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القسم او الفرع : اللغة الإنكليزية

المرحلة: الرابعة

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Theatre of the Absurd Definition

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the term as

‘Theater that seeks to represent the absurdity of human existence in a meaningless universe by bizarre or fantastic means.’

Theatre of the Absurd Origin

Theater of absurd illustrates the philosophy of Albert Camus in The Myth of Sisyphus that speaks of life with no inherent meaning in it. For him, world was beyond the understanding of man, so it will always remain absurd and we should accept this fact. Martin Esslin considered four playwrights: Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, Arthur Adamov and Jean Genet as leaders of the movement. They were also classified as belonging to Absurdist Theater. But, these writers used terms such as “Anti-Theater” or “New Theater”

Theatre of The Absurd History

This movement influenced by existentialism, began in the form of experimental theater in [Paris](#) . Absurd elements first came into existence after the rise of Greek drama in the plays of Aristophanes in the form of wild humor and buffoonery of old [comedy](#).

Then, morality plays of the Middle Ages can also be called a precursor of the Theatre of the Absurd dealing with common man’s struggle with allegorical and existential problems.

World War II finally brought the Theater of Absurd to life because the chaotic atmosphere during that time was compelling them to think about their absurd existence.

Theatre of the Absurd Characteristics

1. Questions of Existence

Absurd plays raise some basic questions of existence like- why we are alive why we have to die and why there is injustice and suffering.

2. Distrust in Language

For absurdist playwrights, language is only a meaningless communication and stereotyped exchange of ideas because words fail to express essence of human existence.

3. Illogical Speeches and Meaningless Plots

By illogical speeches and meaningless plots, they wish to establish a feeling of freedom to make their own worlds.

4. Re-establishment of man's communion with Universe

They attempt to restore the importance of myth and rituals in the life of man and make them aware of the ultimate realities of their life.

5. Emphasize on Abstract Values of Life

Absurdists force us to look at our abstract values of life like love and family. Thus, we may hope to accept the absurdity of life and try to find values in a world devoid of them.

6. Vagueness about Time, Place and Character

Absurdists have no time, place and character in their plays as they feel that there is no past or future, only the repetition of the present

7. Lack of communication amid characters

Each character lives an egoistic life and attempts to get another character to understand him and this results in more alienation.

Plot

Theater of Absurd discards the traditional pattern of plot construction. It consists of repetition of clichés and routine as in [Waiting for Godot](#). There is always a menacing outside force that remains a mystery

throughout the play. Absence, emptiness, nothingness, and unresolved mysteries are central features of many Absurdist plots.

Features of Absurdist Plot

- Absence, Emptiness, Nothingness, Unresolved, Mysteries

For example, the action in Waiting for Godot centers round the absence of a character Godot who is long awaited. The plot also revolves round unexplained metamorphosis, a shift in the laws of physics, or a supernatural change.

For example, in Ionesco's How to Get Rid of It, a couple is dealing with a corpse that is growing large steadily, but Ionesco never discloses the identity of the corpse and, the corpse floats away unidentified in the unknown. The plots are frequently cyclical in Endgame, the play begins where it ends and the theme of routine and repetition keeps on moving.

Theatre of the Absurd Plays

The first large major production of an absurdist play was Jean Genet's The Maids in 1947.

Ionesco's The Bald Sopranos was first performed in 1950, and Beckett's Waiting for Gadot is probably the best known of all absurdist plays and it was premiered in January 1953.

محتوى المحاضرة الثانية

The life of Samuel Beckett

He was born in , April 13, 1906 in Foxrock, a suburb of Dublin, Ireland. Beckett and his older brother spent their childhood. Their much-loved father took them hiking and swimming. Their mother, against whom Beckett rebelled almost all of his life, took them to church. By the time they were five, the boys were in school. Before he left for boarding school in 1920, Beckett had already developed into an avid reader. He kept his books on a small shelf above his bed, along with busts of Shakespeare and Dante.

In spite of this, he graduated first in his class in 1927 with a major in modern languages. In preparation for a teaching career at Trinity, Beckett went to France, where he worked with James Joyce. In 1930, he

received first prize in a contest conducted by the Hours Press for his 98 line poem Whoroscope. This poem was based on the life of René Descartes (1596-1650), a French philosopher and mathematician. He continued to write poetry through the 1930s and 1940s in both English and French. Then, in 1974, after a break of twenty-five years, he began to publish poetry again. Before, during, and after Waiting for Godot, Beckett wrote novels. His first published novel Murphy (1938).

From 1942 to 1944, while living in Roussillon, Beckett wrote Watt, which included veiled autobiographical accounts of his life. By the time his father died in 1933, leaving him a small income, Beckett's character had already been formed. Between bouts with physical and mental illnesses that included flus, colds, aching joints, depression, anxiety, boils, cysts, constipation, insomnia, and glaucoma in both eyes, he would live the rest of his life as a writer. In the next fifty years he would go on to produce an impressive collection of work in a variety of genres.

He created essays, poems, short stories, novels, plays, mime, and film. When Beckett wrote this play (from October 1948 to January 1949), he was already more than forty years old. In 1969, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. In December 1989, after too long a stay in "an old crock's home," Samuel Beckett died of respiratory failure at the age of 83. Right before he died, he was asked if anything in life was worthwhile. "Precious little," he replied.

محتوى المحاضرة الثالثة

Summary Act I

The play opens with two men, Vladimir and Estragon, meeting by a leafless tree, whose species is later speculated to be that of willow. Estragon notifies Vladimir of his most recent troubles: he spent the previous night lying in a ditch and received a beating from a number of anonymous assailants. The duo discuss a variety of issues, none of any apparent severe consequence, and it is revealed that they are waiting for a man named Godot. They are not certain if they have ever met Godot, or if he will even arrive. Pozzo and his slave, Lucky, arrive and pause in their journey. Pozzo endeavors to engage both men in conversation. Lucky is bound by a rope held by Pozzo, who forces Lucky to carry his heavy bags and physically punishes him if he deems his movements too lethargic. Pozzo states that he is on the way to the market, at which he intends to sell Lucky for profit. Following Pozzo's command:

"Think!", Lucky performs a dance and a sudden **monologue: a torrent of academicsounding phrases mixed with sounds** such as "quaquaquaqua".

Lucky's speech, in a cryptic manner, seems to reference the underlying themes of the play. Pozzo and Lucky soon depart, leaving Estragon and Vladimir to continue their wait for the elusive Godot. Soon a boy shows up and explains to Vladimir and Estragon that he is a messenger from Godot, and that Godot will not be arriving tonight, but tomorrow. Vladimir asks about Godot, and the boy exits. Vladimir and Estragon decide that they will also leave, but they remain onstage as the curtain falls.

محتوى المحاضرة الرابعة

THE CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY:

Estragon :

One of the two main characters of the play, along with Vladimir, Estragon is rather helpless on his own. In the beginning of the play, he struggles just to take off his boots, for example. Unlike Vladimir, he has no grasp of time, and is confused as to whether it is evening or morning in act two. He has a poor grasp of people's identities. He doesn't recognize Lucky and Pozzo in act two. He cannot even remember his own past, and tells Pozzo his name is Adam. Estragon repeatedly wants to leave, but each time Vladimir reminds him that they must stay and wait for Godot. While he often forms the dull-minded counterpoint to the more cerebral Vladimir, Estragon is still able to match Vladimir's verbal wit and once claims that he used to be a poet.

VLADIMIR:

Vladimir often seems to be more rational than his more nonsensical companion, Estragon. He has a sense of linear time and realizes that the events of act two essentially repeat those of act one. He is also able to remember people's identities, unlike Estragon and Pozzo, who forget each other in act two. He seems to be the only one who is really outraged at Pozzo's horrible treatment of Lucky in act one, but he doesn't actually do anything to help him. Vladimir tries to explain what is going on in the world and to show evidence to support his theories. By the end of the play Vladimir seems less sure than he did at the beginning: whenever Estragon leaves the stage for a brief moment, Vladimir panics out of his

intense fear of loneliness and abandonment. While Godot never appears on stage or has any lines, he is such a significant absence in the play that he may be rightly recognized as one of the play's characters. What little we can gather about Mr. Godot comes from the dialogue of Estragon, Vladimir, and the boy he sends to deliver his message. Whoever Godot is, Vladimir and Estragon are convinced that he alone will save them, so they wait endlessly for his arrival, which never comes. Because of his name's resemblance to God, Godot is often read as Beckett's pessimistic version of God, an absent savior who never comes to the aid of those suffering on earth.

POZZO:

Pozzo runs into Vladimir and Estragon while journeying along the road in both acts. He abuses Lucky and treats him as a slave, pulling him around with a rope tied around his neck and having him carry all his things. While he exercises some relative power and authority over Lucky and acts superior to the other characters, he is nonetheless far from powerful himself. He panics when he loses things like his watch and is doomed to repeat his wandering every day, just as Vladimir and Estragon repeat their waiting for Godot. He is particularly helpless in act two, when he is inexplicably struck blind and is unable to get up after falling to the ground.

LUCKY:

Lucky is Pozzo's slave, whom Pozzo treats horribly and continually insults, addressing him only as "pig." He is mostly silent in the play, but gives a lengthy, mostly nonsensical monologue in act one, when Pozzo asks him to think out loud. While all the characters on-stage suffer in different ways throughout the play, Lucky is the play's most obvious figure of physical suffering and exploitation as he is whipped, beaten, and kicked by other characters.

محتوى المحاضرة الخامسة

Summary Act II

Act II It is the following day. Vladimir and Estragon are again waiting near the tree, which has grown a number of leaves since last witnessed in Act 1, an indication that a certain amount of time has passed since the events contained within Act 1. Both men are still awaiting Godot. Lucky and Pozzo

eventually reappear, but not as they were. Pozzo has become blind and Lucky has become mute. Pozzo cannot recall having met Vladimir and Estragon previously. Lucky and Pozzo exit shortly after their spirited encounter, leaving Vladimir and Estragon to go on waiting.

Soon after, the boy reappears to report that Godot will not be coming. The boy states that he has not met Vladimir and Estragon before and he is not the boy who talked to Vladimir yesterday, which causes Vladimir a great deal more frustration than he exhibited during their encounter in Act 1. Vladimir implores the boy to remember him the next day so as to avoid a similar encounter. The boy exits. Vladimir and Estragon consider suicide, but they do not have a rope. They decide to leave and return the day after with a rope, but again they remain as the curtain falls on the final act.

Estragon refers to "billions of others," who have been killed, and describes being beaten by an anonymous "they." Lucky (whose ill-fitting name is itself darkly comic) is treated horribly and physically abused on-stage. And Vladimir and Estragon talk nonchalantly and pleasantly about suicide. All this has a discomfiting effect on the audience, who is not sure how to react to this absurd mixture of comedy and tragedy, seriousness and playfulness. In act one, Vladimir says, "one daren't even laugh any more," and his comment could apply well to the audience of Beckett's play, who don't know whether to laugh or to cringe at the events on-stage.

The absurdity caused by the seeming mismatch between characters' tones and the content of their speech can be seen as a reaction to a world emptied of meaning and significance. If the world is meaningless, it makes no sense to see it as comic or tragic, good or bad. Beckett thus presents an eerie play that sits uneasily on the border between tragedy and comedy, in territory one can only call the absurd.

محتوى المحاضرة السادسة

Symbols in Beckett's Waiting for Godot

Symbols

Beckett famously refused to interpret Waiting for Godot, letting his writing speak for itself. "No symbols" where none intended is often read as a warning against assigning symbolic meaning to objects in his writing. This doesn't mean that no symbolism was intended; only that audiences should be careful about assigning meanings not supported by words and actions in the play.

Leafless Tree

The tree, near which Estragon and Vladimir meet, is completely bare of leaves at the beginning of the play. It represents the only organic element in the setting, and it is dead or dormant. This tree portrays the world as barren and lifeless, emphasizing the lack of purpose and meaning the characters must contend with. The apparent growth of leaves on the tree in Act 2 does nothing to ease the sense of meaninglessness; it only adds to the characters' uncertainty about the place and the passage of time. The staging is telling in this regard: despite Vladimir's description of the tree as "covered with leaves," the stage directions specify only "four or five" leaves, leaving it mostly barren.

The Rope

Pozzo's rope is the only rope that physically appears in the play, and it represents the balance of power in the relationship between Pozzo and Lucky. In Act 1, Pozzo dominates Lucky with a rope half the length of the stage: "Pozzo drives Lucky by means of a rope passed around his neck," and Lucky is often the recipient of Pozzo's whip. Yet Lucky accepts this balance of power without question, as if he cannot envision any other state for himself. By Act 2, however, the rope is shortened, and the balance of power in Pozzo and Lucky's relationship is less clear. Pozzo, now blind, depends on Lucky for direction, and Lucky, still slavish, depends psychologically on Pozzo. By extension, there are a number of figurative ropes in the play. Vladimir and Estragon, like Pozzo and Lucky, are similarly tied to each other in a relationship based on domination and submission. The pair is also tied to Godot and the dominating belief that his arrival will provide a meaning for their lives. Vladimir and Estragon also entertain the idea of hanging themselves with a rope. While suicide is never a real option, its discussion provides the pair a diversion from the act of waiting for Godot. The rope here becomes a symbol of submission to an illogical belief.

The Hats

Hats are worn by Vladimir, Estragon, Lucky, and Pozzo and are a vehicle for the characters to show their identities. For example, Lucky needs his hat in order to think; Pozzo shows his power over Lucky by taking his servant's hat off. Vladimir, the "thinker" of the two main characters, is fixated on his hat, while Estragon, who is more realistic, thinks first of his boots. In Act 2, Estragon and Vladimir have a long "bit" in which they exchange their hats along with Lucky's; an aimless attempt to make time pass as they wait.

The Circular Structure of Waiting for Godot

No definite conclusion or resolution can ever be offered to *Waiting for Godot* because the play is essentially circular and repetitive in nature. A traditional play, in contrast, has an introduction of the characters and the exposition; then, there is a statement of the problem of the play in relationship to its settings and characters. (In *Waiting for Godot*, we never know where the play takes place, except that it is set on "a country road.") Furthermore, in a traditional play, the characters are developed, and gradually we come to see the dramatist's world view; the play then rises to a climax, and there is a conclusion. This type of development is called a linear development. In the plays of the Theater of the Absurd, the structure is often exactly the opposite. We have, instead, a circular structure, and most aspects of this drama support this circular structure in one way or another.

The **setting** is the same, and the **time** is the same in both acts. Each act begins early in the morning, just as the tramps are awakening, and both acts close with the moon having risen. The action takes place in exactly the same landscape, isolated road with one single tree. In the second act, there are some leaves on the tree, but from the viewpoint of the audience, the setting is exactly the same.) We are never told where this road is located; all we know is that the action of the play unfolds on this lonely road. Thus, from Act I to Act II, there is no difference in either the setting or in the time and, thus, instead of a progression of time within an identifiable setting, we have a repetition in the second act of the same things that we saw and heard in the first act.

More important than the **repetition** of **setting and time**, however, is the repetition of the **actions**. To repeat, in addition to the basic structure of actions indicated earlier — that is:

Vladimir and Estragon Alone

Arrival of Pozzo and Lucky

Vladimir and Estragon Alone

Arrival of Boy Messenger

Vladimir and Estragon Alone

there are many lesser actions that are repeated in both acts. At the beginning of each act, for example, several identical concerns should be noted. Among these is the emphasis on Estragon's boots. Also, Vladimir, when first noticing Estragon, uses virtually the same words: "So there you are again" in Act I and "There you are again" in Act II. At the beginning of both acts, the first discussion concerns a beating that Estragon received just prior to their meeting. At the beginning of both acts, Vladimir and Estragon emphasize repeatedly that they are there to wait for Godot. In the endings of both acts, Vladimir and Estragon discuss the possibility of hanging themselves, and in both endings they decide to bring some good strong rope with them the next day so that they can indeed hang themselves. In addition, both acts end with the same words, voiced differently: In ACT I:

ESTRAGON: Well, shall we go?

VLADIMIR: Yes, let's go.

ACT II:

VLADIMIR: Well? Shall we go?

ESTRAGON: Yes, let's go.

And the stage directions following these lines are exactly the same in each case: "**They do not move.**"

With the arrival of Pozzo and Lucky in each act, we notice that even though their physical appearance has theoretically changed, outwardly they seem the same; they are still tied together on an endless journey to an unknown place to rendezvous with a nameless person. Likewise, the Boy Messenger, while theoretically different, brings the exact same message:

Mr. Godot will not come today, but he will surely come tomorrow. Vladimir's difficulties with urination and his suffering are discussed in each act as a contrast to the suffering of Estragon because of his boots. In addition, the subject of eating, involving carrots, radishes, and turnips, becomes a central image in each act, and the tramps' involvement with hats, their multiple insults, and their reconciling embraces — these and many more lesser matters are found repeatedly in both acts. Finally, and most important, there are the larger concepts: *first*, the suffering of the tramps; *second*, their attempts, however futile, to pass time; *third*, their attempts to part, and, ultimately, their incessant waiting for Godot — all these make the two acts clearly repetitive, circular in structure, and the fact that these repetitions are so obvious in the play is Beckett's manner of breaking away from the traditional play and of asserting the uniqueness of his own circular structure.

Theories and themes in Waiting for Godot :

- A Marxist reading

Waiting for Godot” by Samuel Beckett and its complex relationship to the late modernist bourgeois ideology, one can actually make a choice to unfold vigour theoretical energies of [Post-Structuralist Marxist theory](#). The play can be discussed in the side of Post-Structuralist Marxist reading. The play shows the conflict and disparity of its meanings reveals its unspoken portions that the late modernist bourgeois ideology has suppressed. As a result, the difference, conflict and contradiction of text’s final meanings are flux, contradictions, silences, absences and unspoken portions of the text, which show its complex relationship to the late modernist bourgeois ideology. the play presents an essential characteristic of human situation, which emphasizes suffering, absurdity, futility, angst and nothingness of human existence. The play also shows class relations in depiction of [Master-slaves relationship between Pozzo and Lucky](#), which is a bleak reference to the exploiting and exploited classes and nations in the modern capitalist world. At the same time the play makes us believe that people wait something, which does not materialize in [the modern capitalist social formulation, just as expected Godot does not appear in the play](#). Still there are many other untapped and unexplored areas of the play; binary oppositions (which is one of the most important themes of Post-structuralism and Post-modernism) [between Vladimir and Estragon’s actions](#), personalities and ways of thinking and behaving is one of the examples.

- Existentialism

Waiting for Godot” is an [existentialist](#) play. It presents many themes of [existentialism](#), which is ideology of the late modernist bourgeoisie. Therefore, we fund in the text of the play many themes of existentialism such as [absurdity, nothingness, futility, uncertainty, nihilism](#), thoroughness into being, angst (anxiety) and disappearance of solutions on the part of human beings, who are in turn left exploited, suffered and bewildered by powerful forces of the bourgeoisie prevalent in the social formation. The most characteristic and important literary movement of modern age, beginning in the late thirties with Albert Camus and Henry Miller, is the Theatre of the Absurd and the most

characteristic protagonist of the movement is Samuel Beckett. The movement has its close affinities with existentialist philosophy and its theme of absurdity.

As a result, the play presents disparity between words and action of the characters. We find complete disparity between the characters' words and deeds. For example, Estragon and Vladimir think to commit suicide, but they fail to do so because of their incapability of any action.

“Vladimir: We will hang ourselves tomorrow. Unless Godot come.

Estragon: And if he comes? Vladimir: We will be saved”

We can mostly notice their incapability to do anything through the play.

“Estragon: “Why don't we hang ourselves?

Vladimir: With what?

Estragon: you haven't got a bit of rope?

Vladimir: No.

Estragon: Then we can't.

Vladimir: Let's go.

Estragon: Oh wait, there is my belt.

Vladimir: It's too short.

Estragon: You could hang on to my legs.

Vladimir: And who would hang onto mine? Estragon: True”

Similarly, we may notice the disparity between words and incapability of any action of the characters throughout the play. They intend to do something but cannot do anything in the whole play. They inertly wait for Godot instead of finding him out. By the end of the play, they want to go but they cannot move.

“Vladimir: Well, shall we go?

Estragon: Yes, let's go. They do not move”

The loss of identity

The loss of identity or misrecognition of human beings is an important theme of existentialism. "Waiting for Godot" depicts the loss of human identity or misrecognition of human beings in the capitalist social formation, expressing the late modernist bourgeois ideology.

This particular play presents a world in which daily actions are without meaning, language fails to effectively communicate, and the characters at times reflect a sense of artifice, even wondering aloud whether perhaps they are on a stage. Becket shows the world a way of escaping from sufferings of life. Life can be spent like Estragon and Vladimir: doing nothing, having irrational behavior, passing the ball and act ridiculously.

Perhaps, absurdity is the only way to get through life. This is also a method to avoid criticism as it has been said that the best way to avoid criticism is to do nothing. While doing nothing and repeating silly actions, one can pass seconds but not whole life. It seems that Becket has preferred absurdity over existentialism. Waiting for Godot is a prime example of what has come to be known as the theater of the absurd. The play is filled with nonsensical lines, wordplay, meaningless dialogue, and characters who abruptly shift emotions and forget everything, ranging from their own identities to what happened yesterday. All of this contributes to an absurdist humor throughout the play. However, this humor is often uncomfortably mixed together with tragic or serious content to make a darker kind of comedy

محتوى المحاضرة التاسعة

Slavery in Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot

Beckett's masterpiece Waiting for Godot is a tragicomedy through which the writer tries to throw much light on the problematic conditions of human beings. one of the most important ideas stated in this play. It is of course slavery. Slavery is an ancient inequitable system in conformity with which a slave is to be purchased and sold similar to any commodity. The slave, man or a woman is to be possessed by another individual and is categorized as a private possession. The slave is obliged to achieve whatever the master wants for free. The serf who is owned for someone lifelong and whose kids should be spontaneously enslaved is called a chattel slave. Beckett's Waiting for Godot reveals that two disparate grades of bondage are shown of which one is patent and is articulately demonstrated throughout the relation between the characters, Pozzo and Lucky.

Employing Pozzo's bad treatment of his slave, the writer succeeds in making a good concentration on the ugliness of slavery. Created to be the victim of such a system, Lucky, on the one hand, is constrained to be pitilessly driven like an animal to the market paying no attention to his dignity as a human being and to the long years he has spent serving his master. Pozzo, on the other hand, appears as a despotic lord who uses a rope tied around the neck of the slave so as to be a means of communication.

Words are replaced by jerking the rope to issue commands.

Being guided by a piece of cord that causes constant pain in the head along with the neck, Lucky, who stands for the best paragon of wretchedness and misery, is ready to execute anything to convince Pozzo to relinquish the idea of letting him be possessed by a new owner. He starts shedding tears as a result of Pozzo's loud declaration, "I hope to get a good price for him."¹¹ The master brutally insults Lucky saying, "old dogs have more dignity" (p. 32). Pozzo is accustomed to do so. It seems that it becomes a part of his daily routine that he has to humiliate the slave. Sometimes, Pozzo does not hesitate to put "the butt of his whip against Lucky's chest and pushes" (p. 24). The only option for Lucky is to be alert to proffer his master whatever he wants. Together with the whip, the master has used the rope to be an outrageous means for dealing with the slave. Moreover, Lucky has to tolerate another type of insult. Pozzo calls him using animal names, "Up pig" and then "Up hog" (p. 23). Lucky even does not dare to look at Pozzo's face, "you look at me, pig" (p. 30). He has no time to get a break excluding the while during which his master is taking his meal. He usually sleeps upright. He starts sagging "slowly until bag and basket touch the ground, then straightens up with a start and begins to sag again" (p. 25). As it is manifested in the following selected lines of a long conversation among Estragon, Vladimir, and Pozzo, the powerless bondman, who doesn't like to be sold, goes on carrying Pozzo's effects on his back while having a rest for he tries to cajole the owner so as to convince him to change his mind.

"ESTRAGON: Why he doesn't put down his bags?

POZZO: He wants to impress me, so that I'll keep him.

ESTRAGON: What?

POZZO: Perhaps I haven't got it quite right. He wants to mollify me, so that I'll give up the idea of parting with him. No, that's not exactly it either.

VLADIMIR: You want to get rid of him? POZZO: He imagines that when I see how well he carries I'll be tempted to keep him on in that capacity" (pp. 29, 31) Although Lucky is always affronted, he refuses the thought that his tyrannical master tries to "get rid of him" (p. 32). the reasonable interpretation of such type of relevance is that the slave and his lord are inseparable.

محتوى المحاضرة العاشرة

Time in waiting for Godot

Waiting for Godot is a story of '*time*' written in the form of 'absurd', set during two consecutive days. The two main characters are tramps awaiting Godot's arrival. Nevertheless, Godot's continual absence wastes time in the lives of the tramps by making them living puppets in the world of the absurd, therefore they simply "*Let it go to waste*" (52), instead of finding an appropriate way to spend it.

Beckett's intention to make them the victims of time, pointing out that we cannot stop time, that we live in the present moment with what we have, instead of waiting for better lives. The readers seem to have a choice between waiting for one "better" thing after another or simply living with what we have.

Both past and future are illusions, and seen under this aspect, we begin to taste the notion of eternity. He says that the concept of a past and future is an illusion, and yet the play seems to be only set in the "*present*". However, *the present does not seem to have a fixed beginning or end*. It would seem that we cannot control time, and the senselessness of time suggests that it is pointless to attempt to stop its passage. "*In an instant all will vanish and we'll be alone once more, in the midst of nothingness*" (52).

A possible solution to this would be the path to eternity; which could be represented by Godot.

This period of time often could be a continuation of endless hope. In Waiting for Godot it seems that the tramps' hope is Godot; they continue their lives with that hope of meeting Godot, because they believe that they "*Will be saved*" (60). However, if they did not have the hope of meeting Godot they may already have taken the action of suicide. Meanwhile, as the tramps are waiting for Godot, they try to find something to do in order to pass the time. The suggestion of suicide is tragic and yet the audience receives it as a comic one:

Vladimir: What do we do now?

Estragon: Wait. Vladimir: Yes, but while waiting.

Estragon: What about hanging ourselves?

Vladimir: Hmm. It'd give us an erection!

Estragon: (highly excited). An erection! (12)

On the one hand, this is a clever way to bring humour into the play through outright absurdity. On the other hand, it is meaningless, nonsensical and absurd to hang oneself in order to pass the time.

However, the tramps do not hang themselves and they continue their journey, coming again the next day with the same hope despite nothing significant happening. Estragon asks “**If he comes?**” Vladimir replies “**We’ll be saved**” (60). However, after deciding against the idea of suicide they select the act of waiting. In the very first sentence of the play, Estragon states “**Nothing to be done**” (7), concluding with the idea that the tramps may want to spend their time doing nothing. This becomes certain when Vladimir insists “**I’m beginning to come round to that opinion**” (7), and throughout the play they come back to the same conclusion, “**Nothing to be done**”. During the second act, when they try to remember Estragon insists, “In the meantime let us try and converse calmly, since we are incapable of keeping silent.

