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Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* and Harold
Pinter's *The Caretaker*. Theatre of the
Absurd or Theatre of Language?

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Abstract

This dissertation is a discursive study of two twentieth-century plays which have been characterized as absurdist: *The Zoo Story* by Edward Albee and *The Caretaker* by Harold Pinter. The study examines the dialogues of the characters from linguistic perspectives in order to account for the way the language of the characters causes violence effects in the two selected plays, and the way the characters' identity expressed by their discourse. The study seeks also to give more insights on those assumptions in the existing critical literature which insists on the 'devaluation of language' and 'meaninglessness' of dialogues in the two plays. The analysis in this study is based on Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature, the constructionists' assumptions about the identity formation, and the pertinent literature on the issue of violence. The analytic observations about the data focus on the various ways in which the characters fail to observe the Cooperative Principle and its four attendant Maxims, namely the maxim of quantity, quality, relation, and manner, and on the generated meaning from the characters' flouting of the previous maxims. The study reveals that the identity of the characters is expressed thanks to the playwrights' violation of the Cooperative Principle. The violence effects in the two plays also turn to be the result of the playwright's effective use of the Cooperative Principle by elaborating the characters' flouting of the four conversational Maxims. Finally, the study demonstrates how the critics miss the interesting point about the unconventional use of language in their assumptions about the language in the Theatre of the Absurd, and how the Theatre of the Absurd deserves to be labeled The Theatre of Language.

Key Words: Discourse, violence, identity, Theatre of the Absurd, language, Grice's Cooperatave Principle, Conversational Maxims, Implicature.

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General Introduction

In 1950s and 1960s, the literary world witnessed the appearance of a drama so different and so strange that it led to the creation of the term 'Theatre of the Absurd'. This theatre movement ignored almost all the criteria by which the critics and interpreters classify and evaluate the traditional drama. According to Roberts James, when we speak about the absurdist plays, we must stop thinking about the theatre of coherently developed situations, the rational motivation and reaction of the characters, the obvious setting linked to traditional drama, the clear plot development, and the logical discourse (1979: 6-7).

The practitioners of drama of the absurd sought to portray the human conditions in order to show the absurdity of human existence. The critic Martin Esslin (1980:22) states that these dramatists 'are no longer telling stories but exploring states of being'. To do this, a number of techniques, such as the 'uncomfortable setting and situations, the strange and incoherent world', are used by the playwrights associated with this movement (Roberts,1997:7). Furthermore, they make the readers experience their unfamiliar ways of 'themes development and presentation' and expect them to understand what is happening in the real world by providing some indirect information and suggestions. (ibid)

Beyond these traits that seem to be present in certain absurdist plays, Roberts claims that there are differences in the playwrights' stylistic choices for their creation of absurdity that suggest their different dramatic techniques and set out their uniqueness (ibid). In fact, those writers don't belong to any organized movement or school of artists that claims this term. In this respect, Esslin (1961:10) asserts that the term was created in order to argue about the similarity of approach by drawing some common points in the works of certain playwrights and denies any attempt to consider it as a 'literary movement' organized consciously by its practitioners.

The analysis of this type of theatre has been one of the main interests of readers and critics, as the playwrights were both creating and applying significant drama convention. This theatre remains not only an area of considerable critical interest but also an area of controversial views among its interpreters. Many discussions centered around the appropriateness of that term as well as the existence of this movement. Szilassy Zoltán (1986:180) states that in 1969, during a symposium devoted to the Theatre of the Absurd, even Martin Esslin who created this term brings another 'less satisfying label' (ibid). This reflects the continuing controversy surrounding this theatre that contravenes the established conventions.

Although controversy has been raised with the appearance of such drama, most of the critics and commentators (Corrigan, 1961; Esslin, 1964; Hinchliffe, 1969), when trying to analyse the nature of the absurdist playwright's methods and their creativeness, share the attitude that it is the language of this theatre which is most revolutionary. For them, this theatre shows language as a very unreliable and insufficient tool of communication. Esslin maintains that this theatre 'tends toward a radical devaluation of language' (1961:26). For Hinchliffe (1969:54), the language of the Theatre of the Absurd is "a dead thing, limiting communication". (Cited in Simpson, 1998:36).

However, while the literary critics and interpreters stress the significance of language in these plays, they have failed to account for the nature of absurd dialogues from linguistic perspectives. Simpson (1998:36) argues that the critics 'fail to account on how absurd texts can still mean on a more general communicative level' (ibid). So, in this work, I try to go so far as to fill the gap, i.e. to give more insights into such a sense of loss of meaning and failure of communication and account for the way the playwrights exploit the language to speak about the human condition and reach their purposes. In other words, I am going to show and consider the way in which the absurd dialogues are used by the absurdist playwrights to

develop their themes and imply important ideas. This attempt at analysis will be done, of course, on the basis of a linguistic framework. Culpeper, et al.(1998) assert that ‘the proper explanation of the dynamics of plays needs much help from areas of linguistics, mainly pragmatics and discourse’.

Departing from what is said, it is reasonable to say that the Theatre of the Absurd is not so much about the absurd as about the play with language. So, instead of referring to the absurdist plays as belonging to the Theatre of the Absurd, we shall refer to them as the Theatre of Language. It will be demonstrated that the violation of the conversational rules is the source of absurdity. It will be explained also that what the critics call ‘inefficient’ interchanges are purposefully done by the two playwrights in order to reach particular dramatic effects.

To do this, two ‘absurdist’ plays are selected as objects of study: Harold Pinter’s *The Caretaker* and Edward Albee’s *The Zoo Story*. Themes of violence and identity will be the focus of interest. I will account on the way the playwrights’ language achieve violence effects and on the way the characters’ identity expressed by their discourse.

The rationale for choosing these two playwrights is that, on one hand, Harold Pinter and Edward Albee are both recognized for their mastery of language. Cohn (1971:130) asserts that Edward Albee is “the most skillful composer of dialogue that America has produced” (Cited in Horn, 1983: 19). Paolucci (1972) asserts, ‘Albee has revolutionized the language of the American stage’. Clurman (1980: 221) considers Albee as “a master of stage speech” (Cited in in Horn, 1983: 19). Concerning Harold Pinter, he is very known for his recurrent and successful use of ‘pause’, ‘silence’, or ‘dots’. As Burkman (197: 9) puts it, Pinter’s pause is ‘as prominent and suggestive as the dialogue’. On the other hand, the playwrights themselves are conscious about the movement towards communication in their work. For Albee, ‘life is language and nothing more’ (Horn,1983: 142). Speaking about Harold Pinter,

silence for him is neither a failure of communication nor a failure of language. As an answer to those who fix the phrase ‘failure of communication’ to his work, he asserts, “we communicate well in our silence, in what is unsaid” (Cited in Burkman, 1971: 9). He adds, “So often, below the words spoken is the thing known and unspoken” (Cited in *ibid*). Instead of focusing on lack of communication, Pinter invites us to explore and investigate what is underneath what is said. Between the inexpressiveness of the characters and their elusiveness, he points out, “there lies a territory which is not only worthy of exploration, but which it is compulsory to explore”(Cited in *ibid*).

It is worth to mention also the reason behind the choice of violence and identity in the two plays as a research themes. First, when we read the plays, it appears that the texts are full of scenes of verbal and physical violence. Second, the conversation of the characters in *The Caretaker* and *The Zoo Story* touches on theme of identity. Both playwrights expose the issue of identity and its establishment. Pinter himself admits ‘the lack of biographical data about his characters’ (Burkman, 1971:9).

From what precedes, it appears that one of the keys to understand Pinter’s and Albee’s language is not to rely on what the characters say but to look for the meaning behind what they say. To analyse the language as it is used in communication, it stands to reason that this study will be based on discourse analysis, since discourse analysis is concerned with the study of language in use (Shiffrin,1994). According to Shiffrin, to analyse the speaker’s discourse and the meaning of their utterances in particular context, one may refer to the ideas of the British philosopher, Paul Grice, who is concerned with the study of meaning in conversation (*ibid*). Grice, indeed, writes about logic and conversation and makes a difference between the existing types of meaning. He develops a theory of ‘Implicature’, which is a theory about ‘the way people use language’(Levinson,1983:100). It is meant ‘to provide an

explanation of how interactants can infer the intended meaning despite the great amount of implicitness in conversation' (Geneviève Zarate Co-ordination, 2004: 31).

Grice, in his theory, formulates the Cooperative Principle for conversation, which is 'an assumption that people taking part in conversation will make what they say appropriate to the mutually accepted purpose of the conversation and to the direction it is taking at the moment' (Hinkel, 1999) and a set of Maxims that express the general Cooperative Principle and specify how to be rational and cooperative in conversation (Levinson,1983: 101). By obeying the maxims, Grice (1989) assumes that the interactants intend to be *true*, *concise*, *relevant*, and *clear*. Generally, it is believed that communication is efficient because the interactants adhere to the cooperative maxims. But, in reality, 'no one actually speaks like that the whole time' (Levinson,1983: 102). In fact, there are instances in which these maxims are violated. Grice, of course, is aware of this. It is in such situations that his theory of implicature arises. The implication is used as a procedure to imply the exact meaning purported in the deliverance of the speaker's message when there is any violation or flouting to the cooperative maxims. In any instance of violation, Celce-Murcia & Olshtain (2000: 23) assert that, 'the principles are adhered to at some deeper level', and 'an additional information or an implicit meaning is conveyed'.

Departing from the assumption that in everyday life people don't submit themselves completely to the Cooperative Principle, the 'irrational' use of language in *The Zoo Story* and *The Caretaker* and the conversation of the characters, which is characterized as 'meaningless', could be explained by the violation of the Cooperative Principle and the flouting of the conversational Maxims.

Though the dramatic interaction is relatively different from daily speech, as it is a fictional constructed interaction, we can not ignore that the regulations of social communication play a vital role in the interpretation of dramatic dialogues. Herman (1995:6)

argues that ‘ the *rules* underlying the orderly and meaningful conversational exchange in everyday contexts are the resource that dramatists use to construct dialogue in plays’. To justify more, Cooper (1998) maintains that, in spite of the differences between drama discourse and the discourse of everyday life, they are quite ‘parallel as modes of communication’, since what is expected and recognized as ‘a well formed speech’ forms the basic standard to assess an ‘incongruent’ and ‘aberrant speech’.

Having justified that the discourse of dramatic world and that of real world are quite parallel as ‘modes of communication’, it entails that the methods and the strategies of analysing the conversational behaviour in daily life are also appropriate to that of a dramatic work. Then, to account for violence and identity formation in the two plays, one must search for the meaning behind the words of the characters by analysing their conversational behaviour on the basis of Grice’s theory of discourse and pragmatics and taking into consideration the context of utterance. Grice, as mentioned earlier, provided some maxims of conversation that are expected to be obeyed by the participants. What is more to this point, however, is that they are strictly bound to context.

In this analysis, my attention will be focussed on instances of *uncooperative* behaviour and on the meaning that emerges from the flouting of the conversational maxims. I will concentrate on the question of how it is that the characters’ identity is informed by their discourse, and how it is that their conversational behaviour causes violence effects. But before inquiring into these research questions, I must, first, seek answers to the following general questions:

- How the Cooperative Principle is violated in *The Zoo Story* and in *The Caretaker*?
- What maxims are flouted ?
- How do the characters flout them?

This work is divided into three chapters(Theoretical Framework and Methodology, Results, and Discussion). These chapters are preceded by a General Introduction, which provides insights into how I put the study in perspective, the aim of the study, the research questions as well as the organization of the study. The first chapter, i.e. Theoretical Framework and Methodology, provides theoretical aspects and the steps required in my analysis. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides the description of Grice's theory of conversational implicature which I apply to analyse the data, definitions of discourse, insights into the notion of context, and a review of the pertinent literature on violence and identity formation, which is necessary to discuss the analysed data and answer the research questions. The second section explains the method used for conducting the research and describes the criteria for data selection and the research procedure. Chapter two presents the results of data analysis, which is based on the two selected themes, i.e. violence and identity. This chapter also is divided into two sections. The first section provides the results of *The Zoo Story* analysis. The second section presents the results obtained from *The Caretaker* analysis. Chapter three is concerned with the discussion and interpretation of the findings of the analysis. As the first and second chapter, this chapter also contains two sections. The first section provides the discussion and interpretation of the results of the analysis of *The Zoo Story*. The second section presents the discussion and interpretation of the results yielded from the analysis of *The Caretaker*. Each section is concluded with summary and conclusion. Finally, this study ends with a general conclusion which overviews the main finding of the analysis.

Chapter 1

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the framework within which I have undertaken my analysis. The second section presents the chosen methodology that informs about the method used and the research procedure. As this study investigates how violence effects are reached in the two plays, and how the characters' identity informed by their discourse, I find it necessary to highlight the main perspectives on violence and identity formation and shed light on the notions of discourse and context, which helps to explain the whole meaning of the characters' utterances. So, after describing Grice's theory of conversational implicature, I will organize the first section, which constitutes my theoretical framework, as follows. First, I will provide tentative definitions of discourse and introduce the notion of context by giving insights into its main constituents and its significance in discourse. Second, I will review the different types of violence and its consequences. Finally, I will expose the two major perspectives on identity formation and justify the need to rely on the approach that stresses the emergence of identity in discourse.

In the second section, I will describe the research method that I have used to answer the research questions. I will provide a restatement of the aim of this study, a description of the method used to select the data, the rationale for the selection of what counts as important data to my analysis. Finally, I will provide an account of how I have applied Grice's Cooperative Principle and conversational Maxims to derive the character's implied meaning in their conversations and answer the research questions.

1.1.Theoretical Framework

As it was mentioned in the introduction, to conduct this study and explain how the language of the playwrights causes violence effects in the two plays, and how the characters' identity expressed by their discourse, it is necessary to use Grice's theory of discourse, which forms the basis of my theoretical development. The following pages, then, are concerned with the description of this theory.

1.1.1.Grice's Theory of Conversational Implicature

In one part labelled 'Logic and Conversation', which is included in *Studies in the Way of Words* (1989), Grice provides us with a general explanation of language which is conceived with the objective to further the studies on meaning and the inquiry into the conditions that govern conversation. This explanation is progressively developed to form the theory of 'Implicature'. In the development of this theory, Grice introduces the notions of rationality and cooperation in conversation and formulates a set of Categories or Maxims to offer an account on the literal and implied meaning, or 'what is said' and 'what is implied', and explain how the participants in conversation bridge the gap between what they say and what they mean. Grice comments on the meaning of the word *say* and the decision about the choice of the speaker' assumed meaning to draw attention to the concept of 'Implicature'. In his commentary, he uses the word *say* to describe what is conventionally conveyed by the words used and the words *implied*, *suggested* and *meant* to describe what the speaker intended to convey. Grice tells us that the 'apparatus', which I am going to describe in the following pages, might help people to decide which implied meaning to be favoured in any uttered sentence.

1.1.1.1. Implicature

Speaking about implicatures, Grice distinguishes between two types: the conventional and the nonconventional implicatures. However, his discussion is more concerned with the nonconventional ones, which he calls ‘Conversational Implicatures’.

The Conventional Implicatures are due to the conventional meaning of the words used, and do not depend on any special features of conversation. The following example may help to explain his point:

- He is an English man, so he is brave.

It is implicated that man’s bravery is the consequence of being English (Grice, 1989:25-26).

The implicature in the previous example is conveyed by the conventional meaning of the word ‘so’.

The Conversational Implicatures, however, are not dependent on the conventional meaning of the words used but rather on ‘general features of discourse’ (ibid:26), and it is those features that Grice tried to identify. By doing so, he remarked that people’s interaction is based on a mutual commitment to the communicative objective:

Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction. (ibid)

Briefly speaking, Grice describes the conversation as ‘rational’, ‘cooperative’, and ‘means-end’ behaviour on the speaker’s part, who aims at communicating and achieving certain outcomes, and on the hearer’s part, who is expected to recognize the speaker’s purpose and respond accordingly. But ‘at each discursive exchange’, he affirms, ‘some possible conversational moves would be excluded as conversationally unsuitable’ (ibid). In this respect, he formulates a general prerequisite as a conversational rule, which he names the

‘Cooperative Principle’, and from the Cooperative Principle, he derives a series of conversational Maxims, which guarantee the efficient use of language.

By referring to the playwrights and to the language play in the two plays, it is likely to suppose that the assumptions underlying the *cooperative* conversation were not held in the discourse of the characters.

1.1.1.2. The Cooperative Principle

The Cooperative Principle maintains the following: ‘Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged’ (ibid).

As can be noticed, the Cooperative Principle functions as a guiding principle that regulates what the interlocutors say in order to ensure cooperation in conversation and achieve their assumed discourse goals. Speaking about my dissertation, the assumption held by the Cooperative Principle could serve as a standard against which we interpret the supposed ‘inefficient’ use of language and the absurd dialogues in the two plays.

1.1.1.3. The Conversational Maxims

According to Grice, there are four Maxims (the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of manner, and the maxim of relation) that assert how to be rational and cooperative in conversation.

1.1.1.3.1. Maxim of Quantity

- a. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
- b. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

By the Maxim of Quantity, Grice assumes that in any successful communication, one should provide sufficient but not more than sufficient information required in the ongoing conversation. The maxim of quantity is assumed to be fulfilled when the interlocutor considers the amount of information that his partner provides as being no more and no less than what he needs in the context of occurrence.

Example1:

The following example is taken from *The Caretaker* play

Davies: What is this ?

Aston: That's a Buddha.(17)

In this case, Aston fulfils the maxim of quantity, as he gives an adequate answer. In other words, the information that Aston provides is as informative as Davies needs.

1.1.1.3.2. Maxim of Quality

Try to make your contribution one that is true.

- a. Do not say what you believe to be false.
- b. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The Maxim of Quality requires that the interactants' conversational contribution should be true and based on evidence. The mutual expectation of interactants is that their information or statements shouldn't be false and should not be communicated if there is no adequate evidence. We assume that the maxim of quality is fulfilled when the two sub-maxims under the maxim of quality are respected in conversation.

Example2:

Aston: You see a blue case?

Davies: Blue case ? Down here. Look by the carpet.(18)

Here, Davies is fulfilling the maxim of quality, because he gives an answer that is based on fact, when he indicates the place of the blue case.

1.1.1.3.3. Maxim of Relation

a. Be relevant.

This maxim requires from the speaker to give an answer or an information that is relevant to the topic of discussion in the ongoing conversation. Thus, we assume that the Maxim of Relation is fulfilled when the interactants' conversational contributions are relevant to the topic at hand.

Example3:

Davies: You see the trouble is, it's right on top of my bed, you see? What I got to watch is nudging...one of them gas taps with my elbow when I get up, you get my meaning?

Aston: There's nothing to worry about.(26)

Aston fulfils the maxim of relation, as he gives an appropriate answer to Davies. In fact, when Davies expresses his anxiousness about what might happen because of the inappropriate place of the gas stove, Aston provides relief to him.

1.1.1.3.4. Maxim of Manner

Grice notes that the Maxim of Manner is concerned with how what is said should be said(27). Under the Maxim of Manner, we find a super maxim, 'Be perspicuous', and four sub-maxims, which are:

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief.
4. Be orderly.

This maxim requires from the interactants to pay attention to what they say in such a way as to ensure clarity and brevity and avoid obscurity and ambiguity when they convey their messages or perform conversational acts.

Example 4:

Jerry: [Ignoring the above] Where do you live? [Peter is reluctant.] Oh, look; I'm not going to rob you, and I'm not going to kidnap your parakeets, your cats, or your daughters.

Peter: [Too loud] I live between Lexington and Third Avenue, on Seventy-fourth Street.

In this example, the stage directions show that Peter is reluctant to speak when Jerry asks him where he lives. But when Jerry gives him the feeling that there is nothing to worry about, Peter provides a clear and straightforward answer, thus he fulfils the maxim of manner.

Grice notes that it is possible to flout a maxim intentionally or unconsciously in the conversation, and it is on the basis of this flouting that the speaker conveys implicatures or produce a different meaning from the one which is literally spoken. Thus, the conversational Maxims are determined to achieve the communicative goals when they are followed and when they are flouted.

When the speakers flout the conversational Maxims, they usually expect their listeners to recognize their flouting and understand the implied meaning. Thus, though the speakers appear to be performing uncooperatively when they flout the maxims, the hearers should assume that cooperation is still taking place but at a deeper level of discourse.

Speaking about my analysis, the Cooperative Principle and the conversational Maxims help to predict when talk in the two plays doesn't proceed according to the specifications of *cooperative* exchanges and deduce the different Maxims and the range of discourse strategies that the playwrights exploit in order to achieve their purposes. Also, by assuming that the

Cooperative Principle is adhered at a deeper level, we can see how the playwrights impart an implied meaning in the utterances that seem meaningless or irrelevant.

The regularities of conversational behaviour were meant to include aspects of human behaviour and cognition beyond the linguistic ones. 'At least some of the stated maxims', Grice maintains, 'have their analogues in the sphere of transactions that are not talk exchanges' (28). To explain more his point, Grice provides the following example:

- 1. Quantity.** If you are assisting me to mend a car, I expect your contribution to be neither more nor less than is required. If, for example, at a particular stage I need screws, I expect you to hand me four, rather than two or six.
- 2. Quality.** I expect your contribution to be genuine and not spurious. If I need sugar as an ingredient in the cake you are assisting me to make, I do not expect you to hand me salt; if I need a spoon, I do not expect a trick spoon made of rubber.
- 3. Relation.** I expect a partner's contribution to be appropriate to the immediate needs at each stage of the transaction. If I am mixing ingredients for a cake, I do not expect to be handed me a good book, or even an oven cloth (though this might be an appropriate contribution at a later stage).
- 4. Manner.** I expect a partner to make it clear what contribution he is making and to execute his performance with reasonable dispatch.

This example shows how any analogue of the conversational maxims govern the non-talk behaviour of people. By referring to the plays, one can assume that there is cooperation only if the non-linguistic behaviour of the characters meets the previous requirements. For example, if one character asks: 'Could you close the door?', the hearer should perform the non-linguistic act of closing the door rather than performing an other act or ignoring completely the speaker's request.

Coming back to the linguistic interest in the Maxims, Grice recognizes that the conversation is conducted in conformity to other sorts of Maxims, such as ‘Be polite’, which may be, in turn, the source of Non-Conventional Implicatures or what is called ‘Conversational Implicatures’.

Grice states that ‘the conversational Maxims operate to produce the Conversational Implicatures in a number of ways’, and the inferences are based on the speaker’s observance or non-observance of the conversational Maxims.

1.1.1.4. The Implicatures Arising in Case of Observance of Maxims

In this case, the conversational implicatures that arise are called ‘Generalized Conversational Implicatures’. These implicatures do not require particular contextual conditions in order to be inferred. In case of Generalized Conversational Implicatures, Grice says that the speaker fails to fulfil a maxim in the following ways:

1. He may quietly and unostentatiously violate a maxim; this accounts for lies and deceptions.
2. He may opt out from the operation both of the maxim and of the cooperative principle. He may indicate that he is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires by saying, for instance, I can not say more; my lips are sealed.
3. He may violate a maxim because of a clash with another maxim, like when a speaker is faced with a situation in which he is unable to fulfil the maxim of quantity without violating the maxim of quality (30). The following example may clarify more this point:

A planning with B an itinerary for a holiday in France. Both of the interlocutors know that A wants to see his friend C . A asks his friend B, ‘Where does C live? ’, and B responds, ‘Somewhere in South of France’.

B's answer appears to be less informative to meet A's needs and B knows this. So, the flouting of the maxim of quantity could be explained only by the supposition that B knows that to be more informative would be at the expense of the maxim of quality. In other words, he will flout the maxim of quality, 'don't say what you lack adequate evidence for'. So, it is implicated that B does not know in which town C lives (32-33).

1.1.1.5. The Implicatures Arising in Case of Flouting of Maxims

The conversational implicatures that are produced in this case are called 'Particularized Conversational Implicatures'. To be inferred, this type of implicatures, depends largely on context (37). They are produced through a deliberate 'flouting' or 'exploiting' of any one of the maxims listed above, and the 'unspoken' meaning is understood by the interlocutor on the basis of his assumption that the speaker is continuing to cooperate in the exchange. In other words, though the conversational contribution of the speaker appears ineffective, the hearer should assume that the speaker means more than he says. (33). A few examples may illustrate this point.

In case of a blatant flouting of the maxim of relation, Grice gives the example of a conversation between A and B who are talking about a mutual friend C. A asks B how C is getting on in his new job in a bank, and B answers: 'Oh quite well, I think he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet'.

It is clear that B's answer is irrelevant. By assuming the observance of the maxims or at least the cooperative principle at the level of what is implicated, A may resort, for instance, to the meaning that C is a person who is prone to the temptation provided by his job. Grice argues that 'whatever implied or suggested by B's reply, it is distinct from what B said, which was simply that C had not been to prison yet' (24).

Some other examples of conversational implicatures are presented below.

1.1.1.5.1. Flouting the Maxim of Quantity

Let's consider the case of a letter of reference for a candidate who wants to enter an institution teaching scientific matters. The teacher writes: 'Mr X's command of languages is excellent, and his attendance at school has been regular. Yours, etc.'

The information given by the tutor appears to be inadequate in comparison to the requirements that a letter of recommendation should include about a candidate. Thus, by responding in this way, the writer appears to be exploiting the quantity maxim, which requires from the speaker to give as much information as the addressee needs. However, it is clear that the addressee is able to deduce that the teacher knows more than he says. So, his avoidance to offer the information that would be helpful is explained by the fact that the teacher does not want to comment explicitly on Mr X's scientific ability. Therefore, he implicates that Mr X is not good at science.

The Maxim of Quantity is flouted also in case of tautologies, such as 'Women are women'. Grice contends that, 'at the level of what is said, tautologies are completely non-informative, but they are informative at the level of what is implicated'. 'To identify their informative content at this level', Grice explains, 'the hearer must be able to explain the speaker's use of that particular tautology in the context of occurrence'.

1.1.1.5.2. Flouting the Maxim of Quality

-Flouting the First Maxim of Quality

-Irony

In one scene involving Mick and Davies in *The Caretaker* play, Mick proposed to the old tramp, Davies, to sell him his house, then he asks him the question, 'Who do you bank with?' (36), though he knows that Davies is a jobless and homeless man, and that he worked

as a cleaner earlier. So, one could infer that Mick's question lacks sincerity, and that he is being ironical about Davies's unpleasant state. Thus, Mick flouts the quality maxim. By doing so, he conveys his intention to intimidate Davies and ridicule him.

-Metaphor

To illustrate about metaphor, let's consider the following example taken from *The Zoo Story* play.

At one time, Jerry attempts to provoke Peter and attack him verbally by saying: 'You're a vegetable! Go lie down on the ground' (42).

It is clear that Jerry is flouting the first maxim of quality, 'to be true', as what his remark involves is not true. However, we can't assume that it is completely different from what Jerry wants to say. The supposition that we can draw from Jerry's statement, then, is that he assumes resemblance between Peter and a vegetable. Accordingly, the possible proposition that could be inferred from Jerry's exaggerating statement is that Peter is a silly person.

-Flouting the Second Maxim of Quality

This case is illustrated with Grice's example about the unfaithful wife. Grice imagined a situation in which a speaker is referring to someone's wife by saying: 'She is probably deceiving him this evening'.

Here, the second Maxim of Quality, 'Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence', is being exploited. In fact, the speaker hasn't a sufficient evidence for what he said. Therefore, he must be trying to impart something for which he has adequate evidence. Thus, the implicature might be that the woman is inclined to deceive her husband, or that she is the sort of person who might do such things (34-35).

1.1.1.5.3. Flouting the Maxim of Relation

The flouting of the maxim of relation could be illustrated by an example taken again from *The Caretaker* play. Davies asks Aston the question, 'You got any more Blacks here?'. Then, Aston holds out a pair of shoes and says: 'See if these are any good' (14).

The Maxim of Relation, here, is actually flouted. Aston could have made a relevant comment but chose not to. By changing the subject, he implicates that Davies's question is inappropriate, and that he doesn't want to speak about any racial subject.

1.1.1.5.4. Flouting the Maxim of Manner

-Flouting the Super Maxim 'Be Perspicuous'

- Ambiguity

The ambiguity which is concerned here is the one that the speaker intends. The following example is taken from the exchange whereby Mick inquires about the reason for which Davies waves a knife towards him.

Mick. What are you waving that about for ?

Davies. You come near me....

Mick. I'm sorry if I gave you a start. But I had you in mind too, you know. I mean, my brother's guest. We got to think of your comfort, en't we ?

Here, Mick expresses his regret for having frightened Davies, then he says to him: 'I had you in mind too'. As we notice, this expression could be interpreted, either to regard somebody with care and concern or to harm somebody in response to or revenge for a harm. But, the second interpretation is the intended one though Mick encourages Davies to pick up the first interpretation in his ironical statement, ' I mean, my brother's guest. We got to think

of your comfort, en't we?'. So, by confusing Davies with this expression, Mick flouts the manner maxim. By flouting this maxim, Mick conveys his attempt to lull Davies.

-Obscurity

A and B are having a conversation in the presence of their child. A might be intentionally obscure in such a way as his wife, B, would understand and their child not. For example, A inform his wife that he will go to shop, but he will be obscure in such a way as his wife will understand and their child not. If the father expects the mother to see that he is being deliberately obscure, and that the Cooperative Principle is assumed to be at work, it seems reasonable to suppose that the father's contribution is implicating that the intended meaning should not be communicated to the child. (36-37).

- Failure to be Brief

To account on the way the sub-maxim, 'to be brief', is flouted, let's consider the following example:

- a. Miss X sang 'Home sweet home.'
- b. Miss X produced a series of sounds that corresponded closely with the score of 'Home sweet home'.

When saying, Miss X sang 'Home sweet home', would be much more perspicuous than when saying, Miss X produced a series of sounds that corresponded closely with the score of 'Home sweet home'. The Maxim of Manner is flouted by being obscure and lengthy rather than clear and brief. The flouting of this maxim, here, triggers the implicated meaning that Miss X's singing performance is different from those to which the term singing is usually applied (37).

In his theory, Grice maintains that ‘The presence of a conversational implicature must be capable of being worked out; for even if it can in fact intuitively grasped.’(31). To be able to calculate the conversational implicature, he claims that the addressee must know or ‘reply’ on the following data and facts:

1. the conventional meaning of the words used.
2. the identity of any references that may be involved.
3. the cooperative principle and its maxims.
4. the context, linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance.
5. other facts of background knowledge.
6. the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants and both participants know or assume this to be the case.

The description of Grice’s theory will be concluded by his general pattern of calculability that he outlines as follow:

1. He has said that P.
2. There is no reason to suppose that he is not observing the maxims, or at least, the Cooperative Principle.
3. He could not be doing this unless he thought that Q.
4. He knows (and knows that I know that he knows) that I can see that the supposition that he thinks that Q is required.
5. He has done nothing to stop me thinking that Q.
6. He intends me to think, or is at least willing to allow me to think that Q, and so, he has implicated that Q.

Besides the description of the framework on which I base my analysis, there are some concepts or notions that appear to be central to my analysis. Among those notions, we have

discourse and context. So, in the following pages, I will provide tentative definitions of ‘discourse’ and some explanations about the notion of ‘context’.

1.1.2. Definitions of Discourse

The notion of discourse is present in various fields and defined in different ways. In the field of linguistics which interests us, there are two eminent descriptions of discourse (Schiffrin, 1994). It is generally defined as language in use (the focus of attention is on function) or language organisation beyond the level of the sentence (the focus of attention is on structure). But since my work is concerned with drama discourse, the concept of discourse used in this study should be taken to mean what Benveniste (1966) points out to as:

a variety of written forms that reproduce spoken discourse or that borrow its style and purposes: correspondence , memoirs, plays, didactic works, in short, any genre in which one person addresses another, identifies himself as a speaker, organizing what he says in personalized form’ (Cited in Issacharoff,1989:5).

Discourse taken as such, generally speaking, is a written form that represents the spoken form or in relation to speech. Though dramatic discourse is ‘a *represented* discourse and not *ordinary* discourse’ as Issacharoff (ibid) puts it, ‘the conventions of fiction don’t change the meaning of words or other linguistic elements’(Searle, 1969 :79). Adding to this, Elam claims that one should identify dramatic characters as participants in communicative events. According to her:

Whatever the properties ascribed to dramatic personae as individuals in a fictional world, and whatever personal, actantial, social and other rules they are seen to fulfil as functions of dramatic structure, it is in the first instance as participants in speech events that they are usually perceived. It is the discourse level of the drama—the dialogic exchange of information-bearing utterances which constitutes, at the same time, a form of interaction in itself—that is most immediately present to the spectator or auditor (1980:121-122).

The consideration of dramatic characters as participants in communicative events, entails the assignment of a number of qualities and capacities to the participants, such as the linguistic and the communicative competence. Elam states:

In granting dramatic figures the status of agents (and patients) of speech events, in other words, we necessarily attribute to them the qualities and the various forms of competence which allow us to participate in communicative exchanges (ibid:122).

To determine the functions and the purposes of the language used in communicative exchanges, a discourse analyst must have knowledge about the participants in discourse. At the same time, the notion of context should be considered (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000:4). So, it is important to see what this notion of context consists of.

Introduction to the Notion of Context

The notion of ‘context’, as Herman (1995:185) puts it, is a ‘complex one’. Indeed, there are different approaches to discourse and pragmatics which differ in their assumptions about context and their concentration on particular elements of context and the ignorance of others (Schiffrin, 1993). However, since this work is concerned with character-to-character communication level, and as such with the dramatic context. The following pages, then, are concerned with the characterization of dramatic context.

1.1.3. The Constituents of a Dramatic Context

According to Elam (1980:123), the dramatic context contains two distinct components: the situation in which a given exchange takes place, or what is generally known as a situational context and the communicative context, usually known as the context of utterance.

1.1.3.1.The Situational Context

The situational context, as Elam (1980:121) states, includes a variety of different factors, such as ‘the speaker and the hearer, the actions they are performing at the time, various external objects and events, stage directions, etc’.

1.1.3.2.The Context of Utterance

According to Elam, the context of utterance or the communicative context comprises ‘the relationship set up between speaker, listener, and discourse in the immediate here-and-now’(ibid). This relationship is a ‘dynamic one’ (Elam,1980:104; Mey,1993:186). That is to say, the contextual factors are in steady development during the process of social interaction. Accordingly, in order to understand what goes on between the interactants, it is necessary to take into consideration the changes that occur at the level of context.

Besides what is preceded, Mey introduced the notion of ‘wording the world’. He contends that, ‘in order to understand another person’s wording, I have to participate in his or her contexts, to word the world with him or her.’ (1993:304). Provided that we are dealing with the dramatic world, it would be necessary to word the dramatic world and the real world in order to understand what is going between the characters as well as the messages of the playwrights.

Having provided the necessary information about the notion of context and its constituents, it is to the issues of violence and identity I shall now turn.

Introduction to the Issue of Violence

A wide range of explanations about the issue of violence could be found in the existing literature. However, the explanations which would illuminate and relate to this study

are those which are concerned with its types. Hipp and Hanson (2000) distinguishes between three types of violence: the physical, the verbal, and the non-verbal violence. As this dissertation deals with the relation between the language of the characters and their violence, the verbal violence becomes of primary importance to my analysis. However, the other forms of violence should be known and taken into consideration, as they may serve as means of provocation and as reasons for which verbal violence unfolds. Thus, the literature that follows provides the descriptions of the three existing types of violence. But before giving the descriptions, I should provide, first, a definition to the notion of violence.

1.1.4. Definition of Violence

A great curriculum about reducing school violence named 'Respect & Protect' provides a broad definition of violence. According to this curriculum, violence is 'any mean word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings, or things.'(Cited in Hipp and Hanson, 2000:10). As we notice, this definition extends to include the three types of violence.

1.1.5.The Three Types of Violence

1.1.5.1. Physical Violence

Physical violence occurs when we use force against someone in such a way as to cause physical damage to him or put him at risk of hurt and injury. According to Peterman and Dixon (2003), physical violence includes actions, like 'hitting, pushing, throwing, kicking, biting, punching, grabbing, beating, pinching, pulling hair, shaking, assaulting with a weapon, restraining, invading someone's personal space, stabbing, shooting, stealing, or any other action that causes bodily harm' .

1.1.5.2. Verbal Violence

Sometimes, our speech enacts violence. The verbal violence or abuse can affect mentally, psychologically, or emotionally (Hipp and Hanson, 2000:10). Emotional and psychological abuses occur when one ‘ridicules, insults, blames, humiliates, criticizes, and routinely ignores another purposefully’ (Peterman and Dixon, 2003:3). Other examples may include ‘frequent withholding of approval, manipulating with lies ... , screaming or name calling, making fun of someone, criticizing or sabotaging one’s goals, attempting to isolate one person from friends and family, using racial slurs, etc.’ (Hipp and Hanson, 2000).

1.1.5.3. Non-Verbal Violence

In our behaviour, there are different ways in which the non-verbal violence is shown. According to Hipp and Hanson, it may be manifested through ‘aggressive hand gestures, like giving someone the finger, making a fist or drawing a finger across the throat; staring aggressively; making mean faces; rolling your eyes to indicate disgust, etc’ (2000:10-11).

Although some acts are more hurtful than others, all violences cause some type of injury. Hipp and Hanson (2000:13) argue that ‘Violence, no matter how small an act or how seemingly innocent the intention, means the victim suffers some degree of hurt or pain’. Sometimes, one act could cause a violent explosion, especially when it is done repeatedly, like ‘not listening when someone is talking to you’, or ‘letting someone down by not showing up when you said you would’ (ibid:14).

Summary

In order to explore the way in which the language of the two playwrights causes violence effects in the two selected plays, we have argued that it is necessary to provide first a general overview about the issue of violence. So, in the previous literature, I have given a

tentative definition of violence in order to get a clear idea about its meaning and provided information about the existing types of violence and how they affect so that we predict the scenes of violence in the *The Zoo Story* and *The Caretaker* play and understand how they emerge.

Introduction to the Issue of Identity

My aim in this part of study is to describe the two basic ways or theories of identity treatment: the essentialist that view identity as being ‘fixed’ and ‘stable’, and the anti-essentialist that considers identity as being ‘fluid’ and dependent on the discursive context. Theoretically, this dissertation will be based on the anti-essentialist orientation which is a discourse centered one, since my study is based on discourse analysis and my interest is drawn to the question of how the characters’ identity expressed by their dialogues. But I find it worth highlighting the essentialist view of identity in order to see how it differs from the anti-essentialist one in terms of interests and points of emphasis, and as such we will understand well the conceptualization of identity which is based on discourse, and we will get a clear perception about its importance to this study. In the following pages, then, I will provide the two basic views or theories of identity and explain how the anti-essentialist view is the one which fits my analysis.

1.1.6. Identity Theories

Following Benwell and Stokoe (2006), identity theories are divided into ‘essentialist’ and ‘anti-essentialist’ theories. The essentialist theories of identity assume that identities are ‘rigid’ and ‘distinct’. According to the essentialists, identity is located ‘inside persons, as a product of minds, cognition, the psyche, or socialisation practices’. It is ‘a taken-for-granted

category and a feature of a person that is absolute and knowable' (ibid:9). From this perspective, identity is considered as a subject which brings to mind images of stability and persistence through time. Some questions are based on this treatment of identity, including 'what identities people possess [...], how they may be distinguished from one another' (ibid:4). It is assumed, for instance, that the signs that indicate the difference between people constitute real and inflexible boundaries. Thus, each group is assumed to have its intrinsic or 'essential' character (Roseneil and Seymour, 1999:3).

In contrast, the anti-essentialist perspective, which lies on the constructionist approaches, attaches a great importance to the idea of 'fluidity' of identity and its 'fragmentary' nature. The constructionist approaches maintains that 'one can not ignore the fragmentary and the processual character of identities' (ibid). The identity term, according to these approaches, is a 'socially constructed category', and 'whatever people agree it to be in any given historical and cultural context' (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006:6). In keeping with this type of thought, two ideas come to the mind: the idea that any person plays an active role in choosing his identity, and the idea that they can acquire new ones in different contexts.

By taking the constructionist way of thinking of identity, the anti-essentialists assume that individuals have multiple and varying identities that are 'constructively engaged in the securing of identities' (Roseneil and Seymour, 1999:3). Therefore, there is no way to support the view of identity as being 'fixed', and there is nothing 'given' or 'natural' about being part of a social category or group.

Another point of interest in the constructionist treatment of identity is its emphasis on the emergence of identities in discourse and its concentration on the importance of interaction in the identity formation. In fact, according to the constructionist researchers, identity is located 'in the public realms of discourse and semiotic system' (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006:9). In other words, identities' are seen and sorted out from the content of what the participants

say. Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995:218) argue, ‘Identities are practical accomplishments that are constructed and—even deconstructed—online in the *everyday flow of verbal interaction*’ (Cited in De fina, et al., 2006:6). Thus, language plays a crucial role both in identity construction and deconstruction. Benwell and Stokoe (2006:6) point out that the constructionist assumptions about identity formation lead to the understanding of identity ‘in terms of who people are to each other, and how different kinds of identities are produced in spoken interaction and written texts’. Accordingly, identity is likely to be seen not as images that people portray about themselves but as a construction interpreted by other people through a close focus on the interaction of the participants in discourse.

Besides the centrality of discourse, Benwell and Stokoe assume that there is also ‘social and embodied conducts of people’, such as ‘how we move, where we are, what we wear, how we talk’, that are involved and considered in identity formation (ibid:4).

Departing from the previous descriptions of the two distinct and opposing perspectives on identity, i.e. the essentialists and the constructionists’ perspectives, it is not surprising that this dissertation, with its focus on the discourse of the characters, adopts the constructionist view that stresses the formation of identity as an interactional achievement. A commitment to discourse-based understanding of identity enables us to explore the identity of the characters through their conversational performance and see how different interactional situations and contexts lead to draw various assumptions about the characters’s identity.

1.2.Methodology

1.2.1.The Research Method

The methodological approach to data collection and analysis used in this study was based on discourse analysis. In other words, the dramatic discourse of the two plays by

Harold Pinter and Edward Albee approached in terms of discourse analysis, and the analysed data is selected from the characters' dialogues. The purpose of this study is to account on the way the characters' language causes violence effects, and on the way their identity is expressed by their discourse. This is to be achieved by searching for the meaning behind the characters' words and by looking for the instances in which they don't seem to be cooperating.

For the purpose of this study, the language of the two plays is analysed on the basis of Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature which is combined with the constructionist account on identity formation and the pertinent literature on the issue of violence. This combination is considered to be necessary for an appropriate analysis of the characters utterances.

First, as suggested earlier, the conversational implicatures are of a great significance for the interactants. In fact, 'in the Gricean model, the bridge from what is said (the literal content of the uttered sentence, determined by its grammatical structure with the reference of indexicals resolved) to what is communicated is built through implicature.' (Horn, 2004, p. 3). Besides, Grice's theory enables us to give interpretation to the discourse that is considered as 'irrational'.

Second, the motivation for drawing from the constructionist approach to identity formation originates from our awareness that this study demands a discourse analysis approach, thus the need for research into the discursive construction of identity that considers the individual's active participation in current life. Building on these assumptions, the analysis focused on the way the identity of the characters is enacted moment to moment in their conversation.

Speaking about violence, any information about it and its different types turns into a methodological advantage, as it gives hints and clues that explain what counts as data about

violence in the two plays. Indeed, it is to these clues that I referred when I examined the speech of the characters.

It was established earlier that discourse occurs in context, and that it needs to be investigated with reference to that context. Accordingly, the methodology combined also a contextual consideration of language use. So, the meaning of the characters' utterances was retrieved in relation to the context of occurrence.

1.2.2. Data Selection and the Research Procedure

It is generally known that the accepted standard used in making a decision about the data to be analysed in dissertations and theses is relevance. As far as my dissertation is concerned, I selected some extracts that contain data involving the main concerns of my analysis. In other words, the analytic observations about the data stressed the different ways in which the characters violate the Cooperative Principle and the conversational Maxims in their conversations and the possible reasons for doing so. I focused mainly on utterances that contain implied meaning that involves relevant information on the question of identity and violence. I applied the Cooperative Principle that maintains the following: 'Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged' to examine and identify the instances in which the characters are not conforming to the requirement of this principle. I used the four associated maxims (the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relation, and the maxim of manner) to highlight the moments when the characters give too much or too little information than what is required for the situation, when they deliberately say something that is not true or say something for which they lack adequate evidence, when they are obscure or ambiguous in their speech and their utterances are unclear, and when their utterances are irrelevant or unrelated to the situation and to the subject of discussion.

It is important to point out that the analysis took into consideration the interaction between the characters themselves and the interaction between the reader and the playwrights. Short (1989) argues that the analysis of a dramatic text call for the need to take into consideration the two levels of interaction, i.e. ‘the character-to-character interaction’ and the ‘author-to-reader/audience interaction’. It calls also for the need to see ‘how these two levels interact’ (ibid).

In order to contextualize the analysis, I introduced the outcomes yielded from the analysis with plot summaries of the two plays.

Summary

As the key aim in this study is to investigate the characters’ violence and identity as productions of discourse, our choice of what to review, what to describe, and what to emphasise is based on discourse. So, in this chapter, I have tried to describe Grice’s theory of discourse, with particular focus on the violation of the Cooperative Principle and the flouting of the four associated Maxims, which gives rise to conversational implicatures. I have attempted also to provide a definition of discourse, which is most suitable to my subject and object of study. Given the fact that the conversational implicatures can be drawn and explained only on the basis that the interlocutors take into consideration the context of discourse, I have tried to characterize the notion of context by stating its different constituents and its significance in discourse. Two other notions relate to our study: the notion of identity and the notion of violence. Drawing on this assumption, I have included, in this chapter, a definition of violence and an account of its different forms and effects in order to make a picture on what counts as violence in the two plays. I have described the anti-essentialist perspective or assumption about identity formation and shown how this assumption, which lies on the constructionist approaches and considers how identity is to be understood from

discursive perspectives, is the assumption which is appropriate to my study. But before describing the anti-essentialist assumption, I have chosen to provide, first, an account of the essentialist perspective in order to see how the two basic ways or theories about identity treatment differ and understand fully what the anti-essentialist theories support, and how we will draw from them. The points that I have just highlighted constitute the first section of the first chapter. The second section of the latter I devoted it to the methodology of the research, which informs about the choice of method and the procedure of the research and explains how Grice' theory of conversational implicature is the theory that enable us to draw the intended meaning of the characters in the two plays. The methodology justifies also our combination of Grice' theory with the selected literature on violence and identity and highlights the importance of such combination in answering the research questions meant to inquire about the violence effects and the identity of the characters in the two plays. As a final point, this section provides the criteria of data selection and analysis as well as the procedure and the steps that I have applied in my analysis.

Chapter 2

Results

Introduction

Chapter three identified the methodology that was selected to investigate the research questions. This chapter reports on the outcomes of the analysis meant to examine the characters' conversational behaviour and seek for the meaning behind what they say so as to find answers to the research questions posed earlier:

- How the character's dialogues cause violence effects?
- How the characters' identity expressed by their discourse?

Given the fact that the findings have been reached through the application of Grice's theory on the dramatic texts of the two plays, it is important to recall that the analysis focussed on the character's flouting of maxims, or on the playwrights' exploiting of the conversational rules to elaborate on their themes, namely identity and violence. Indeed, the selected data are analysed with regard to identity and violence themes and in relation to the overarching research questions meant to inquire about the way in which the Cooperative Principle is violated in *The Zoo Story* and in *The Caretaker*, what maxims are flouted, and the ways in which the characters flout those maxims.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides the results yielded from the analysis of Harold Pinters' *The Caretaker*, and the second section provides the results obtained from the analysis of Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story*.

2.1. Plot Summary of Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker*

Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* is a three-act play about three characters, Aston, a kind man who once received an electroshock treatment in his brain, Mick, Aston's younger

brother, who is a violent and ill-natured tradesman, and Mac Davies or Bernard Jenkins (his assumed name), a homeless old man who is given the bullet because of his refusal to take the rubbish bucket out of the café where he worked as a cleaner.

Aston rescued the homeless unemployed Davies and brings him to his dwelling. As soon as they enter into the house, Aston offers him a sit three times, but Davies refuses to sit. He starts rather his complains about the bad treatment of people with whom he fights in the café and expresses a kind of racist hate. Then, he reveals that he goes under an assumed name, 'Bernard Jenkins', and that his real name is 'Mac Davies'. He tells Aston that he uses a found insurance card that carry his false name and pretends that he is waiting for the weather to break, and that he is in need of a good pair of shoes in order to journey to Sidcup to bring his papers that prove his official identity. Right after, Aston invites Davies to stay until he gets himself 'fixed up' and provides him with some basic necessities.

In the morning, Davies awakes with a start, as he finds Aston looking at him. Aston complains about Davies' noises, but Davies denies this and accuses the 'Blacks' living next door. The next day, Aston goes out to purchase a jigsaw and get Davies's bag from the café, and Davies locks the door and starts searching through the objects in the room. The first act closes with Mick, who catches Davies and forces his body to the floor, asking him: 'what is the game?'

As the second act opens, Mick flickes Davies with his trousers and interrogates him several times about his presence and his name. He asks Davies ironically whether he slept well the previous night and shows him the feeling of horrified disapproval for this encounter. He asks Davies whether he is 'a foreigner' or not, and Davies answers indirectly that he was born and bred in the British Isles. With powerless efforts, Davies claims his trousers in order to journey to Sidcup to bring his papers and informs Mick that he is not an intruder, and that Aston invites him to stay there. Davies claims also that the room they stay in is not Mick's

room, a thing that leads Mick to attack him verbally and insult him. He also warns off Davies and informs him that he is the house owner and that the bed in which he slept the previous night is his bed.

Later, when Aston returns bringing the bag that Davies left in the café, Mick doesn't let Davies get his bag each time Davies tries to get it. He teases Davies until Aston's intervention. Mick leaves the house, and Aston informs Davies that Mick, in fact, is the house owner and explains that he looks after his brother's house. Aston offers Davies the job of Caretaker, and then Davies anxiously talks to Aston about the dangers he might encounter, as he goes under an assumed name. Later, Davies enters into the house, Mick frightens him in the dark and urges him to keep a knife and ask: ' who is there?'. Mick refuses to answer and keeps Davies in a state of fear until the light comes on. Later, Mick complains to Davies about Aston's laziness and offers him the job of a caretaker, but Davies takes advantage of the situation to complain to Mick about Aston and say unpleasant things about him. This fact leads Mick to express his regret for hearing such things and accuse Davies of being 'hypocritical'. Just after, Mick goes into details relating to Davies's payment, then he claims Davies' identification papers and informs him that he must provide those papers if he wants to take that job. Davies again mentions his need for shoes in order to go to Sidcup to get his identity papers. The next morning, Aston awakes Davies, reminding him of this plan. Davies wakes up, complaining to Aston about his bad sleeping which results from the rain and the air coming in the window. Aston suggests other possible choices, but Davies refuses and shows rigidity and stiff resistance. The Second Act closes with Aston's revelation about his electro-shock treatment in an asylum, the bad effects of that treatment, as well as the expression of his impatience to find the man who is responsible for that.

The third act opens with Mick and Davies' discussion about the apartment's redecoration. Mick thinks carefully what he would do to redecorate it, then he informs Davies

that he is excluded from his house. Davies plays off Mick against his brother by accusing Aston of being of no feeling and showing his inability to be sociable and every bad aspect of Aston's behaviour. He tries also to satisfy Mick and make agreement with him without Aston's involvement, and Mick admitted to conspire against Aston in order to trick Davies. At this moment, Aston enters and gives Davies a pair of shoes which he reluctantly accepts because of the colour of the laces. Yet, Davies speaks again about 'going down to Sidcup' in order to get his papers.

When it gets dark, Aston moves closer to Davies who is asleep, shaking him in order to stop his noises. Davies reacts in an aggressive way, insulting Aston by reminding him of his treatment in the mental institution, a thing that leads Aston to say to Davies that it is time to search for another place. At the end, Davies points a knife at Aston, then Aston asks Davies to leave, but Davies claims that Mick will take his side and kick Aston out instead. After, Davies angrily leaves the house and says to Aston: 'Now I know who I can trust'.

Later, Davies enters with Mick and recounts what occurred earlier. Mick tries to comfort and calm down Davies, but just as Davies starts showing contempt for Aston by telling Mick that it is time for Aston to 'go where he comes from', Mick takes Aston's side and criticizes Davies. Then, he turns to discuss the house's decoration, exploiting the occasion to say that he is mistaken about Davies by pretending that he is informed that Davies is 'an interior decorator'. Finally, Mick forces Davies to disclose that his 'real name' is Davies and his assumed name is 'Jenkins'. Disappointingly, Davies insults Aston by calling him 'nutty', and Mick expresses his upsetting by making it clear to Davies that what he says is an impertinent thing to say. Then, he informs him that his brother 'can do whatever he wants in his house' and that he must turn back to his own 'business' affairs .

As a last effort to find a place in that house, Davies finds the excuse of having returned in order to get his pipe, then he exploits the occasion to beg Aston to let him stay, but Aston

seems affectless. By the end of the play, Aston gazes at his garden and turns his back to Davies, refusing to make any response to Davies' excuses and pretexted arguments.

2.2. The Results of *The Caretaker* Analysis

2.2.1. The Violation of the Cooperative Principle and Conversational Maxims in

The Caretaker

The analysis of the characters' conversational behaviour on the basis of Grice's theory of conversational implicature shows that the characters are flouting the conversational maxims from the beginning of the play till its end. In the first exchange, for example, Aston offers Davies a sit three times, but Davies initiates a very unusual reply to Aston's offer. He violates the cooperative principle, as he remains standing. More than this, he is consistently responding to Aston with an irrelevant long speech, initiating the topic of his unpleasantness in the café. By doing this, he fails to fulfil both the quantity and the relation maxims. Through this flouting, Davies is revealed as a rude and querulous person who tries to draw Aston's sympathy.

Davies . Sit down ? Huh...I haven't had a good sit down...I haven't had a proper sit down...well, I couldn't tell you...

Aston (*placing the chair*). Here you are.

Davies .Ten minutes off for a tea-break in the middle of the night in that place and I couldn't find a seat, not one. All them Greeks had it, Poles, Blacks, the lot of them, they had me working there...they had me working...

Aston sits on the bed,rolling himself a cigarette. Davies watches him.

All them Blacks had it, Greeks Poles, the lot of them, that's what, doing me out of a seat, treating me like dirt. When he comes at me tonight I told him.

Aston . Take a seat

Davies .Yes, but what I got to do first, you see, what I got to do, I got to loosen myself up, you see what I mean ? I could have done in down there.
(Davies *explains loudly, punches downward with closed fist, turns his back to Aston and stares at the wall*). (7-8).

In this verbal exchange, we notice that Davies talks too much, and his talk is inappropriate to Aston's offer, thus he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation. Besides Davies' attempt to draw Aston's sympathy, his flouting of the previous maxims is intended to characterize him as a rude and querulous person. These two traits are manifested again in his flouting of the manner maxim when he speaks unsuccinctly in his second utterance and in his stage directions (*Davies explains loudly...*).

This first exchange between Aston and Davies sets a model of interaction for the rest of the conversations in which the characters alternately are violating the cooperative principle and exploiting the maxims. Davies' tendency to insist on his bad luck and his attempt to get Aston to believe what he says, for instance, leads him again to flout the maxims of quantity and relation.

Davies (*handing the tin*).When he come at me tonight I told him. Didn't I ? You heard me tell him, didn't you?
Aston. I saw him have a go at you.
Davies . Go at me? You wouldn't grumble. The filthy skate, an old man like me, I've had dinner with the best.(9)

By flouting the quantity and the relation maxims in this exchange, Davies is portrayed as an insolent hostile man who tries to prove his superior worth. In fact, his expression of deprivation exceeds the expectations and breaks the norms of social behaviour when he pretends, 'I've had dinner with the best', and when he names the Scotch man, 'The filthy skate'.

Davies' conversational contributions disclose other traits in his character, such as his arrogance and aggressiveness. These traits are made apparent in the same exchange where he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation another time in order to expand on his misfortunes.

Aston. Yes, I saw him have a go at you.

Davies. All them toe-rags, mate, got the manners of pigs. I might have been on the road a few years but you can take it from me I'm clean. I keep myself up. That's why I left my wife. Fortnight after I married her, no, not so much as that, no more than a week, I took the lid off a saucepan, you know what was in it? A pile of her underclothing, unwashed. The pan for vegetable, it was. The vegetable pan. That's when I left her and I haven't seen her since.(9)

What draws the readers' attention in this exchange is Davies non-conscious contradictions. His speech as an expression of unpleasantness can call for Aston and the reader's sympathy, but his flouting of the quantity and relation maxims by his aggressive language and his incongruent talk about his wife's lack of standards of personal hygiene to stress his deprivation and show his moral correctness conceals what he claims and the response he seeks. Davies's exaggerated sense of misfortune and his incongruent pompous statements can be seen as an absurd attempt to distort the truth and hide behind his words. In fact, while he claims, 'I was brought up with the right ideas', he contradicts himself by saying: 'if I had a few years off me I'd ... I'd break you in half' (10). The propriety and the respect that Davies claims are disproved by his inappropriate and aggressive language.

Davies is revealed also as an ineffectual person. This is shown when he flouts the quantity and the manner maxims in his recurrent attempts to incline Aston to observe his apprehensions.

Davies. (coming closer) Did you see what happened with that one?

Aston. I only got the end of it.

Davies. Comes up to me, parks a bucket of rubbish at me tells me to take it out the back. It's not my job to take out the bucket! They got a boy there for taking out the bucket. I wasn't engaged to take out the buckets. My job's cleaning the

floor, clearing up the tables, doing a bit of washing-up, nothing to do with taking out buckets!

Aston. Uh.(9)

In this exchange, Davies talks too much and repeats himself more than once, therefore he fails to observe the quantity and the manner maxims. By flouting these maxims, Pinter intends to establish Davies as an ineffectual person who tries to cover up his fear and social inadequacy. In fact, by revising Davies' earlier discriminating speech about the Blacks, the Greeks, and the Poles who prevent him from seating, his emphasis on the fact that it is not his job to take the buckets out suggests his state of insecurity and his attempt to evade his inabilities and inferiorities. This is confirmed when he says to the Scotch man, 'I got my rights ... I might have been on the road but nobody's got more rights than I have'.(10)

Davies' ineffectualness is manifested again in his recurrent flouting of the maxim of manner when he responds Aston who invites him to be a caretaker in Mick's house. By contrast, Aston is revealed as a diffident and inassertive person. This is reflected in his

Davies. Caretaking, eh?

Aston. Yes.

Davies. Well, I ... I never been a caretaker before, you know ... I mean to say ... I never ... what I mean to say is... I never been a caretaker before.

Pause.

Aston. How do you feel about being one, then?

Davies. Well, I reckon ... Well, I'd have to know ... you know

Aston. What sort of

Davies. Yes, what sort of ... you know....

Pause

Aston. Well, I mean

Davies. I mean, I'd have to ... I'd have to....

Aston. Well, I could tell you ...

Davies. That's ... that'sit ... you see ... you get my meaning?

Aston. When the time comes ...

In this exchange, Pinter exaggerates in the use of fragmentary and incompleting sentences, a fact that makes the linguistic performance of the characters sound absurd. Davies, for example, fails to observe the manner maxim practically in all his responses to Aston. He expresses his position on Aston's proposal in broken and incomplete sentences, and each time he makes excuses to avoid answering Aston directly. Davies' failure to observe the maxim of manner in his responses could be seen as an indication of his refusal to work, or as an attempt to make his refusal unnoticeable. In fact, by taking into consideration the fact that he is a jobless man, and that he depends on other people in terms of lodging and necessities of life, it is likely to think that his failure to observe the maxim of manner in different instances is an indication of the fact that he is an ineffectual person who dislikes work. However, Aston's non-observance of the manner maxim in his incomplete sentences is interpreted as a sign of his diffidence and lack of assertiveness. In fact, his conversational contributions show that he understands the purport of Davies's utterances, but he remains incapable to finish his sentences and address Davies directly without hesitations.

It is noticeable that Davies is also a compulsive person. His attempt to draw Aston's attention, which is revealed in his revision of the story of the bucket through which he flouts the maxim of relation, 'to be relevant', is one example in which Davies's compulsiveness is made remarkable.

Davies. I told him what to do with his bucket. Didn't I? You heard. Look here, I said where I was brought up we had some idea how to talk to old people with the proper respect, we was brought up with the right ideas ...(10)

More important than his grammatical mistakes is his saying which doesn't match at all what Aston and the audience are expecting. From his first utterance, we learn that what he is going to say will be concerned with what the Scotch man will do with that bucket, but his

speech is completely deviated. He speaks rather about his appropriate social behaviour and his proper respect. By doing so, Davies is shown as a compulsive person.

It is increasingly apparent that Davies is always moving away from the central topic or line of argument to speak about his personal worries and anxieties. In fact, in addition to his story about the people's maltreatment and attack in the café, he resorts to other recollections of events intended to elicit and provoke Aston's interests and feeling. This desire for recognition from Aston is an indication of his insecurity. One instance in which Davies is revealed as an insecure man is perceived when he recounts the story of a generous mate at Shepherd's Bush, a story which leads him to flout two maxims at once.

Davies. Them bastards at the monastery let me down again.

Aston (*going to his bed*) Where?

Davies. Down in Luton. Monastery down at Luton I got a mate at Shepherd's Bush? You see....

Aston *looking under his bed.* I might have a pair.

Davies. I got this mate at Shepherd's Bush. In the convenience. Run about the best convenience they had. (*He watches Aston.*) Run about the best one. Always slipped me a bit of soap. They have to have the best soap. I was never without a piece of soap, whenever I happened to be knocking about the Shepherd's Bush area.

Aston (*emerging from under the bed with shoes*). Pair of brown.(13)

Davies' nonobservance of the quantity and relation maxims in his utterance, 'Down in Luton. Monastery down at Luton I got a mate at Shepherd's Bush? You see....', and his failure to pay attention to Aston's response about his previous request concerning his need for footwear could be explained by his impatience to change his standing and get Aston's support and respect. Indeed, the stage directions (*Davies watches him*) reveal this clearly. Aston, in his turn, fails to fulfil the relation maxim each time Davies tries to provoke his feeling. Aston's failure to respond appropriately is likely to be seen as an evidence of lack of interest in what Davies is saying.

Davies' insecurity is revealed on another occasion in his flouting of the quantity maxim in his response to Aston who offers him a sum of money.

Aston. How are you off for money?

Davies. Oh well ... now, mister, if you want the truth ... I'm a bit short.

Aston takes some coins from his pocket, sorts them, and holds out five shillings

Aston. Here's a few bob.

Davies (*taking the coins*). Thank you, thank you, good luck. I just happen to find myself a bit short. You see, I got nothing for all that week's work I did last week. That's the position, that's what it is.(19)

It appears that Davies's answer to Aston's offer consists the flouting of the quantity maxim, for he doesn't only thank Aston, but he explains why he doesn't possess money. So, by way of relevance, one must think that he is in an insecure position. Indeed, all along the play, we notice his over-concern with some physical needs, such as food and shoes, and his dependence on other people. His flouting of the quality maxim in his exaggerated statement, 'shoes ? It's life and death to me' (13), is a noteworthy example that proves this.

In addition to his insecurity, Davies's dramatization of his anxieties indicates a confusion about his own position. This is apparent in his flouting of the quantity and relation maxims in his response to Aston's question, 'What name you been going under?'

Aston. What name you been going under?

Davies. Jenkins. Bernard Jenkins. That's my name. That's the name I'm known, anyway. But it's no good me going on with that name. I got no rights. I got an insurance card here. (He takes a card from his pocket.) Under the name of Jenkins. See? Bernard Jenkins. [...] But I can't go along with these. That's not my real name, they'd find out, they'd have me in the nick. [...] There's been other stamps, plenty, but they haven't put them on, the nigs, I never had enough time to go into it.

Aston. They should have stamped your card.

Davies. It would have done no good! I'd have got nothing anyway. That's not my real name. If I take that card along I go in the nick.

Aston. What's your real name, then?

Davies. Davies. Mac Davies. That was before I changed my name.(20)

In response to Aston's first question, Davies flouts the quantity maxim by reciting the story of his name changing in a repetitive manner. Davies' frequent repetition doesn't clarify so much as it obscures. In fact, he doesn't explain his motivation for changing his name. Accordingly, we couldn't completely admit that his real name is indeed Davies. So, what we can conclude or what we can clearly understand is the fact that Davies' repetitions implicate a confusion about his own situation. This is confirmed by Davies' questionable background, which is foreseen in his flouting of the quantity and manner maxims in his responses to Aston who asks him about his name and origin.

Aston. What did you say your name was?

Davies. Bernard Jenkins is my assumed one.

Aston. No, your other one?

Davies. Davies. Mac Davies.

Aston. Welsh, are you?

Davies. Eh?

Aston. You Welsh?

Pause.

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

Aston. Where were you born then?

Davies (*darkly*). What do you mean?(23)

Davies, in this exchange, flouts the maxim of quantity by refusing to provide a specific information concerning his origin each time Aston asks him. Davies responds to Aston, either with a question declaring his misunderstanding or with an evasive and incomplete answer whereby he flouts the manner maxim in addition to the quantity maxim. Logically, Davies does this in order to escape the question and avoid his involvement in an unpleasant situation. By consequence, we implicate that there is uncertainty and confusion about Davies' situation and origins.

In addition to what precedes, Davies's speech reveals him as a person who is ill at ease. At the same time, it shows him as a talkative, repulsive, and ungrateful man. These assumptions about his character are manifested mainly in his story about the 'bastard monk' in Luton monastery, a story whereby he flouts three maxims at once.

Aston (*holding out the shoes*). See if these are any good.

Davies. You know what that bastard monk said to me? (*He looks over to the shoes*). I think those'd be a bit small.

Aston. Would they?

Davies. No don't look the right size.

Aston. Not bad trim.

Davies: Can't wear shoes that don't fit. Nothing worse. I said to this monk, here, I said, look here, mister, he opened the door, big door, he opened it, look here, mister, I said, I come all the way down here, look, I said, I showed him these, I said, you haven't got a pair of shoes, have you, a pair of shoes, I said, enough to keep me on my way. Look at these, they are nearly out....(14)

In response to Aston who asks Davies to give his point of view about the shoes, Davies flouts the relation maxim by asking an inappropriate question whereby he insults the monk in Luton monastery, thus Davies appears as a repulsive person. After, Davies digresses from the initial point of discussion, i.e. his point of view about the shoes that Aston offered to him, to recount what happened in Luton monastery. His tale proved to be so long, full of repetitions and unnecessary words. Thus, he fails to observe the maxims of quantity, relation and manner. Davies's repetitions as well as his failure to talk orderly and in a straightforward manner are explained by his attempt to affect Aston. Besides this, his flouting reveals significant traits in his character, such as his insecurity and uneasiness, his ungratefulness, which is made apparent when he says, 'Can't wear shoes that don't fit. Nothing worse', and finally his talkativeness, which is reflected all along his speech.

Davies' insecurity and tendency to incline Aston to talk and sympathize with him are revealed also through his recurrent initiation of conversation as well as through his change of topics of discussion. For example:

Davies. You the landlord, are you?

He puts a pipe in his mouth and puffs without lighting it. Yes, I noticed them heavy curtains pulled across next door as we came along[...]. I thought there must be someone living there.

Aston. Family of Indians live there.

Davies. Blacks?

Aston. I don't see much of them.

Davies. Blacks, eh? (*Davies stands and moves about*). Well you've got some

knick-knacks here all right, I'll say that. I don't like a bare room. (*Aston joins Davies upstage centre*) I'll tell you what, mate, you haven't got a spare pair of shoes?

Aston. Shoes?(12-13)

This exchange reveals Davies' flouting of the maxims of quantity and relation on two occasions. This happens when he asks questions followed by deviant statements without hearing the answers. Davies's flouting of the previous maxims in his disjointed speech are explained by his state of insecurity on one hand and his attempt to incline Aston to sympathize with him and be cooperative on the other hand.

Unlike Davies, Aston is very reticent and limited in his speech. This is revealed in the second part of the previous exchange through his silence.

Aston. What happened when you got there, then ?

Pause

Davies. I used to know a bootmaker in Acton. He was a good mate to me.

Pause

You know what that bastard monk said to me?

Pause

How many more blacks you got around here then ? (14)

Aston's reticence is manifested in his violation of the cooperative principle, which is revealed in his silence that is implicitly understood from the pauses that separate Davies' utterances.

Also noticeable in Davies' utterances is his racist comments and prejudiced opinions, which lead to the assumption that he is a racist man. This is shown through his flouting of the maxims of quantity and relation in the utterances whereby he criticises bitterly the Greeks, Poles, and Blacks, as well as in his flouting of the relation maxim, when he turns from his discussion about the arrangement of the objects in Mick's room to ask Aston a question whereby he wonders whether Aston shares the toilet with the Blacks or not. This is revealed when he said: 'You don't share' it do you?' (18).

Aston, however, proves to be reluctant to speak about any racial subject. This is revealed through his flouting of the relation maxim whenever Davies evokes such subjects. For instance, when Davies asks Aston whether he has got any more Blacks, Aston answers irrelevantly, 'See if these are any good'(14). This is confirmed when Davies wonders whether the blacks 'come in' or not, and Aston, on another time, gives an irrelevant answer by saying: 'You see a blue case'(18).

Aston is not only restricted in his language and his talk about racial subjects, but he proved to be vague. His vagueness is perceived, for instance, in his irrelevant talk about the glass of Guinness whereby he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation.

Davies. (*taking the coins*). Thank you, thank you, good luck. I just happen to find my self a bit short. You see, I got nothing for all that weeks' work I did last week. That's the position, that's what it is.

Pause.

Aston . I went into the pub the other day . Ordered a Guinness. They gave it to me in a thick mug . I sat down, but I couldn't drink it . I can't drink Guinness from a thick mug. I only like it out of a thin glass. I had a few sips, but I couldn't finish it.(19)

Aston's speech occurs after a pause and has no relation to what is preceded. More perceptively, it opposes his previously assumed reticence. Thus, this sudden desire to speak about the glass of Guinness can be explained as a sign of Aston's vagueness and disorientation. This is very noticeable in his flouting of the maxim of relation when he speaks irrelevantly about the lady in the café.

Davies. Ah, that's right. They're very handy.

Aston. They are, yes.

Pause.

You know, I was sitting a café the other day. I happened to be sitting at the same table as this woman. Well, we started to ...we started to pick up a bit of a conversation. I don't know...about her holiday, it was, where she'd been. She'd been down to the south coast. I can't remember where though. Anyway, we were just sitting there, having this bit of a conversation...then suddenly she put her hand over to mine...and she said, how would you like me to have a look at your body?(24-25)

On another occasion, Aston's speech occurs after a pause and has no relation to what he says earlier, i.e. his talk about the fretsaw and jigsaw that he claims are very handy. This unpredictable speech about the lady in the café could be seen as a second evidence of his vagueness and of the fact that he is wrapped in his thought. This becomes more apparent later when he flouts the maxims of quantity and manner in his longest turn in the play, where he reveals his hallucinations and his painful experience and electro-shock treatment in the asylum. The following extract may clarify the point:

Aston. I used to go there quite a bit [...] They were all . . . a good bit older than me.

But they always used to listen. I thought . . . they understood what I said. [...] I used to ... talk about things. [...]. It was all right. The trouble was, I used to have kind of hallucinations. They weren't hallucinations, they... I used to get the feeling I could see things... very clearly... everything used ... everything used to get very quiet... and this clear sight ... it was ... but may be I was wrong....

In this extract, Aston flouts the maxims of quantity and manner, as he tends toward a long evasive speech and proved to be incoherent and hesitating, mainly when he tries to recall his moments of hallucinations. His verbosity, his hesitation, and his evasiveness serve as a clear indication of his own trouble on one hand and a noteworthy example of his vagueness on the other hand.

Coming back to Davies, his attempt to draw Aston's sympathy and respect stems from his inner intent to stay in Mick's house. Indeed, his intrusion and interior motives appear in his earlier conversations, as when he flouts the relation maxim by asking a question intended to elicit Aston's invitation to sleep in Mick's house.

Davies. Yes, well, you'd be well out of the draught there.

Aston. You don't get much wind.

Davies. You'd be well out of it. It's different when you're kipping out.

Aston. Would be.

Davies. Nothing but wind then.

Pause

Aston. Yes, when the wind gets up it

Davies. Yes....

Aston. Mmmm....

Pause

Davies. Gets very draughty.

Aston. Ah.

Davies. I'm very sensitive to it

Aston. Are you?

Davies. Always have been.

Pause

You got any more rooms then, have you? (11)

In this exchange, we notice Davies' excessive concern with the draught until he, after a pause, flouts the relation maxim by changing the topic of conversation with his question which is intended to know whether Aston 'got any more rooms' or not. Davies notes that Aston's bed is out of draughts and says that he is 'very sensitive to draught'. So, one could easily infer from his exaggerated talk about the draughts and from his last question by which he flouts the relation maxim his attempt to drive Aston to invite him.

Aston's charitable nature prompts Davies' desire to stay in Aston's house not only for a while but to settle down forever. This is seen in his flouting of the manner maxim when he answers Aston with incomplete sentences. This is revealed in the following extract:

Aston. You can sleep here if you like.

Davies. Here? Oh I don't know about that.

Pause.

How long for?

Aston. Till you get yourself fixed up.

Davies (*sitting*). Ay well, that

Aston. Get yourself sorted out....

Davies. Oh, I'll be fixed up ...pretty soon now....(24)

Davies' incomplete response to Aston who invites him to stay in his brother's house is an indication of what he is unwilling to say, i.e. his intention to establish himself permanently in that house. This intention is confirmed later, when he avoids going to Sidcup, the place where he claims he has left his papers, by making all sorts of excuses, such as the act of rejecting the shoes for a futile reason, either they are not the right shape (15), or they lack the threading laces (62).

Davies' last effort to position himself in Mick's house is manifested in his flouting of the maxims of quantity and manner, when he accuses Aston for indifference, and when he tries to prove to Mick that he would do the job of a caretaker better than Aston. This is manifested in the opening pages of the third act of the play.

Davies. See, there's been plenty of rain in the last week, but it ain't been dripping into the bucket.

Pause.

He must have tarred it over up there.

Pause.

There was someone walking about on the roof the other night. It must have been him.

Pause.

But I got a feeling he's tarred it over on the roof up there. Ain't said a word to me.

Pause.

He don't answer me when I talk to him. (58)

Davies' contribution in the extract shows his violation of the cooperative principle by flouting the quantity and manner maxims in his relentless complaints through which he accuses Aston for indifference and laziness and sets Mick against his brother Aston. Davies flouts also the relation maxim when he switches his speech from complaints to the proposition of taking the responsibility for looking after the house together with Mick. This is manifested in his proposition, 'You and me, we could get this place going' (60). By flouting the previous maxims, Davies doesn't only convey his feeling of contempt and ingratitude towards Aston, but he implicates his strong desire to take Aston's position in Mick's house.

It is increasingly apparent from the progression of the play that Davies is observing just his own conversational goals and is concerned only with his interests. This is shown through his perpetual ignorance of Aston's contributions by changing the topic of conversation. Thus, he fails to observe the maxim of relation, 'be relevant'. For example,

when Aston recalls his story of the glass of Guinness, Davies ignores what he says and responds irrelevantly, 'If only the weather would break ! Then I'd be able to get down to Sidcup !' (19). Again, when Aston comments on the fact that he hasn't found the jigsaw that he was searching for, Davies ignores what he says by asking an irrelevant question, 'Who is that feller ?'(39).

By contrast, Aston is a tolerant and kind person. These two traits are revealed on different occasions throughout the play, mainly when he changes the topic of conversation and shows his disregard for Aston's concerns. For example, instead of commenting on Davies' change of topic when he asks the question, 'Who is that feller ?', or instead of showing anger to Davies for his disregard, Aston prefers to respond quietly, ' He's my brother'.

More surprising than Davies' ignorance of Aston is the rising hostility and aggression that he feels towards him. This is revealed through his flouting of three maxims (the quantity, the quality, and the relation maxim) at once in response to Aston's remark, 'Might be a bit unfamiliar', whereby he flouts the quality maxim.

Aston: No, you woke me up. I thought you might have been dreaming.

Davies: I wasn't dreaming. I never had a dream in my life.

Pause.

Aston: May be it was the bed.

Davies: Nothing wrong with this bed.

Aston : Might be a bit unfamiliar.

Davies: There is nothing unfamiliar about me with beds. I slept in beds. I don't make noises just because I sleep in a bed. I slept in plenty of beds (23).

By revising what precedes, it is reasonable to say that Aston is not lying when he says that Davies is making noises, and there is no reason to lie, since Aston, himself, who invites Davies to stay and sleep in Mick's house. So, by flouting the quality maxim in his utterance, 'May be it was the bed', Aston intends to retrieve his complaints about Davies' noises. Thus,

we can assume that Aston is timid, and that he doesn't want to alienate Davies. In fact, we notice Aston's hesitation to comment on the noises when he flouts the manner maxim by speaking unclearly in his first remark, 'You ...er ...'. (22)

Instead of openly admitting the truth and accepting Aston's complaints, Davies continues to tell lies. He proved to be insincere by violating the quality maxim when he tries to convince Aston that the noises were made by the Blacks. This is shown in the following exchange:

Davies. Them you got. Next door. May be it were them blacks making noises,
coming up through the walls.

Aston. Hmmnn.(23)

One can notice that Davies is deceiving Aston, for Davies knows exactly that what he says is not true, and that it is quite irrational to admit. In fact, his earlier words disguise what he claims. At first, he doesn't deny that he makes noises. He appears rather as someone who fears to reveal himself while he is sleeping. This is manifested when he says: 'Now, wait a minute. Wait a minute, what do you mean? What kind of noises' (22) and confirmed when he responds to Aston, who told him that he was jabbering, with the utterance, 'what would I be jabbering about' (23).

Besides his insincerity, Davies proved to be a contemptuous character. For example, instead of sympathizing with Aston after his confessions, Davies shows contempt and hatred towards him and takes Aston's painful experience in the asylum as something humiliating. This is seen in his flouting of the maxims of quality and quantity in response to Aston who complains, again, about Davies's disturbing noises.

Aston. You're making noises.

Davies. What do you expect me to do, stop breathing?

Aston goes to his bed, and puts on his trousers.

Aston. I'll get a bit of air.

Davies. What do you expect me to do? I tell you, mate, I'm not surprised they took you in. Waking an old man up in the middle of the night, you must be off your nut! [...] They had you inside one of them places before, they can have you inside again. Your brother's got his eye on you! ... You think I'm going to do your dirty work? Haaaaahhhh!... (65-66).

Davies' answer to Aston's remark conveys something that obviously doesn't match Aston's intention. Thus, he flouts the quality maxim. By flouting this maxim, he stresses his repulsiveness and conveys his hostility towards Aston. After Aston's expression of exasperation in his utterance, 'I'll get a bit of air', Davies flouts another maxim, which is the quantity maxim. This happens when he launches into a long speech through which he charges Aston with insults and harmful mocking expressions and provokes him by reminding him of his electrical treatment in the asylum. By doing this, Davies accentuates his hatred and heartlessness.

Davies's contempt to Aston is foreseen again in his flouting of the maxims of quality and quantity when he puts a blame on Aston in response to Mick who confronts him with the charge of having deceived him. This is illustrated in the following extract:

Mick. You got two names. What about the rest? Eh? Now come on, why did you tell me all this dirt about you being an interior decorator?

Davies. I didn't tell you nothing! Won't you listen to what I'm saying?

Pause.

It was him who told you. It was your brother who must have told you. He is nutty! He'd tell you anything, out of spite, he's nutty, he's half way gone, it was him who told you (73).

In an attempt to defend himself, Davies flouts the maxims of quantity and quality. Davies doesn't only deny Mick's accusations, but he unfairly charges Aston with the responsibility of supplying Mick with an incorrect information about Davies' working abilities. In addition to this, he uses his knowledge of Aston's asylum experience to accuse

Aston of being nutty. In view of his flouting of the quantity and quality maxims, Davies emphasizes his contempt and hostility towards Aston.

The dialogues involving Davies and Aston reveal also the opportunist and the treacherous nature of Davies. This is shown when he flouts the maxims of quality, quantity, and relation in his response to Aston who refuses to give him a sum of money.

Davies (*coming round*). Eh, mister, just one thing...eh....you couldn't slip me a couple of bob, for a cup of tea, just, you know?

Aston. I gave you a few bob last night.

Davies. Eh, so you did. So you did. I forgot. Went clean out of my mind. That's right. Thank you, mister. Listen. You're sure now, you're sure you don't mind me staying here? I mean I'm not the sort of man who wants to take any liberties.

Aston. No, that's all right.(26)

It is not true that Davies forgets the fact that Aston offered him a sum of money earlier, and there is no way to think so. His ceaseless demands, his frequent attempts to find excuses, and his inappropriate comment, 'Listen. You're sure now, you're sure you don't mind me staying here? I mean I'm not the sort of man who wants to take any liberties', urge the audience / reader not only to disbelieve him but to suppose the opposite of what he says. Even his actions prove this, like when he takes profit of Aston's absence by searching in his room and examining his objects (27-28). What is also inferred from Davies previous flouting of the quality maxim is his attempt to change Aston's possible judgements and make him believe what he says.

Davies' insincerity and tendency to manipulate Aston with lies could be seen in his flouting of the quality and manner maxims when he elaborates on his intention to go to Wembly to get a job there.

Davies. I might get down to Wembly later on in the day.

Aston.Uh-uh.

Davies. There is a caff down there, you see, might be able to get fixed up there. I was there, see ? I know they were a bit short-handed. They might be in the need of a bit of staff.

Aston. When was that?

Davies. Eh? Oh, well, that was ...near on ...that'll be ... that'll be a little while ago now.(27)

Though there is nothing that presses Davies or that makes him fearful, Davies fails to respond Aston clearly when Aston inquires about the time of Davies' journey to Wembly. So, Davies's evasiveness and unprecise reply are understood as an indication of his untruthfulness and his tendency to deceive Aston. This is clearly seen when Aston, after the battle over Davies' bag, inquires about the way Davies gets on at Wembly, and Davies, in response, violates the quality maxim by denying completely that he went there before. This is shown in the following exchange:

Aston. How did you get on at Wembly ?

Davies. Well, I didn't get down there.

Pause.

No. I couldn't make it.(39)

Aston asks Davies about the way in which he gets on at Wembly just after the battle over Davies' bag. Thus, this sudden urge to inquire about Davies' journey to Wembly is explained by his suspicion in what Davies is saying. Indeed, his mistrust and suspicion in Davies had been already manifested when he flouts the relation maxim in his sudden inquiry about Davies' name and birthplace after Davies' response to Aston' story of being approached by a woman in a café. (23)

Whatever situations Davies puts Aston in and in spite of Davies' unconsideration and selfishness, Aston remains diffident and unmoved. His diffidence and indecision are inferable, for example, from his flouting of the maxim of relation, when he introduces his

intention 'to walk down to Goldhawk Road', in response to Davies who takes up a defensive position as a reaction to Aston who requests 'a bit of air' in his room.

Aston. Sleep with your feet to the window.

Davies. What good would that do ?

Aston. The rain wouldn't come in on your head.

Davies. No, I couldn't do that. I couldn't do that.

Pause.

I mean, I got used to sleeping this way. It isn't me has to change, It's that window. You see, It's raining now. Look at it. It's coming down now.

Pause .

Aston.I think I'll have a walk down to Goldhawk Road. I got talking to a man there.

He had a saw bench. It looked in pretty good condition to me. Don't think it's much good to him.

Davies's inflexible position and his unwillingness to adapt himself to the situation, i.e. to accept the opening of the window, urges Aston to flout the relation maxim in order to retreat from Davies' confrontation. Aston's acceptance of Davies' non-consideration and selfishness and his avoidance to confront Davies could be interpreted as a sign of his indecision and diffidence.

Unlike Aston, Mick, from his first encounter with Davies, is shown as a rigid and rugged person. In the verbal exchange that opens the second act, for instance, Mick, with the intention of intimidating Davies, flouts the quantity maxim by interrogating him about his identity more than once. As a result, Mick is looked upon as a dominant and aggressive person. In parallel to Mick's dominance and aggression is Davies's fear and inferior position, which are revealed through his flouting of the quantity and relation maxims in his responses to Mick's questions.

Davies. I don't know you. I don't know who you are.

Pause.

Mick. Eh?

Davies. Jenkins.

Mick. Jenkins?

Davies. Yes.

Mick. Jen . . . kins.

Pause.

You sleep here last night?

Davies. Yes.

Mick. Sleep well?

Davies. Yes.

Mick. I'm awfully glad. It's awfully nice to meet you.

Pause.

What did you say your name was?

Davies. Jenkins.

Mick. I beg your pardon? (30-31).

As we notice in the conversation passage cited above, Mick crossexamines Davies and repeats his questions several times though he hears Davies' replies, thus he flouts the quantity maxim. Mick's repetition is meant to establish his dominance and aggression. These two character traits appear on other occasions in his purposeful spelling of Davies' name. Davies, in his turn, flouts the maxims of quantity and relation. This happens when he evades Mick's question, 'What's your name?', by his inappropriate answer, 'I don't know you. I don't know who you are'. Davies' refusal to disclose his name to Mick is an indication of his fear and inferior position.

Mick's impatience to attack Davies and stress his authority and dominance is manifested forcefully in his recourse to other inquiries through which he flouts the quantity maxim repeatedly. For example:

Mick. What's your name?

Davies. (*shifting about to rise*). Now look here!

Mick. What?

Davies. Jenkins!

Mick. Jen...kins.

Davies makes a sudden move to rise. A violent bellow from Mick sends him back (Ashout.) Sleep here last night?

Davies. Yes...

Mick (*continuing at great pace*). How'd you sleep ?

Davies. I slept—

Mick. Sleep well?

Davies. Now look—

Mick. What bed?

Davies. That—

Mick. Not the other? (32-33).

Mick, in this third inquisition, repeats his questions several times. The repetition is done purposefully, thus he flouts the quantity maxim. The flouting of this maxim is meant to remind Davies of Mick's verbal dominance and authority. Indeed, Mick provokes Davies and prevents him from speaking and defending himself. This is revealed in Davies's flouting of manner maxim in his unfinished answers, like in 'I slept—' or in 'Now look—'.

Mick's aggression and power position are expressed also in his disjointed questions and statements through which he flouts the relation maxim, like in the following extract:

Mick. What did they teach you?

Pause.

How did you like my bed?

Pause.

That's my bed. You want to mind you don't catch a draught (49).

After the inquiry about Davies' birthplace, Mick asks Davies, 'What did they teach you', then, after a pause and without hearing the answer, he changes the topic of conversation by asking another unrelated question, 'How did you like my bed?'. Thus, he flouts the relation maxim. By flouting this maxim, Mick wants to put Davies in an uncomfortable situation and keep him vulnerable. This is confirmed by his last statement, 'That's my bed', and his bad

behaviour which is revealed through his stage directions (*Mick flicks Davies's trousers in his face several times*).

Another strong argument about Mick's aggression and his attempt to offend Davies is apparent in his failure to observe the maxims of quantity and quality when he fights over Davies' bag of belongings.

Davies. That's my bag !

Mick (*eluding him*). This bag's very familiar.

Davies. What do you mean ?

Mick. Where'd you get it ?

Aston (*rising, to them*). Scrub it.

Davies. That's mine.

Mick. Whose ?

Davies. It's mine ! tell him it's mine !

Mick. This your bag ?

Davies. Give me it !

Aston. Give it to him.

Mick. What ? Give him what ? (38).

The previous verbal exchange reveals Mick's ceaseless attempts to tease Davies by catching his 'bag of bilongings' and preventing him from getting it. This intention is expressed further in his flouting of the maxims of quantity and quality, when he asks his ludicrous questions by which he pretends the ignorance of what bag Davies is asking for and in his flouting of the manner maxim, when he questions Davies' ownership of the bag relentlessly. By flouting the previous maxims, Mick stresses again his aggressiveness. Though the purported meaning of his questions does not carry any aggressiveness, the repetition sets up his aggression.

In addition to the battle over the bag, there are other instances in which Mick shows intensely his violence and aggression. One noticeable instance is when he flouts the quantity

maxim by refusing to reassure Davies whom he frightens in the dark with the nozzle of an elecrolux vacuum (44-45).

Like Mick's authority and aggression, Davies's fear and inferior position also appear in other instances, as when he flouts the relation maxim in his response to Mick, who claims resemblance between Davies and the bloke he meets in 'Guilford', and in his successive flouting of the manner maxim in response to Mick's insults and face-threatening comments.

Mick. You know, you remind me of a bloke I bumped into once, just the other side of the Guilford by-pass—

Davies. I was brought here !

Mick. Pardon ?

Davies. I was brought here ! I was brought here !

Mick. Brought here ? Who brought you here ?

Davies. Man who lives here...he...

Pause.

Mick. Fibber.

Davies. I was brought here, last night...met him in a caff...I was working...I got the bullet...I was working there... bloke saved me from a punch up, brought me here, brought me right here.(34)

In the previous exchange, Davies tries to inform Mick that he is not an intruder and that he was invited by his brother Aston. This is apparent in his first statement, 'I was brought here'. However, what he says is unrelated to Mick's initial intimidating remark. Thus, he flouts the relation maxim. Through this flouting, Davies conveys his feeling of fear and inferiority. These two traits are manifested further when he flouts the manner maxim in his incomplete responses to Mick's verbal insults and accusation as well as in his answer to Mick's question, 'Who brought you here ?'.

The example that is worth to cite again with regard to Davies' fear and inferiority is that in which he retrieves what he says about Aston by flouting the quantity maxim in response to Mick' judgements about Davies' use of the djective 'funny' to describe Aston.

Davies . I was saying, he's ... he's a bit of a funny bloke, your brother.

Mick stares at him.

Mick . Funny ? Why ?

Davies. Well...he's funny....

Mick. What's funny about him?

Pause

Davies. Not liking work .

Mick . What's funny about that?

Davies . Nothing (49-50).

It is noticeable from this exchange that Mick checks and questions Davies's use of the adjective funny to describe Aston three times. By consequence of Mick's triple check, Davies retracts his description of Aston as a 'funny' person by answering Mick with 'Nothing' when he asks: 'What's funny about that?'. Davies' retraction as well as his refusal to give explanation about the reason for which he describes Aston in that way lead him to flout the quantity maxim. By flouting this maxim, Davies conveys his fear and submission and recognises Micks' power and domination.

Besides his dominance and aggression, Mick is revealed as a witty person. This is revealed when he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation by digressing from his interrogation about Davies's identity to an irrelevant and lengthy monologue through which he shows a thorough understanding of Davies's character.

Mick. You remind me of my uncle's brother. [...]. Had a penchant for nuts... Couldn't eat enough of them ... It was a funny business. Your spitting image was. Married a Chinaman and went to Jamaica. (31)

In this extract, Mick flouts the maxims of quantity and relation, as he digresses from his inquisition about Davies' identity to an inappropriate and long narrative, whereby he likens Davies to his uncle's brother. This is expressed by using words in a clever, apt, and funny way. By doing so, Mick appears as a witty person.

Mick's understanding of Davies as well as his wittiness are manifested in other instances throughout the play, like when he flouts the quality maxim in the exchange whereby he invites Davies to work as a caretaker in his house.

Davies. I am a capable sort of man. I mean to say, I've had plenty offers in my life, you know, there's no getting away from that.

Mick. Well, I could see before, when you took out that knife, that you wouldn't let anyone mess you about.

Davies. No one messes me about, man.

Mick. I mean, you've been in the services, haven't you?

Davies. The what?

Mick. You been in the services. You can tell by your stance.

Davies. Oh...yes. Spent half my life there, man over seas...like serving... I was

Mick. In the colonies, weren't you?

Davies. I was over there. I was one of the first over there.

Mick. That's it. You're just the man I been looking for .

Davies. What for?

Mick. Caretaker. (50-51).

By analyzing the previous exchange, we come to realize that Mick flouts the quality maxim in his final response to Davies. Mick doesn't really mean that he is searching for the caretaker though he conveys this to Davies. His previous comment, 'Well, I could see before, when you took out that knife, that you wouldn't let anyone mess you about', and the content of his questions concerning Davies' servitude in the colonies are sufficient enough to justify the presence of his flouting. By flouting the quality maxim, Mick conveys an ironic intention. This irony conveys Mick's profound understanding of Davies on one hand and his wittiness on the other hand.

Another important example to cite with regard to Mick's wittiness and profound understanding of the old man is the one in which he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation in his speech whereby he elaborates on Davies's character by likening him, this time, to a bloke he knew in Shoreditch.

Mick. You know believe it or no, you've got a funny kind of resemblance to a bloke I once knew in Shoreditch. [...] When I got to know him I found out he was brought up in Putney. That didn't make any difference to me. I knew quite a few people who were born in Putney. Even if they weren't born in Putney they were born in Fulham. The only trouble was, he wasn't born in Putney, he was only brought up in Putney. It turned out he was born in the Caledonian Road...(32)

As a response to Davies who disclaims Mick's ownership of the room, Mick elaborates a long irrelevant speech, thus he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation. Mick, in this speech, employs his mastery of language and his thorough knowledge of particular places to intimidate Davies. However, his speech is not only an exercise in intimidation but also an indirect way of expressing his understanding of Davies's character and an impressive attempt from the playwright to demonstrate Mick's agility and sharp mental abilities.

Mick's digressions give rise to other important traits in his character, such as his eloquence and cruelty which are set up in his third long speech whereby he abandons his inquisitions.

Mick. You're stinking the place out. You're an old robber,[...] I could charge seven quid a week for this if I wanted to... Say the word and I'll have my solicitors draft you out a contract. Otherwise I've got the van outside, I can run you to the police station in five minutes[...] So, what do you say ? Eight hundred odd for this room or three thousand down four the whole upper storey[...]. No strings attached [...].Who do you bank with?(36)

After his requests, Mick attacks Davies verbally, then he departs to an unpredictable statement about the legal duties and responsibilities in buying a house in order to intimidate and dismiss the homeless Davies with a feigned offer to sell him the house and threatens him with the police detention. Thus, he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation. By flouting

these maxims, Mick appears as an eloquent and dexterous person on one hand, and as an offensive and disconcerting person on the other hand.

Mick's ironies give rise to other traits in his character, such as his derisiveness which is manifested in his mocking offer whereby he invites Davies to have a drink in the house where he lives.

Davies. Where do you live now, then ?

Mick. Me ? Oh ? I've got a little place. Not bad. Everything laid on. You must come up and have a drink some time. Listen to some Tchaikovsky.(64)

It is obvious that Mick doesn't really appreciate Davies to invite him. His invitation, then, is an ironical expression to ridicule Davies. As a result of his sarcastic invitation, Mick flouts the quality maxim. By flouting this maxim, Mick appears as a derisive person.

In addition to what precedes, Mick is revealed as a spiteful and deceitful person. This is apparent in his twice violation of the quality maxim in his attempts to calm down Davies, who complains about Aston's insults, by comforting him with a lie and tricking him into criticising Aston so that an unpleasant situation takes Davies by surprise.

Mick. Tch, tch, tch.

Davies. That's what he said to me.

Mick. You don't stink.

Davies. No, sir!

Mick. If you stink I would be the first one to tell you.

Davies. I told him, I told him he... I said to him, you ain't heard the last of this man! I said, don't you forget your brother. I told him you'll be coming along to sort him out. He don't know what he's started, doing that. Doing that to me . I said

Davies keeps complaining and criticizing Aston and as a final thing to his complaints, he announces, ' I tell you he should go back !'where he come from'(71), an expression that urges Mick to change the course of his conversation by confronting Davies with a charge of having deceived him. This is revealed in the following part of their conversational exchange:

Mick (*turning to look at him*). Come from?

Davies. Yes.

Mick. Where did he come from!

Davies. Well ... he ... he ...

Mick. You get a bit out of your depth, sometimes, don't you?

Pause.

(*Rising, briskly*) Well, anyway, as things stand, I don't mind having a go at doing up the place

Davies. That's what I wanted to hear!

Mick. No, I don't mind.

He turns to face Davies. But you better be as good as you say you are.

Davies. What do you mean?

Mick. Well, you say you're an interior decorator, you'd better be a good one

Davies. A what!

Mick. What do you mean, a what? A decorator. An interior decorator. (71-72)

Mick's comforting statement, 'You don't stink', appears to be ironical, for he, himself, used to humiliate Davies in the same way as Aston, like when he says to Davies, 'Listen son, listen sonny, you stink' (35). Mick's irony leads him to violate the quality maxim. This violation is likely to be assumed as an attempt to lull Davies into thinking that he sides with him and predisposing him to attack Aston. Mick's objective in violating the quality maxim is indeed achieved, since Davies's innermost thoughts and feelings are revealed right after Mick's violation. This happens when he expressed his discontent by extending his complaints against Aston and dropping the hint that Aston should return to the 'asylum'. After Davies' suggestion, Mick, again, violates the quality maxim by accusing Davies for having told him that he is 'an interior decorator' though he knows that Davies has never said so. Mick's twice violation of the quality maxim conveys his intention to reprimand the old man and give himself the opportunity to do it. By consequence, Mick is revealed as a deceitful and spiteful person. These assumptions about Mick's character are confirmed when he launches into a long verbal criticism through which he charges Davies with some degrading expressions, such

as ‘ You’re violent, you’re erratic, you’re just completely unpredictable. You’re nothing else but a wild animal’(73).

After his cunning deception, Mick shows his objection to Davies’s presence in his house. This is communicated through his flouting of the relation maxim when he responds to Davies’ question ‘What about me?’.

Davies. Who would live there?

Mick. I would. My brother and me.

Pause.

Davies. What about me?

Mick (*quietly*). All this junk here, it’s no good to anyone. It’s just a lot of old iron, that’s all. Clobber. You couldn’t make a home out of this. (61)

It is apparent that Mick doesn’t answer Davies’ question, ‘What about me?’, in an appropriate way. Thus, he flouts the relation maxim. By flouting this maxim, Mick conveys his rejection of Davies and considers him as equal to the worthless objects that Aston accumulates.

Aston also realizes that he must show Davies the door and tell him to leave. In fact, he is no longer prepared to let Davies live in Mick’s house. Aston communicated this to Davies by refusing to participate in his conversation. This is revealed towards the end of the play.

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.

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, [...]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, [...] 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 going to do ?

Pause.

What shall I do ?. (77-78)

This final exchange reveals Davies' attempt to call for Aston's earlier consideration and caring by showing himself as someone who might help out. This is apparent, for instance, in his proposition, 'I'll give you a hand! We'll both put up that shed together! See?'. But Aston seems not interested. In fact, he blocks Davies' attempts to ingratiate himself, either by refusing his proposals or by remaining silent. Aston's silence and refusal to engage in Davies' conversation lead him to flout the quantity maxim. Through his flouting, Aston shows to Davies his total rejection of him.

2.3. Plot Summary of *The Zoo Story*

Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* is a one-act play which involves two characters, Jerry and Peter, who meet in New York's Central Park for the first time. Peter, an educated polite man who is comfortably sitting on his favorite bench in Central Park reading a book, and Jerry, an isolated lonely man who seeks for a conversation partner and human contact.

Jerry comes and invades Peter's privacy, addressing him with an unfamiliar opening by informing him that he has been to the zoo and repeating that information three times. Then, Jerry interrogates Peter and forces him to listen to his stories. All along the play, Jerry refers to the zoo without telling Peter what happened there. He tells him how something important

happened, so important that he would see it on TV at that night. Peter tries to stop the conversation by giving short polite answers, but Jerry does give up. He urges Peter to enter into his conversation. Every time Peter wants to block the conversation to go back to his reading, Jerry changes the topic of conversation and urges Peter to feel that he is an intolerant and arrogant person. After a series of inappropriate questions, Peter unwillingly reveals the details of his life and household. Jerry succeeds to know that Peter is married, and that he has two girls, two parakeets, and two cats, that he lives on the fashionable East Side of the Park, and that he has an executive position in a publishing house. Jerry manages to know also that Peter wants to have a son, that he will have no more children, and that this decision is made by Peter's wife.

During the play, he questions Peter about the dividing-line between upper-upper-middle class and lower-upper-middle class, then he informs him about his unlucky life and relationships. He describes his apartment and his private property and tells Peter unexpected things about his parents and the Westside rooming house where he lives. Jerry talks about the dysfunctional neighbors and the lustful landlady. He speaks about taboo themes and informs Peter about the homosexual experience that he had at the age of fifteen. He gives a detailed account of 'The Story of Jerry and the Dog', which is a long story about his encounter with the landlady's dog that barks and tries to bite him each time he returns to his house. He tells him how he attempts to gain the dog's attention and affection, first by showing kindness and then cruelty.

Towards the end of the story, Peter desperately yells at Jerry and tells him that he doesn't understand what he is saying, and that he doesn't want to hear any more about his stories. Jerry sits on the bench, tickling Peter relentlessly, then he tells him what happened at the zoo. He punches Peter and provokes him to fight for the bench and everything he is proud of. Then, he takes out a knife and urges Peter to pick it up to defend himself. Jerry go

recklessly and pierce himself with the knife, then he forces Peter to run away. Peter acts on Jerry's instructions and flees, leaving Jerry on the point of death in the Central Park.

2.4. The Results of *The Zoo Story* Analysis

2.4.1. The Violation of the Cooperative Principle and Conversational Maxims in *The Zoo Story*

A close examination of Peter and Jerry's verbal exchanges in relation to Grice's theory of Implicature shows that the conversational Maxims are flouted all along the play. The most immediate example that illustrates this is the one which starts with the first utterances spoken by Jerry to Peter.

Jerry. I've been to the zoo. [Peter doesn't notice.] I said, I've been to the zoo.

MISTER, I'VE BEEN TO THE ZOO!

Peter. Hm? . . . What? . . . I'm sorry, were you talking to me?(12)

It is apparent that Jerry's conversational opening is odd and even absurd, for he greets Peter whom he has met for the first time with the expression 'I've been to the zoo' and repeats this expression three times. Jerry's repetition and unfamiliar opening leads him to flout the quantity and the relation maxims. By flouting these maxims, the playwright gives initial insights into Jerry's character. In fact, he introduced him as a rude, strange, and intruding person at once.

Another point in relation to Jerry's odd opening is his flouting of the quantity maxim, on another occasion, when he kept trying to ascertain the direction in which he had been walking.

Jerry. [...]. I walked until I came here. Have I been walking north?

Peter. [Puzzled] North? Why . . . I . . . I think so. Let me see.

Jerry. [Pointing past the audience] Is that Fifth avenue?

Peter. Why ya; yes, it is.

Jerry. And what is that cross street there; that one, to the right?

Peter. That? Oh, that's Seventy-fourth Street.

Jerry. And the zoo is around Sixty-5fth Street; so, I've been walking north.

Peter. [Anxious to get back to his reading] Yes; it would seem so.

Jerry. Good old north.

Peter. [Lightly, by reflex] Ha, ha.

Jerry. [After a slight pause] But not due north.

Peter. I ... well, no, not due north; but, we ... call it north. It's northerly.(12-13)

Here, Jerry repeats the word north several times and shows his over-concern with the question whether he walked northerly or not without stating the purpose of his inquiry. Thus he flouts the maxims of quantity and manner. By flouting these maxims, Jerry is looked upon, again, as an intruding person who urges Peter to enter into his conversation.

Jerry's intrusive character appears also when he asks Peter personal questions about his private life regardless of Peter's reluctance to speak. One noticeable example in which Jerry tries to tease out information from Peter is when he flouts the relation maxim in order to get knowledge about Peter's residence.

Jerry. [...] Where do you live? [Peter is reluctant.] Oh, look; I'm not going to rob you, and I'm not going to kidnap your parakeets, your cats, or your daughters.

Peter.[Too loud] I live between Lexington and Third Avenue, on Seventy-fourth Street.

Jerry. That wasn't so hard, was it?

Peter. I didn't mean to seem ... ah ... it's that you don't really carry on a conversation; you just ask questions. And I'm ... I'm normally ... uh ... reticent.(19)

Jerry's inquiry about the place where Peter lives is followed by a comment intended to incite Peter to answer his question. Thus, Jerry flouts the relation maxim. By doing so, he reveals his tendency to disturb Peter's privacy and his attempt to provoke Peter and urge him to be cooperative.

Jerry's intrusion and provocation of Peter accentuated when he flouts the quantity and manner maxims in order to get knowledge about Peter's household in spite of Peter's apparent refusal.

Jerry. But every once in a while I like to talk to somebody, really talk; like to get to know somebody, know all about him.

Peter.[Lightly laughing, still a little uncomfortable]And am I the guinea pig for today?

Jerry. On a sun-drenched Sunday afternoon like this? Who better than a nice married man with two daughters and ... uh ... a dog? [Peter shakes his head.] No? Two dogs. [Peter shakes his head again. Hm. No dogs? [Peter shakes his head, sadly] Oh, that's a shame. But you look like an animal man. CATS? [Peter nods his head, ruefully.] Cats ! But, that can't be your idea.No, sir. Your wife and daughters? [Peter nods his head.] Is there anything else I should know?
(17-18)

In this exchange, Jerry is trying relentlessly to draw Peter to inform him about his household though Peter shows his refusal to answer by nodding his head ruefully. Thus, Jerry flouts the quantity and manner maxims. Jerry's flouting, here, confirms his tendency to intrude on Peter's privacy and provoke him. Indeed, Peter's embarrassment is revealed on different occasions, like when he flouts the manner and the quantity maxims in his responses to Jerry who inquires about his incomes. This is revealed in the following exchange:

Jerry. [...] And what else ? What do you do to support your enormous household?

Peter. I ... uh ... I have an executive position with a ... a small publishing house. We ... uh ... we publish text books.

Jerry. That sounds nice; very nice. What do you make?

Peter. [Still cheerful] Now look here!(18)

Here, Jerry's intruding questions provoke Peter and make him uncomfortable. This is understood from Peter's flouting of the manner maxim in his fragmentary answer, 'I ... uh ... I have an executive position with a ... a small publishing house. We ... uh ... we publish text books', and his flouting of the quantity maxim in his evasive answer, 'Now look here!'.

Like Jerry's intrusion, his rudeness and his attempt to affect Peter appear also in other instances, as in his flouting of the quantity maxim after his question whereby he wonders whether Peter minds having a conversation with him.

Jerry. [Stands for a few seconds, looking at Peter, who finally looks up again, puzzled]
Do you mind if we talk?

Peter. [Obviously minding] Why . . . no, no.

Jerry. Yes you do; you do.

Peter. [Puts his book down, his pipe out and away, smiling] No, I really; I don't mind.

Jerry. Yes you do.(14)

In this short exchange, Jerry makes a supposition about Peter's unwillingness to communicate by saying: 'Yes you do' and affirms this three times, thus he flouts the quantity maxim. Jerry's repetitive confrontation of Peter with the statement 'Yes you do' reveals him again as a rude person who attempts to take up Peter's whole attention.

Jerry appears also as a an unpredictable and unnerving person. This is manifested through his abrupt change from his inquiry about the destination of his walk to the discussion about the dangerous consequences of smoking through which he flouts the relation maxim.

Jerry. [Watches as Peter, anxious to dismiss him, prepares his pipe] Well, boy,
you're not going to get lung cancer, are you?

Peter. [Looks up, a little annoyed, then smiles] No, sir. Not from this.

Jerry. No, sir. What you'll probably get is cancer of the mouth, and then you'll have
to wear one of those things Freud wore after they took one whole side of his
jaw away, What do they call those things ?

Peter. [Uncomfortable] A prosthesis?(13)

Here, Jerry flouts the relation maxim by changing abruptly his talk from his inquiry about the direction of his walking to the sensitive topics of lung cancer and cancer of the mouth and their unpleasant results. This abrupt change in topic of conversation and his

inappropriate speech about sensitive topics convey Jerry's unpredictable ways and his relentless attempt to make Peter feel indignant.

During the play, Jerry appears as a distracting person who is not conforming to what is expected. This is manifested through his tendency to jump from one thing to another one as well as through his forceful attempts to catch Peter's attention and engage him in a conversation by announcing confusing statements without clarifying his objective in what he says. This is revealed, for example, in his flouting of the quantity and relation maxims in response to Peter's inquiry about Jerry's enigmatic statement, 'Wait until you see the expression on his face'.

Jerry. [...] Wait until you see the expression on his face.

Peter. What? Whose face? Look here; is this something about the zoo?

Jerry. [Distantly] The what?

Peter. The zoo; the zoo. Something about the zoo.

Jerry. The zoo?

Peter. You've mentioned it several times.

Jerry [Still distant, but returning abruptly] The zoo? Oh yes: the zoo. I was there before I came here. I told you that. Say, what's the dividing line between upper-upper-middle-class and lower-upper-middle-class?

Peter. My dear fellow, I ... (19-20)

In this exchange, we notice that Jerry evades Peter's questions by giving an inappropriate answer, then he asks him an unrelated question which is concerned with the difference between the upper-upper-middle-class and lower-upper-middle-class. Jerry's unexpected question leads him to flout the maxims of manner and relation. This double flouting shows Jerry as an impolite person who causes Peter's bewilderment and distraction. This is confirmed by Peter's last utterance, 'But, you see, your question about the classes bewildered me'(20), and his discourteous reaction to Jerry, which is apparent in his statement, 'My dear fellow, I ...'

Jerry's tendency to bewilder Peter is revealed as well through his utterances whereby he mentions the zoo and moves away from it without informing Peter on the import of his statement. The following exchange shows this clearly:

Jerry. But I imagine you'd rather hear about what happened at the zoo.

Peter [Enthusiastic]. Oh, yes; the zoo. [Then, awkward:] That is ... if you ...

Jerry. Let me tell you about why I went ... well, let me tell you some things. I've told you about the fourth floor of the rooming house...(27)

In this example, Jerry flouts the maxims of quantity, relation, and manner, for he initiates the topic of the zoo and goes on to explain why he went there. Suddenly, he digresses from his line of argument to speak about other things. By doing so, Jerry disturbs Peter and bewilders him. This is confirmed when Peter asks Jerry: 'What were you saying about the zoo... that I'd read about it, or see...?'(17), and when he expresses his need to know what happened at the zoo by saying: 'Yes. Yes, by all means; tell me what happened at the zoo' (39).

All along the play, Jerry is revealed as a talkative person who is eager to establish contact with Peter. This is apparent mainly in his long speeches whereby he flouts the quantity maxim, like when he tells Peter everything about the rooming house where he lives and about his neighbours in response to Peter's statement, 'Oh, I thought you lived in the Village'(21). The two previous assumptions about Jerry are revealed also when he enumerates the elements in his house and tells Peter important things about his life, mainly that ones which are concerned with his parents and his childhood in response to Peter's comment, 'It doesn't sound a very nice place ... where you live'(22).

What is also remarkable in Jerry's speech is his dominance and authority on one hand and his need to socialize on the other hand. These traits are manifested, for example, when he flouts the quantity maxim in response to Peter's inquiry about the zoo as well as in his tendency to stop and ignore Peter.

Peter.What were you saying about the zoo... that I'd read about it, or see...?

Jerry. I'll tell you about it, soon. Do you mind if I ask you questions?

Peter. Oh, not really.

Jerry. I'll tell you why I do it; I don't talk to many people except to say like: give me a beer, or where's the john, or what time does the feature go on, or keep your hands to yourself, buddy. You know ! things like that.

Peter. I must say I don't ...

Jerry. But every once in a while I like to talk to somebody, really talk; like to get to know somebody, know all about him.(17)

In this exchange, Jerry flouts the quantity maxim by evading Peter's question, then he flouts the manner maxim when he ignores him by preventing him from finishing his statement. Jerry's flouting of the previous maxims reveals him as a dominant character who is in control over Peter.

Jerry's dominance is revealed also in his control of subjects of discussion and his tendency to talk about taboo subjects in spite of Peter's objection.

Peter. [Embarrassed] I'd rather not talk about these things.

Jerry. So? Don't. Besides, I wasn't trying to pull your post-adolescent sexual life and hard times; what I wanted to get at is the value difference between pornographic playing cards when you're a kid, and pornographic playing cards when you're older.[...] *But I imagine you'd rather hear about what happened at the zoo.*

Peter. [*Enthusiastic*]: Oh, yes; the zoo. [*Then, awkward:*] That is ... if you ...

Jerry. Let me tell you about why I went ... well, let me tell you some things...(26)

It is noticeable that Jerry is refusing to be cooperative in his conversation, as he doesn't respect Peter's conversational needs. In fact, when Peter opts out from the conversation and hints to Jerry to stop talking about taboo themes, Jerry carries on his discussion and goes on to explain his point about the pornographic playing cards. By doing so, he flouts the manner maxim. Jerry's flouting revealed him as an authoritative speaker who dominates the situation. Indeed, right after this flouting, Jerry orients the talk to other subjects

of his own concern. This is apparent when he flouts the manner maxim in his utterance, ‘Let me tell you about why I went ... well, let me tell you some things...’.

As the play progresses, Jerry is shown as an unpleasant and unnerving person. In fact, he takes advantage of every occasion to intimidate and show his contempt towards Peter. One attempt at intimidating is apparent in the answer he gives in response to Peter’s inquiry about the ‘Empty picture frames’.

Peter. [Stares glumly at his shoes, then] About those two Empty picture frames...?

Jerry. I don’t see why they need any explanation at all. Isn’t it clear? I don’t have pictures of anyone to put in them.(23)

In this example, Jerry flouts the quantity maxim when he makes a hurting remark to Peter and the quality maxim when he informs Peter that he hasn’t any picture to put in his picture frames. By flouting the quantity and quality maxims in this example, Jerry conveys his attempt to intimidate and annoy Peter.

Jerry’s tendency to intimidate and annoy Peter is revealed also when he violates the cooperative principle by tickling Peter in the ribs persistently and refusing to cease doing so in spite of Peter’s objection.

Jerry’s contempt, however, is manifested when he flouts the quantity maxim in his response to Peter who naively comments on Jerry’s intention to tell him the story of the dog and the story of the zoo.

Jerry.[As if to a child] because after I tell you about the dog, do you know what then ?

Then... then I’ll tell you about what happened at the zoo.

Peter. [Laughing faintly] You’re ... you’re full of stories, aren’t you?

Jerry.You don’t have to listen. Nobody is holding you here; remember that. Keep that in your mind.

Peter. [Irritably] I know that.

Jerry. You do? Good.(29)

By responding to Peter with, ‘You don’t have to listen. Nobody is holding you here; remember that. Keep that in your mind’, Jerry flouts the maxims of manner and relation, as he gives an unexpected and unpleasant answer to Peter. Jerry’s double flouting shows his tendency to treat Peter as an inferior person in order to make him feel angry.

Jerry is presented also as a repulsive person who is unable to establish contact. His repulsiveness is shown in his flouting of the manner maxim when he describes the landlady in an unpleasant way and when he tells the story of Jerry and the dog after his failure to involve Peter in his conversation.

Jerry’s conversational contributions show him also as a vicious and a witty person who wants to trap Peter. This is foreseen in his double flouting of the manner maxim and his flouting of the relation maxim after Peter’s inquiry about the reason for which Jerry recounts his long story about the landlady and her dog.

Jerry. [Quietly] I tried to explain it to you as I went along. I went slowly; it all has to do with ...

Peter. I DON T WANT TO HEAR ANY MORE. I don’t understand you, or your landlady, or her dog....

Jerry. *Her dog! I thought it was my ... No. No, you’re right. It is her dog. [...] I don’t know what I was thinking about; of Course you don’t understand. [...] I don’t live in your block; I’m not married to two parakeets, or whatever your set-up is. I am a permanent transient, and my home is the sickening rooming-houses on the West Side of New York City, which is the greatest city in the world. Amen.*

Peter. I’m ... I’m sorry; I didn’t mean to ...(37)

In this exchange, Jerry appears as if he is plotting to harm Peter. Indeed, when Peter says to Jerry, ‘I don’t understand you, or your landlady, or her dog....’, Jerry flouts the maxim of manner by giving an unfinished answer whereby he alludes to Peter that the landlady’s dog was rather his own dog. Then, he flouts the relation maxim by deviating from his speech to compare his living situation with that of Peter to get him out of the way and incline him to

focus on his conditions instead of looking for the significance of what he says earlier. But as we notice, Jerry accuses Peter of lying and shows contempt towards him. Thus, one can deduce that Jerry's flouting is intended to show him as a vicious and witty person who wants to put Peter in a confining situation. In fact, towards the end of the play, when Jerry senses Peter's readiness to leave the place, he begs him to stay, then renews his talk about the zoo and promises Peter to tell him again what happened there in order to succeed in keeping him in conversation.

Another trait worth mentioning in Jerry's character is his aggressiveness. This character trait is foreseen, mainly in the exchange through which he forces Peter to leave the bench where he sits.

Jerry. [He pokes Peter on the arm.] Move over.

Peter. [Friendly] I'm sorry, haven't you enough room? [He shifts a little.]

Jerry. [Smiling slightly]. Well, all the animals are there, and all the people are there, and it's Sunday and all the children are there. [He pokes Peter again.] Move over.

Peter. [Patiently, still friendly] All right. [He moves some more, and Jerry has all the room he might need.]

Jerry. And it's a hot day, so all the stench is there, too..., and all the birds are screaming. [Pokes Peter harder.] Move over ! (40)

In this exchange, Jerry urges Peter to leave the bench where he sits by interspersing his speech with the expression 'move over' on several occasions. Thus, he flouts the maxims of manner and relation at once. Through this flouting, Jerry conveys intensely his aggressiveness and his intention to force Peter to fight with him. In fact, the stage directions reveal that Jerry is poking Peter repeatedly.

There is another exchange through which Jerry's aggressiveness is apparent. This is seen when he provokes Peter repeatedly and incites him to pick up a knife in order to fight for his properties.

Jerry. Now you pick up that knife and you fight with me. You fight for your self-respect; you fight for that goddamned bench.

Peter. [Struggling] No! Let ... let go of me! He... Help!

Jerry. [Slaps Peter on each "fight"] You fight, you miserable bastard; fight for that bench; ...fight for your two aughters; fight for your wife; fight for your manhood, you pathetic little vegetable. [Spits in Peter's face] You couldn't even get your wife with a male child. (46-47)

Here, Jerry's violence and aggression appear in his flouting of the quantity maxim, when he insults Peter and urges him to fight for everything he possesses and likes, as well as in his flouting of the relation maxim, when he misuses the information he obtained about Peter's private life, mainly the one which is concerned with Peter and his wife's decision about how many children they should have.

Jerry's aggressiveness is, of course, apparent in other instances, like when he flouts the relation maxim by confronting Peter, who informs him that he wasn't 'expecting anybody', with hostility by saying: 'No, I don't imagine you were. But I'm here, and I'm not leaving' (38).

Speaking about Peter, his character is quite opposite to that of Jerry. Indeed, his conversational contributions reveal him as a cautious and passive person who is reluctant to speak. His shyness and passivity, for example, are apparent in the previous exchange when he flouts the manner maxim in his utterance, 'I'm ... I'm sorry; I didn't mean to ...', whereby he apologizes to Jerry who elaborates on an ironical attempt to draw Peter's sympathy. Peter's shyness and passivity are revealed also when he flouts the manner maxim in his hesitant and unfinished answer, '*Oh, yes; the zoo. [Then, awkward:] That is ... if you ...*', in response to Jerry's supposition concerning Peter's willingness to know what happened at the zoo.

Peter is shown also as a polite and modest person. His modesty, for example, is seen in his flouting of the relation maxim when he attempts a joke on himself in order to end Jerry's misunderstanding.

Peter. My dear fellow, I ...

Jerry. Don't my dear fellow me.

Peter. [Unhappily] Was I patronizing? I believe I was; I'm sorry. But, you see, your question about the classes bewildered me.

Jerry. And when you're bewildered you become patronizing?

Peter. I ... I don't express myself too well, sometimes.[He attempts a joke on himself.] I'm in publishing, not writing.(20)

Peter's Modesty and simplicity are manifested in his flouting of the relation maxim when he says: 'I'm in publishing, not writing'(47), in an attempt to remove Jerry's misunderstanding.

Speaking about Peter's reticence, it is manifested on different occasions throughout the play, like when he flouts the maxim of manner in response to Jerry who wants to know whether there are other things to know about Peter or not. This is revealed in the following short exchange:

Jerry. [...] Is there anything else I should know?'

Peter. [He has cleared his throat] There are ... there are two parakeets. One ... uh ... one for each of my daughters.(18)

As it is apparent in this exchange, Peter responds to Jerry with hesitation and in a fragmentary way, thus he flouts the manner maxim. This flouting is intended to show Peter as a reticent person.

The other examples concerning Peter's reticence are that in which he flouts the manner maxim again in his fragmentary answer to Jerry's question, 'And what else? What do you do to support your enormous household?'

Like his reticence, Peter's politeness is also revealed in different instances throughout the play. The following exchange is selected to illustrate one instance:

Jerry. All right. Who are your favourite writers? Baudelaire and J.P.Marquand?

Peter. [Wary] Well, I like a great many writers; I have a considerable ... catholicity of taste, if I may say so. Those two men are fine, each in his way. [Warming up]

Baudelaire, of course ... uh ... is by far the finer of the two, but Marquand has a place ... in our ... uh ... national ...

Jerry. Skip it.

Peter. I ... sorry.(21)

In this exchange, Peter's politeness appears when he flouts the manner maxim in his final utterance whereby he attempts to express himself with hesitation, then apologizing for Jerry by saying: ' sorry'.

It is important to state also that Peter is an acquiescent person. This is foreseen in his flouting of the maxim of manner, when he attempts to escape Jerry's question concerning Peter's marital status by preceding his response to Jerry with the questioning word 'why', then giving the requested information.

Peter's acquiescence is also seen when he flouts the quantity and the relation maxims in his response to Jerry's inquiry about Peter and his wife's decision about the fact they will have no more children.

Jerry. And you're not going to have any more kids, are you?

Peter. [A bit distantly] No. No more. [Then back, and irksome] Why did you say that? How would you know about that?

Jerry.The way you cross your legs, perhaps; something in the voice. Or maybe I'm just guessing. Is it your wife?

Peter. [Furious] That's none of your business! [A silence.] Do you understand ? [Jerry nods. Peter is quiet now.] Well, you're right. We'll have no more children.(16)

In this exchange, Peter gives an irrelevant answer when Jerry asks him the question, 'Is it your wife?'. Thus, he flouts the relation maxim. Interestingly, after seeing Jerry's nodding, Peter comes to cooperate and answer Jerry appropriately. So , Peter's flouting and his sudden cooperation are likely to be interpreted as a sign of his acquiescence. It is only towards the end of the play that Peter takes a defensive position. This is revealed when he

says: 'THAT'S ENOUGH....'(45) in reaction to Jerry who attacks him verbally by saying: 'you are a vegetable, and a slightly near-sighted one'. Peter's defensiveness is revealed also when he flouts the quality maxim in his comment, 'you ... you monster'(47).

Chapter 3

Discussion

Introduction

As we know, this study is set to examine the dialogues in *The Zoo Story* and *The Caretaker* in order to indicate how the characters' language causes violence effects and how their identity expressed by their discourse. To this aim, the characters' underlying meaning and the interpretation of their utterances will be provided in relation to the cooperative principle and conversational maxims, which specify what participants in conversation have to do so as to speak in efficient, rational, and cooperative way. The following discussion, then, is basically an attempt to explain the characters' flouting, thus interpreting the playwrights' exploiting of conversational maxims, which is meant to reach their aims. But it serves also as an effort to find interpretations to the supposed 'devaluation of language' and 'meaningless' dialogues in the Theatre of the Absurd.

This chapter, as the previous one, is divided into two sections. The first section is devoted to the discussion and interpretation of the findings of the analysis concerned with *The Caretaker* analysis, and the second section deals with the discussion and interpretation of the findings of *The Zoo Story* analysis. Each discussion is followed by summary and conclusion.

It is worth noting that in order to explain what the two playwrights do with language to reach their dramatic effects, namely violence and identity, it is necessary to review the main observations made on the way the characters exploit the conversational maxims throughout the plays' happenings. So, in each section of my discussion, I will try to interlace the main findings of the analysis with the interpretations I attribute to them.

3.1. Discussion and Interpretation of the Results Yielded from the Analysis of Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker*

As the results indicate, Pinter's dialogues in *The Caretaker* are full of violations of the cooperative principle. In fact, the characters practically flout every maxim of conversation in every dialogue in the play. In the opening exchanges between Aston and Davies, for example, Davies elaborates on his needs and anxieties in order to draw Aston's sympathy. Interestingly, the more Davies tries to incline Aston to give a fullest consideration to his apprehensions and show pity for him, the more he flouts maxims, and the more the playwright discloses important aspects in Davies' character. The first remarkable example is the one in which Aston invites Davies to 'sit down', and Davies digresses from his talk to express his anxieties and prejudices against the Blacks, Greeks and Poles instead of expressing his gratitude to Aston. In this discourse situation, Davies contravenes the expectation of discourse by flouting the maxims of quantity and relation. However, though incongruent Davies' expression of deprivation, ultimately brings with it the sense of absurdity, the playwright do convey something important about Davies. In fact, he provides a quick account about his character. He portrays him as a racist, rude, bigot, and querulous person at once.

The second example to bring back to mind is the one in which Davies, after his failure to incline Aston to confirm the truth of what he is saying at the beginning of the play, turns to recall his personal standards to change Aston's possible judgments, an assumption which we draw from Davies's statement, 'All them toe-rags, mate, got the manners of pigs. I might have been on the road a few years but you can take it from me I'm clean. I keep myself up. That's why I left my wife. Fortnight after I married her, no, not so much as that....'. Here, Davies's expression of victimization is absurd and ridiculous, as his aggressive language and demonstrative propriety are so exaggerated and contradictory that he undermines what he claims. However, the combination of Davies' self-assertion and self-deception is purposefully

done. In fact, through this elaboration on Davies' unconscious contradiction, the playwright makes Davies flout the maxims of quantity and relation, and through this flouting, he portrays Davies as an aggressive and repulsive person. After this, Davies digresses from his talk to describe the people in the café and recount what happened there. Through this digression, the playwright elaborates again on Davies' self-contradiction, and through the latter, he confirms Davies' aggression.

The playwright, of course, dramatizes Davies' anxieties by raising other issues throughout the play. By expanding on Davies' misfortunes, the playwright offers himself the opportunity to disclose other significant traits in Davies's character. For example, when Davies raises his disappointing experience at the monastery in Luton, the playwright makes him flout the maxims of quantity and relation by elaborating on a long irrelevant speech through which he exaggerates in Davies' self-repetitions. Through his overwordiness in speech, Davies is looked upon as a talkative person who tries to influence Aston, and through his exaggerated repetitions, the playwright reveals him as an insecure person who is in a state of uneasiness. These assumptions about Davies are suggested also by his disjointed speech and evasiveness which are all the result of his flouting of the conversational maxims.

The previous techniques, i.e. overwordiness and self-repetitions, evasiveness and disjointed talk are exploited on several occasions throughout the play. For example, when Davies complains about the man with whom he fights in the café, he exaggerates in his self-repetitions through his insistence on the fact that it is not his job to take the buckets out. As a result, the playwright characterizes him as an inferior ineffectual person who tries to cover up his inadequacy. Also, when Mick and Aston asks Davies questions about his name and background, Davies deliberately evades their questions by giving indirect and incomplete answers through which he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation. By elaborating on

Davies' evasiveness, the playwright implies Davies' questionable background as well as the confusion about his position.

Throughout the play, Davies exploits Aston's kindness and generosity and attempts to take advantage of his rescuer in order to establish himself in Mick's house. To succeed in his plan, he elaborates, first, his need for shoes to travel to Sidcup to regain his papers. Then, he tries to create disagreement between Aston and Mick. Noticeably, the playwright resorts to the flouting of maxims to convey Davies' comploting, and through this comploting, the characters are offered other development in their personality. For example, when Davies switched his expectations to Mick in order to ensure his place and position in the house, the playwright portrays him as a contemptuous ingratitude person thanks to his flouting of the quantity and manner maxims in his long speech whereby he launches into a series of complaints against Aston.

Speaking about Mick, when he senses the possible threats posed by Davies to the brotherly relationship and to Aston himself, he employs all his efforts to dominate Davies and lead him to a state of subservience. He attacks Davies physically. Then, he uses some verbal strategies, such as repetitions, pauses and silences, digressions, ironies, and ignorance to offend, intimidate, and discredit Davies. Mick adopts each of the previous strategies through the flouting of the conversational maxims. At the beginning of the second act, for instance, Mick cross-examines Davies by interrogating him about his name and his background in a repetitive manner. As we notice, those repetitive questions used as an operative instrument to establish Mick's power and aggression.

The power relationship between Mick and Davies is enacted practically in every dialogue involving them. In each dialogue, Mick shows an intention to offend Davies and give himself the opportunity to do it by elaborating conversational schemes that are full of deceits and aggression. When Davies shifts his allegiance from Aston to Mick, for instance,

he succeeds to engage with Mick in the discussion regarding Aston's inconsideration. However, it becomes soon apparent that Mick's conversational engagements with Davies are used to put Davies in a confining situation and trick him. As we notice again, his attempts to trick Davies are accomplished through his flouting of maxims, and through those floutings, the playwright shows Davies as an inferior person and Mick as powerful dominant person. For example, when Mick engages with Davies in the discussion regarding Aston's ineffectualness in working, he exaggerates in the use of fragmentary and incompleting sentences whereby he flouts the manner maxim. This fact leads to an apparent non-fluency in Mick's conversation. But as we know, Mick proves to be a competent speaker and even a speech-jugler throughout the play. Thus, the apparent flaw in his interaction is used by the playwright in order to disclose Mick's attempt to trap Davies. This assumption is confirmed when Davies treats Aston as a funny bloke, and Mick, through a relentless questioning, checks the linguistic accuracy of what Davies is saying, leading him finally to retract his statement. This act serves as an evidence of Davies' inferior position. Davies as ever is the inferior interactant. His inferiority is revealed, mainly through his detracted linguistic performance, which is apparent in his hesitations and his incomplete utterances which turn to be the result of his flouting of the maxim of manner.

Towards the end of the play, when Mick shows his total rejection of Davies, Davies turns to beg Aston to let him stay in the house. But Aston refuses to listen to him and shows, in his turn, his rejection of Davies. The playwright manages to communicate this to his readers through the characters' silence, a technique which generally results from the playwrights' violation of the cooperative principle. This technique is used also to anticipate Mick's unpleasant questions and introduce Aston as a reticent person.

In view of what is highlighted in the analysis and discussion, it appears that the playwright features dialogues which are full of violations of the cooperative principle, so much so we

experience absurdity and irrationality in the characters' conversation. However, though the playwright induces such sense of absurdity and irrationality by violating the conversational rules in the characters' dialogues, and though our certainty about the characters and what they say is undermined from time to time in the play, we should assume that the playwright attaches a great significance to the characters' flouting of the conversational maxims. This significance appears mainly in the role the characters' verbal excess, repetitions, digressions, self-contradictions, pauses and silences, avoidance and evasiveness, play in the creation of the characters's identity and the establishment of violence effects in the play. We have just seen, for example, how Mick's repetitive questions are used as a weapon for aggression, how Davies' fragmentary and uncompleted sentences are used to indicate his insecurity and inferior position, and how Mick and Aston's silences are used to indicate their rejection of Davies.

Thus, it becomes doubtful to assume that the dialogues in *The Caretaker* are meaningless or that *The Caretaker* play is about the failure of language to express reality. The confusion and the uncertainty that surround Davies' name and origin, for example, are not due to failure of language. In fact, the results of analysis show that Davies is rather evasive in his communication, because he is afraid of revealing himself, and the playwright wants to convey Davies' insecurity and confusing position.

Departing from what has been explained, it becomes evident that the playwright's exploitations of language are purposefully done in order to get across his points. This is, of course, the thing that he makes us aware of when he says, 'under what is said another thing is being said', and when he invites us to explore what lies between the inexpressiveness of the characters and their elusiveness.

It has been already shown that the absurdity in the play emerges from the playwright's exploitations of the rules governing language use through the characters' flouting of maxims.

Thus, the importance of language overrides the importance of absurdity in *The Caretaker*. This fact leads us to think that it is preferable to replace the term Theatre of the Absurd with the term Theatre of Language.

Summary and Conclusion

With much focus on the dramatic effects of Pinters' language in the creation of characters' identity in *The Caretaker* and in the establishment of violence effects in the characters' dialogues, this section in our study highlights a number of points. First, the identity of the characters and their personality traits are unveiled thanks to the playwright's judicious exploitation of the cooperative principle. In fact, almost all aspects of the characters' personality and assumptions about their intentions prove to be the result of the characters' flouting of maxims of conversation. Second, the violence effects exhibited in the play are also revealed to be the result of the playwright's elaboration on the characters' violation of the cooperative principle in their dialogues. Pinter's concern with power dominance and question of subservience, for example, are mostly shown through his manipulation of conversational maxims. Third, the critics' insistence on meaninglessness of dialogues and failure of language appears to be the result of lack of insight into the reasons for which the playwright used language as he did. The sense of absurdity is also the result of Pinter's exploitation of the cooperative principle, which is meant to convey his ideas and develop his themes. Finally, the discussion shows the necessity to name such type of theatre which exploit the traditional drama convention the 'Theatre of Language', for the term 'Theatre of the Absurd' seems to impart a little of what is most significant in the play, i.e. the language.

3.2. Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings in Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story*

A mere reading of Albee's *The Zoo Story* shows that the play is about the exposition of two strangers' conversation which ends in an unpleasant way, but the analysis of this play on the basis of Grice's conversational implicatures shows how the playwright dramatizes the conversation of the characters in such a way as to account for his themes, namely violence and identity.

As the results of the analysis show, the playwright exploits the four conversational maxims all along the play. But what counts more in this study is not whether Albee exploits the maxims or not, but how he exploits them, and how he manages to cause violence effects and disclose the characters' identity through his violations of the cooperative principle in the characters' discourse. So, the following pages concern the explanation and interpretation of his exploitations.

From Jerry's conversational opening onwards, we notice that the conversational moves that people anticipate in social interaction between strangers are almost absent. At the beginning of the play, for example, Jerry moves closer to the stranger Peter and speaks to him as if he knows him. He starts his conversation by a rude announcement, 'I've been to the zoo', and repeats this three times, then he inquires repeatedly about the direction of his walk without informing Peter about the reason behind his questions. This is obviously an odd opening, for it contravenes the discourse strategies that people are expected to use in such social encounters. Simpson Paul (1989:46) argues, 'There are very strong interactive constraints on what can be said at the beginning of a conversation between two people who don't know each other'. In his argument, he points out to 'reference to the weather' and 'comments on the immediate physical environment' as 'conversational gambits' which are expected in such conversational openings. Besides his absurd way of starting a conversation, Jerry flouts the maxim of quantity by repeating his announcement three times and by inquiring

about the direction of his walk more than three times. There is, of course, a reason behind those repetitions. Though Jerry doesn't allude to anything, there is something communicated at the higher level of discourse, i.e. the discourse between the reader and the playwright. The most plausible interpretation is that the playwright intends the flouting to give the first impressions about about Jerry's character: his rudeness and his strangeness. This flouting is meant also to convey to the reader that this is not an ordinary encounter between strangers, and that something is going to happen between Jerry and Peter.

As we know, the play builds on what Jerry has to say about his visit to the zoo, but Jerry avoids telling what happened there almost all along the play. Indeed, in the examples cited in the analysis, Jerry mentioned the zoo regularly, but each time he evades Peter's questions concerning his visit, either by flouting the maxim of quantity or the maxim of relation or both of them. As a result, he leaves Peter in a state of distraction and bewilderment. It is clear that Jerry's statements are not without determination. Indeed, by reading the whole play, we come to realize that his aim in hinting at the zoo and promising Peter to tell him what happened there is his need to make contact, talk about his own conversational interests, and elicit the information he needs from Peter. Jerry, for example, after mentioning his visit to the zoo in his opening conversation, begins to ask questions about Peter's personal life, including the intimate matters. Considering the fact that Jerry has met Peter for the first time, his questions are definitely uncalled-for, as they are at odds with the polite behaviour demanded between strangers. However, it is likely to assume that the playwright again violates the expectations of discourse in order to achieve certain effects. The interpretation that we can attribute to Jerry's inappropriate and direct questions or to the playwright's violation is that it is used as a means to impact on the development of the play in general and the development of the characters and their relationships in particular. In fact, Jerry's unconventional and suspicious manner of speaking portray him as an intruding and

impolite person. At the same time, it induces Peter's uneasiness and discomfort, which result in his passivity and reluctance to speak. Peter's passivity and reluctance are signposted in his distinctive way of speaking, which is generally composed of answers whereby he flouts the maxim of manner, as when he responds Jerry's question, 'And what else ? What do you do to support your enormous household?', with a fragmentary answer, 'I ... uh ... I have an executive position with a ... a small publishing house. We ... uh ... we publish text books'.

The playwright makes Peter flout the manner maxim also to show him as a polite person. This is foreseen, first, in his indirect answer to Jerry, who wants to ascertain the direction of his walking by saying: 'North? Why. . . I . . . I think so. Let me see', second, in his attempts to correct and justify himself, like when he says: 'I didn't mean to seem ... ah ... it's that you don't really carry on a conversation; you just ask questions. And I'm ... I'm normally ... uh ... reticent', and finally, by more obvious tactful ways, such as his repeated apologies, 'I'm sorry' and 'I ...sorry'.

What is manifested also through Jerry's initiations and inappropriate questions is the unbalanced interaction between him and Peter, a thing that brings on some impressions about the characters and some reflections about their statuses. Jerry, for example, appears as a powerful dominant character who behaves as if he is Peter's superior. This is clearly seen in his refusals to give answers to Peter's questions, and his tendency to interrupt and ignore Peter. Interestingly, all this is achieved through his flouting of the maxims of quantity and relation. Peter, however, is the inferior interactant, who is subjugated and forced into a state of dreadfulness. Indeed, across many speaking turns, Peter is prevented from expressing himself and finishing his replies, all what he can do is asking for some explanations and giving feedbacks to Jerry's questions. This is shown through his minimal responses as well as through his fragmentary and unfinished sentences whereby he flouts the maxim of manner.

All along the play, Jerry is deceiving Peter to such extent that Peter is eager to opt out of the interaction. In his first exchanges, for example, Jerry manages to engage Peter in the conversation but through a cunning deception. He asks Peter a direct question, 'Do you mind if we talk', then he confronts him with the charge of minding to have a conversation with him by a repetitive defiant expression, 'Yes you do'. It is evident that this is an awkward way of making contact with Peter and an indecent attempt to involve him in conversation. But the playwright intends to exploit the cooperative principle through Jerry's repetition to raise tension and convey Jerry's aggression.

What Albee also uses to develop the previous aspect of Jerry's character is the interrogation of the interlocutor about his private matters without paying attention to social etiquette and standards of speaking. Jerry, for instance, violates the cooperative principle by asking questions of very intimate nature to Peter, including the reasons for not having any more children. This is obviously a form of verbal aggression. Jerry's linguistic behaviour, indeed, causes Peter's resentment and anger. The stage directions, for example, show Peter in a state of furiousness when Jerry wonders whether it is Peter's wife who is responsible for the decision about the fact of having no more children. More immoral than what precedes, Jerry uses the information he gleaned about Peter as a powerful tool to control and hurt him. When he fights over the bench, for instance, Jerry taunts and offends Peter by flouting the quantity and the relation maxims through his intimidating expression, 'You couldn't even get your wife with a male child'.

It was already stated that the ambiguity of Jerry's language and his inability to establish genuine conversation distracts Peter and bewilder him. This fact leaves two options for Peter: either he asks for clarifications or opts out of the conversation. But what is noticed is that both attempts are prevented and stopped by Jerry's interruptions and violations. Jerry, in fact, refuses to give clarifications or adequate information to Peter's questions and obliges

him to listen to stories from his life and subjects that someone wouldn't want to hear whenever Peter tries to opt out of the conversation. For example, when Peter says: 'I'd rather not talk about these things', in order to stop the development of Jerry's speech about taboo themes, such as his sexual life and his points about the pornographic playing cards, Jerry flouts the quantity maxim by carrying his talk without paying attention to Peter's conversational concerns. Then, just after finishing his points, he returns back to recount what happened at the zoo. On other occasion, he doesn't immediately inform Peter about the important event. Jerry's reference to the zoo after his violation of the cooperative principle in his speech about the subjects that Peter wants to evade is likely to be assumed as a control manoeuvre that limits Peter's freedom of speaking and action. In fact, though his subjects of discussion are incongruous in the discourse context that involves him and Peter and in spite of his multiple violations of the cooperative principle, Jerry succeeds in keeping Peter in the conversation and urging him to cooperate, either willingly or unwillingly, as he does when Peter expresses his need to go home when he became aware of his inability to piece Jerry's thoughts and motives.

Jerry. Oh, come on; stay a while longer.

Peter. I really should get home; you see . . .

Jerry. [Tickles Peter's ribs with his fingers] Oh, come on.

Peter. [He is very ticklish; as Jerry continues to tickle him his voice becomes falsetto.] No, I ... OHHHH! Don' t do that. Stop,Stop. Ohhh, no, no.

Jerry. Oh, come on.t(38)

To guarantee Peter's cooperation at this level of discussion, Jerry manipulates Peter not by words but by physical acts. He violates the cooperative principle by tickling Peter in the ribs repeatedly and refusing to listen to Peter. It is obvious that this is a disrespectful behaviour from the part of Jerry, but what is important is that, through this act, the playwright manages to offer another aspect of Jerry's character. In fact, he portrays him as an indecent

and disrespectful person, and Peter, of course, is the disturbed and affected one. Peter's state of disturbance is revealed in his loss of language when he reacts to Jerry's tickling:

Oh, hee, hee, hee. I must go. I ... hee, hee, hee. After all, stop, stop, hee, hee, hee, after all, the parakeets will be getting dinner ready soon. Hee, hee. And the cats are setting the table. Stop, stop, and, and ... [He is beside himself now.] ... and we're having ... hee, hee ... uh ... ho, ho.

The last effort to convey Jerry's bitterness and aggression is achieved through a combination of physical attack and vehement verbal assault. When Peter gets discontented by Jerry's disconcerting behaviour, and when the situation became unruly, Jerry provokes Peter to fight and makes him feel angry. He violates the cooperative principle by asking Peter in a repetitive manner to 'move over' from the bench where he sits. Then, he flouts the quantity and the quality maxims by elaborating a sarcastic humiliating speech, 'You fight, you miserable bastard; fight for that bench; fight for your parakeets; fight for your cats; fight for your two daughters; fight for your wife; fight for your manhood, you pathetic little vegetable', which pushes Peter to fight and participate in Jerry's provocative plan.

All along the play, Jerry jumps from one subject to an unrelated one, so much so that Peter, as we have already said, is disconcerted. Besides Peter's bewilderment, the disorderly nature of Jerry's speech suggests some important character traits. What draws our attention more is that the scenes which marks Jerry's abrupt turns are the points from which we can notice a considerable change in his character. For example, when Jerry asks Peter: 'What is your name?', instead of hearing Peter's answer, he goes on a long speech throughout which he reveals things about his sexual life. It is evident that Jerry flouts the maxims of quantity and relation when he passes his question about Peter's name and sets to disclose sensitive facts about his life, however, though Jerry doesn't wait for Peter's answer, and though Peter's name is not disclosed, Jerry's irrelevant long speech about his past, which marks an abrupt turn in the discourse situation, is intended by the playwright to convey important things about Jerry

and make his present state understood. Jerry's homosexuality, for example, helps to understand his celebacy.

Two other abrupt tuns worth mentioning; his inappropriate talk about the landlady and her dog and his sudden talk about his childhood. First, when Peter inquires about Jerry's empty picture frames, Jerry launches into a long speech whereby he flouts the maxims of quantity and relation. He talks about his parents and his family history, including his homosexual experience and every significant element about his childhood. Here, Jerry's conversational behaviour reflects his talkativeness, but it displays also significant things about his past which are crucial, as we have already said, to the understanding of his present state. His parent abandonment, for instance, explains his loneliness, and his loneliness explains his need to make contact. Jerry's affirmation, 'every once in a while I like to talk to somebody, really talk; like to get to know somebody, know all about him', confirms this clearly. Second, at one time, Jerry attempts to inform Peter about the reason behind his visit to the zoo, but, suddenly, he deflects his talk to describe scrupulously the land-lady and her dog that serves as a gatekeeper in the building where they live and tell a long story of his relationship with the dog. In his description, Jerry uses unthinkable, degrading, and disgusting words, and in his story, he reveals his failure to establish contact with the dog. It is evident that Jerry violates the cooperative principle through his inappropriate speech, and it is evident also that his speech doesn't convey any direct objectives or obvious implicature to Peter. However, though strange may seem Jerry's speech, and though it is not understood by Peter, the audience and the readers should assume that there is something communicated at the higher level of discourse. Simpson, in fact, states that the 'departures from maximal efficiency are strategically motivated and are not just aberrant or purposeless bits of discourse' (39). Brown and Levinson(1987), in their turn, assert that there is 'no deviation from rational efficiency without a reason'. What is an implicature for us, then, or what could we draw from Jerry's

long stories is the assumptions about his characterization. Jerry, for instance, appears as a spiteful person who is incapable to establish genuine contact.

In the light of what precedes, we notice that the language and the dramatic actions in *The Zoo Story* play differ from what the playwrights' readerships are acquainted with. They are even abnormal if compared to other traditional plays. The actions, for example, are not meant to tell a story or follow a clear plot development. Instead, they present a set of instances intended to convey and express the complexity and absurdity of human conditions which are reflected, for example in Jerry's behaviour towards Peter, his relationship with his neighbours, and his hard childhood. Speaking about language, a plenty of examples about the violation of the conversational rules are found, a thing that leads the mode of expression to oppose the tradition of drama. Jerry, for instance, doesn't make his statements clear enough for Peter to understand what he is talking about and be cooperative, and his topics do not make a clear picture about his goal and intention. However, though apparently unreasonable and beyond understanding the play may look like at the surface level, Edward Albee conveys profound ideas at the deeper level. He has, in fact, definite logical reasons behind his seemingly meaningless dialogues. Behind Jerry's absurd conversation, as we have already stated, there lies his attempt to draw Peter into conversation and urge him to participate in act of violence, an act that he didn't want to go unnoticed. This is evidently apparent when he told Peter at the beginning of the play that he was going to see an important event on TV at night and confirmed by his final speech:

But ... I don't know ... could I have planned all this? No ... no, I couldn't have. But I think I did. And now I've told you what you wanted to know, haven't I? And now you know all about what happened at the zoo. And now you know what you'll see in your TV, and the face I told you about ... you remember ... the face I told you about ... my face, the face you see right now....(48)

The deeper level of Albee's thoughts is constituted also in Jerry's distinctive behaviour. For example, the conflict that the playwright enacts between Jerry and Peter in the

play is a way to give an account of life which is completely vulnerable and estranging. Interestingly, this conflict seems in agreement with confusion and unconventional ways of conversation. In fact, the confrontational atmosphere issues from Jerry's exploitations of the conversational rules. So, instead of considering the language in the Theatre of the Absurd as a very unreliable and insufficient tool of communication, and instead of considering it as a vehicle of conventionalized stereotyped and meaningless exchanges, it seems more reasonable to assume that language with its violated rules are used as a valuable tool to reflect the whole ways of life that the absurdist playwrights view and portray as absurd and nonsensical. Simpson Paul is prior to discredit the critics who argue about the meaninglessness of dialogues and the failure of communication in this play. This is clear in his opposing view to Bigsby's perception of the play in terms of a 'breakdown of communication'(1969:24). In his criticism, Simpson comments, 'To describe the play as a communicative breakdown [...] is simply misleading' (1997:173).

Thus, though the play builds on the characters and the audience's confusion, and though the playwright undermines our sense of confidence and certainty by introducing indirectness and doubt into many statements, one must assume that the deep meaning and the conspicuous assumptions about the characters and the themes of the play emerge from these techniques, which are practically the result of the violations of the conversational rules. Instead of giving the readers a direct access to the characters' expressions, for example, the playwright invites them to play an active role to decipher the underlying meaning of the character's utterances, or as Esslin (1969) points out, 'they are forced to make a creative effort of their own, an effort of interpretation and integration'. Also, instead of providing sufficient descriptions of the characters, the playwright encodes key points about the characters' identity and relationship in their flouting of maxims and expects the audience to decode them. This fact leads to the assumption that the identity of the characters is not conceived only in their

name and recalls the constructivists' understanding of identity in the sense that it is 'viewed as the emergent product rather than the preexisting source of linguistic and other semiotic practices (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005:588 cited in De Fina, et al., 2006). In view of the characters' identity and personality traits, for example, Jerry's violence, which is manifested in his actions of ignoring, ridiculing, disrespecting, criticizing, purposefully humiliating Peter, accusing him for the purpose of manipulating his decision making, and finally manipulating his words to submit him to an undesirable behaviour, issues from the violation of the cooperative principle and from the flouting of particular conversational maxims in his utterances, which are, of course, intertwined with some abusive words and acts of physical violence.

Speaking about the characters' relationship, it is noticeable that Albee shows a strong interest in highlighting the power relationship between the characters all along the play, and through this relationship, the playwright exhibits the psychological state of the characters, such as their fears, discomfort, and bewilderment, and other assumptions about their status, attitudes, motives, etc. Interestingly, this relationship is reflected in Jerry's interruptions and ignorance of Peter, his disjointed speech, his long turns, and his intruding questions, and in Peter's vagueness and unfinished responses, which are all the result of the playwright's judicious exploitations of the conversational maxims.

From the context of what precedes, it appears that the Gricean cooperative principle is violated by purpose, and that in view of its violation, the playwright reaches different effects, namely violence and identity of the characters by flouting particular maxims that the readers are expected to identify and interpret. This assumption reminds us of Herman's statement, 'the Gricean Maxims are [...] often purposefully flouted by comedians and writers, who may hide the complete truth and manipulate their words for the effect of the story and the sake of the reader's experience' (1995:32).

What is also remarkable in the preceding comments is that Albee's *The Zoo Story* exemplifies the absurd not only in the exposition of the conditions of life but also in the linguistic forms that are reflected in the following notions: confusion, vagueness, disjointed speech, uncertainty, and mismatches between discourse expectations and the context of occurrence, like in Jerry's first utterances to Peter. However, what arises more our interest is the fact that the concentration of the critics on the absurd exceeds their concentration on the language while the manipulation of language and its rules is the major source of absurdity, either in the arguments about the human conditions of life or in the absurd forms that are designed to reflect those conditions. Thus, it seems more reasonable to name such theatre that exploits the language to reach the foregrounded effects the Theatre of Language than to name it the Theatre of the Absurd.

Summary and Conclusion

The discussion and interpretation of the results yielded from the analysis of Albee's *The Zoo Story* on the basis of Grice's theory of conversational implicatures raise a number of ideas. First, they stress the idea that what is important in interpreting dramatic dialogues is not just the meaning of what is said but also the meaning beneath what is said and the implicatures which are brought about. The dramatic significance of those implicatures is evident in the insights provided into the characters' identity and the violence effects in the play. In fact, it has been already argued that the characters' personality and psychological state can be seen in their flouting of particular conversational maxims, and that the playwright manages to bring on the violence of the characters and establish the conflictual scenes in the play thanks to those flouting. Second, the motivation for the playwright's flouting of the conversational maxims or the unconventional ways of communication is established and explained. Accordingly, the critical comments on the play, such as the 'failure of

communication’, the ‘meaninglessness’ of dialogues or the treatment of language as a ‘very unreliable and insufficient tool of communication’ are likely to be shattered, as it appears that the deviations from the cooperative principle and its maxims which give that sense of failure of communication or distrust of language. This deviation is purposefully done in order to reach particular dramatic effects. Third, that strong sense of the absurd which causes the difficulty of conceptualization of dialogues in *The Zoo Story* and which leads the critics to give the term ‘Theatre of the Absurd’ is explained by the mismatch between what the characters say and the context of occurrence and by their flouting of the conversational maxims, which gives rise to absurd forms reflected in the confusing statements, disjointed speech, uncertainty, and vagueness, which the playwright uses to argue about the absurdity of human conditions, which is exemplified, for example, in Peter’s bewilderment and Jerry’s cruelty. Finally, the argument about the necessity to replace the term Theatre of the Absurd with the term Theatre of Language is established and explained.

General Conclusion

The analysis of the language in Edward Albee’s *The Zoo Story* and Pinter’s *The Caretaker* and the attempt to explain it from discourse perspectives have brought some insights into the manner in which the playwrights get across their points and develop their themes.

By focusing on the themes of identity and violence, the study shows that Edward Albee and Harold Pinter violate the conversational rules all along their plays by making the characters flout the conversational maxims in every dialogue involving them. Interestingly, it is on the basis of those flouting that the playwrights create the characters’ identity and the violence effects in the two stories. In fact, practically every assumption about the characters’ personality traits and every conflictual and violent scene in the two plays turns to be the result

of the inferences triggered from the playwrights' elaboration on the characters' flouting of the conversational maxims.

The study reveals also that the language which is represented as an insufficient tool of communication turns to be a key element through which the playwrights achieve their foregrounded dramatic effects. The main arguments about the dramatic effects of the playwrights' particular use of language in their plays appear, as we have already stated, in the valuable observations they develop about the characters and the situations in which they are involved.

Finally, the study shows that the intrigue lying in the establishment of the relevance of what the characters says is explained by the lack of insight into the implied meaning in the discourse of the characters, and that the language of the two playwrights is the source of absurdity, a fact that has led to create the need to offer the term Theatre of Language to the dramatic works which are classified as absurdists.

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Résumé

Cette thèse est une étude discursive de deux pièces théâtrales du 20^{ème} siècle qui ont été caractérisées comme absurde: *The Zoo Story* d'Edward Albee et *The Caretaker* par Harold Pinter. Cette étude examine les dialogues des personnages dans des perspectives linguistiques afin de révéler la façon dont leur langage provoque la violence dans les deux pièces et démontrer comment leur discours exprime leur identité. La recherche sert aussi à remettre en perspectives les critiques et les idées attribuées au Théâtre de l'Absurde, notamment la 'dévalorisation de la langue' et le 'non-sens' des dialogues. En ce qui concerne l'analyse, l'étude se base sur la théorie d'implication qui est élaborée par Grice, le perspectif constructiviste sur la formation d'identité et la documentation pertinente sur la question de la violence. Les observations analytiques sur les données se concentrent sur les différentes façons dont les personnages ne parviennent pas à respecter le principe de coopération et ses quatre maximes (la maxime de quantité, qualité, relation, et manière) et sur le sens généré par l'exploitation des précédentes maximes. La recherche révèle que l'identité des personnages dans les deux pièces est exprimée grâce à leur violation du principe de coopération et le bafouillage des quatre maximes de conversation dans leurs dialogues et que la violence est également le résultat de l'exploitation du principe de coopération par les deux dramaturges en bafouant les quatre maximes dans les dialogues des personnages. En dernier lieu, cette recherche montre comment les idées posées par les critiques à propos de la langue dans le Théâtre de l'Absurde manquées de noter que l'utilisation non-conventionnelle de la langue est délibérément faite par les dramaturges afin d'atteindre leurs objectifs dans les deux pièces et démontre par conséquent comment le Théâtre de l'Absurde mérite d'être nommé le Théâtre de la Langue.

Mots-clés: Discours, violence, identité, le Théâtre de l'Absurde, la langue, le principe de coopération, les Maxims conversationnelles de Grice, l'implication.