ben: Go and light it.
Gus: Light what?
Ben: The kettle.
Gus: You mean the gas.
Ben: Who does?
Gus: You do.
Ben (*eyes narrowing*): What do you mean, I mean the gas?
Gus: Well, that's what you mean, don't you? The gas.
Ben (*powerfully*): If I say go and light the kettle I mean go and light the kettle.
Gus: How can you light a kettle?
Ben: It's a figure of speech! Light the kettle. It's a figure of speech!
Gus: I've never heard it.
Ben: Light the kettle! It's common usage!
Gus: I think you've got it wrong.
Ben (*menacing*): What do you mean?
Gus: They say put on the kettle.
Ben (*taut*):Who says?
(*They stare at each other, breathing hard*)
(*Deliberately*) I have never in all my life heard anyone say put on the kettle.
[...]
Gus: Yes, but I've never heard—
Ben (*Vehemently*): Nobody says light the gas! What does the gas light?
Gus: What does the gas--?
Ben (*Grabbing him with two hands by the throat, at arm's length*): THE KETTLE, YOU FOOL!

(*Gus takes the hands from his throat.*)
Gus: All right, all right
[...]
Ben (*wearily*): Put on the bloody kettle, for Christ's sake.

(Pinter, ibid, 846- 847)

According to Gale, "Gus's attempt to correct Ben is simply an attempt to undermine his stature by catching him in the error. Ben's strong counter attack reveals his awareness that it is authority in their relationship that is at stake" (Quigley, in Gale, Critical Essays, 288). Ben tries to convince Gus that saying "Light the kettle" is only "common usage" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 846). When that fails, and Ben finds his authority threatened, he resorts to physical coercion. In the end, Ben uses the terminology which he denies is in use. "Ben goes to his bed, but, realising what he has said, stops and half turns. They look at each other. Gus slowly exits, left" (Pinter, Ibid, 847). Ben half turns, waiting for Gus to say something, so that he can retaliate. Gus does not say anything, either because he does not want to get into another fight with Ben, or because he knows he has won, and that is enough for him, so he looks at Ben and exits slowly, silently, savouring his silent victory. The look that passes between Ben and Gus, as well as Ben's half-turned-waiting-to-attack position, speak volumes about the two, their relationship and the outcome of this silent confrontation. It is also another example of physical aloofness with a hint of possible physical eruption, at least on Ben's side. On the one hand, when Ben half turns, waiting for Gus' next move, he holds back by not reacting, rather waiting for Gus' action; thus, Ben is being aloof. On the other hand, Ben's stance—half turned—is that of someone ready to pounce; it has a threatening and warning undertone. Ben, silently and through his body language (position), is warning Gus

of the outcome of another round between them--more violence. In this scene, as in many others, words are not necessary to indicate the presence or possibility of violence, for body language alone tells the story.

Violence, with its different types, forms and degrees—whether directed towards another or towards oneself--is a vicious quality; it can be either voluntary or involuntary. In many cases physical violence as well as physical aloofness are substituted for conversation, be it because the characters are incapable of or unwilling to use verbal language as a means of communicating. Yet, whereas these characters can use words to twist meaning or hide truths, their body language—be it violence or aloofness—cannot be easily faked, for it is genuine and spontaneous.

2.4.RITUALS, GAMES AND HABITS

In some sense, rituals and habits share the same characteristics and purposes. We all have rituals, and we also have habits; some we acquire and cling to from childhood, some we pick up along the way. Both habits and rituals give the doers or persons involved—whether consciously or unconsciously—feelings of comfort, belonging, reassurance or bonding. Rituals and habits come in many different forms—songs, dances, thoughts, deeds, games, tendencies and compulsions--and are dictated by various rules or needs. Rituals come in all forms, shapes and colors, and occur for various reasons and ends. There are general or public rituals and also private rituals, performed solitarily, in couples or in groups. There are in society the weekly rituals of Mass for the Christian

worshippers, the annual rituals of award-distributing ceremonies for artists, sexual rituals by couples, habitual rituals by children, the unconscious yet insistent rituals of the mentally challenged, the obsessive/compulsive rituals—in thought or deed—of OCD patients, and the compulsory rituals of games. Habits too come in different forms, shapes and colors. Some habits are healthy—like eating a balanced diet or exercising regularly. Others habits are bad for us--like heavy smoking or drinking excessively. Some habits--like fiddling with objects, or checking the watch, or touching the hair--are nervous habits, yet they give the doer a sense of comfort; these habits are, more often than not, done unconsciously, until someone spoils the fun and points them out to the doer. Other forms of habits, not as harmless, would fall into the category of obsessive-compulsive. Also, in childhood, some children acquire the habit of sucking their thumbs, while others insist on sleeping with the lights on to fend off the evil monsters. We can almost venture to say that rituals are conscious tendencies performed by choice, whereas habits are innate tendencies performed unconsciously. Either could be harmful, addictive or unhealthy. Both feed the human need for a sense of comfort and security, even if it is a momentary gratification

In many of Pinter's plays, games, rituals and habits almost always constitute a big and important non-verbal part of the meaning of the plays, of authorial communication. They may be called a form of body language because they are indicated by actions or gesture rather than by words. In fact, in many instances, body language speaks louder than words ever could. For example, in

The Dumb Waiter, there are ritualistic conversations, whose importance lies not so much in what is being said as in the steps, choreography or sequence of how it is said. In general, Ben and Gus have a sequence in conversing together. Ben reads something interesting in the paper, makes an exclamation and tells Gus to listen; that would be Gus' cue to tell Ben to proceed, then they both discuss the tidbit and agree or disagree over different aspects. In the beginning of the play, we can see this repetitiveness in the form of their conversations. We can also see their enthusiasm and, one can almost say, their enjoyment of their banter. It is not so much what they say, however, which gives them pleasure, as much as their enjoyment of their silently-agreed-upon game in the art of conversation. This game is important for both Ben and Gus, for it safely helps them pass the time. Only when Gus deviates and breaks the rules of the game by wondering and questioning just about everything does Ben become angry and annoyed, because their simple game of harmlessly passing the time becomes dangerous. By contrasting these early conversations between Ben and Gus in the beginning of the play with the last conversation, in the last scene, one can tell that Gus is broken and even dispirited—this is clear from the way Gus is behaving in the last scene. Here, Gus goes through the motions without showing any emotions; he lacks the enthusiasm and even the clownish energy that he displays at the beginning of the play.

(Ben throws the paper down.)
Ben: Kaw!
(He picks up the paper and looks at it.)
Listen to this!
(Pause.)
What about that, eh?

(Pause.)
Kaw!
(Pause.)
Have you ever heard such a thing/
Gus *(dully)*: Go on!
Ben: It's true.
Gus: Go away.
Ben: It's down here in black and white.
Gus *(very low)*: Is that a fact?
Ben: Can you imagine it.
Gus: It's unbelievable.
Ben: It's enough to make you want to puke, isn't it?
Gus (*almost inaudible)*: Incredible.
(Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 854)

Ben tries to engage Gus once more in their conversational game or ritual. Ben exclaims, asks questions, then pauses to give Gus a moment or two to respond. After so many endeavors by Ben, Gus finally responds—"dully." What is amusing about this conversation is that Ben never really tells Gus or the audience what the piece of news is to which Gus still responds as "unbelievable" and "incredible." At that point in the play, it is obvious that Gus' spirit is broken. As to Ben, he still needs to continue this ritualistic game to calm his nerves and reassure himself that all is well, just as before. The essence of the moment here is not the words spoken but the indications given out by the pitch and volume of Ben's voice—which seems loud, forced and almost exaggerated—and by Gus' dejection—which is apparent in his "very low," "almost inaudible" voice and dullness (Pinter, Ibid, 854).

In The Homecoming, the cigar smoking in Act One and then later at the beginning of Act Two is a ritual that reflects the characters' male bonding. This ritual of cigar smoking brings to mind the tendency of many native tribes to engage in the spiritual ritual of passing the pipe—filled with tobacco or a drug--

while discussing different important matters and issues (Frazer 95, 484). It is also a ritual that has been used as peace offering between opponents. Steven H. Gale suggests that

> [i]f the people in the drama are desperate in their needs, then everything they do may be aimed at satisfying themselves [...] In a family which feels these needs so vitally, there has been a breakdown in the ability to communicate emotions between the individual members, and as a result they have resorted to game playing and rituals in an attempt to get through to one another. Unfortunately, the game playing and rituals only serve to compound the problem and make expression of feeling more difficult because the stylized forms get in the way of the players [...] intensifying the very problems they are meant to alleviate. According to Pinter, "The game is the least of it. What takes place is a mode of expression, a chosen device. It's the way the characters face each other under the game that interests me." The game, essentially, is the continual battle for emotional security.
>
> (Gale, Butter's Going Up, 149)

The males in this play display antagonistic feelings towards one another. Not only is their antagonism towards each other obvious, but, more often than not, it is genuine. Yet, they seem to need to be in each other's lives. At one of the rarely honest points in The Homecoming, after Teddy deliberately takes Lenny's cheese-roll, Lenny really opens up about how he feels about Teddy. Even though he feels disappointed with Teddy, he nevertheless considers him an integral part of their family unit. Lenny tells Teddy "...we do make up a unit, Teddy, and you're an integral part of it. When we all sit round the backyard having a quiet gander at the night sky, there's always an empty chair standing in the circle, which is in fact

yours" (Pinter, The Homecoming, 65). These moments of apparent openness however are rare. Most of the time, they are like a pack of wolves.

> The family pack, composed of parents, whelps, and close relatives, is the social unit. Within the pack there is a social hierarchy. The leader is usually the largest and strongest dog, followed by younger or senile males, then the mate of the dominant dog, other females, and finally the pups in order of strength. The usual pack numbers between four and seven individuals [...] The father brings food to the nursing female and later to the young. If the mother is killed, the father will look after the young as well as possible [...] The adults show a considerable amount of mutual respect and affection. There is much tail-wagging, caressing, romping, and occasionally tricks, ruses, and friendly brawls; but strangers are usually driven off.
>
> (Whitfield, 220)

Whereas the adult wolves show much respect and friendliness towards one another in the pack, Max and his family members show animosity and disrespect towards one another and to Teddy, who is a stranger. In spite of that they seem to be dependent on one another. One can say that their relationship is symbiotic, or like that of leeches who need to feed off their hosts. Mostly, they connect with one another without overtly doing so, and here they subtly achieve that through their silent ritual of smoking cigars. "The cigars provide an important unifying link in the action" (Fjelde, 97). In the first act, Sam shows Max and Lenny the box of cigars he was given by one of his clients who appreciated his service and promptness.

> Sam *takes a box of cigars from his pocket.*
> Max: Come here. Let's have a look at them.
> Sam *shows* Max *the cigars*, Max *takes one from the box, pinches it and sniffs it.*
> It's a fair cigar.

Sam: Want to try one?
Max *and* Sam *light cigars.*
(Pinter, The Homecoming, 12)

Max and Sam light up their "fair" cigars before Max starts his sudden attack on Sam and his criticism of Sam's character, job and life in general (Pinter, Ibid, 13-15). The cigar is important in establishing male status. It also provides grounds of competition between Max and Sam. Although it is Sam who brings the cigar, it is Max who tests it and deems it to be "fair." He does so by right of being the head of the family. He has to act tough or his power will be usurped by his opponent, Sam. This cigar-smoking ritual is repeated in the opening scene of the second act of the play. We see that "Max, Teddy, Lenny *and* Sam *are about the stage, lighting cigars*" (Pinter, Ibid, 45). The afternoon seems pleasant enough; they had a "very good lunch," they are all sitting together amicably and Max entertains Ruth by reminiscing about the past and recounting his family history, where of course he makes himself out to be the hero and saviour of the day. They are like male animals fighting to possess females at mating season. The mood *seems* pleasant and light until Max declares that the cigar is lousy, stubs it out, turns to Sam and starts picking on him and criticizing him. Then they get into another ritual or game, where Max belittles Sam and puts him down.

Max: This is a lousy cigar.
He stubs it out.
He turns to Sam.
[...]
Max: It makes the bile come up in my mouth. The bile—you
understand? (*To* Ruth) I worked as a butcher all my life, using the chopper and the slab, the slab, you know what I mean, the chopper and the slab! To keep my family in luxury. Two families!

> My mother was bedridden, my brothers all invalids. I had to earn the money for the leading psychiatrists. I had to read books! I had to study the disease, so that I could cope with an emergency at every stage. A crippled family, three bastard sons, a slutbitch of a wife—don't talk to me about the pain of childbirth—I suffered the pain, I've still got the pangs—when I give a little cough my back collapses—and I've got a lazy idle bugger of a brother won't even get to work on time. The best chauffeur in the world. All his life he sat in the front seat giving lovely hand signals. You call that work? This man doesn't know his gearbox from his arse! [...] Anyone could have you at the same time. You'd bend over for half a dollar on Blackfriars Bridge.
> Sam: Me!
> Max : For two bob and a toffee apple.
> [...]
> Max *points his stick at* Sam.
> Max : He didn't even fight in the war. This man didn't even fight in the bloody war!
> Sam: I did!
> Max : Who did you kill?
> *Silence.*
> Sam *gets up, goes to* Ruth, *shakes her hand and goes out of the front door.*
> (Pinter, The Homecoming, 47-48)

Max's verbal attacks on Sam are violent and malicious. In talking about himself in front of Ruth, Max paints a perfect picture of the noble hero, the saviour, and the martyr who solely shouldered the family responsibility and saw his family through the tough times. It is not enough for Max to place himself on a high pedestal, but he has to attack Sam and show him for the coward he—Max—thinks him to be. By using this technique of comparing two extremes—Max of course representing the better end—he is painting an even better and more flawless picture of himself so as to impress Ruth farther. Sam's silence shows his compliance and surrender to Max. His departure is his way of putting an end to Max's abuse and

showing off at his expense. It is quite probable that Sam's silence and departure, like that of the defeated/departed moose or baboon, after a fight, are a confirmation, to Max, of Sam's cowardly, passive nature (Berne, Sex in Human Loving, 171-178). This is a ritualistic game between the two brothers—Sam and Max—where they play the role of passive or aggressive.

In The Lover, there are two forms of ritual games. First, there is the verbal game, where Sarah and Richard play on words, sometimes intentionally and sometimes unintentionally, in referring to the dichotomy in their relationship. For example, Richard makes the distinction between wife and whore and mistress as well as the functions and qualities that go with each. According to Richard, a wife possesses "wit," "grace" and "elegance" (Pinter, The Lover, 168), is to be "respected," "admired" and "loved" (Pinter, Ibid 169)—where marriage would possess such attributes as "dignity" and "sensibility" (Pinter, Ibid, 169). A whore—between whom and a mistress there is a "world of difference" (Pinter, Ibid, 167)--on the other hand, is simply "a common garden slut. Not worth talking about. Handy between trains, nothing more" (Pinter, Ibid, 167), "a functionary who either pleases or displeases" (Pinter, Ibid, 168) and "someone who could express and engender lust with all lust's cunning. Nothing more" (Pinter, Ibid, 169). Sarah and Richard cannot reconcile passion and respect; thus, they split their relationship into two separate parts: one is the respectable marriage and the other is the torrid love affair--even the affair holds different meanings for the couple.

This brings us to Sarah and Richard's second form of ritual or game, which consists of sexual games. "Games are played by people who are afraid of intimacy,

either in general or with others. They are a way of getting close to others and having meaningful transactions without the surrender that intimacy requires. Thus sexual games may be either a barrier against love or a step on the way to it—a sort of testing arena" (Berne, Sex in Human Loving, 185). Sarah and Richard play out and fulfil their fantasies through their sexual games or rituals, without what Berne calls "the surrender that intimacy requires." They are seeking closeness and achieving it, yet all the while they are wearing their masks. It is not unlike acting on a stage while wearing a mask that does not allow the array of emotions that register on the actor's face to be revealed to others.

The actual nature of the lovers' ritualized sexual games is quite important, for it is the basis of the affair. The games are divided into different types or categories; for example, there is role-playing time, tea-time as well as whispering time. These games are both physical and verbal; that is, the lovers first silently perform their ritual, like dancers performing a dance *à l' improviste—foreplay*—then they take turns in role-playing, like the victim and the rescuer, or the pursued and the pursuer. The nature of the lovers' sexual games is characterised by repetitiveness, violence and aggression.

> Richard *comes in...He walks into the room and stands.*
> *She closes the door behind him. Walks slowly down past him, and sits on the chaise longue, crossing her legs.*
> *Pause.*
> *He moves slowly to chaise longue and stands very close to her at her back. She arches her back, uncrosses her legs, moves away to low chair down left.*
> *Pause.*

> *He looks at her, then moves towards the hall cupboard, brings out a bongo drum. He places the drum on the chaise longue, stands.*
> *Pause.*
> *She rises, moves past him towards the hall, turns, looks at him. He moves below chaise. They sit at either end. He begins to tap the drum. Her forefingers move along drum towards his hand. She scratches the back of his hand sharply. Her hand retreats. Her fingers tap one after the other towards him, and rest. Her forefinger scratches between his fingers. Her other fingers do the same. His hand clasps hers. Her hand tries to escape. Wild beats of their fingers tangling.*
> *Stillness.*
>
> (Pinter, The Lover, 175-176)

This is the lovers' foreplay, before their role-playing game. Neither the audience nor the readers need words to go with this silent ritual; the acts are quite universal. The lovers are keeping a *rendezvous.* The man acts macho and self-assured; the woman is playing the role of seductress, posing as she had practiced before her lover's arrival. They tease each other and use the bongo drum to set and accentuate the mood of their passionate interlude. In their roles of lovers, they come across as passionate, so unlike their other selves, cool and reserved.

According to Berne, the "advantages of playing games are nowhere shown more clearly than in sexual games.... Sexual games satisfy other needs besides or instead of sex: hate, spite, anger, fear, guilt, shame, and embarrassment, along with hurt and inadequacy, and all the other perverse feelings for which some people have to settle in place of love " (Berne, Sex in Human Loving, 190). Sarah and Richard/Max's love affair is based on sexual rituals and games that are quite unfitting for their conservative, politically-correct

marriage. The lovers therefore play these games—ritualistic sexual games including several roles--within the overall game--the love affair. For example, in this scene, Sarah is waiting for her lover. The lover is no other than her husband Max dressed differently. They begin the game as the lovers meeting according to their rendezvous, and then move to playing their sexual games as foreplay that eventually lead to their love-making. Thus, we realize that the married couple is playing out a fantasy of love and seduction outside of marriage or a sexual game. Within this fantasy or game, the couple plays different roles or personas, alternating between pursued/pursuer or victim/aggressor. When done with their role playing—the games within the game—they resume their roles as the lovers.

The doorbell rings. Pulling her dress down she moves to the door, opens it.
Sarah: Hallo, Max.
[...]
He puts drum down on chair down right, picks up cigarette, moves to her.
Max : Excuse me.
She glances at him and away.
Excuse me, have you got a light?
She does not respond.
Do you happen to have a light?
Sarah: Do you mind leaving me alone?
Max : Why?
Pause.
I'm merely asking if you can give me a light.
She moves from him and looks up and down the room.
He follows to her shoulder. She turns back.
Sarah: Excuse me.
She moves past him. Close, his body follows.
She stops.
I don't like being followed.
Max : Just give me a light and I won't bother you. That's all I want.
Sarah (*through her teeth*): Please go away. I'm waiting for someone.

Max : Who?
Sarah: My husband.
Max : Why are you so shy? Eh? Where's your lighter?
He touches her body. An indrawn breath from her.
Here?
Pause.
Where is it?
He touches her body. A gasp from her.
Here?
She wrenches herself away. He traps her in the corner.
Sarah (*hissing*): What do you think you're doing?
Max : I'm dying for a puff.
Sarah: I'm waiting for my husband!
Max : Let me get a light from yours.
They struggle silently.
She breaks away to wall.
Silence.
He approaches.
Are you all right miss? I've just got rid of that ...gentleman. Did he hurt you in any way?
Sarah: Oh how wonderful of you. No, no, I'm all right. Thank you.
Max : Very lucky I happened to be passing. You wouldn't believe that could happen in such a beautiful park.
Sarah: No, you wouldn't.
Max : Still, you've come to no harm.
Sarah: I can never thank you enough. I'm terribly grateful, I really am.
Max : Why don't you sit down a second and calm yourself.
Sarah: Oh, I'm quite calm – but...yes, thank you. You're so kind. Where shall we sit.
Max : Well, we can't sit out. It's raining. What about that park-keeper's hut?
Sarah: Do you think we should? I mean, what about the park-keeper?
Max : I am the park-keeper.
They sit on the chaise longue.
Sarah: I never imagined I could meet anyone so kind.
Max : To treat a lovely young woman like you like that, it's unpardonable.
Sarah (*gazing at him*): You seem so mature, so...appreciative.

Max : Of course.
Sarah: So gentle. So...Perhaps it was all for the best.
Max : What do you mean?
Sarah: So that we could meet. So that we could meet. You and I.

Her fingers trace his thigh. He stares at them, lifts them off.

Max : I don't quite follow you.
Sarah: Don't you?

Her fingers trace his thigh. He stares at them, lifts them off.

Max : Now look, I'm sorry. I'm married.

She takes his hand and puts it on her knee.

Sarah: You're so sweet, you mustn't worry.
Max (*Snatching his hand away*): No, I really am. My wife's waiting for me.
Sarah: Can't you speak to strange girls?
Max : No.
Sarah: Oh, how sickening you are. How tepid.
Max : I'm sorry.
Sarah: You men are all alike. Give me a cigarette.
Max : I bloody well won't.
Sarah: I beg your pardon?
Max : Come here, Dolores.
Sarah: Oh no, not me. Once bitten twice shy, thanks. (*She stands.*) Bye-bye.
Max : You can't get out, darling. The hut's locked. We're alone. You're trapped.
Sarah: Trapped! I'm a married woman. You can't treat me like this.
Max (*moving to her)*: It's teatime, Mary.

She moves swiftly behind the table and stands there with her back to the wall. He moves to the opposite end of the table, hitches his trousers, bends and begins to crawl under the table towards her.

He disappears under the velvet cloth. Silence. She stares down at the table. Her legs are hidden from view. His hand is on her leg. She looks about, grimaces, grits her teeth, gasps, gradually sinks under the table, and disappears. Long Silence.

Her Voice: Max!

Lights fade.
Fade up.
Max *sitting on chair down left.*

Sarah *pouring tea.*
Sarah: Max.
Max : What?
Sarah (*fondly*): Darling.
Slight pause.
What is it? You're very thoughtful.
Max : No.
Sarah: You are. I know it.
Pause.
Max : Where's your husband?
Pause.
Sarah: My husband? You know where he is.
Max : Where?
Sarah: He's at work.
Max : Poor fellow. Working away, all day.
Pause.
I wonder what he's like.
Sarah (*chuckling*): Oh, Max.
(Pinter, The Lover, 175-180)

In this scene, we see Sarah and Richard's ritualistic sexual games, where they alternate the roles of pursuer and pursued, the aggressor and the victim. Their games are mostly based on violence and seduction. The gallant gentleman bests the bad guy and sends him off on his way, thus rescuing the damsel in distress. Or the seductress tries to seduce the kind, resisting gentleman. By having a dichotomous relationship, Sarah and Richard act out their fantasies (as Dolores/Mary and Max) that satisfy their needs, without compromising what their conventional marriage stands for. In their rituals, the lovers use their bodies sexually to express their emotions and desires; in doing so they try to deceive themselves into feeling a false sense of security and assurance that indeed they have "a healthy marriage" (Pinter, Ibid, 168).

The sexual game itself seems to have an essential rule; the husband and wife cannot openly acknowledge that they are playing the game or mix their

separate relationships. They have to remain loyal to the rules of the game. They have to pretend that their lovers are in fact different from their spouses. They would rather be found guilty of having an affair than face the possibility of fulfilling their sexual desires and still having a respectable marriage. In this sense Berne's second advantage of sexual games applies, in which "games avoid confrontations, responsibility and commitments" (Berne, Sex in Human Loving, 190). This silent rule is not explicitly stated in the play, but is implied. For example, on one occasion, Richard, as Max the lover, questions Sarah about her husband and tells her that the affair has to end for he cannot deceive his wife any more. He pushes Sarah so far that she "slams the table," screams at him then pleads with him, hoping that he is playing a new game. In this passage there is an explicit reference to the lover's game-playing.

> *She slams the table.*
> Sarah: Stop it! What's the matter with you? What happened to you? (*Quietly.*) Please, please, stop it. What are you doing, playing a game?
> Max : A game? I don't play games.
> Sarah: Don't you? You do. Oh, you do. You do. Usually I like them.
> Max : I've played my last game.
>
> (Pinter, The Lover, 183)

It is clear that Sarah would rather play a game that she does not like, one which she believes might be her lover's new game, rather than give up playing games altogether. On another occasion, Sarah shows her dismay and shock when Richard, now openly the husband, softly calls her an adulteress, brings out the bongo drum, questions her about it and insists on using it. Sarah asks him to stop and reminds him of their arrangement. :

Richard (*softly*): Adulteress.
Sarah : You can't talk like this, it's impossible, you know you can't. What do you think you're doing? [...]
He opens the cupboard and takes out the bongo drum. [...]
Richard: What's this? I found it some time ago. What is it? [...]
Sarah : You shouldn't touch that [...] It's nothing [...] It's nothing [...] Put it back.
Richard: Nothing? This? A drum in my cupboard?
Sarah : Put it back! [...]
Richard: It isn't by any chance anything to do with your illicit afternoons?
Sarah : Not at all. Why should it?
Richard: It is used. This is used isn't it? I can guess.
Sarah : You guess nothing. Give it to me.
Richard: How does he use it? How do you use it? [...] What function does this fulfil? It's not just an ornament, I take it? What do you do with it?
Sarah (with quite anguish):You've no right to question me. No right at all. It was our arrangement. No questions of this kind. Please. Don't, don't. It was our arrangement.

(Pinter, Ibid, 192, 193)

Richard seems to want to end their arrangement. According to Sarah, he had been asking more questions than usual, complaining about the whole situation, and hinting at breaking off the arrangement, or rather ending the affair. Either Richard is bored with the game and wants to play a new, more exciting game, or he has found a way to reconcile the two aspects of their marriage. According to what he tells Sarah, he has played his last game (Pinter, Ibid, 183). Sarah, on the other hand, seems more than happy with their arrangement. She refuses to even consider changing the game or bending the rules. Richard, who wants to end the games or alter the rules, is left with no choice but to shock Sarah by savagely breaking the rules of the game, as seen in the quotation above. Sarah however does not accept

Richard's decision to end the affair. She uses all her weapons to fight back. She pleads with Richard and she tries to seduce him. When all else fails, Sarah tells Richard that he is not her only lover and that she receives many others, all strangers (Pinter, 193). Sarah's admission moves Richard to counter-retaliate by grabbing the drum in order to start the games again. At first Sarah is resistant, for it is Richard playing the game, not Max—we can tell from the clothes.

Richard: You can't get out darling. You're trapped.
They face each other from opposite ends of the table.
She suddenly giggles.
Silence.
Sarah : I'm trapped.
Pause.
What will my husband say?
Pause.
He expects me. He's waiting. I can't get out. I'm trapped. You've no right to treat a married woman like this. Have you? Think, think, think of what you're doing.
She looks at him, bends and begins to crawl under the table towards him. She emerges from under the table and kneels at his feet, looking up. Her hand goes up his leg. He is looking down at her.
You are very forward. You really are. Oh, you really are. But my husband will understand. My husband does understand. Come here. Come down here. I'll explain. After all, think of my marriage. He adores me. Come here and I'll whisper to you. I'll whisper it. It's whispering time. Isn't it?
She takes his hands. He sinks to his knees, with her. They are kneeling together, close. She strokes his face.
It's a very late tea. Isn't it? But I think I like it. Aren't you sweet? I've never seen you before after sunset. My husband's at a late-night conference. Yes, you look different. Why are you wearing this strange suit, and this tie? You usually wear something else, don't you? Take off your jacket. Mmmnn? Would you like me to

> change? Would you like me to change my clothes?
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 195-196)

Richard does not seem to know what he wants to do about their situation—whether to end the games, or alter them. Sarah is on unfamiliar territory. She feels trapped, as she repeats several times. She is hesitant as to whether she should play along or not in this new game. As she begins to participate in the game, she tells Richard to think of what he is doing. Finally, Sarah succumbs to Richard's efforts; she plays along. Yet she tries to make what passed between her and Richard part of a game, a new game. Richard is in a way a new player to whom she will explain things. Another new element in their game is the time. It is after sunset, too late for habitual teatime. Sarah seems compelled to mention that they are not wearing the appropriate attire, their uniforms. One cannot say that the conflict within has been resolved, but, at least outwardly, they are resuming their ritualistic sexual games with new elements added to them. It is their way of resolving the conflict, if at least temporarily.

Rituals, games and habits are forms of body language because they mostly depend on actions as a means of self-expression. They are also considered as a means of communication by the author about the characters. By understanding the characters' habits and rituals, and the games that they play, and by analyzing the underlying reasons behind these actions, we gain a better understanding of the characters, their dynamics, their relationships and their interactions with one another, as well as the point that the author is trying to make at that moment, or what he is trying to say.

2.5.CONCLUSION

Body language is that which speaks without or above words. Its power lies in its silence or implication and universality that is understood by all. It is a physical language (not necessarily a negative thing) that is genuine and instinctive. It can reflect moods and communicate thoughts and feelings through mime, gestures, physical violence or physical aloofness, as well as through rituals, games and habits.

The mime is one of the oldest forms of communication in the entertainment business, be it in the theatre or the silent motion pictures. There are the silent acts and wordless gestures on the stage, the mime-performer on the street who entertains the passers-by, the silent movies of Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy and others, as well as many cartoons. This silent means of communication, based purely on gestures, is understood by all in spite of the absence of words.

Physical violence is a form of aggression directed outwardly towards another, or inwardly towards oneself. Outward violence shows impatience, disrespect and hostility. It is born out of frustration, insecurity and a desire to intimidate and overpower another. Inward violence shows insecurity, self-control and repression. It is born out of an inability to communicate or a desire to be assertive and out of fear that results in passivity. Physical aloofness shows hostility and reserve. In holding back from others, one is breaking the bridges of communication with others, thus isolating them and robbing them of the right to communicate and interact.

Rituals, habits and games constitute one more important medium of physical language in Pinter's plays, indicating deep truth about inner states. Some are innate and some are acquired, some are healthy and some are addictive. They are quite important, for they give the doer a sense of security, comfort, reassurance and bonding, while they tell the audience much about the characters.

All of these forms of body language are harder to interpret or decipher than verbal language, probably because body language—which is more genuine than verbal language--is like a foreign language; we know it exists, but it is too difficult to bother with it. It is however very valuable to look at it and analyze it closely, as Pinter does, for we thereby learn much more than if we did not take the trouble. Even if it is hard to examine all these forms of body language, they are worthwhile, for they give us a greater appreciation and a better understanding of what we see and hear, rather than simply believing the empty words that assails our ears or blindly accepting the immediate meaning of what meets the eye.

CHAPTER THREE:

VISUAL LANGUAGE

3.1.INTRODUCTION

In the world, we depend on our senses to see, hear, smell, perceive, judge and so on. Vision, which is related to perception, is quite an important sense. It is our window on the world around us. It is our tool that helps us form our first impression of a person or a place, before we know anything about either. Of course our perception of what we see is mostly based on what meets our eyes. It is also based on what we bring to it, which is our way of thinking, our sets of values and beliefs as well as our background and upbringing, which in a large measure affect our perceptions and judgements.

Visual language is one of the many aspects that distinguish drama from other genres. Watching a play involves a different experience than watching a movie or reading a book. We—the audience/readers—are aware of this difference in experience. In the theatre, we do not get the playwright's detailed stage directions, for example, a character's description, motives or thoughts (unless revealed in a soliloquy). Yet we do get a sense of these things because, in the theatre, we see the play not only through our own interpretation, but also through that of the actors and the director. This means that the play is no longer playing in our heads, where we get to interpret the words on the pages in our minds and to direct the play. On the stage, the play is first visually perceived, where someone else's interpretation becomes assimilated and accommodated in our heads. The visual language is what first greets our eyes--the setting/scenery, the furniture and props—and helps to form our first impression.

It is safe to say that the theatre depends to a great extent on visual language; that is, what the audience sees on the stage. Visual language is one of the playwright's—and also the director's--ways of communicating with the audience. The actors do not have to make unnecessary, explicit references about their environment, living conditions, or the different props, with the intention of explaining or clarifying their importance and significance in the play to the audience. The actors mostly have to concentrate on conveying to the audience through words or actions their motives, thoughts and emotions, which in turn will clarify to the audience any further connections these may bear on the setting. By means of visual perception, with the added input of the characters, the audience can decipher the meaning of the different props, or the feelings of the characters, or a scene, or see how the characters' environment and living conditions affect their behaviour and bear on their actions.

Visual language is a particularly important element of the non-verbal in Pinter's plays. Visual language or stagecraft includes setting (time, place, scenery), lighting and sound effects, choice of furniture or clothes, as well as several types of props; each has specific meaning and function in the non-verbal communicative language in Pinter's works.

3.2.SETTING

According to Lee A. Jacobus, the setting "of a play includes many things. First it refers to the time and place in which the action occurs. Second, it refers to

the scenery, the physical elements that appear on the stage to vivify the author's stage directions...The title of the play provides another element of the setting" (Jacobus, 21, 22). In Pinter's plays, the setting is often quite realistic, yet at the same time a metaphoric comment on life. It is the surrounding milieu of the characters, which particularly bears great significance on the characters and the play, and generally as well as implicitly reflects on the existing conditions of humanity. The visible on the stage (the setting/scenery) hides, but at the same time can reflect the invisible (the characters' emotional state). Pinter tries to communicate this to his audience through his brilliant choice of settings in his plays.

The setting includes the space, the architecture and the furniture, as well as the quality of the room. For example, the setting tips us off as to whether the characters live in poor or comfortable living conditions, whether the room is packed or items are sparse, why and what that means. Also, the space and the colours have great significance on the mood and on our perception of the characters and how their surrounding reflects on them.

The set designer, with the collaboration and input of the director and the playwright (if living) of every new production of a play, has an important role in building the set, which is an important element in the success or failure of the play. In most cases, they usually stick to the playwright's directions. In an interview with John Bury, the set designer of one of the productions of The Homecoming, he stated that: "Harold has, in the past, shown a complete abhorrence of the composite set...He hates composite sets because, I think, he

feels that there has to be a good reality in the room" (Bury, 27). According to Bury, The Homecoming demanded a composite set because Pinter wanted

> to see the hall, the front door, and the staircase—he got around this by writing into the text that line about knocking the wall down to make an open living area. Instead of a composite set becoming a stage device, which let the audience look through very careful angles to see the staircase and the room, he made it a single living area...My feeling is this is how Harold justified to himself the use of that set. He thought, "Christ, I can't have a composite set. This is quite simple: Teddy can say that line, then the whole thing falls into place.
>
> (Bury, 26-27)

It is quite obvious that a set for the same play done by another group would vary according to the production criteria, the stage itself and the space it provides. Yet, most productions of a given play, adhere more or less to the playwright's directions. Pinter seems "more than most playwrights, conscious of using a set, as opposed to just having it there" (Bury, 29).

Gale describes the setting in Pinter's The Homecoming as a "confining, barren set" (Gale, Butter's Going Up, 147). The barren set reflects the characters' emotional and, for some, physical state. The characters are empty, unable to relate to one another in conventional ways. They are emotionally as well as physically barren and impotent; there is a possibility that none of the four men living in the house is going to have children. Max already had three sons—or, had he?—and is now a frustrated old man. We never see Lenny take part in the action; he is always standing and watching from afar. He is good at fabricating stories, so he tells stories of his escape from women rather than his involvement with them. Even when Lenny and Joey recount to Teddy this long and unbelievable story about the two

girls that they supposedly slept with (Pinter, The Homecoming, 66-68)–as discussed in Chapter One—Lenny tells Teddy that Joey slept with his girl, yet he says nothing about what happened with his own girl. Instead of boasting about his prowess and sexual conquests, Lenny boasts about those of Joey's, which seem to be as non-existant as Lenny's. After spending two hours with Ruth, Joey is not capable of going the "whole hog"; whether it is as a result of Joey's impotence or Ruth's cunning, we can only guess. As to Sam, he does not seem interested in the question of marriage, or even of fathering children. When Max sarcastically wonders how a man with all of Sam's gifts never got married, Sam answers: "There is still time" (Pinter, ibid, 14) before going on to reminisce about Jessie. Sam is more than happy—not to mention safe--living in the memory of Jessie, for whom he has undying platonic love, esteem and affection. These characters are not living; they merely exist. Their lifelessness is reflected in their grim house.

Even though the house is kept clean--since Max is "obsessed with order and clarity" and "doesn't like mess"--it still lacks warmth; it also lacks a woman's touch. John Bury says:

> The environment is essentially masculine. That was the whole point about that house. There wasn't anything feminine about it. That set couldn't be dirty. It couldn't be squalid, because of the reference to cleanliness. Those men cleaned that place out of existence. Washed and wiped up their tea cups...It wasn't dust and grubbiness. But it was essentially faded, like a carpet that had been beaten, wallpaper that had never been changed. The corners were a bit frayed. It was a house no feminine hand ever entered, no one ever put a bit of chintz on a cushion, no one ever arranged the flowers in a vase. It was barracklike. This came out of the play. But it was difficult to get this degree of sordidness without being

> dirty. One couldn't actually have hanging-off paper and one couldn't actually have dirty corners.
>
> (Bury, 32)

The house, as has been suggested, lacks a woman's touch; no woman has been in the house since Jessie's death. The men try to do the chores, with much grumbling and complaining, but, alas, it is not the same. There is something about it that is not clean; it is not physical, but rather felt. Teddy does not want to stay there; he wants Ruth to go back with him to America, where it is clean.

> Teddy: We'll go anyway, mmnn? It's so clean there.
> Ruth : Clean.
> Teddy: Yes.
> Ruth : Is it dirty here?
> Teddy: No, of course not. But it's cleaner there.
> *Pause...*
> Ruth : You find it dirty here?
> Teddy: I didn't say I found it dirty here.
> *Pause.*
> I didn't say that.
> *Pause.*
> [...]
> Here, there's nowhere to bathe, except the swimming bath down the road. You know what it's like? It's like a urinal. A filthy urinal!
>
> (Pinter, The Homecoming, 54-55)

The grimness, sordidness and fading things around the house reflect the moral degeneration of its occupants. It is obvious from their conversation that they do the *grand menage* of the house and keep it clean, but that cleanliness is not reflected in their values, beliefs and life-style. Teddy can see that; he probably saw it a long time ago and that may have been one of the reasons—if not the main reason—that caused his departure to America. After seeing Lenny kissing Ruth, Joey practically making out with Ruth and Max approving, Teddy answers his family's questions about his work. He says:

> You wouldn't understand my works. You wouldn't have the faintest idea of what they were about. You wouldn't appreciate the points of reference. You're way behind. All of you. There is no point in my sending you my works. You'd be lost. It's nothing to do with the question of intelligence. It's a way of being able to look at the world. It's a question of how far you can operate on things and not in things. I mean it's the question of your capacity to ally the two, to relate the two, to balance the two. To see, to be able to *see*! I'm the one who can see. That's why I can write my critical works. Might do you good...have a look at them...see how certain people can view...things...how certain people can maintain...intellectual equilibrium. Intellectual equilibrium. You're just objects. You just...move about. I can observe it. I can see what you do. It's the same as I do. But you're lost in it. You won't get me being...I won't be lost in it.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 61-62)

In my opinion, Teddy's answer seems to be about their moral degradation more than anything else, as is represented by the grim and dirty set. He sees what his family is all about and how they live their lives. In his surface passivity (as seen in Chapter 2, he struggles to be in control of his emotions without them being seen on the outside), he is no better than they are because, instead of speaking up, he keeps quiet about his true feelings and opinions concerning his family's corruption and immorality. Yet, he seems to think that by seeing them for what they really are and by refusing to be dragged down to their level and taking part in the action, he is not as lost as they are. By escaping the decadent house and its immoral occupants, he believes he is saved.

Sam too can see this moral degeneration and feel this uncleanliness. In continuing the scene where Max and Sam discuss the question of Sam's marital

status, Max tells Sam: "When you find the right girl, Sam, let your family know [...] You can bring her to live here, she can keep us all happy. We'd take it in turns to give her a walk round the park." To which Sam answers: "I wouldn't bring her here" (Pinter, ibid, 15). Max's insinuation is quite clear and self-explanatory. To even consider bringing his non-existing bride to that house is out of the question. Later in the play, after finding out what kind of a woman Ruth is, Max tells Teddy:

> Listen, you think I don't know why you didn't tell me you were married? I know why. You were ashamed. You thought I'd be annoyed because you married a woman beneath you. You should have known me better. I'm broadminded. I'm a broadminded man [...] we're talking about a woman of quality. We're talking about a woman of feeling.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 59-60)

It is precisely because Teddy knows the kind of man Max is—in addition to Ruth's nature--that he did not tell Max that he was married. At the first available opportunity, Max, Lenny and Joey ask Ruth to stay on, thinking that she will keep them happy. Sam collapses, unable to deal further with this corruption. Having been aware of his family's corruption and the uncleanliness of the household he lives in, it is not surprising that Sam is always washing up, scraping plates in the kitchen and getting rid of Max's remains. Max of course takes it personally and complains about being driven out of the kitchen.

> Max : I hate this room.
> *Pause.*
> It's the kitchen I like. It's cosy in there. It's cosy.
> *Pause.*
> But I can't stay in there. You know why? Because he's always washing up in there,

> scraping the plates, driving me out of the kitchen, that's why.
> [...]
> Max : What are you doing in there?
> Sam: washing up.
> Max : What else?
> Sam: Getting rid of your leavings.
> Max : Putting them in the bin, eh?
> Sam: Right in.
> Max : What point are you trying to prove?
> Sam: No point.
> Max :Oh yes, you are. You resent making my breakfast, that's what it is, isn't it? That's why you bang around the kitchen like that, scraping the frying-pan, scraping all the leavings into the bin, scraping all the plates, scraping all the tea out of the teapot...that's why you do that, every single stinking morning. I know. Listen, Sam. I want to say something to you. From my heart.
> *He moves closer.*
> I want you to get rid of these feelings of resentment you've got towards me. I wish I could understand them. Honestly, have I ever given you cause? Never.
> (Pinter, ibid, 37, 38-39)

It seems that Sam is unconsciously trying to clean this house, to purify it, to disinfect it, to get rid of all that is dirty.

It is obvious that nothing has changed in the house since Jessie's death; it was and still is as impure, unclean and adulterated as ever, as are the lives of the men. For example, the lock was not changed. After so many years of absence, Teddy was able to get in the house using his old key (Pinter, ibid, 19, 20). Nothing changed, except may be for the wall that they knocked down after her death. Teddy tells Ruth: "Actually there was a wall, across there...with a door. We knocked it down...years ago...to make an open living area. The structure was not affected, you see. My mother was dead" (Pinter, ibid, 21). The

structure of the house is a metaphor for the corrupt core of the family. Whereas one was not affected by knocking down a wall, the other also survived Jessie's death by remaining as corrupt and immoral as ever.

In The Dumb Waiter, we see that the set parallels and reflects the characters' mood and situation. The Dumb Waiter is set in a confined basement room that lends itself to claustrophobic qualities. Such a constraining and depressing environment reflects the characters' irritation and nervousness. "To an extent, such constraint is a metaphor for the constraints that life itself places on people and that people place upon themselves" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 840); this is quite true of Ben and Gus. They have placed constraints upon themselves by choosing to be killers. Much like the basement, fear, the unknown and blind obedience to the powerful presence of the unseen Wilson can be restraining. They have been drained of their emotions, morality and wills. They are like caged animals, prowling around their cage, suffocating little by little, lashing out and sometimes striking at each other. While they are waiting, we see that Ben has more or less confined himself to the bed and his paper, whereas Gus constantly paces. Both portray a picture of two caged animals in a zoo—one inwardly agitated yet outwardly docile and compliant, the other the restless rebel.

The room that Ben and Gus are occupying is not just any room, but rather a basement room: dark, cold and damp. Nothing seems to be functional in that room: the meter is not running, the lavatory does not flush, and the beds are not comfortable. It is buried underground, where there is not even a window, which is a link with the outside world through which one gets at least light, warmth and

fresh air, if not knowledge and awareness. Gus complains to Ben about the room, among other things.

> Gus *wanders downstage, looks out front, then all about the room.*
> Gus: I wouldn't like to live in this dump. I wouldn't mind if you had a window, you could see what it looked like outside.
> Ben: What do you want a window for?
> Gus: Well, I like to have a bit of a view, Ben. It whiles away the time.
> *He walks about the room.*
> I mean, you come into a place when it is still dark, you come into a room you've never seen before, you sleep all day, you do your job, and then you go out in the night again.
> *Pause.*
> I like to get a look at the scenery. You never get the chance in this job.
> Ben: You get your holidays, don't you?
> Gus: Only a fortnight.
> Ben (*lowering the paper*): You kill me. Anyone would think you're working every day. How often do you do a job? Once a week? What are you complaining about?
> Gus: Yes, but we got to be on tap though, haven't we? You can't move out of the house in case a call comes.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 843-844)

Ben and Gus are closed in a depressing, negative and helpless environment, with no source of light, order or sustenance. They are isolated from the outside world; they have no means of communication with the world out there other than through the speaking tube, which they were not even aware of, and which only speaks **to** them and gives commands. Even their time is not their own; when they are not actually doing a job, they are still on call. Ben and Gus are kept in the dark literally and metaphorically and the set reflects it.

The basement has two doors: the left door leads to the kitchen and lavatory, whereas the right door leads to the passage. In more than one sense the doors lead to nowhere. They are useless and might as well be decorative. The left door leads to a lavatory where the chain is defective and to a kitchen where the meter does not run; Gus cannot even get it running to make a cup of tea. It is a dead end, not even adequate enough for basic needs. The door on the right, which leads to the passage and ultimately upstairs—which means freedom, fresh air and sunlight—is just as useless as the door to the left. Its presence is equivalent to its absence; both doors bear the same weight of negating what they should provide. It is an illusion and a trap that gives a false sense of freedom, free will and choice. When Gus steps out of the door on the left that leads to the kitchen to get a glass of water, he is shoved back in through the door on the right stripped of his clothes (uniform) and gun (means of protection) to meet his ultimate destiny, as planned by the organization. It is quite odd why Pinter would have Gus exit from the left door and have him shoved back in from the right door. One can only guess that the door on the left represents a back door through which Gus might have attempted to escape, whereas the door on the right is the main door. Pinter might be trying to make a statement that Ben and Gus are trapped and that there is no way out for them, not even quietly sneaking through from the back door. Any foul attempts are discovered and punished by the organiztion. Many critics believe that, like Beckett's Waiting for Godot, the basement represents the world, Ben and Gus represent humanity, and the powerful, omnipotent, yet unseen presence of Wilson represents God. If this view

holds, then one can certainly suggest that the moral of the story that Pinter might be trying to point out through the function, or lack thereof, of the doors is that: there is no escape from life, not even through suicide.

In his essay on Pinter's The Lover, Austin E. Quigley states that the "stage set registers, in its central division, two major components of the couple's relationship and the difficulty of fusing them into a seamless whole" (Quigley, In Gale, Critical Approaches, 83). He further contends that the

> "*two areas*" of the stage provide a persistent visual manifestation of two aspects of Richard and Sarah's relationship: The public domain of a responsible husband-and-wife unit, and the private domain of two individuals with a passionate sexual bond.
>
> (Quigley, ibid, 83)

Just as the lovers have their own rituals and clothing, they need their own space to conduct their affair. If in their minds love, respect and dignity cannot coexist with lust, pleasure and passion, then they have to play games to fulfil their sexual fantasies; these games must take place in different areas. Consequently, it seems only reasonable that they try to keep their lives and their dreams or fantasies separate.

Just as the two areas signify the dichotomy in Sarah and Richard's relationship, it also implies their inability to reconcile respectability and lust or passion. The lover is always in the living room, where the setting is right—the venetian-blinds down, the bongo drum on hand, the tea-tray ready, the tight, seductive clothes worn—and which befits the kind of passionate interludes that the lovers have. We learn through a discussion between Sarah and Richard that, even

though the heat was uncomfortable for Sarah and her lover in the living room, they did not move elsewhere in the house.

> Richard: I see you had the Venetian blinds down.
> Sarah : We did, yes.
> Richard: The light was terribly strong.
> Sarah : It was. Awfully strong.
> Richard: The trouble with this room is that it catches the sun so directly, when it's shining. You didn't move to another room?
> Sarah : No. We stayed here.
> Richard: Must have been blinding.
> Sarah : It was. That's why we put the blinds down.
> *Pause.*
> Richard: The thing is it gets so awfully hot in here with the blinds down.
> Sarah : Would you say so?
> Richard: Perhaps not. Perhaps it's just that you feel hotter.
> Sarah : Yes. That's probably it.
> *Pause.*
>
> (Pinter, The Lover, 164)

We also know that the lover has never been in the bedroom; we know that because, at one point in the play, Richard remarks, on looking out of the bedroom window, that the lover has never seen the view from that window. He says: "Your poor lover has never seen the night from this window, has he?" (Pinter, ibid, 171). The sanctuary of the bedroom is reserved for the sensible dignified marital relationship, whereas the affair—lustful, passionate and human, but unacceptable and undignified—is kept in the living room, just outside the bedroom door--the threshold that separates the duality in their relationship.

The dichotomy in the setting also implies the dichotomy of Sarah and Richard's public and private selves and how they view one another in their different roles. They think it is wonderful that they live in a secluded area, away from the

main road, for, with a little bit of prudence and discretion, it is easier to avoid gossip (Pinter, ibid, 173). To the world, Richard is the respectable husband who is married to the respectable wife, of whom he is proud. Richard tells Sarah:

> I have great pride in being seen with you. When we're out to dinner, or at the theatre [...] Or at the Hunt Ball [...] Great pride, to walk with you as my wife on my arm. To see you smile, laugh, walk, talk, bend, be still. To hear your command of contemporary phraseology, your delicate use of the very latest idiomatic expression, so subtly employed. Yes. To feel the envy of others, their attempts to gain favour with you, by fair means or foul, your austere grace confounding them. And to know you are my wife. It's a source of a profound satisfaction to me.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 187)

In public, Richard and Sarah are accomplished, civilized and respectful. In private, they are a couple that has a problem. They have desires and fantasies that do not fit in their public image. Their passionate interludes cannot be part of the husband-wife relationship. In their marriage, there is dignity and sensibility, none of which exists in their affair, according to Richard.

> Sarah : I'm sorry your affair possesses so little dignity.
> Richard: The dignity is in my marriage.
> Sarah : Or sensibility.
> Richard: The sensibility likewise. I wasn't looking for such attributes. I find them in you.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 169)

Even in the affair, Sarah still wants dignity, meaning and maybe even love. According to her, her lover is "terribly sweet" and "very loving"; in fact his "whole body emanates love" (Pinter, ibid, 172). Sarah calls Richard's lover a mistress, not as Richard calls her a "whore" and a "functionary who either pleases or displeases" (Pinter, Ibid, 168). Sarah finds Richard's "attitude to women rather

alarming" (Pinter, Ibid, 169). According to Richard, in his affair, he is not looking for Sarah's double or for a woman whom he could respect, admire and love as he does Sarah (Pinter, Ibid, 169). It seems that for Sarah the affair is a game to spice up their marriage; whereas for Richard, the affair borders on perversion. When the duality in their relationship (as he perceives it) catches up with him, Richard decides to end the affair, and it centers about the division in the set. He tells her that he refuses to put up with her affair and suggests she conduct it anywhere outside his house, which from that moment on is off limits. He tells Sarah:

> I came to a decision [...] That it has to stop [...] Your debauchery [...] Your life of depravity. Your path of illegitimate lust [...] I've come to an irrevocable decision on that point [...] The fact is this is my house. From today, I forbid you to entertain your lover on these premises. This applies to any time of the day. Is that understood [...] It's strange, of course, that it's taken me so long to appreciate the humiliating ignominy of my position [...] The fact is I am a husband who has extended to his wife's lover open house on any afternoon of her desire. I've been too kind [...] Perhaps you would give him my compliments, by letter if you like and ask him to cease his visits from (He consults calendar.)—the twelfth inst [...] Do you think it's pleasant to know that your wife is unfaithful to you two or three times a week, with great regularity? [...] It's insupportable. It has become insupportable. I'm no longer disposed to put up with it. [...] Can I tell you what I suggest you do? [...] Take him out into the fields. Find a ditch. Or a slag of heap. Find a rubbish dump. Mmmm? What about that? [...] Buy a canoe and find a stagnant pond. Anything. Anywhere. But not my living room [...] But if you want your lover so much, surely that's the obvious thing to do, since his entry to this house is now barred. I'm trying to be helpful, darling, because of my love for you. You can see that. If I find him on

> these premises I'll kick his teeth out. [...] I'll kick his head in.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 189, 190, 191)

Richard's attitude and behaviour make no sense to Sarah, who is subtly trying to point out to him that conducting her affair without him is of course not possible. Sarah and Richard's different outlooks concerning the affair/lover and the use of the living room might be the reason why Sarah seems capable of coping with the dichotomy in their relationship, whereas Richard breaks down.

In general, our surrounding reflects and bears great significance on us. It serves as a basis we use to form first impressions. The setting/scenery in the theatre is no different or less important than in real life. The playwright, director and set designer, especially in Pinter, are conscious of the importance of the setting and the significance it bears on the play, the characters and the underlying relationships. They are equally aware that the set is an evocative means of communication between them and the audience.

3.3.CLOTHES

Clothes have become an essential need for humanity, especially since Adam and Eve were kicked out of paradise. Throughout time, the function of clothes has changed along with the changes in everyday life, needs, fashion and society. At first, clothes served the one and only basic function of literally hiding the nakedness of the body, or rather the shame of being naked—a reminder of the original sin. Throughout time, up until our present day, different types of clothes

serve many other different functions besides the original one. Above all, clothes have an important communication value; in many cases, they may affect the way we are perceived and how we perceive others--how we may react to them or the value or worth we assign to them based on first impression. "Several investigations have produced support for this old adage ["Clothes make the man"]. In one study it was found that the evaluation of men in photographs could be altered by changing their dress." (Kleinke, 11). In fact, to show just how clothes affect our perception and impression of others, there was an experiment conducted in Austin, Texas, where "it was arranged that a thirty-one-year-old male "model" would come to an intersection in the presence of other pedestrians and either obey or violate the pedestrian crossing signal" (Kleinke, 11). I guess it does not come as a surprise that when "the model was well dressed in a coat and a tie, significantly more people would follow his example in disobeying the "wait" signal than when the model was poorly dressed in work clothes" (Kleinke, 11).

> To understand the relationship between clothes and communication, we should be familiar with the various functions clothes may fulfil: decoration, protection (both physical and psychological), sexual attraction, self-assertion, self-denial, concealment, group identification, and display of status or role.
>
> (Knapp, 178)

In examining the meaning and function of clothes as well as the underlying motive of a certain choice, one can get an understanding of the characters, their motives and intentions about others. Thus, clothing is another important element of Pinter's stagecraft (or visual means of communication).

In Pinter's The Lover, the clothes signify the husband/wife relationship versus the lover/mistress relationship. As husband and wife, they dress respectably. Sarah wears "a crisp, demure dress" (Pinter, The Lover, 161) and low-heeled shoes. As for Richard, he wears "a sober suit" (Pinter, ibid, 162) and a hat and carries a briefcase. In their bedroom, Sarah wears a "nightdress" and Richard wears his "pyjamas" (Pinter, ibid, 170). In and out of the bedroom, as husband and wife, each dresses in a manner befitting the cool, collected and reserved spouse, which is a reflection of the type of marriage they have. For her lover, however, Sarah wears "a very tight, low-cut dress" and high-heeled shoes (Pinter, ibid, 174). As for Richard/Max, he wears "a suede jacket, and no tie" (Pinter, ibid, 175). This type of dress reflects the type of relationship that the lovers have: passionate, seductive and unconventional. It is very important for their games that they dress in their appropriate dress, or rather "uniform," as Gale puts it in his Butter's Going Up (132). Clothes allow the characters to play their "roles." They are like masks that hide not only their nakedness, but also their "true" selves, which they dare not reveal to the world, and sometimes to themselves. In that sense, we can see the struggle of Sarah and Richard to come to terms with their forbidden desires and conservative beliefs. When they try to end the game, they fail and ultimately end up starting another one, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, for they cannot reconcile the two opposing forces in themselves—they would rather play a game than end up with a doomed marriage. Yet in their new game as well as the old one, they have to be attired properly. By pretending to be somebody else—that is dressing for the role—it is easy to act the role without shame, blame or concern.

On two separate occasions, Sarah discovers that she is wearing the wrong shoes. "*Suddenly notices she is wearing low-heeled shoes. She goes to the cupboard changes them for high-heeled shoes*" (Pinter, The Lover, 174). On another occasion, Sarah forgets to change her shoes; Richard comments on them.

> Richard: What shoes are they?
> Sarah : Mmnn?
> Richard: Those shoes. They 're unfamiliar. Very high-heeled, aren't they?
> Sarah (*muttering*): Mistake. Sorry.
> Richard: (*not hearing*): Sorry? I beg your pardon?
> Sarah : I'll ...take them off.
> Richard: Not quite the most comfortable shoes for an evening at home, I would have thought.
> *She goes into the hall, opens cupboard, puts high-heeled shoes into cupboard, puts on low-heeled shoes.*
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 166)

At that point in the play, we are unaware that Richard is the lover. We really believe that the high-heeled shoes are unfamiliar to him and that he is simply making an innocent remark. Yet, later in the play, when we come to realize that Richard is indeed the lover, we see this scene in a different light. Richard is not merely commenting on an unfamiliar pair of shoes, he is telling Sarah that she is being careless in mixing clothing elements from their separate relationships; that is, Sarah is not following the rules of the game that she is so fond of. This subtle warning is quite obvious from the way he carries on about the high-heeled pair of shoes, as well as from what would have been the tone of voice that would accompany such a scolding.

Towards the end of the play, after Sarah and Richard had had some sort of a confrontation, and Richard had suddenly started a new game to which Sarah succumbed, Sarah noticed that they were not dressed properly for these games.

> Sarah : [Y]ou look different. Why are you wearing this strange suit, and this tie? You usually wear something else, don't you? Take off your jacket. Mmmnn? Would you like me to change? Would you like me to change my clothes? I'll change for you, darling. Shall I? Would you like that ?
> *Silence. She is very close to him.*
> Richard: Yes.
> *Pause.*
> Change.
> *Pause.*
> Change.
> *Pause.*
> Change your clothes.
> *Pause.*
> You lovely whore.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 195, 196)

It is very important for Richard and Sarah's games—old or new--that they dress in their appropriate dress, or rather "uniform," to be able to lead their double lives. Any mix-up upsets the balance of their game and further confuses them.

In The Dumb Waiter, Ben and Gus "*are dressed in shirts, trousers, and braces*" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 842). They too, like Sarah and Richard in The Lover, are dressed for their roles, except that Ben and Gus are not playing a game. Their uniform is not selected by choice, rather it is dictated by their line of work, which here is stereotypical. Ben and Gus are professional killers who are dressed to look professional, yet not as killers. A passer-by might take them to be anything from business executives to bank clerks. Like their surrounding, their profession and their lives, their clothes are confining, and not a befitting attire for a

basement/bedroom. Even the conformist Ben cannot remain fully dressed the whole time they are waiting. They usually get fully dressed though when they get a call or when they know that time is getting on. It is their business attire. Ben knows when to get ready, yet he has to remind Gus to get dressed (Pinter, ibid, 850).

Whereas Ben and Gus' costume might be uncomfortable and confining, it is quite practical for their line of work; for example, the jacket serves to hide the revolver. At the end of the play, Ben "adjusts his jacket to diminish the bulge of the revolver" (Pinter, ibid, 854). In the final scene of the play, Gus "stumbles in. He is striped of his jacket, waistcoat, tie, holster, and revolver" (Pinter, ibid, 854). By stripping him of his uniform, he is being stripped of his identity and his job. He is no longer one of them—the organization/killers—but rather one of the victims. He stands defenceless and unprotected (naked) in front of Ben's revolver that is levelled at him.

In The Homecoming, most of the characters dress according to their occupations or what they do in life. Some are more obvious than others. For example, Sam wears a "*chauffeur's uniform*" and a "hat" (Pinter, The Homecoming, 11). Another example that is not as obvious is in the opening scene when we see Lenny. He is dressed the part of a businessman. "*He wears a dark suit*" (Pinter, ibid, 7). He is also playing the role. He "*is sitting on the sofa with a newspaper, a pencil in his hand* [...] *He makes occasional marks on the back page*" (Pinter, ibid, 7). In the beginning, this throws us off; we mistake him for a business executive who appears to be checking the stock market in the morning paper. Later in the play, when we get to know him better, we find out his line of business;

he is a pimp. True to his occupation, he makes arrangements and never gets involved. He stands and surveys from afar.

When we first meet Max, he is wearing "*an old cardigan and a cap, and carr[ying] a stick*" (Pinter, ibid, 7). He is an old man, a remnant of the man he used to be. He is like a dog that is all bark and no bite. Not even his first faded, yet loud, appearance prepares us for the way we see him at the end of the play: a whimpering, stammering, sobbing, insecure old man (Pinter, ibid, 81-82) who is reduced to begging for the least bit of attention; he is trying in vain to hold on to a faded picture of himself in the old days.

When we first meet Teddy and Ruth, they "*are both well dressed in light summer suits and light raincoats*" (Pinter, ibid, 19). In contrast to the house and its occupants, one can see that Teddy and Ruth are well off. The next time we see Teddy and Ruth together, it is morning time. They come downstairs "*wearing dressing-gowns*" (Pinter, ibid, 40), whereas all the other members of the family present—Max, Sam and Joey--are dressed. This causes anticipation, uncertainty and confusion, and Max rapidly came to a conclusion about the visitors in the dressing-gowns: that his absent son brought a "tart" to his house—he was not that far off from the truth.

When Lenny and Ruth first met, Ruth was fully dressed down to her coat, while Lenny was dressed in his pyjamas. Even Lenny commented on the fact. He told Ruth: "Isn't funny? I've got my pyjamas on and you're fully dressed" (Pinter, ibid, 29). Obviously, it is quite natural that this would be the case, since Ruth had just got into the house after going for a walk, whereas Lenny had just got out of

bed. It seems that the whore and customer roles are reversed (implied by the clothes). This dress situation intimidates Lenny and puts him at a disadvantage. This explains how Lenny the cool, collected business-like man was had by Ruth, who left him uncertain as to what had passed between them, whether or not she had really made him a proposal and, if she had, what kind of a proposal that was (Pinter, ibid, 34-35). Lenny was bested by Ruth's cunning in this scene as well as in the scene where they negotiate the terms of her contract (Pinter, ibid, 76-79). Ruth got all she wanted and then some and we are left certain that she will only give what she wants whenever she wants. From the very first scene that we encounter Ruth, she appears as a strong woman who gets her way, with Teddy, Lenny and the rest of the family members. As we have seen in Ruth's case, clothes either put her in a place of power or made her vulnerable. When Ruth is fully dressed, she makes a formidable figure for Lenny, who is only dressed in his night-clothes, and intimidates him, whereas, when Ruth appears in front of Teddy's family in her dressing-gown while they are fully dressed, she becomes vulnerable and defenseless against insults and name-calling.

Clothes are quite important in our everyday life; they have various purposes and serve many functions. Sometimes, clothes are a symbol of our status in life. At other times, they become our means of hiding our fragility and nakedness—literally and metaphorically. They disguise or create impressions. Clothes also add to one's self-confidence and self-assurance. In addition, they may serve as a tool or part of a game, where we can play a role other than who we really are.

3.4.PROPS

Props are just as important as setting and clothing. Props (stage properties) are like trinkets. Some hold sentimental value, others have special memories attached to them, while others serve specific functions. In looking up some synonyms for the word prop (on Windows 98 thesaurus), I found that some are: "support, brace, strengthen, sustain, uphold, brace and reinforce." These words (all verbs) accurately describe the function or purpose of the different types of stage props (nouns): they support, brace, strengthen, sustain, uphold, brace and reinforce the meaning of the plays. There are many types of stage props: hand props, personal props, costume props and ornamental props. For example, some of the props in Pinter's plays are a broken wall, a stick, a bongo drum, crooked Venetian blinds, food, newspapers and a hatch. Every item/prop holds significance and meaning for its play.

In Pinter's The Dumb Waiter, the newspaper that Ben is constantly reading is a prop. At an early point in the play, one is led to believe that reading is more of a pastime for Ben; however, later on, it becomes apparent that the newspaper constitutes a barrier separating him from Gus. It becomes a means of trying to avoid conversation with Gus; this is quite inevitable, for Gus is quite persistent in asking questions and is not very intelligent. It also serves as an escape mechanism and a means of masking his nervousness. It helps him to avoid dealing with his feelings and fears. When reading, Ben will not have to think about reality or the job that has to be done. Pinter knows that the audience can easily relate to the use of an object to keep one's minds off things. Ben also uses the newspaper, even if

unconsciously, as a tool to show his ire and impatience with Gus. Throughout the play, Ben constantly rattles the paper when he gets fed up with Gus and his endless questions.

Another stage prop in The Dumb Waiter is the hatch through which Ben and Gus get the ludicrous orders. Not only are the orders bizarre, but also the fact that anyone expects to be provided with such extravagant food in such a deserted, confined cafe is indeed ridiculous. Unless of course it is someone--maybe Wilson--who knows that Ben and Gus are down there, and wants to rob them of their food--a simple pleasure for Gus--as he has robbed them of everything else, be it respectable lives, good homes, morals or wills. On further consideration and examination of this absurdity, the audience realises that it is not so absurd after all. It is a symbol of the unreasonable demands that are often placed on one in life, be it through some wild religious beliefs, or outlandish political or economic situations, or personal circumstances. One often yields and gives in to these unreasonable demands, mostly out of fear of standing up to a non-visible or a powerful authority, just as these two men do. It seems that Gus has been giving in for so long a time that he finally gets fed up. Gus sent up all the food he had and he was still being criticised. "We sent up all we've got and he's not satisfied. No, honest, it's enough to make the cat laugh" (Pinter, The Dumb Waiter, 852). Towards the end of the play, Gus asks Ben why he sent the food up in the box, then he corrects himself and says that he is the one who sent the stuff; he neither complained nor objected (Pinter, ibid, 852). Gus is finally owning up to his passivity. Only after he realises how absurd his behaviour has been all along, does Gus scream into the tube:

"WE'VE GOT NOTHING LEFT! NOTHING! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?" (Pinter, ibid, 854). He gets a crumpled note with the word "Scampi" on it (Pinter, ibid, 854). It is a pun on the word scamp; it means rascal or good-for-nothing; this is exactly how Gus feels. It is interesting to note that the serving hatch, the speaking tube and the food orders seem to go only one way; there is no give-and-take. This reflects the way things are done in the organization. The system is based on orders and commands which must be dumbly waited for and blindly obeyed.

In The Dumb Waiter, revolvers are of course necessary props. Yet, the state of the revolver reflects on its owner. According to Ben, Gus does not take care of his gun, and this shows that he is slacking off on the job.

> Ben: Slack, mate, slack.
> Gus: Who me? Slack?
> Ben: Have you checked your gun? You haven't even checked your gun. It looks disgraceful, anyway. Why don't you ever polish it?
> (*Gus rubs his revolver on the sheet*).
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 850)

In their line of work, the gun is what might make the difference between life and death. To be careless about something as important as that, in addition to breaking the rules, showing rebellion and resistance and questioning everything, is like signing a death warrant, which probably came in effect at the end of the play.

Gale suggests that the crooked Venetian blinds in The Lover represent a "malfunctioning mechanism serving as a reflection of a physical universe in which objects do not fulfil their customary roles, in much the same way this husband/wife combination has broken down" (Gale, Butter's Going Up, 130). Sarah brings down the blinds when her lover comes over: she keeps the sun out, and keeps her "affair"

in the dark. "*Goes to the window, pulls venetian blinds down, opens them, and closes them until there is a slight slit of light*" (Pinter, The Lover, 174). They also serve as a protection against curious eyes and ultimately gossip, or, worse, a scandal. It is a good contrast to the window in Sarah and Richard's bedroom that is wide open; both Sarah and Richard stand by it in full view with nothing to hide. In one scene in the play, Richard "*opens the windows fully and stands by them, looking out [...] She joins him at the window. They stand silently*" (Pinter, ibid, 171). The Venetian blinds are originally from Venice. In general, throughout many times and by many authors in literature, Italy has been associated with passion, wanton abandon, corruption, decadence and so on, of course as opposed to English reserve, Puritanism and so on. The crooked blind here certainly seem fitting. At one point in the play, Richard looks up at the Venetian blinds and remarks: "That blind hasn't been put up properly," to which Sarah answers: "Yes, it is a bit crooked, isn't it?" Which is followed by a pause. (Pinter, ibid, 163). This certainly makes us wonder whether the crooked blind is not a symbol of Sarah and Richard's relationship as lovers—crooked and blind.

Another important stage prop in The Lover is the bongo drum that Sarah and Richard/Max use as part of their ritualistic seduction scene. It has been said that some African tribes use drums as part of a ritual before mating. Often, the male plays the drum while dancing with the female. We have certainly discussed in the previous chapter how effectively Sarah and Richard use this particular prop in their interludes and seduction scene.

In The Homecoming, Max's stick is almost an extension of himself. He uses it as an extension of his arm to attack as well as to defend himself. Thus, the stick serves as a tool to threaten and a tool to protect himself with. Max is constantly gripping his stick or pointing it at someone, that is, when he is not actually using to hit someone. It is his weapon that must give him some sense of security and power. After he hits Joey and Sam and collapses on the floor, Max uses his stick as an aid to straighten himself, unaided by either of his sons (Pinter, The Homecoming, 42-43).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the cigar—a prop--is a means for male bonding. Yet underneath all this amicable bonding, there is a lot of rivalry between the males—Max and Sam as well as Teddy and Lenny. Even though it is Sam who provides the cigar, it is Max who tests it and declares it to be fair or inferior. During this ritualistic male bonding, the following exchange takes place between Lenny and Teddy:

> Lenny (*to* Teddy): Your cigar is gone out.
> Teddy: Oh, yes.
> Lenny: Want a light?
> Teddy: No. No.
> *Pause.*
> So has yours.
> Lenny: Oh, yes.
> *Pause.*
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 51)

At first glance, this innocent exchange seems to be nothing more than just that. Yet, between these two brothers, nothing is simple or innocent. To be a part of this male bonding ritual, one's cigar has to be lit up. Having his cigar go out implies that he is no longer a part of this circle; he is out. By politely asking whether Teddy wants a

light or not, Lenny is pointing this out to Teddy. We might even venture to say that this incident foreshadows Teddy's place in Ruth's life at the end of the play. Teddy gets back at Lenny by pointing out to him that his cigar is out as well, by that implying that Lenny is not part of the circle either. This is verified later when, at the end, Lenny does not seem to play much of a role in the new arrangement. After he settles everything, he stands watching from afar.

Another important prop, through which we see the animosity between Lenny and Teddy, is Lenny's cheese-roll.

> [Lenny] *goes to the sideboard, opens it, peers in it, to the right and the left, stands.*
> Lenny: Where's my cheese-roll?
> *Pause.*
> Someone's taken my cheese-roll. I left it there [...]
> Teddy: I took your cheese-roll, Lenny [...]
> Lenny: You took my cheese-roll?
> Teddy: Yes.
> Lenny: I made that roll myself. I cut it and put the butter on. I sliced a piece of cheese and put it in between. I put it on a plate and I put it in the sideboard. I did all that before I went out. Now I come back and you've eaten it.
> Teddy: Well, what are you going to do about it?
> Lenny: I'm waiting for you to apologize.
> Teddy: But I took it deliberately, Lenny.
> Lenny; You mean you didn't stumble on it by mistake?
> Teddy: No, I saw you put it there. I was hungry, so I ate it.
> *Pause.*
> Lenny: Barefaced audacity.
> *Pause.*
> What led you to be so...vindictive against your own brother? I'm bowled over.
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 63-64)

Animosity such as this is not born overnight. It is possible that it is based on jealousy on Lenny's part. It is quite possible that Lenny is envious of Teddy for

having succeeded to escape living at home. It seems that Lenny expects something from Teddy, as a compensation for the life that Teddy had but Lenny could not have (Pinter, ibid, 65). It would seem quite natural that Teddy be peeved and resentful towards Lenny after Lenny stalled Ruth and Teddy from leaving by insisting that Ruth dance with him, which in turn started the chain of events that followed: Ruth and Lenny kissing, then Ruth and Joey making out on the sofa. It is probable that Teddy had an idea of how all of this would end up. Therefore, the cheese-roll becomes a tool through which Teddy attempts to get back at Lenny. By purposely taking what belongs to Lenny (the cheese-roll), Teddy is showing his resentment without really overtly showing it.

At one point in the play, Ruth asks Lenny his opinion of her shoes, and the following conversation takes place:

> Ruth : What do you think of my shoes?
> Lenny: They are very nice.
> Ruth : No, I can't get the ones I want over there.
> Lenny: Can't get them over there, eh?
> Ruth : No...you don't get them there.
> *Pause.*
>
> (Pinter, ibid, 56)

Ruth is not talking about shoes. The shoes are just a metaphor she is using for the lifestyle that she wants to live. Between a choice of living in America and being a mother of three children and a wife to a university professor with all the responsibilities these entail, and living with her in-laws as a prostitute, Ruth chooses the latter. Her choice is represented by the kind of shoes that she wants and that fit, metaphorically of course.

One critic has suggested that the glass of water is like a weapon. As seen in Chapter One, the game of the glass of water is a test of will or a tug of war between Ruth and Lenny. It is a battle of wills that is won by Ruth who makes outrageous proposals to Lenny, shocks him and then walks out on him, leaving him confused, with his questions unanswered. That was only Round One; though it did not matter much at the time, it was a good indication of how the following rounds would go. In the final round, when Ruth and Lenny were negotiating Ruth's staying arrangements, Ruth won with flying colours.

Lenny: We'd get you a flat.
Pause.
Ruth : A flat?
Lenny: Yes.
Ruth : Where?
Lenny: In town.
Pause.
But you'd live here with us.
[...]
Ruth : How many rooms would this flat have?
Lenny: Not many.
Ruth : I would want at least three rooms and a bathroom.
Lenny: You wouldn't need three rooms and a bathroom.
Max : She'd need a bathroom.
Lenny: But not three rooms.
Pause.
Ruth : Oh. I would. Really.
Lenny: Two would do.
Ruth : No. Two wouldn't be enough.
Pause.
I 'd want a dressing-room, a rest-room, and a bedroom.
Pause.
Lenny: All right, we'll get you a flat with three rooms and a bathroom.
Ruth : With what kind of conveniences?
Lenny: All conveniences.
Ruth : A personal maid?

Lenny: Of course.
Pause.
We'd finance you, to begin with, and then, when you were established, you could pay us back, in instalments.
Ruth : Oh, no, I wouldn't agree to that.
Lenny: Oh, why not?
Ruth : You would have to regard your outlay simply as a capital investment.
Pause.
Lenny: I see. All right.
Ruth : You'd supply my wardrobe, of course?
Lenny: We'd supply everything. Everything you need.
Ruth : I need an awful lot. Otherwise I wouldn't be content.
Lenny: You'd have everything.
Ruth : I would naturally want to draw up an inventory of everything I would need, which would require your signatures in the presence of witnesses.
Lenny: Naturally.
Ruth : All aspects of the agreement and conditions of employment would have to be clarified to our mutual satisfaction before we finalize the contract.
Lenny: Of course.
Pause.
Ruth : Well, it might prove a workable arrangement.
(Pinter, ibid, 76-78)

Ruth outdid Lenny and Max put together in the negotiations. Not only did Ruth get what she wants, but she also got more than she bargained for. At the end of the play Ruth sits in what we suppose is Max's chair—at the end of the play, it is called "her chair"--with the males surrounding her. She has usurped Max's power--who "*falls to his knees, whimpers, begins to moan and sob* [...] *crawls past* Sam's *body round her chair*" (Pinter, ibid, 82)--and nipped in the bud any attempts by Lenny to become the new head of the family. This household changed power into Ruth's hands; control went from a patriarchy to a matriarchy.

Another important prop in The Homecoming is Teddy's key. Teddy's key still works after all these years; this is one of the elements that imply that nothing has changed around this house. But what bears greater importance about this particular prop is that, in the beginning of the play, when Teddy and Ruth arrive, Ruth insists on going out for a stroll. Ruth asks Teddy for his key and he gives it to her (Pinter, ibid, 24). Not only does Ruth end up ruling this household, but she has had the key to the house all along. It seems that the conquest was inevitable all along—that Ruth ends up with the keys to her kingdom.

Props have great indicative value and function. As we have already seen, props have important significances that go beyond their immediate and apparent meaning. They have symbolic and metaphoric value that subtly puts emphasis on and clarifies the characters' actions and behaviours, or the meaning of a moment or a scene, as well as the outcome of certain events.

3.5.CONCLUSION

In the theatre, the audience becomes "conscious of entering a world in which every prop and plot point exists in an electric, precarious balance. Pinter is creating a world as mercurial as the imagination itself" (Lahr, A Casebook on Harold Pinter, xiii). The reference here is to visual language, which constitutes the element on stage that first greets the audience and serves as a basis for them to form a first impression. The visual language includes set/scenery, furniture, clothes and props.

The setting/scenery in the theatre is the characters' surrounding environment, that reflects on the characters feelings and behaviour and desires. The playwright, director as well as set designer are aware of the importance of the setting and its significance for the play, the characters and the underlying relationships. They are equally aware that the set is a means of communication between them and the audience.

Clothes are quite important in our everyday life as well as on stage. Whether in real life or in the theatre, clothes serve many purposes. Clothes have a symbolic function, serving as a means of hiding our nakedness—literally and metaphorically—or as a tool in various games.

Every prop is chosen and used for a specific reason. Their communicative value is self-explanatory. Props also have an importance that goes beyond the immediate and apparent meaning; that is, props can have sentimental value and emotional significance as well as symbolic functions or purposes.

CONCLUSION

Non-verbal communication is an important aspect of all conversation; personal or dramatic, it is actually one of the main pillars of conversation. It is important in our everyday interactions in life as well as in the different fields of science, art and literature. The researcher/scientist—be it a chemist, a biologist or a psychologist--depends on observations to come up with the appropriate and factual conclusions that support his hypothesis, theory or diagnosis. The artist depends on the visual aspect of non-verbal communication in his use of colours, depth, dimension, tone, etc. The writer depends on the words used, not just as dialogue but in description, to convey his meaning. If we are reading a book, we have to use our imagination and visualize the story in our heads. If we are watching a play, we do not merely listen to the actors; we watch them and try to read and decipher their every action, reaction, silence, hesitation and display of emotions. We use the actors' surroundings, living conditions, appearance, clothes, habits, etc. to help us better understand the characters and their behaviour, before we pass our judgement on them or see whether or not we can relate to or sympathsize with them. The non-verbal is important not just in Pinter's work. It is present in all aspects of our lives. Yet, Pinter seems to be more aware of the importance of this mode of communication than many other playwrights.

When verbal language becomes a broken vehicle that does not allow expression and communication, the playwright resorts to other means of communication, for himself and his characters. Non-verbal language is the characters' alternative means, whether consciously or unconsciously, of expressing themselves and their sentiments. It is also the playwright's subtle way of revealing

important information to the audience about the characters, their environment and their relationships. The non-verbal does not merely fit where verbal language fails; it is a language of its own. It is a part of our everyday normal language. In this way, Pinter's theatre is true to everyday life with all its misunderstandings, difficulties, absurdities and imperfections of communication.

So much has been written about Pinter's plays. Quite a bit of work has been done about Pinter's verbal means of communication and his astounding ability to be true in recording everyday conversations in his plays. Whereas a lot of such books and articles written on Pinter's works were consulted for this thesis, my aim, which I trust I have achieved, was to examine his work from a new approach, that of the non-verbal. For example, much has been written on silences and pauses as part of the spoken text and how the sound of silence was as deafening as when words were spoken. In my approach, in the first chapter, I was aiming to show how what is not said indicates what is happening inside the audience's and characters' heads, and helps us to examine how the characters felt and how their thoughts and feelings affected what came next. In the second chapter, I wanted to show that physical or body language is quite important in our interactions with one another. If read accurately, it proves to be more honest than verbal language, for it is genuine and spontaneous. In the third chapter, my point was to show that all that appears on stage—be it surroundings, clothes or props—is also a language and bears great significance on the characters as well as for the meaning of the play. These are true indications.

A qualification is nevertheless required. Many critics have observed that, even though Pinter's verbal language is realistic and true to ordinary speech, it is sometimes an insufficient and ineffectual or deceptive tool that fails, distorts and restricts. One has to keep in mind, however, that non-verbal communication, like verbal, could also be deceptive, not because the other person's action or reaction is calculated and intended to deceive, but rather because, in many cases, it is subjective, unplanned and open to personal interpretation—which varies from one person to the other. One has to remember, therefore, that, as nothing is perfect, and in spite of the fact that non-verbal communication is often more genuine than verbal communication, misunderstandings and misinterpretations can occur in both. Nevertheless, non-verbal language is the more genuine, spontaneous and reliable of these two means of communication.

If I were to summarize my thesis in only a few words, I would choose a quotation from Pinter's The Homecoming, where Ruth says: "My lips move. Why don't you restrict...your observation to that? Perhaps the fact that they move is more significant...than the words which come through them. You must bear that...possibility...in mind" (Pinter, The Homecoming, 53). In a nut-shell, this is what Pinter is all about and this is what we must keep in mind when we read or watch his plays. We should listen to what is not being said, rather than to what is simply said. We should look for and see what is hidden or implied, rather than simply what the characters deliberately express. We should probe, think about and analyse every dimension of a dramatic text or production to get to the truth, rather

than just accept what we hear or are told. We should be sensitized to the immense potential which lies in non-verbal communication.

My object has been to demonstrate that being in the theatre is a unique aesthetic and intellectual experience. Drama is characterized by a special blend of ingredients that is not found in any other literary or narrative genre. Drama is defined best by a quotation given by Lee A. Jacobus. He says:

> Drama is the art of make-believe. It captivates children and adults from all societies and all walks of life. Make-believe consists in part of acting out events that happened or that we imagine happening. DRAMA consists of representing those actions for the pleasure of others. The primary ingredients of drama are the characters, represented by players; action, described by gestures and movement; thought, implied by players; dialogue and action; spectacle, represented by scenery and costume; and, finally, audiences, who respond to this complex mixture.
>
> (Jacobus, 1)

All of the above components/ingredients are successfully encountered in Pinter's work and must be considered together if one is to perceive fully what the play is trying to say.

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