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PINTER: "THE SAID AND THE UNSAID"

BY

JOANNE CHRISTENSEN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Pinter uses such verbal devices as hesitations, pauses and silences, syntax and rhythm, tone and diction, and conversational implicatures, as well as visual devices such as gesture and proxemics to create unspoken meaning, a subtext of emotion, intention and motivation. These devices are constantly refined, achieving greater subtlety and realism as Pinter's career progresses. An integral part of this subtext is menace. It too joins the trend toward realism, evolving from a physical threat originating in some abstract external force to psychological menace arising from within the characters' relationships. As Pinter's techniques grow more sophisticated, the demands on the audience to detect and interpret subtextual meaning become greater. Despite this increasing sophistication, audiences continue to be disturbed not only by the menace they perceive onstage, but also by the challenges to dramatic convention posed by Pinter's techniques for creating subtext.

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INTRODUCTION

Pinter [illegible] reluctance when asked to discuss his approaches or theories concerning [illegible]. However, he makes an exception in a speech entitled "Writing for the Theatre" delivered at the 1962 National Student Drama Festival in Bristol. In addition to such topics as the writing process and critical and audience response, he addresses some of the issues and themes in his works such as identity, verification, resolution and communication. Regarding the last theme he makes the following claim:

> Language . . . is a highly ambiguous business. So often, below the word spoken, is the thing known and unspoken. . . . You and I, the characters which grow on a page, most of the time we're inexpressive, giving little away, unreliable, elusive, evasive, obstructive, unwilling. But it's out of these attributes that a language arises. A language, I repeat, where under what is said, another thing is being said. (13-14)

As the combative flavor of this passage implies, language becomes the weapon with which characters confront each other in the subtextual battle. Irving Wardle comments on the "ferocious sense of territory" Pinter's characters display ("Harold Pinter" 658). They must struggle to win or maintain their position within the social order of the play. This is not a physical contest; brute strength does not ensure victory. Rather, a character's dexterity in the field of verbal thrust and parry determines whether he will succeed. The dangers of probing too deep or revealing too much discourage, for the most part, even overt verbal aggression, forcing the characters to manoeuver in an indirect, oblique fashion. Conflict, except for occasional, brief outbursts, remains curiously beneath a restrained veneer of "polite" conversation. Thus, a doubleness in Pinter's language emerges, a doubleness in which unspoken meaning is concealed

within or under the spoken words.

Ambiguity or doubleness, of course, is not unique to Pinter's language or plays; however, the intensity or degree to which he employs this doubleness is distinctive. The relative absence of exposition, another distinctive Pinterian trait, draws complaints about deliberate obscurity;[1] yet this inexplicitness forces us to concentrate more closely on the language, to infer what we can. Instead of discovering, with any certainty, background information, we are drawn, or should be drawn, into the present action or situation to consider the full significance of the words themselves and their secondary meanings, how they are said and their effect on the stage listener.

Critics grapple with definitions to satisfactorily account for the ambiguity or doubleness of Pinter's language. J. R. Hollis, in his book, *Harold Pinter: The Poetics of Silence*, claims that in Pinter's language "the most important things are not being said" (13). In his article, "Beyond Realism: The Plays of Harold Pinter," F. J. Bernhard notes:

> Pinter . . . consistently draws upon two chief sources of dramatic poetry: situations for which the ordinary meaning of words are inadequate and language that conveys something other than the meaning of its words. (185)

Martin Esslin, in *The Peopled Wound*, phrases the phenomenon as "what is being said and what lies behind it," claiming unarticulated meaning arises from "the complete contradiction between the words that are spoken and the emotional and psychological action that underlies them" (211-12). John Russell Brown, in *Theatre Language*, subscribes to the idea of a subtext operating beneath the words, agreeing with Pinter's formulation that "under what is said, another thing is being said" (27). Austin Quigley expresses dissatisfaction with these critics who he feels "have found it a great deal easier to perceive 'hidden' meanings than to explain how the 'hidden' is, or becomes, visible" (15). As the quotation marks suggest, he dismisses the idea of 'hidden,' unspoken or subtextual meaning. He exhorts us to look at how the language functions, at not only

what the characters say, but *why* they say it *when* they do (72-73). This is excellent advice. Unfortunately, when Quigley turns to analysis of the actual plays, he falls prey to the same tendency for which he reproves the other critics: explication. If there is no 'hidden' meaning, why does he find extensive explication necessary?

Mindful of this pitfall, I do not intend to provide or endorse any particular reading. Rather, I want to reconfirm the theory that Pinter creates unspoken meaning (my term for the language beneath the language) and to illustrate *how* he does so through such verbal devices as hesitations, pauses and silences, syntax and rhythm, diction and tone, conversational implicatures, and such visual devices as gesture and proxemics. Furthermore, I will explore how these methods evolve through the course of his career from *The Birthday Party* through *The Caretaker, The Homecoming, Old Times* up to and including *No Man's Land* and how Pinter employs them to shape audience response. The famous initial shock and rejection of *The Birthday Party* was followed by gradual approval and acceptance, attesting to the success with which Pinter has educated "critics and audiences about his particular style" (Hincheliffe 49). Finally, I want to examine the question of menace - how these devices create or reveal threat and how the nature of menace changes. John Russell Brown claims, in "Dialogue in Pinter and Others," first published in 1965, that an audience "expecting to be puzzled ceases to be truly puzzled; still more, . . . the expectant audience ceases to be menaced" (11). Time has proven him wrong; audiences continue to be disturbed and challenged by the menace in Pinter's plays.

CHAPTER I: VERBAL DEVICES

Pinter builds into his dialogue numerous verbal devices which contribute significantly to the creation of his language beneath the language. The first three devices, hesitations, pauses and silences, might seem an odd inclusion in a chapter entitled "verbal devices." However, they are an important element in the patterning of his dialogue; unspoken meaning often surfaces in these moments when nothing is said. Moreover, their interaction with the other, more *verbal* devices explored in this chapter, the conversational implicatures in the next and the visual devices in the last prove them a natural starting place for this discussion. Like the other verbal devices, syntax and rhythm, tone and diction, hesitations, pauses and silences are all used both unconsciously and deliberately by various characters. Pinter refines his own use of these devices as his career progresses and his audience grows more attuned to his style.

In his article, "'Punctuation' and Patterning in *The Homecoming*," John Dawick examines the structural functions of hesitations, pauses and silences (in addition to blackouts and curtains). He also occasionally touches with beneficial insight on their subtextual capacities. He notes how hesitations can reveal a character's emotional state and how they, as well as pauses, can be used strategically by a character for a desired effect. Dawick agrees with John Russell Brown's assessment of the basic function of Pinter's pause, how it marks the "silent interplay of conscious and unconscious motivation" ("Dialogue in Pinter and Others" 127). The pause signals unspoken meaning, allowing the audience to grasp the nuances of the preceding remark or exchange.[2] Silences perform these functions as well but act as an intensifier. They "emphasize the most intense moments of menace or conflict" (Dawick 42). In the later plays, they also signal important shifts in the relations between characters. Dawick remarks on the increased frequency and control with which Pinter employs the pause and

silence in *The Homecoming*, a trend he continues in the two later plays.

As Dawick remarks, hesitations are often the result of an inarticulate character's groping attempt to find the words that precisely express what he desires to say (38). They usually convey more than this, however; for example, they may reveal when a character is lying as when Goldberg in *The Birthday Party* haltingly reassures Petey on Stanley's condition:

> Goldberg (*a little uncertainly*). Oh ... a little better, I think, a little better. Of course, I'm not really qualified to say, Mr. Boles. I mean, I haven't got the ... the qualifications. The best thing would be if someone with the proper ... mnn ... qualifications ... was to have a look at him. Someone with a few letters after his name. It makes all the difference. (81)

The hesitations not only give the impression Goldberg is avoiding a specific answer to Petey's questions, but that he is also improvising an explanation for Stanley's removal. Significantly, Goldberg, who up to this point has been unfalteringly eloquent even when he is lying, suddenly appears nervous and uneasy. His lies and his nervousness intensify our already roused suspicions concerning Stanley's true condition and the nature of the night-long interrogation. This gruelling session has left Goldberg, as well as McCann, profoundly shaken and disturbed.

Hirst, in *No Man's Land*, is another whose emotions well up to the surface, manifesting themselves in faltering interruptions during his description of the pictures in his album:

> Hirst. . . . You might see faces of others, in shadow, or cheeks of others, turning, or jaws, or backs of necks, or eyes, dark under hats, which might remind you of others, whom once you knew, whom you thought long dead, but from whom you will still receive a sidelong glance, if you can face the good ghost. Allow the love of the good ghost. They possess all that emotion ... trapped. Bow to it. It will assuredly never release them, but who knows ... what relief ... it may give to them ... who knows how they may quicken ... in their chains, in their glass jars. You think it cruel ... to quicken them, when they are fixed, imprisoned? No ... no. Deepy, deeply, they wish to respond to your touch, to your look, and when you smile, their joy ... is unbounded.

> And so I say to you, tender the dead, as you would yourself be tendered, now, in what you would describe as your life. (137)

The distress betrayed in this halting description is greater than is usually warranted in a regretful reminiscence of lost youth. The hesitations begin specifically when he turns to the theme of imprisonment, referring obliquely to his own imprisonment and metaphoric death (he is no longer a creative, productive literary figure), and to his own desire and fear to reach out to the free, living world. He ends with a plea for gentle treatment, not so much for the people in the photographs as for himself. The description of the people in the photographs is too charged; Hirst associates too closely with their speculated emotions for the passage to be accepted as a straightforward statement.

Faltering is often an indication of a character's highly emotional state. Such is the case in *The Caretaker* when Aston relates his experiences in the mental hospital to Davies:

> Aston. . . . Then one day ... this man ... doctor, I suppose ... the head one ... he was quite a man of ... distinction ... although I wasn't so sure about that. He called me in. He said ... he told me I had something. He said they'd concluded their examination. That's what he said. And he showed me a pile of papers and he said that I'd got something, some complaint. He said ... he just said that, you see. You've got ... this thing. That's your complaint. And we've decided, he said, that in your interests there's only one course we can take. He said ... But I can't ... exactly remember ... how he put it ... he said, we're going to do something to your brain. . . . (64)

If we accept the account as true, the hesitations give it a vulnerable, purging, confessional quality. Aston, perhaps for the first time, is reaching out to someone outside the family for understanding and companionship. Coupled with the oblique references to mental illness and shock treatment, the faltering reveals a lingering reluctance to address the experience directly. If, however, one subscribes to the conspiracy theory (between Aston and Mick against Davies),[3] this confession is merely a clever ploy to appear vulnerable and give the tramp a certain feeling of superiority and

false confidence.

If Aston is using hesitation deliberately, he is not unique in the Pinterian host of characters. Dawick notes the "ironic emphasis" Lenny in *The Homecoming* achieves with a carefully placed hesitation. When Max berates his son for shouting in the middle of the night, Lenny responds, "Look, why don't you just ... pop off, eh?" (51). The pun on "pop" plays on the doubtfulness of Max's paternity. Lenny's cruel insinuations serve to upset Max and divert the latter's demand for an explanation:

> Lenny. I'll tell you what, Dad, since you're in the mood for a bit of a ... chat, I'll ask you a question. It's a question I've been meaning to ask you for some time. That night ... you know ... the night you got me ... that night with Mum, what was it like? . . . (52)

Just as he emphasizes "pop," he emphasizes "chat," the euphemism for a facts of life talk between father and son (Dawick 39). With malicious deliberation, Lenny dwells on the uncertainty surrounding his own conception.

In *Old Times* Anna's hesitations serve to ensure that Deely recognizes the improvisation in her account of the strange man who visited the girls' flat years before:

> Anna. . . . No, no, I'm quite wrong ... he didn't move quickly ... that's quite wrong ... he moved ... very slowly, the light was bad, and stopped. He stood in the center of the room. He looked at us both, at our beds. Then he turned towards me. He approached my bed. He bent down over me. But I would have nothing to do with him, absolutely nothing. (28)

Anna contradicts a few details of her initial account, emphasizing the first change with four hesitations. This tactic draws Deely's as well as our attention to the subsequent alterations. The alterations, in turn, lead us to the realization that she is deliberately antagonizing Deely by lying. Her flagrant disregard for veracity is intended to disconcert and disturb him, and her hesitations ensure that her challenge registers.

Hesitations prove themselves important markers in charting the subtext of these plays. They can unintentionally reveal a character's emotional state as when Goldberg

lies to Petey, or they may be used to emphasize or draw attention to an insult or challenge as when Anna deliberately allows Deely to recognize her lies. In the earlier plays, particularly in *The Caretaker*, the characters struggle more with inarticulacy. Characters in the later plays, who are often of a higher social class and verbal capacity, falter less frequently, more often using hesitations for emphasis and effect.

John Russell Brown and Martin Esslin discuss the influence of Chekhov's subtextual techniques on Pinter's.[4] This is especially true of the manner in which these two playwrights employ pauses. Each uses the pause to draw attention to something the characters avoid vocalizing, to allow the audience a moment to grasp the full significance of a comment and to give particular emphasis through framing a remark with two pauses. There is one major difference between the techniques of these two playwrights: whereas in Chekhov's play, we have the sense that the characters have no control over the pauses, the characters in Pinter's plays often use them with calculated effect.

All three techniques involving pauses appear in the classic subtextual scene between Varya and Lopahin near the end of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* when the latter aborts his proposal to the former. Lyubov having just received assurance that Lopahin is ready to propose sends in Varya:

> Varya (*looking a long while over the things*). It is strange, I can't find it anywhere.
> Lopahin: What are you looking for?
> Varya. I packed it myself, and I can't remember. (*A pause.*)
> Lopahin. Where are you going now, Varvara Mihailova?
> Varya. I? To the Ragulins. I have arranged to go to them to look after the house--as a housekeeper.
> Lopahin. That's in Yashnovo? It'll be seventy miles away. (*A pause.*) So this is the end of life in this house!
> Varya (*looking among the things*). Where is it? Perhaps I put it in the trunk. Yes, life in this house is over--there will be no more of it.
> Lopahin. And I'm just off to Harkov--by this next train. I've a lot of business there. I'm leaving Epihodov here, and I've taken him on.
> Varya. Really!
> Lopahin. This time last year we had snow already, if you remember; but now it's so fine and sunny. Though it's cold, to be sure--three degrees of frost.
> Varya. I haven't looked. (*A pause.*) And besides, our thermometer's

broken.
(*A pause. Voice at the door from the yard*: "Yermolay Alexeyevitch!")
Lopahin. (*as though he has long been expecting this summons*). This minute! (Lopahin *goes out quickly*. . . .) (162-63)

All of the pauses in this passage serve to underline the collective awareness (both of the audience and of the characters) that Lopahin is supposed to be proposing and that Varya is waiting for him to do so. The first pause particularly illustrates this, emphasizing Varya's feeble pretext for entering the room (searching for some unnamed item), thereby providing Lopahin his opportunity. Compare this scene to Meg and Petey's last conversation:

Meg. Where's Stan?

Pause

Is Stan down yet, Petey?
Petey. No ... he's ....
Meg. Is he still in bed?
Petey. Yes, he's ... still asleep.
Meg. Still? He'll be late for his breakfast.
Petey. Let him ... sleep.

Pause

Meg. Wasn't it a lovely party last night?
Petey. I wasn't there.
Meg. Weren't you?
Petey. I came in afterwards.
Meg. Oh.

Pause

It was a lovely party. I haven't laughed so much for years. We had dancing and singing. And games. You should have been there.
Petey. It was good, eh?

Pause (96-97)

The familiar morning exchange is laden with the memory of last night's party and this morning's tragedy. Meg superficially denies the horrors of the night before. Petey tenderly encourages her self-delusion, unable to express his own suspicions concerning

the true nature of the party. The last two awkward pauses indicate they both know the party was not so lovely. Petey understandably finds it difficult to reveal what he has just witnessed (note the hesitations) and witholds the dreadful news he knows will hurt his wife (Esslin 79). Yet, the first two uncomfortable pauses suggest Meg suspects the appalling truth. The pauses, as in Chekhov, underline the omniscience of both audience and characters despite the latter's evasion of the central issue.

The second pause in the passage quoted from *The Cherry Orchard* illustrates another technique common to both playwrights in which the pause allows the audience a moment to register the full implications of the preceding remark or exchange. This second pause follows Lopahin's observation that Varya, as housekeeper to the Ragulins, will live seventy miles away. Various thoughts spring to mind: the difficulty for Lopahin to see Varya should he allow her to leave now; the probability that this is his last chance to propose; the convenience of not having to face her should he fail to do so. Pinter achieves the same multi-conclusion effect using the pause in *Old Times* and *No Man's Land*. In the former, Anna and Deely discuss Kate as if she were not present:

> Deely. Sometimes I take her face in my hands and look at it.
> Anna. Really?
> Deely. Yes, I look at it, holding it in my hands. Then I kind of let it go, take my hands away, leave it floating.
> Kate. My head is quite fixed. I have it on.
> Deely. (*To* Anna.) It just floats away.
> Anna. She was always a dreamer. . . . One day she said to me, I've slept through Friday. . . . I've slept right through it, today is Saturday.
> Deely. You mean she literally didn't know what day it was?
> Anna. No.
> Kate. Yes I did. It was Saturday.
>
> *Pause* (20-21)

During this pause, the audience recognizes Kate's defensiveness and its source: the aggravation the other two personalities provoke through imposing their memory, their perception of her, onto her; the covert aggression embodied in discussing her as if she were not there; and the quiet resolution with which Kate asserts herself. In *No Man's*

Land, Foster and Briggs reassure Hirst:

> Foster. So that nothing else will happen forever. You'll simply be sitting here forever.
> Briggs. But not alone.
> Foster. No. We'll be with you. Briggs and me.
>
> *Pause* (152)

Although this may be comforting to Hirst, Spooner cannot miss the conspicuous exclusion of himself, following as it does his recent offer to be of service. The hostility implied in the omission is simultaneously intensified by the pause as it is being absorbed by the audience. Pinter's technique here contrasts with the less subtle methods found in a scene in *The Caretaker* in which Mick similarly excludes Davies from his plans for the future of the apartment. Pinter uses Davies' pathetic response "What about me?" to underline the omission for the audience (70). After twenty years of Pinter plays, however, Spooner's silence is sufficient not only to signal his understanding but also to alert the audience to the exclusion and all of its implications. With Pinter's pauses, we sometimes see the speaker drop a small bombshell into the conversation and observe the recoil, recovery and regrouping of his or her stage listener. Dawick notes how "the pause alerts the audience to the trap concealed in the speaker's words and focuses attention on his opponent's capacity to avoid it" (40).

Another strategic use of the pause is to frame a highly charged remark, setting it apart and rendering its implied meaning unmistakable. The manner in which Chekhov frames certain remarks with pauses contrasts to Pinter's characters' strategic use of framing pauses. The pause that follows Varya's response to Lopahin's remarks on the weather, "I haven't looked yet," combines with the pause following, "Besides our thermometer's broken," to frame and provide extra emphasis. The first pause illuminates the contrast between Lopahin who has time to notice the weather and Varya who, because of present family circumstances, does not. The second reinforces the

association between the disintegration of the family and the broken thermometer and general disrepair of the estate. The first pause hints at despair, as if Varya is beginning to realize the inevitable outcome of Lopahin's escape into a discussion of the weather. The second confirms that fear in a mutual, silent acknowledgement that he will not propose. Awareness is raised by the first pause, expanded in the framed remark and heightened by the second pause.

Pinter's characters themselves make use of the pauses to heighten each other's awareness. Max takes advantage of a break in Sam's conversation with Lenny to assert:

Pause

Max. I'm here, too, you know.

Sam looks at him.

I said I'm here, too. I'm sitting here.
Sam. I know you're here.

Pause

I took a Yankee out there today ... to the airport. (28)

The first pause is a natural break in the conversation; the second is calculated to allow Max a moment of insight before Sam resumes his former topic. It conveys not only aggravation at Max's interruption but also reveals Sam and Lenny's deliberate exclusion of Max. The pauses set this exchange apart, an exchange which confirms the audience's (and Max's) suspicion that he is being ignored. Anna also uses the framing technique in *Old Times*. She tells Deely:

Anna. She floats from the bath. Like a dream. Unaware of anyone standing, with her towel, waiting for her, waiting to wrap it round her. Quite absorbed.

Pause

Until it is placed on her shoulders.

Pause (50)

She pauses just before the last remark to give it particular emphasis, to ensure Deely does not miss its implications. She suggests some sexual response from Kate when the towel is placed, a response with which Anna appears familiar. The second pause allows Deely to absorb her meaning. She knows it will take him a moment to recover and respond. Unlike Chekhov's characters, who never seem to control the pauses but rather appear subject to, or even victims of those which arise naturally, Pinter's characters capitalize on, manipulate, even create pauses.

One manner in which Pinter's characters use pauses and in which Chekhov's - in this scene from *The Cherry Orchard* at least - do not is to elicit some response, usually some kind of reassurance, from another character. This is the case in *No Man's Land* during Spooner and Hirst's first conversation:

> Spooner. [I am] One of the latter, yes, a man of intelligence and perception. Not one of the former, oh no, not at all. By no means.
>
> *Pause*
>
> May I say how very kind of you it was to ask me in? In fact, you are kindness itself, . . . To show interest in me or, good gracious, anything tending towards a positive liking of me, would cause in me a condition of the acutest alarm. Fortunately, the danger is remote.
>
> *Pause*
>
> I speak to you with this startling candor because you are clearly a reticent man, which appeals, and because you are a stranger to me, and because you are clearly kindness itself.
>
> *Pause*
>
> Do you often hang about Hampstead Heath?
> Hirst. No. (79)

The pauses invite some reaction, some feedback, preferably concurring with Spooner's declarations. Hirst's silence implies his skepticism and even disagreement. It suggests a reluctance to express these sentiments or even antipathy for Spooner and his conceits. Spooner finally resorts to a direct question to which Hirst, apparently unwilling to

display outright hostility, finally replies. In *The Caretaker*, Davies, another disreputable visitor like Spooner, attempts virtually the same strategy except that he begins with direct questions, then turns to indirect remarks spaced with encouraging, pleading pauses, hoping Aston will interrupt to express a change of heart:

> Davies. What am I going to do?
>
> *Pause*
>
> What shall I do?
>
> *Pause*
>
> Where am I going to go?
>
> *Pause*
>
> If you want me to go ... I'll go. You just say the word.
>
> *Pause*
>
> I'll tell you what though ... them shoes ... them shoes you give me ... they're working out all right ... they're all right. Maybe I could ... get ... down ...
>
> *Aston remains still, his back to him, at the window.*
>
> Listen ... if I ... got down ... if I was to ... get my papers ... would you ... would you let ... would you ... if I got down ... and got my ...
>
> *Long Silence.*
>
> *Curtain.* (86-87)

Davies shifts from pauses to hesitations as though he fears the all too final and unalterable silence. The mute Aston unequivocally communicates his unyielding position.

All of the functions of the pause can also be performed by silence. Like the pause, silence can be unconscious or it can be manipulated by a character. It draws attention to the subtext; it allows the stage listener (and the audience) time to grasp the significance of a remark or an exchange; and it adds emphasis to a particular comment. The distinction

between pauses and silences is found in the intensity each achieves: the silence is more intense than the pause. Pinter, therefore, reserves his silences for moments requiring particular force.

Pinter uses silences sparingly in the earlier two plays, especially in *The Birthday Party*. When Petey demands where Goldberg and McCann are taking Stanley, the two turn, followed by a heavy silence before Goldberg replies (95). The gravity of Petey's challenge and the threat these men pose to Stanley, and now Petey, register during these heart-stopping moments. Similarly, Davies, in *The Caretaker*, finally pushes Aston too far by telling him to build his "stinking shed," to which Aston responds, "That's not a stinking shed" (77). During the ominous silence that follows, the fatality of Davies' mistake is recognized and the impending strength with which Aston will insist on his final rejection is anticipated. For the most part in the earlier plays and always in the later plays, silences occur at the most intense and/or crucial moments.

As the last remark suggests, Pinter refines his use of silence as his career progresses. While Dawick notes how silences in *The Caretaker* "introduce or close key sequences or mark significant turning points in the action," in *The Homecoming* he finds that silences display a clearer, better defined structural function (38). Their occurrence with exits and entrances is more consistent, distinguishing sequences and encounters as units of action and awareness (the latter on the part of the audience - Dawick 42-3). They emphasize the moments of realignment and readjustment at the end of one sequence and the beginning of the next. Only silence can restrain the outbreak of physical aggression once the tension has reached its height. Then, either a character leaves, allowing those remaining to realign themselves, or another one enters. Sensing the tension, he may try to alleviate it with a new, perhaps neutral subject, forcing all onstage to readjust their present relationships (Dawick 43). Lenny and Max reach one of these tense climaxes just before Sam enters. An uneasy silence still prevails following Lenny's mocking imitation of a small child begging for mercy. Sam's sigh as he joins

the seated group perhaps reveals his awareness of the palpable hostility. Lenny outwardly interprets the sigh as a sign of fatigue, initiating a new conversation, a new overtly friendly relationship with Sam (a new round in the family bout) which excludes and irritates Max thus building the tension once again.

In *Old Times* Pinter dispenses with the exits and entrances, using only the silences to signal realignment. Kate, for instance, implies her acquiescence to Anna's continuous indirect pressure to revive their pre-marital friendship by ignoring Deely's protests about Sicily. She repeats her question:

> Kate. (*To* Anna.) Do you like the Sicilian people?
>
> Anna *stares at her.*
>
> *Silence*
>
> Anna. (*Quietly.*) Don't let's go out tonight . . . (39)

During this silence, Anna and the audience recognize and assess the meaning of Kate's words. Anna then consciously adopts the attitude and conversation common to their younger days and friendship in London. Silence becomes a marker for the audience, signalling a key moment, a key shift in the volatile relationships onstage.

In *No Man's Land*, Pinter uses both silence in conjunction with exits and entrances and silence alone to signal an important development in the onstage relationships. For example, when Foster enters for the first time, he and Spooner assess each other in silence, each preparing for the new relationship with a stranger who is possibly a dangerous intruder. Spooner seems to decide to wait for Foster to initiate the conversation. The latter adopts a defensive aggression thinly veiled in jovial chatter (Foster's monologue is discussed further in the next chapter). Another silence, this time unaccompanied by entrance or exit, follows Hirst's friendly remark about Spooner:

Hirst. Yes, yes, but he's a good man at heart. I knew him at Oxford.

Silence

Spooner. (*To* Hirst) Let me live with you and be your secretary.
Hirst. Is there a big fly in here? I hear buzzing. (146)

Spooner, during the silence, absorbs Hirst's first remarks, interpreting them as favor and encouragement. However, unlike Anna, Spooner misinterprets. If Hirst had left an embarrassing but meaningful silence instead of changing the topic, his disinclination might have been better stressed. Spooner might not have continued his rather lengthy and futile proposal. Hirst does subsequently remain quiet whenever Spooner appears to finish. However, the silence with its negative implications only urges the latter to continue. Having begun, Spooner perseveres in desperation until the last unequivocal silence, which is followed by Hirst's request to change the subject. We find again, as with the pause, the expressive tool that silence proves itself to be in the subtextual battle.

While Pinter uses silence for structural functions, he does not abandon its potential for emphasis and clarification in the later plays. What does change is the frequency with which he uses both pauses and silences. As the load these two devices carry increases, Pinter gains, in Dawick's opinion, "firmer control of the subtext," something the latter believes is "indicated by the greater economy of dialogue and 'business'" (38). The ability of the audience to interpret dialogue, action, pauses and silence also allows Pinter to rely increasingly on the latter two to convey much that is left unspoken.

Like hesitations, pauses and silences, syntax and rhythm can be unconscious, undesigned indicators (on the part of the characters) of meaning and emotion. They can also function as part of a character's overall strategy. A few carefully placed words or an extended speech filled with mesmerizing rhythms can speak volumes about a character's state of mind, motivation or intention. The most interesting, syntactically and rhythmically, of the extended monologues are usually highly stylized. Pinter

incorporates such rhetorical devices as antithesis, asyndeton, anaphora, epistrophe and symploce,[5] giving extra force to passages that often prove the most memorable.

Before looking at the more complex syntactical and rhythmical passages, I want to examine a few simple but subtextually revealing sentence constructions. Two unconscious words, on Stanley's part, give rise to a great deal of speculation:

> Stanley. . . . I like it here, but I'll be moving soon. Back home. I'll stay there too, *this time*. No place like home. . . . (50 - my italics)

The words "this time," set off with a comma at the end of the sentence, act as a reassuring afterthought. They hint at several possibilities: that home is somehow disagreeable; that someone wishes to keep him there; that Stanley has left home before only to be forced to return; that Stanley, like a child who promises to be good, suspects he has tried beyond patience some figure of authority and fears reprisal. A similar construction is used by Deely, in *Old Times*, to respond to Anna's question:

> Anna. Listen. What silence. Is it always as silent?
> Deely. It's quite silent here, yes. Normally. (15)

The "yes" again set off with a comma at the end of the sentence, has a thoughtful quality as though Deely has never really considered the silence in their home. The word "normally," isolated with periods, adds to this perception and reveals his awareness of how Anna is invading that peace and quiet. His irritation with Anna is beginning to form and emerge. It is likely he mutters this last word, not having yet reached the point of exasperation where he would be openly rude or insulting. Lenny, in *The Homecoming*, on the other hand, has no qualms about insulting his father. He phrases this thrust with malicious emphasis:

> Lenny. What the boys want, Dad, is your own special brand of cooking, Dad. . . . (33)

The first "Dad," set off with two commas, heightens expectation and emphasizes the ensuing insult. The special brand of cooking alludes to Lenny's earlier condemnation of Max's cooking as dog food. With the repetition of "Dad" at the end of the sentence, Lenny draws jeering attention to his father's unnatural feminine role as nurturer, implying his inability to accomplish even women's work and undermining his position as the dominant male in the family.

A more extended use of repetition is used, unconsciously, by Stanley as he describes a fictional tour to Meg:

> Stanley. I've ... er ... I've been offered a job, as a matter of fact.
> Meg. What?
> Stanley. Yes. I'm considering a job at the moment.
> Meg. You're not.
> Stanley. A good one, too. A night club. In Berlin.
> Meg. Berlin?
> Stanley. Berlin. A night club. Playing the piano. A fabulous salary. And all found.
> Meg. How long for?
> Stanley. We don't stay in Berlin. Then we go to Athens.
> Meg. How long for?
> Stanley. Yes. Then we pay a flying visit to ... er ... whatsisname ...
> Meg. Where?
> Stanley. Constantinople. Zagreb. Vladivostock. It's a round the world tour. (32)

The stage direction calls for Stanley to speak airily, at least initially; this tone, the hesitations, the repetitions, the short, uneven sentences mounting detail onto detail reveal how Stanley improvises the itinerary of his world tour. With each phrase, the tour grows in appeal, prestige and duration, but loses credibility. The suddeness of his announcement and the repetitions reveal it as a fabrication even before he begins avoiding Meg's questions. All of this leads us to suspect his desperation to escape the two strangers (whose expected arrival has recently been imparted to him) and that his departure would be permanent.

While Stanley's story necessarily displays an almost haphazard repetition to achieve the effect of improvisation, Pinter often uses repetition in a more stylized, patterned

manner. And as with Stanley, these occasions can betray anxiety and other deep-seated emotions. Max, in *The Homecoming*, for instance, evokes the bitterness and frustration of his life:

> Max. . . . I worked as a butcher all my life, using the chopper and the slab, the slab, you know what I mean, the chopper and the slab! To keep my family in luxury. Two families! My mother was bedridden; my brothers were all invalids. I had to earn the money for the leading psychiatrists. I had to read books! I had to study the disease, so that I could cope with an emergency at every stage. . . . (63)

In the last three sentences, Pinter uses the rhetorical device anaphora in which each sentence or phrase begins with the same word or words, in this case "I had." This gives a sense of the pressure Max feels he experienced while supporting his family. His repetitions in the first sentence, "the chopper and the slab," combine with another device, asyndeton (where phrases are joined by commas), to give an intensity and immediacy to the memory. From the choppiness of the phrases and the ensuing sentences - some short, some broken up with commas - a rhythm emerges through which we sense Max working himself into a frenzy. The anxieties of the past merge with the lingering resentment of the present.

Anxiety prompts this outburst from McCann the morning after Stanley's party:

> McCann. Let's finish and go. Let's get it over and go. Get the thing done. Let's finish the bloody thing. Let's get the thing done and go. (86)

This passage has a total of twenty-six words, yet there are really only eleven individual words repeated over and over in variation using anaphora, epistrophe (repetition of the concluding word[s]) and symploce (which combines the former two, repeating both the beginning and concluding word[s]). "Let's finish" and "Let's go" each begin sentences twice. "And go" appears three times at the end. Three sentences begin with "Let's" and end with "and go." Any of these three devices alone would provide intensity and emphasis; together they create a sense of overwhelming urgency and agitation. The

night of interrogation has taken its toll leaving McCann edgy and restless to leave the scene. This tension kindles an apprehension in the audience as we begin to suspect that Goldberg and McCann have utterly destroyed Stanley's sanity this time.

Acute distress is again conveyed through the use of rhetorical devices and the resulting rhythms when Deely, in *Old Times*, feels he is losing his hold on his wife, Kate:

> Deely. Yes, but you're here, with us. He's there, alone, lurching up and down the terrace, waiting for a speedboat, waiting for a speedboat to spill out beautiful people, at least. Beautiful Mediterranean people. Waiting for all *that*, a kind of elegance we know nothing about, a slim-bellied Cote d'Azur thing we know absolutely nothing about, a lobster and lobster sauce ideology we know fuck all about . . . (63)

An antithesis is set up on the first two remarks: you're here/he's there, with us/alone. The two long sentences, with their accumulation of phrases joined with commas, are again examples of asyndeton, creating the impression of vivid immediacy. Anaphora betrays a sense of Deely's mounting agitation as he repeats "waiting for a speedboat," once with the variation "waiting for all *that*." In the second long sentence, epistrophe further increases the intensity of Deely's desperation as he repeats "we know nothing about" with the elaborations "absolutely nothing" and "fuck all." "Beautiful people," from the end of the first long sentence, is repeated and varied in the short phrase that follows. Framed between the two long, complex sentences, this phrase, "Beautiful Mediterranean people" is perhaps the key to Deely's fear: beautiful Mediterranean people like Anna and her husband may lure Kate away to their exotic life, leaving him alone to wait for her return.

Deely's fear is not unwarranted. Anna has been appealing to Kate from her first monologue in which she recreates the atmosphere of their younger days in London:

> Anna. ... and the cafés we found, almost private ones, weren't they? where artists and writers and sometimes actors collected, and others with dancers, we sat hardly breathing with our cups of coffee, heads bent,

> so as not to be seen, so as not to disturb, so as not to distract, and listened and listened to all those words, all those cafés and all those people, creative undoubtedly, and does it all still exist I wonder? do you know? can you tell me? (14)

The entire speech, of which I have only quoted the section following her brief hesitation, is one long sentence. This run-on sentence gives the impression of breathlessness, of excitement and activity, as detail follows detail. The use of asyndeton, beginning with "we sat" up to "so as not to distract," speeds up our sense of time, giving a feeling of [illegible]ry which is then slowed down with the use of the conjunctions in "and listened [illegible]" thus rendering the impression of much time spent listening. Intensity is achieved through anaphora in the two series of phrases beginning with, "so as not to" and "all those," providing the reminiscence with vitality. Finally, Anna intersperses inviting questions, in a direct attempt to draw Kate into the recreation.

Anna is only one in a host of Pinterian aggressors who use syntax and rhythm to manipulate and intimidate those around them. One critic notes the "remorselessly mounting insistence of the verbal rhythm" with which Goldberg and McCann interrogate, oppress and destroy Stanley (Wickham 29). Mick, in *The Caretaker*, uses a mixed catalogue of daunting financial terms and other absurdly unrelated catch phrases:

> Mick. . . . I know an insurance firm in West Ham'll be pleased to handle the deal for you. No strings attached, open and above board, untarnished record; twenty percent interest, fifty percent deposit; down payments, back payments, family allowances, bonus schemes, remission of term for good behavior, six months lease, yearly examination of the relevant archives, tea laid on, disposal of shares, benefit extension, compensation on cessation, comprehensive indemnity against Riot, Civil Commotion, Labour Disturbances, Storm, Tempest, Thunderbolt, Larceny or Cattle all subject to a daily check and double check. . . . (45)

The relentless rhythm in this passage enables the audience to sense the underlying threat to Davies even before the more obviously menacing terms appear at the end. Spooner uses a more subtly stylized, yet relentless, attack on Hirst:

> Spooner. Oh my dear sir, may I remind you that you betrayed Stella Winstanley with Emily Spooner, my own wife, throughout a long soiled summer, a fact known at the time throughout the Home Counties? May I further remind you that Muriel Blackwood and Doreen Busby have never recovered from your insane and corrosive sexual absolutism? May I further remind you that your friendship with and corruption of Geoffrey Ramsden at Oxford was the talk of Balliol and Christchurch Cathedral? (134)

Each of the three long, complex questions begins with "may I (further) remind you," an unobtrusive form of anaphora with just enough emphasis to ensure the malevolence of Spooner's politely phrased, yet devastating accusations. In *No Man's Land*, Pinter uses patterned syntax and rhythms sparingly. It is impossible to find intensely stylized passages like Deely's "Beautiful Mediterranean people" outburst. The revealing syntax and rhythms are subdued or merely hinted at; their significance is not missed, however, by an ear accustomed to Pinterian language and style.

Pinter's use of syntax and rhythms in the early plays is more direct and recognizable. As he turns to more stylized constructions, using numerous rhetorical devices, his rhythms become more subtle, controlled and intense. By the time he wrote *No Man's Land*, he found he could confidently subdue his patterned syntax and rhythms dramatically and still attract the audience's attention to emotional distress or a strategic attack.

Tone and diction function subtextually much the same as the other elements discussed in this chapter. In considering tone, there is always the variable factor of an individual actor's interpretation, but for the purposes of this discussion, I am only examining instances where the reaction of the stage listener specifies the tone used by the speaker. Tone is usually deliberate, as is the adoption of a specific type of language, a tactic which actually becomes a kind of strategic role-playing at times. The characters also unconsciously use a certain language - sexual, violent - which, accumulating, sets

the overall tone of the play, influencing the audience's response during more specific passages.

In *The Birthday Party*, Meg's response to Stanley's choice of *succulent*, to describe his breakfast, suggests a tone which implies more than a simple description of this fried bread:

> Meg. . . . Was it nice?
> Stanley. What?
> Meg. The fried bread.
> Stanley. Succulent.
> Meg. You shouldn't say that word.
> Stanley. What word?
> Meg. That word you said. . . . You shouldn't say that word to a married woman. (27)

Stanley rebels against Meg's incessant, maddening questions, jeering at her inarticulateness (her exclusive use of *nice*) with his polysyllabic adjective. He may be teasing her with a sexually suggestive tone or perhaps he luxuriates a little too much in his sense of superiority which Meg, unfamiliar with the word and absorbed in her own perverse fantasy world, readily misinterprets as sexually insinuating. Stanley's tone may or may not be intended to sound sexually suggestive, but Ruth's when she defies Lenny in *The Homecoming* is unmistakably suggestive:

> Ruth. If you take the glass ... I'll take you.
>
> *Pause.*
>
> Lenny. How about me taking the glass without you taking me?
> Ruth. Why don't I just take you?
>
> *Pause.*
>
> Lenny. You're joking.
>
> *Pause.*
>
> You're in love, anyway, with another man. You've had a secret liason with another man. His family didn't even know. Then you come here without a word of warning and start to make trouble. (50)

Full of confidence and sexual overtones, she calls the bluff Lenny poses in his prostitute and mangle stories - stories of sex, violence and domination. She surprises him with her aggressive sexuality. His incredulous, even panic-filled reaction leaves no doubt concerning her tone or meaning. Likewise, Deely's overreaction to the following remark by Anna indicates the suggestive manner with which she addresses Kate:

> Anna. . . . How can you say that, when I'm looking at you now, seeing you poised so shyly over me, looking down at me -
> Deely. Stop that! (31)

Anna plays on Deely's growing suspicion of a former lesbian relationship between the two women. In each of these cases, the curious choice of words is enough to alert our intuitive antennae; our suspicions concerning the nature of the tone are confirmed by the stage [illegible]ner's reaction.

The more adept verbal fencers in Pinter's plays always select their words carefully. At times, they even adopt a specific type of diction with a whole range of associations. Goldberg, for instance, appropriates the vague, evasive style of a bureaucrat or politician to mollify McCann's uneasiness:

> Goldberg. The main issue is a singular issue and quite distinct from your previous work. Certain elements, however, might well approximate in points of procedure to some of your other activities. All is dependent on the attitude of our subject. At all events, McCann, I can assure you that the assignment will be carried out and the mission accomplished with no excessive aggravation to you or myself. Satisfied? (40)

We tend to mistrust this kind of unspecific language, signalling as it usually does some attempt to conceal and divert attention. It is also reminiscent of euphemistic diction used in the underworld or secret service: "activities, issues, procedure, assignment, mission" recall such oblique expressions as "liquidation" and "termination" which avoid direct, concrete reference in favor of depersonalized, distancing rhetoric.

The negotiations between the men and Ruth near the end of Act II of *The*

Homecoming are carried out in a similar unspecific jargon:

> Lenny. We'd finance you, to begin with, and then, when you were established, you could pay us back, in installments.
> Ruth. Oh, no, I wouldn't agree to that.
> Lenny. Oh, why not?
> Ruth. You would have to regard your original outlay simply as a capital investment . . . I would naturally want to draw up an inventory of everything I would need, which would require your signatures in the presence of witnesses.
> Lenny. Naturally.
> Ruth. All aspects of the agreement and conditions of employment would have to be clarified to our mutual satisfaction before we finalized the contract. (93)

Prostitution is never mentioned but is alluded to as popping "up to the flat for a couple of hours" (92) and pulling one's weight financially (91). Ruth and Lenny turn it into a business arrangement, glossing the issue with sophisticated financial lingo. The ease with which they slip into this language implies a familiarity with or even previous experience in such matters: Lenny's "occupation," it seems, involves pimping and Ruth's career as a model may have involved more than simply posing nude.

Contrasting to this vague, evasive language are the detailed specifics Mick employs to intimidate Davies. When the tramp grows too friendly, hinting Aston should be sent away, Mick sends this encoded warning signal:

> Davies. . . . Where do you live now, then?
> Mick. Me? Oh, I've got a little place . . . You must come up and have a drink some time. Listen to some Tchaikovsky. (72-73)

Mick introduces the kind of activities and atmosphere outside Davies' experience as a tramp (he may not even know who Tchaikovsky was). This sophisticated chatter would be more appropriate to a cocktail party. Later, when Davies again suggests Aston be sent back to the asylum, Mick plays his trumpcard, accusing the tramp of misrepresenting himself as an interior decorator:

Mick. You mean you wouldn't know how to fit teal-blue, copper and parchment linoleum squares and have those colours re-echoed in the walls?
Davies. Now, look here, where'd you get--?
Mick. You wouldn't be able to decorate out a table in afromosia teak veneer, an armchair in oatmeal tweed and a beech frame settee with a woven sea-grass seat? (81)

Davies, of course, never really claimed he could do more than help. Mick tricks him, crushing the tramp with decorating jargon. He asserts his superiority and betrays his contempt, describing an environment outside Davies' sphere, beyond his imagination.[6]

While Mick uses specific decorating language to attack, Spooner in *No Man's Land* similarly resorts to detailed publishing jargon to deflect Briggs' apparent challenge of Spooner's claim to be a poet. When Briggs suggests he become Foster's patron, Spooner tries to reinforce a sense of his familiarity with the publishing arena with this patronizing encouragement:

Spooner. . . . Well, if he'd like to send me some examples of his work, double spaced on quarto, with copies in a separate folder by separate post in case of loss or misappropriation, stamped addressed envelope enclosed, I'll read them.
Briggs. That's very nice of you.
Spooner. Not at all. You can tell him he can look forward to a scrupulously honest and, if I may say so, highly sensitive judgement. (125)

Spooner, unfortunately over-emphasizes the literary lingo, drawing attention to his uneasiness which in turn points to Briggs' distrust, raising our own suspicions.

Earlier, Spooner uses figurative language to make insinuations about Hirst's alleged wife and their sexual relations:

Spooner. Tell me then about your wife.
Hirst. What wife?
Spooner. How beautiful she was, how tender and how true. Tell me with what speed she swung in the air, with what velocity she came off the wicket, whether she was responsive to finger spin, whether you could bowl a shooter with her, or an off break with a leg break action. In other words, did she google? (92)

He associates Hirst's alleged wife with a ball in a game of cricket. Words like came, responsive, fingerspin, leg break action and google[7] are sexually suggestive in this context and we can imagine Spooner's mischievously insinuating tone. Combined with Hirst's denials and his silence, this poetic display with its startling, personal subject could imply two things: some embarrassing sexual reason such as impotence for never having married or a similar reason for a failed marriage.

Pinter's characters seem to enjoy adopting certain roles and language to suit particular situations and purposes. When they wish to discuss something unpleasant, they exploit the vague, elusive rhetoric of the business, political or artistic realms. When on the attack, they use specifics and details which disconcert and intimidate the stage listener. Spooner combines the two, utilizing the specific terms of cricket in a metaphoric, non-specific, indirect discussion of Hirst's sexual affairs.

While Pinter's characters deliberately exploit language, they also unconsciously adopt certain words and phrases which accumulate to create a pattern of imagery and a pervading tone and atmosphere. Pinter's technique in *The Birthday Party* is not yet fully developed, only hinting at patterns of sexual, violent and sanitary imagery. However, in *The Caretaker*, violence dominates Davies' everyday speech in a series of puns (Brown, *Theatre Language* 44). He unconsciously uses such words and phrases as "knocked off," "give me the [illegible]nocking about," "dead out," and "flog" in connection with such ordinary [illegible]s as "Some bloke tried to flog me some suede [shoes] the other day" (24). A [illegible]g and a general aura of menace emerge from the recurrent violent[illegible]

In *The Homecoming*, violence combines with sex and physical corruption to dominate the imagistic patterns. Lenny wrestles with a mangle and intends to stifle his clock. Max, a butcher, angrily hopes his son will drown in his own blood. The men, especially Max, refer to each other as bitches and sluts and to Ruth as a tart and a scrubber. Sex is referred to as going the whole hog. Everyone and everthing is filthy,

stinking, diseased. Images of rotting and corruption - maggots, pus, crap - proliferate. The household is not simply the urinal Teddy claims, it is a cesspool of degenerating sexual frustrations.

The language in *Old Times* is generally more deliberate (on the part of the characters) and more subtle. Anna annoys Deely with such sexually suggestive words as "gaze," "lest" and "beguile." He is, at times, blunt and clumsy, choosing such transparent adjectives as "luscious," "voluptuous" and "thigh-kissing." On other occasions, his approach is more subtle, simulating and even appropriating her language such as "sensuous" and "gaze." Though conscious, this language still charges the play with ever-present sexual undertones.

The language of *No Man's Land* operates on two levels: the elevated diction of the literary realm and the crude, base expressions of the gutter. Spooner and Hirst tend to pursue an often obtuse, but "polite," cultured style. The former divulges Arabella Hinscott's sexual preference as her "particular predilection. Consuming the male member" (134). Briggs and Foster, on the other hand, usually speak in a more straightforward, less flowery manner. When the latter tries to converse with a cultured, educated response, his baser diction and style inevitably emerge:

> Foster. . . . I might have been grateful for the picture. A good work of art tends to move me. You follow me? I'm not a cunt, you know. (102)

Spooner even juxtaposes a crude question at the end of his sophisticated cricket metaphor "Does she google?" This tension between styles of language is appropriate for a play in which three of the four characters claim to be poets. The language in these four plays (*The Careteaker, The Homecoming, Old Times* and *No Man's Land*) nurtures a sensibility, an heightened awareness in the audience that encourages certain responses and intuitions. When Davies draws his knife, we are not surprised, for the violence of his everyday language indicates the insecure, threatening world which he, as a transient,

inhabits. Pinter similarly prepares us for the shocking resolution at the end of *The Homecoming*, at least in part, through the characters' perverse sexual diction. In *Old Times*, we perceive that Kate and Anna may have been lovers almost entirely through the sexually suggestive language, through its imagery and tone. The tension between styles of diction in *No Man's Land* contributes to the general atmosphere of tension. The language becomes not only a medium, not only a means of attack and defense, but an integral element of the play's conflict, of the subject itself.

All of the verbal devices examined in this chapter undergo a constant refining process as Pinter's career progresses and his audience adjusts to his style. The hesitations grow infrequent as his characters become more educated and articulate, until the very appearance of a hesitation signals something of significance. The pauses and silences appear increasingly, carrying a heavier load of subtextual information as our capacity to infer grows. Syntax and rhythms become more complex and intense up to *Old Times* after which less intensely stylized, even partial constructions are sufficient to alert our sensibilities to the more subtle rhythms. Pinter's characters acquire greater control over their tone and diction (especially in the last two plays) using particular words to achieve specific effects. Through imagery and style, the characters' overall language, unconscious or intentional, plays a larger and increasingly subtle role in audience response. All of these verbal devices guide the audience, drawing attention to crucial exchanges. Employed both consciously and unconsciously on the part of the characters, they reveal emotion, states of mind, motivation and intention. In conjunction with the conversational implicatures and the visual devices to be discussed in the following chapters, they create a level of communication "locked beneath"[8] speech, essential elements in the ever-evolving and mutable subtext.

CHAPTER II: CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES

Linguistic studies provide one important clue to understanding how Pinter is able to create a language beneath the language. H. P. Grice, in his article "Logic and Conversation," and Keir Elam, in *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*,[9] explore how unvoiced meaning is conveyed in ordinary conversation. Grice begins by identifying certain principles and guidelines to which those who wish to communicate in a clear and unequivocal manner automatically and often unconsciously adhere. Grice notes that,

> Our talk exchanges . . . are characteristically, to some degree at least, co-operative efforts, and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least, a mutually accepted direction. (45)

He formulates a general principle for successful communication which he labels the co-operative principle:

> 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. (45)

In order to remain within the boundaries of the co-operative principle, certain guidelines or maxims must be followed. Keir Elam sets down these maxims in a simple, concise manner:

1. The maxims of *quantity*. (a) The contribution should be as informative as is required for the purposes of the exchange. (b) The contribution should not be more informative than is required.

2. The maxims of *quality*, expressible as the supermaxim 'Try to make the contribution one that is true'. (a) The speaker should not say what he knows to be false. (b) He should not say that for which he lacks evidence. . . .

3. The maxim of *relation* i.e. "Be relevant".

> 4. The maxims of *manner*, expressible as a supermaxim, 'Be perspicuous'. (a) The speaker should avoid obscurity. (b) He should avoid ambiguity. (c) He should avoid unnecessary prolixity. (d) He should be orderly. (171-72)

Occasionally, these maxims are transgressed without entirely abandoning the co-operative principle, thereby infusing an exchange with additional, implied meaning. Grice calls this "conversational implicature." Both he and Elam are intrigued by the deliberate flouting of the maxims to create underlying meaning. It is surprising, when one looks closely, how often Pinter's characters transgress or exploit these maxims to impart meaning, often meaning imbued with a sense of menace. Conversational implicature becomes in Pinter's plays a sophisticated method of conveying and combatting threat beneath a restrained veneer of polite exchange.

Many critics interpret Pinter's unique style of language as an illustration of the "failure to communicate." Pinter himself objects to this cliché. A brief examination of Ionesco's use of the conversational laws will provide an illuminating contrast for the discussion in this chapter of Pinter's exploitive technique. Whereas Ionesco's characters break these laws and, therefore, experience a breakdown in communication, Pinter's transgress without breaking these maxims. Through exploitation, and thereby creating implicature, his characters communicate on a second, subtextual level. In *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, Elam cites three examples from Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano* in which characters break the first three maxims (175-6). Mrs. Smith breaks the maxim of quantity by providing the following unnecessary information:

> Mrs. Smith. There, it's nine o'clock. We've drunk the soup, and eaten the fish and chips, and the English salad. The children have drunk English water. We've eaten well this evening. That's because we live in the suburbs of London and because our name is Smith. (9)

The maxim of quality is broken by the Fire Chief: "I should like to remove my helmet but I haven't time to sit down. (*He sits down, without removing his helmet.*)" (27)

This exchange between Mrs. Smith and Mr. Martin violates the maxim of relevance:

> Mr. Martin. One doesn't polish spectacles with black wax.
> Mrs. Smith. Yes, but with money one can buy anything.
> Mr. Martin. I'd rather kill a rabbit than sing in a garden. (39)

Finally, the maxim of manner is superbly distorted in this lecture in Ionesco's *The Lesson*:

> Professor. That which distinguishes the neo-Spanish languages from each other and their idioms from the other linguistic groups, such as the group of languages called Austrian and neo-Austrian or Hapsburgian, as well as the Esperanto, Helvetian, Monacan, Swiss, Andorran, Basque, and jai alai groups, and also the groups of diplomatic and technical languages--that which distinuguishes them, I repeat, is their striking resemblance which makes it so hard to distinguish them from each other--I'm speaking of the neo-Spanish languages which one is able to distinguish from each other, however, only thanks to their distinctive characteristics, absolutely indisputable proofs of their extra-ordinary resemblance, which renders indisputable their common origin, and which, at the same time, differentiates them profoundly--through the continuation of the distinctive traits which I've just cited. (61)

Even in context, the meaning of this convoluted, repetitious and seemingly contradictory diatribe remains obscure. Neither the student nor the audience can understand the professor without closely examining a written record of his lecture. In each of these instances, the breakdown in communication between Ionesco's characters translates into confusion for the audience. Pinter's audience may experience a similar sense of frustration, but this is not due to any failure on the part of the characters to communicate with each other. Rather, it is a result of Pinter's limited use of exposition. Elam notes that as an audience we expect characters to,

> produce utterances which are informative (indeed this constraint is, perhaps, stronger than in the case of everyday talk), 'true' with respect to the dramatic world (unless strategically insincere), comprehensible and relevant to the occasion. On such expectations the audience bases and supposes the dramatic listener to base the 'reading between the lines' which makes up a considerable part of its decoding. (173)

Pinter disregards these expectations for informative and verifiable exchanges. The resulting ignorance and uncertainty alone can and does cause unease in audiences unacquainted with Pinter. They also intensify the burden of decoding for the audience, but ideally they focus attention on the relationships and action at hand, what the characters are presently doing to each other, and how they accomplish it. One of the keys in following these developing relationships, in understanding the emerging subtext of struggle and menace, is in recognizing and decoding the numerous conversational implicatures Pinter weaves into his dialogue.

Two recognizable types in any Pinter play are the talkative and restrained personalities. Each plays havoc with the maxims of quantity, providing either too much or too little information and allowing an alert listener to draw a wider range of conclusions concerning the action on stage. Reticence can be interpreted as a defensive manoeuver or as a means of intimidation. The same is true of loquacity. The latter additionally allows for the danger of unconscious or unintentional, and usually undesired, revelation. Almost all of Pinter's characters, at one time or another, transgress or exploit the quantity maxims with varying effects.

When McCann questions Goldberg, in *The Birthday Party*, as to whether they have arrived at the correct address, the latter is singularly evasive:

> McCann. Nat. How do we know this is the right house?
> Goldberg. What?
> McCann. How do we know this is the right house?
> Goldberg. What makes you think it's the wrong house?
> McCann. I didn't see a number on the gate.
> Goldberg. I wasn't looking for a number. (38)

If Goldberg satisfied McCann with a straightforward answer, he would not arouse our curiosity and suspicion. Instead, he uses questions and guarded, ambiguous answers to deflect his associate's queries. He thus cultivates an air of mystery that partially explains McCann's uneasiness and suggests an unpleasant purpose for their visit.

Stanley, too, arouses our curiosity. Assuming McCann knows his background, he nervously rattles on, attempting to explain and exonerate himself, saying more than the conversation demands:

> McCann. Do you find it [the seaside] bracing?
> Stanley. Me? No. But you will. (*He sits at the table*). I like it here, but I'll be moving soon. Back home. I'll stay there too, this time. No place like home. (*He laughs*) I wouldn't have left, but business calls. Business called, and I had to leave for a bit. You know how it is.
> McCann. (*sitting at the table, left*). You in business?
> Stanley. No. I think I'll give it up. I've got a small private income, you see. I think I'll give it up. Don't like being away from home. I used to live very quietly--played records, that's about all. Everything delivered to the door. Then I started a little private business, in a small way, and it compelled me to come down here--kept me longer than I expected. . . . I lived so quietly. You can only appreciate what you've had when things change. . . . (49-50)

Stanley's emphasis on returning to Maidenhead, on "living quietly" suggests that his present living arrangements and habits are somehow unacceptable. It also hints at a promise to reform. The "I'll stay there too, *this time*" indicates he has been in trouble before. At the same time as he offers McCann these unsolicited explanations and assurances, he carefully avoids McCann's question with its implied demand to know in what sort of business Stanley is engaged. He simultaneously transgresses both of the quantity maxims. While we are never exactly certain of Stanley's allegedly dubious activities, we are convinced of his fear.

Just as Stanley inadvertantly displays his fear, Davies in *The Caretaker* reveals one of his deep-seated anxieties in the course of one of his numerous effusive moments:

> 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.
>
> *Pause*
>
> 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 the vegetables, it was. The vegetable pan. That's when I left her and I haven't seen her since. (17-18)

Aston's reticence and carefully phrased responses during this exchange may arise from a genuine conflict between the desire to be friendly and the desire to be honest. Or, if one adheres to the conspiracy theory, Aston may be deliberately withholding his reassurance (reassurance for which the tramp is fishing) in order to unnerve Davies. In either case, Aston's quiet manner does unnerve the tramp; it continues to do so throughout the play, prompting him to reinforce his own ego. In trying to differentiate himself from the rabble with which Aston has witnessed him associating, Davies insists on his personal hygiene, a theme he reverts to in subsequent monologues. The ensuing anecdote concerning his wife, while humorous, is superfluous, part of the over-insistence that confirms rather than dismisses suspicion. Mick, whom we have good reason to suspect of overhearing their conversation,[10] seizes upon this insecurity to intimidate the tramp by accusing him of offensive odor (45, 83).

Max, in *The Homecoming*, tries to assert his authority over his son Lenny (and the rest of the household) but only succeeds in exposing his fear and insecurity in his unsolicited ramblings:

> Max. I think I'll have a fag. Give me a fag.
>
> *Pause*
>
> I just asked you to give me a cigarette.
>
> *Pause*
>
> Look what I'm lumbered with.
>
> *He takes a crumpled cigarette from his pocket.*
>
> I'm getting old, my word of honour.
>
> *He lights it.*

> You think I wasn't a tearaway? I would have taken care of you, twice over. I'm still strong. You ask your Uncle Sam what I was. But at the same time I always had a kind heart. Always. (24)

Max's monologue is spurred by Lenny's irritating silence. In his article Irving Wardle sees the characters in this play as animals locked in a territorial struggle.[11] Seen in this light Max becomes the dominant older male, demanding respect and fending off the impending challenge of a younger member. Unable to elicit a response from his son, he roars his former prowess in an empty show of strength. His theatrics not only transgress the overinformative quantity maxim, they also betray his uneasiness and frustration with his son. He ends with a thinly disguided appeal for compassion - "I always had a kind heart" - when Lenny eventually seizes control of the pack or pride. Having no effect on Lenny, Max turns on his brother Sam, the chauffeur. However, Sam takes defensive measures alluding to a secret which might discredit, humiliate and even topple Max's precarious domination over the family:

> Max. Above having a good bang on the backseat, are you?
> Sam. Yes, I leave that to others.
> Max. You leave it to others? What others? You paralyzed prat!
> Sam. I don't mess up my car! Or my ...my boss's car! Like other people.
> Max. Other people? What other people?
>
> *Pause*
>
> What other people?
>
> *Pause*
>
> Sam. Other people. (31)

Max may suspect who these other people are. He changes the topic, but we are left wondering until the end of the play when Sam finally reveals that Max's wife Jesse and his friend Mac are the "other people." In the meantime, Sam violates the underinformative maxim, retaining his place in the balance of family power by alluding to, but not fully revealing, his dark secret.

In *Old Times*, Kate also employs reticence in self-defense. Her opening conversation with her husband is intriguing. Her extreme reserve seems uncalled for, suggesting an indifference even an antagonism he does not, at least initially, appear to deserve:

> Deely. Did you *think* of her as your best friend?
> Kate. She was my only friend.
> Deely. Your best and only.
> Kate. My one and only.
>
> *Pause*
>
> If you have only one of something you can't say it's the best of anything.
> Deely. Because you have nothing to compare it with?
> Kate. Mmm.
>
> *Pause*
>
> Deely. (*Smiling*). She was incomparable.
> Kate. Oh, I'm sure she wasn't. (5)

Like many of Pinter's characters, Kate prefers to insulate herself from the world. At first, Deely seems simply curious, but it becomes increasingly apparent that his curiosity reaches suffocating proportions:

> Deely. Are you looking forward to seeing her?
> Kate. No.
> Deely. I am. I shall be very interested.
> Kate. In what?
> Deely. In you. I'll be watching you. (7)

At the same time as we might sympathize with Kate, it is somewhat disconcerting to find her so secretive about her friendship with Anna, to discover she has never told Deely about their having shared a flat. Her secretiveness suggests something unpleasant surrounding their friendship. In any case, Kate is teasingly non-committal.

Deely grows increasingly nervous and antagonistic toward Anna whose purpose, despite her denial, is to disrupt, to draw Kate back into their former relationship. He

frequently tries to impress upon both Anna and Kate his worldliness and sophistication:

> Deely. . . . My work took me to Sicily. My work concerns itself with life all over, you see, in every part of the globe. With people all over the globe. I use the word globe because the word world possesses emotional political sociological and psychological pretensions and resonances which I prefer as a matter of choice to do without, or shall I say to stay clear of, or if you like to reject. How's the yacht? (36)

His obsession with the words globe and world is heavy with unspoken meaning. Parodying Anna's unusual choice of language such as "gaze" and "lest," Deely, through his own specially selected words such as "pretensions," and "resonances," lets Anna know he is sensitive to her manoeuverings. He transmits his objection and even a warning to her with phrases like "to do without," "to steer clear of" and "to reject." However, his bravado is ultimately transparently anxious.

In *No Man's Land*, Pinter continues to make use of the quantity maxims in much the same manner as he does in previous plays. When Foster inquires whether Spooner's wife and daughter would like Briggs, Spooner phrases a carefully polite reply: "They are remarkably gracious women" (104). He sidesteps the question but still implies his dislike. The jibe is too indirect for slower-witted Briggs who misses the inference as Foster quickly changes the subject. Foster is a nimble player of the implication game. Upon encountering a rather disreputable-looking stranger, Spooner, in the house, he plunges into a diatribe encoding various messages to the intruder:

> Foster. . . .What are you drinking? It's bloody late. I'm worn to a frazzle. This is what I want. (*He drinks.*) Taxi? No chance. Taxi drivers are against me. Something about me. Some unknown factor. My gait, perhaps. Or perhaps because I travel incognito. Oh, that's better. Works wonders. How are you? What are you drinking? Who are you? I thought I'd never make it. What a hike. And not only that. I'm defenseless. I don't carry a gun in London. But I'm not bothered. Once you've done the East you've done it all. I've done the East. . . . (97)

The first two sentences compounded with the later repetition of "what are you drinking?"

hold the seed of an accusation that Spooner does not belong or has overstayed his welcome. Foster then gives the impression he is one to be feared. That he is unarmed may provide some reassurance should the intruder feel cornered and desperate. The confidence he exudes in his pugilistic powers, however, should deter any thoughts of attack. If we compare this "encounter with a stranger" scene with those in *The Caretaker* and *The Homecoming*, we see how the transgressions of quantity have evolved. In *The Caretaker*, Mick surprises Davies, wrestling him to the floor, demanding to know what his game is. Lenny, in *The Homecoming*, is much more polite to Ruth. However, without physically abusing her, he does try to intimidate her with accounts of his alleged previous violent outbursts perpetrated against a prostitute and a defenseless old woman. Without directly describing violence, Foster still conveys his lethal potential should the need to defend himself arise. The violations of the quantity maxims in *No Man's Land* are much more refined than those in earlier plays.

Pinter also expands the influence of the maxims of quantity by applying the principles of underinformativeness and overinformativeness to exposition in general. He confuses the audience with a tremendous number of details and images without providing enough information to establish the full picture. The complaints about deliberate obscurity mentioned in the Introduction, therefore, are actually a reaction against Pinter's challenge to the dramatic convention of relevant exposition.

The maxims of quality interrelate closely with one of Pinter's major themes: the difficulty in ascertaining truth or fact especially with reference to memory and the past. The two maxims of quantity, "(a) The speaker should not say what he knows to be false. (b) He should not say that for which he lacks evidence" (Elam 171), both come into play. Pinter adds to these a unique twist of his own, mystifying his audience with a kind of creative storytelling, a mingling of fact with fiction. Although most lies, unsubstantiated claims and even the stories are easily identified as such in the early

works, it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish truth from fabrication with each successive play. Ultimately, absolute truth or certainty are irrelevant. Our attention is directed to and focused on, not only one of Pinter's themes (verification), but on the motive behind the falsehoods and their effects on the stage listener(s).

Stanley, in *The Birthday Party*, is rather a clumsy liar. The stage listener usually spots his fibs as easily as we do. Lulu is sceptical when Stanley tells her,

> Stanley (*rising*): Stuffy? I disinfected the place this morning.
> Lulu (*at the door*). Oh, that's better.
> Stanley. I think it's going to rain to-day. What do you think?
> Lulu. I hope so. You could do with it.
> Stanley. Me! I was in the sea at half past six.
> Lulu. Were you?
> Stanley. I went right out to the headland and back before breakfast. Don't you believe me!
>
> *She sits, takes out a compact and powders her nose.*
>
> Lulu (*offering him the compact*). Do you want to have a look at your face? (35)

Even though Lulu has not witnessed Stanley's recent rising as we have, she still doubts his claims. Her misgivings are implied in her challenge to look at himself in the mirror. Stanley's lies point to his insecurity in two areas: his lifestyle (including his personal hygiene) and his masculinity. He is sensitive to Lulu's insinuations that he smells. To dispell her perception of him as lazy and slovenly, he invents an account of his morning exercise. An inadequate attempt to bolster his image as a vital male, his adolescent boasting only betrays his uneasiness in the presence of a young, attractive woman.

Goldberg and McCann are prone to lying as well. McCann tells Stanley they are on a short holiday (49) after he and Goldberg have discussed, onstage, the "job" they have come to do. Furthermore, their contradictory accusations during the interrogation leave us wondering if Stanley even committed any one particular crime. One moment the two are badgering him for killing his wife, the next for having left her at the altar and therefore not having married at all (59-60). The false accusations are intended to so

disorient and confuse Stanley that he can no longer think or respond logically.

In another case of tactical confusion, Mick accuses Davies, in *The Caretaker*, of falsely representing himself as an interior decorator. The accusation itself is a gross misrepresentation; Davies never offered more than to help. Sensing the threat of eviction, the tramp, grasping at straws, tells Mick,

> Davies. . . . It was him who told you. It was your brother who must have told you. He's nutty! He'd tell you anything, out of spite, he's nutty, he's halfway gone, it was him who told you. (82)

Davies has no evidence whatsoever that Aston has said anything to Mick. He is still trying to play one brother against the other in a bid for security, shelter and occupation.

Another case of an unsubstantiated claim appears at the opening of the second Act in *The Homecoming* where Max insists (on the meagre evidence of a good cup of coffee),

> Max. I've got the feeling you're a first-rate cook.
> Ruth. I'm not bad.
> Max. No, I've got the feeling you're a number one cook. . . . (61)

Max tries to force his daughter-in-law into the image of a good wife and mother. The men, especially Max, desire a replacement for Jessie (Max earlier suggested Sam find a wife they could all share). Ruth, as it turns out, is willing to stay. However, she successfully resists the imposition of conventional duties; her obligation to the men is exclusively sexual and Max's desire for a replacement cook is thwarted.

Still exploiting the quality maxim in *The Homecoming*, Pinter begins to challenge more directly our blind acceptance of the exposition provided by characters. While we might suspect the reliability of Stanley's concert story or Aston's institution account, Lenny unabashedly confesses his prostitute tale to be fiction:

> Ruth. How did you know she was diseased?
> Lenny. How did I know?

Pause

I decided she was. (47)

Our conventional assumption of the truth of any remark unless "strategically insincere" (Elam 173) does not apply in a Pinter play. As his career progresses, Pinter increasingly disregards the audience's expectation for verifiable information; any statement may be "strategically insincere" and Pinter does not always make it clear what is truth and what is fiction. Lenny's lie is obvious. His strategy is intimidation: through his story he tries to convey a sense of his physical power; through the revelation of his lie, a sense of his verbal power; through both, he imples he can do whatever he wishes. However, his implications of physical force prove no match for Ruth's sexual implications. Whereas she remains unperturbed by his insinuations, he and the other men are struck speechless with her provocative contribution to the "philosophical" discussion (I will elaborate further below).

Pinter continues the storytelling motif in *Old Times*, heightening the sense of the unreliability of memory and of people to tell the truth. Anna, Deely and eventually Kate use their tales as weapons in a verbal skirmish. Anna lays the ground rules fairly early in their confrontation:

Anna. . . . There are some things one remembers even though they may never have happened. There are things I remember which may never have happened but as I recall them so they take place.
Deely. *What?* (27-28)

She proceeds to illustrate her point in her next monologue:

Anna. The man came over to me, quickly, looked down at me, . . . No, no, I'm quite wrong ... he didn't move quickly ... that's quite wrong ... he moved ... very slowly, the light was bad, and stopped. He stood in the center of the room. He looked at us both, at our beds. Then he turned towards me. He approached my bed. He bent over me. . . . (28)

Although Deely is initially flabbergasted, he eventually adapts himself to the game.

Incorporating elements (the Wayfarer's tavern, gazing up skirts, wearing Kate's underwear) from previous yarns, he and Anna trade stories unfavorable to the other. Their attempts to discredit one another in Kate's eyes only provoke her to reject Anna and put Deely in his place with her own story based on Anna's "strange man" monologue partially quoted above. The reminiscences appear to be increasingly more invention than truth as the play progresses. This does not, however, prevent Kate from asserting her independence in the face of Deely's and Anna's attempts to dominate her. She emerges the best storyteller.

Briggs, in *No Man's Land*, begins and ends his story of his first meeting with Foster with the curious assurance: "I should tell you he'll deny this account. His story will be different" (120-21). We are left to guess if this is due to faulty memory or a deliberate lie. We find ourselves judging most of the reminiscences in this manner. In the exchange concerning their college days, it is unclear whether Hirst has mistaken Spooner for someone by the name of Charles Weatherby (and Spooner, therefore, is improvising) or if Spooner pretends to be a new acquaintance until Hirst recognizes him. Is Hirst's memory faulty or is Spooner lying? In either case, the reminiscences become attacks on Hirst's character, including such charges as adultery, perversion and homosexuality. While Hirst is obviously disturbed by these accusations, the audience is disturbed by the quicksand of contradictory remarks and unreliable reminiscences into which every possible concrete point of reference disappears.

Like the transgressed maxims of quantity, those of quality become aggressive and defensive tactics in the verbal manoeuverings of Pinter's characters. Although I have not discussed the simpler lies and unsubstantiated claims in the later plays, they still play a role, though a less impressive one than in the complex tales. Similarly, there are stories in the earlier plays but they are not as effective; they do not grow out of one another, accumulating power as they do in *Old Times* and *No Man's Land*. A character's capacity to invent, to assimilate and to transform previously revealed information to his

advantage becomes crucial to his survival; witness Kate's success and Hirst's failure. These lies and stories are not only weapons used by one character against another, however; through their unreliability, they are also used by the playwright to undermine the audience's desire for certainty and verification.

The transgressions of the third maxim, that of relevance, are probably the most confusing characteristic in Pinter's plays. Characters usually transgress this maxim with a sudden change in topic. But while the new subject initially appears unrelated to previous comments or exchanges, there is occasionally some connection and always some strategy underlying the shift.

Goldberg, for instance, exploits the relevance maxim to camouflage warnings. The previously quoted exchange between Goldberg and McCann in which the latter asks his boss whether they have arrived at the correct house, prompts this curious response:

> Goldberg (*settling in the armchair*). You know one thing Uncle Barney taught me? Uncle Barney taught me that the word of a gentleman is enough. That's why, when I had to go away on business I never carried any money. One of my sons used to come with me. He used to carry a few coppers. For a paper, perhaps, . . . Otherwise my name was good. Besides, I was a very busy man.
> McCann. What about this, Nat? Isn't it about time someone came in? (38)

Neither Uncle Barney nor only carrying a few coppers appears to have any bearing on whether the Boles' is the residence they seek. The key phrases here are "the word of a gentleman" and "a very busy man." McCann is unconsciously questioning Goldberg's judgement when his word, especially when concerned with business, should be sufficient. Pinter has McCann, the slower-witted of the pair, miss Goldberg's point. He thus stresses, and reinforces our awareness of, Goldberg's attempt to use the principles of the third maxim in an indirect reproof. Stanley, in contrast, is attuned to Goldberg's veiled warnings. With another lie, Stanley attempts to send Goldberg and McCann away:

Stanley. I run the house. I'm afraid you and your friend will have to find other accommodation.
Goldberg (*rising*). Oh, I forgot, I must congratulate you on your birthday. (*Offering his hand.*) Congratulations.
Stanley (*ignoring hand*). Perhaps you're deaf.
Goldberg. No, what makes you think that? As a matter of fact, every single one of my senses is at its peak. Not bad going, eh? For a man past fifty. But a birthday, I always feel, is a great occasion, taken too much for granted these days. What a thing to celebrate - birth! Like getting up in the morning. Marvellous! Some people don't like the idea of getting up in the morning. I've heard them. Getting up in the morning, they say, what is it? Your skin's crabby, you need a shave, your eyes are full of muck, your mouth is like a boghouse, the palms of your hands are full of sweat, your nose is clogged up, your feet stink, what are you but a corpse waiting to be washed? Whenever I hear that point of view I feel cheerful. Because I know what it is to wake up with the sun shining, to the sound of the lawnmover, all the little birds, the smell of the grass, church bells, tomato juice -
Stanley. Get out. (54-55)

Goldberg sidesteps Stanley's demand that they leave, blatantly changing the subject. However, when Stanley insists, he takes a more subtle tack, smoothly changing gears from senses to birthday to a portrait of Stanley getting up in the morning. Stanley's slovenliness, laziness (Meg and Petey earlier hinted at his habitual late-rising) and unproductive lifestyle all come under attack. The reference to the corpse foreshadows his symbolic death and rebirth at the end of the play. While we may not comprehend the full nature of Goldberg's monologue, Stanley appears to understand only too well.

Mick is another whose superficially irrelevant chatter is intended to intimidate. He tries to pressure Davies into revealing more about himself.

Mick. . . . You remind me of my uncle's brother. He was always on the move, that man. Never without his passport. . . . To be honest, I've never made out how he came to be my uncle's brother. I've often thought that maybe it was the other way round. I mean that my uncle was his brother and he was my uncle. But I never called him uncle. As a matter of fact I called him Sid. My mother called him Sid too. It was a funny business. Your spitting image he was. Married a Chinaman and went to Jamaica.

***

Mick. You know, believe it or not, you've got a funny kind of resemblance

> to a bloke I once knew in Shoreditch. Actually he lived in Aldgate. I was staying with a cousin in Camden Town. This chap, he used to have a pitch in Finsbury Park, just by the bus depot. When I got to know him I found out he was brought up in Putney. That didn't make any difference to me. I know quite a few people who were born in Putney. . . . Yes, it was a curious affair. Dead spit of you he was. . . . (40-41)

These two monologues challenge one of Davies' tender spots, his identity. With an insistence on the tramp's resembling someone he knows, Mick implies a dissatisfaction with Davies' explanation of himself, that he knows and is wary of his type. The uncle's different appellations and possible paternity parallel Davies' two names and unverifiable identity. The passport is an allusion to the official papers in Sidcup Davies claims prove who he is. The nomadic existence of the uncle, the detailed place names in both stories parody Davies' own roaming lifestyle and his earlier conversation with Aston in which he mentions many places. The detailed places also mock Davies' reticence concerning his origins. These accurate thrusts suggest that Mick has eavesdropped on Davies' and Aston's conversation. His choice of such phrases as "a funny business" and "a curious affair" indicate Mick's distrust. Davies eventually senses this distrust and the aggression embodied in these chatty, irrelevant speeches, cutting Mick off when he commences yet another about a bloke he bumped into by the Guildford pass.

Ruth uses the reference maxim to send the family an encoded proposal (to fill Jessie's place) when she interrupts the philosophical discussion:

> Ruth. Don't be too sure though. You've forgotten something. Look at me. I ... move my leg. That's all it is. But I wear ... underwear ... underwear ... which moves with me ... it ... captures your attention. Perhaps you misinterpret. The action is simple. It's a leg ... moving. My lips move. Why don't you restrict ... your observations to that? Perhaps the fact that they move is more significant ... than the words which come through them. You must bear that ... possibility ... in mind. . . . (69)

The table leg and her own leg seem to provide only a tenuous link to the discussion at hand. However, she is contrasting the physical and the intellectual worlds, of action and

words. With her seductively moving leg and her observation that her moving lips may be more important than her words, she aligns herself with Teddy's family and their physical realm against Teddy and his academic life. Like her underwear, her sudden, suggestive subject captures attention but leaves the men speechless. Uncomfortable, they escape as quickly as they can. Teddy tries to convince Ruth they should leave soon, thus implying he too senses her improper overtures to his family.

The relevance maxim emerges as an important tactic in the tug of war between Anna and Deely for control of Kate. Anna expertly guides the conversation time and again back to the days in London when she and Kate were close friends. For instance, she responds to Kate's declaration that she likes cooking with:

> Anna. We weren't terribly elaborate in cooking, didn't have time, but every so often dished up an incredibly enormous stew, guzzled the lot, and then more often than not sat up half the night reading Yeats. . . . (18)

Most of Anna's reminiscences are barely related to the topic at hand. They are intended to draw Kate back into their old friendship. Deely is more clumsy, abruptly launching into his "Odd Man Out" story and other memories. Eventually he grows impatient, even aggressive, announcing suddenly:

> Deely. Well, any time your husband finds himself in this direction my little wife will be only too glad to put the old pot on the old gas stove and dish him up something luscious if not voluptuous. No trouble.
>
> *Pause*
>
> I suppose his business interests kept him from making the trip. What's his name? Gian Carlo or Per Paulo?
>
> Kate (*To* Anna). Do you have marble floors? (37)

Kate and Deely now square off, the former questioning Anna about Sicily, the latter dwelling on himself and his work. He becomes highly agitated when the women ignore him.

Kate (*To* Anna). And do you like the Sicilian people?
Deely. I've been there. There's nothing more to see, there's nothing more to investigate, nothing. There's nothing more in Sicily to investigate.
Kate (*To* Anna). Do you like the Sicilian people?

Anna stares at her

Silence

Anna (*Quietly.*) Don't let's go out tonight, don't let's go anywhere tonight, let's stay in. I'll cook something, you can wash your hair, you can relax, we'll put on some records. (39)

Kate resists Deely's attempts to steer the conversation. The repetition of her question decisively shuts him out, signalling her surrender to Anna (at least for the moment). Recognizing this, Anna completely changes the subject, launching into a new discussion totally unconnected with Sicily but one which acknowledges her success in the tug-of-war that is only just concealed in this crucial exchange.

Foster and Spooner come to a guarded understanding, in *No Man's Land*, through a superficially irrelevant discussion of Foster's (alleged) experiences. Foster initiates the discussion to avert any unpleasantness following Spooner's insulting remark to Briggs already discussed above. He ostensibly seeks the former's opinion on his encounter with a blind Eastern tramp and a coin that disappears:

Spooner. A typical Eastern contrick.
Foster. Double Dutch, you mean?
Spooner. Certainly. Your good health. (*Drinks*) (105)

Foster's choice of a tramp appearing to be something other than he is, is not lost on Spooner. Foster drives home his meaning, further linking Spooner to the con artist with his Double Dutch remark which harks back to Spooner's Amsterdam account. He implies a wariness of the intruder and his intentions.

Although we are able catch the significance of this exchange without too much trouble, many of the sudden shifts in *No Man's Land* are more difficult to follow. For instance, when Hirst re-enters the next morning in Act II, he suddenly appears to know

Spooner from years ago and the two embark on reminiscences of old friends. We almost feel as if we are watching a different play. In fact, we often receive the impression that we are watching almost a series of loosely connected plays. Spooner's remark on "imaginative leaps" acquires new significance when *No Man's Land* is viewed in this manner.

> Foster. . . . A famous writer wanted me. He wanted me to be his secretary, his chauffeur, his housekeeper, his amanuensis. How did he know of me? Who told him?
> Spooner. He made an imaginative leap. Few can do it. Few do it. He did it. And that's why God loves him. (144)

The audience's ability to perform imaginative leaps, to fill in the exposition themselves, is tested through the exploitation of the relevance maxim. This task grows increasingly difficult in Pinter's plays until it reaches an extreme in this one.

Behind an irrelevant remark, therefore, can lurk any number of things: a warning, a threat, a proposal, an acknowledgement, a struggle, a fear. Such a remark may be introduced to manipulate another character or to avoid some previous topic. It is usually a conscious tactic used with calculated deliberation or clumsy spontaneity. Up to *Old Times*, the characters' abilities to switch subjects with subtlety and meaningful effect improve. The characters in *No Man's Land* are capable of subtlety, but through them Pinter often disregards the audience's expectation for smooth continuity, forcing them to make imaginative leaps. Like the movement of Ruth's leg, a sudden shift always captures attention, focusing on the concealed movements beneath the skirt of polite conversation.

The final maxim of manner requires the speaker to be orderly, unambiguous, unobscure and succinct. All of Pinter's characters seem to violate one aspect or another. As with the previous maxims, the transgression of this one is sometimes deliberate, but often accidental (on the part of the characters). Arising from the infringement on the

manner maxim are some of the most vivid and most puzzling passages in Pinter's works, passages so perplexing we can never satisfactorily explain them.

In the course of examining other maxims, we have already come across occasions where prolixity is flaunted rather than controlled. Goldberg provides several classic examples. In this exchange with Lulu during the party, he combines prolixity with ambiguity and obscurity:

> Goldberg. I had a wife. What a wife. Listen to this. Friday of an afternoon, I'd take myself for a little constitutional, down over the park. . . . I'd say hullo to the little boys, the little girls--I never made distinctions--and then back I'd go, back to my bungalow with the flat roof. "Simey," my wife used to shout, "quick, before it gets cold!" And there on the table what would I see? The nicest piece of rollmop and pickled cucumber you could wish to find.
> Lulu. I thought your name was Nat.
> Goldberg. She called me Simey. (69)

This is the second time Goldberg leaves the explanation of his two names obscure. His curious phrase "I never made distinctions" in reference to saying hello to the children is left ambiguous, giving rise to an unsettling suspicion that he is a bisexual paedophile. (Lulu's later horrified allusion to Goldberg's briefcase further supports the suspicion of his perverted sexual tastes.) The word "constitutional," also becomes ambiguous in this context, acquiring sexual connotations beyond a simple stroll for the sake of exercise. This passage and its companion piece (53), in which it is his mother who provides dinner and calls him Simey, do not really lead us to any definite conclusions about Goldberg; they merely leave us feeling uneasy and suspicious.

Mick's first verbal attack on Davies, already partially quoted, cannot be entirely made sense of either. Mick is deliberately obscure and confusing, spewing forth a jumble of details and images concerning his uncle's brother for Davies (and us) to try to make sense of:

> Mick. . . . Bit of an athlete. Long-jump specialist. He had a habit of demonstrating different run-ups in the drawing-room round about

> Christmas time. Had a penchant for nuts. That's what it was. Nothing else but a penchant. Couldn't eat enough of them. Peanuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, monkey nuts, wouldn't touch a piece of fruitcake. Had a marvellous stop-watch. Picked it up in Hong Kong. The day after they chucked him out of the Salvation Army. Used to go in number four for Beckenham Reserves. That was before he got his Gold Medal. Had a funny habit of carrying his fiddle on his back. Like a papoose. I think there was a bit of Red Indian in him. . . . (40)

These vivid images do not make sense in themselves but contribute to a general sense of the thrust of Mick's attack on Davies' identity. The deliberate disorder and obscurity achieve their goal of unnerving the tramp.

Two ambiguous remarks in *The Homecoming* raise speculation concerning Max's late wife Jessie and the effect her absence has on the family. Teddy, showing Ruth his childhood home, tells her:

> Teddy. . . . I mean, it's a fine room, don't you think? Actually there was a wall, across there ... with a door. We knocked it down ... years ago ... to make an open living area. The structure wasn't affected, you see. My mother was dead. . . . (37)

There seems an odd association, in Teddy's mind at least, between Jessie and supporting structures. Her death apparently created a profound weakness in the family unit. Max later makes a curious connection between Jessie and Ruth: "I've never had a whore under this roof before. Ever since your mother died" (58). Max seems to imply that not only is Ruth a whore, but Jessie was also. He is ambivalent toward his wife's memory throughout the play. One minute he praises her as a good wife and mother, the next he damns her as a slut and a bitch. Though it is never clearly articulated, the family's need of a woman is implied in these curious remarks; a need which precipitates the shocking resolution.

In *Old Times*, there is apparently another dark secret, like that about Jessie, which emerges from another reunion, this time between two old friends. Almost from the first, Deely suspects the two women of a former homosexual relationship. He alludes to

lesbians in his own stories. He sharply interrupts Anna whenever she speaks suggestively to Kate.

> Anna. . . . How can you say that, when I'm looking down at you now, seeing you so shyly poised over me, looking down at me--
> Deely. Stop that! (31)

Near the end of Act II, Anna describes how Kate would listen to her adventures secretly clad in her friend's underwear. Deely's response is sarcastic:

> Anna. . . . I would choose a position in the room from which I could see her face, although she could not see mine. She could hear my voice only. And so she listened and I watched her listening.
> Deely. Sounds a perfect marriage.
> Anna. We were great friends. (62)

A "perfect marriage" is sufficiently ambiguous to suggest either a compatible partnership or more sexual overtones. Anna does not rise to the bait, however, but merely stresses "great friends." Whether there was a homosexual relationship or not, Anna plays on Deely's suspicions.

In looking closely at the manner maxim in *No Man's Land*, we find that the characters in this play can be the most confusing. Spooner, for instance, violates all four maxims of manner within a few minutes; he is unorderly, obscure, ambiguous and prolix:

> Spooner. I would say, albeit on a brief acquaintance, that you lack the essential quality of manliness, which is to put your money where your mouth is, to pick up a pintpot and know it to be a pintpot, and knowing it to be a pintpot, to declare it as a pintpot, and to stay faithful to that pintpot as though you had given birth to it out of your own arse. You lack that capability, in my view.
>
> *Pause*
>
> Do forgive me my candour. It is not method but madness. So you won't, I hope, object if I take out my prayer beads and my prayer mat and salute what I take to be your impotence?
>
> *He stands*

> I salute. And attend. And saluting and attending am at your service all embracing. Heed me. I am a relevant witness. And could be a friend. (94-95)

Spooner leaps about from pintpots to impotence, from scathing sarcasm to supportive sympathy. The connection between impotence and pintpots is obscure. His attitude toward Hirst is ambiguous teetering between disdain and friendliness. His rhetoric is wordy and pretentious. Hirst's reaction, gripping the cabinet, leads us to conclude that Spooner's insults are finding their target. Hirst, at least, understands this confusing monologue showing no sign of being comforted by the professions of friendship.

The violations of manner, like those of relevance, place great demands on the audience. We are not always in possession of enough background information, if any, which might satisfactorily account for an obscure or ambiguous remark. Prolixity and disorderliness only aggravate an already frustrating task of decoding and piecing together information. Usually we must abandon our natural desire to know with certainty the meaning of a remark and focus, instead, on the purpose of its ambiguity and obscurity, on how it affects the stage listener. Pinter consistently coaxes his audience to re-evaluate its approach to and expectations of drama by expanding the exploitation of conversational principles to exploit, on a grander scale, certain dramatic conventions such as exposition, verification and continuity. Through exploitation of conversational conventions, he creates unspoken, implied meaning; through a magnification of this process to involve the exploitation of dramatic conventions, he creates a sustained subtext.

In another area of his educational process, he occasionally focuses attention, through his characters, on his methods and techniques in using conversational implicatures. Spooner, for instance, refers three times to Hirst's reticence. On the last occasion, he even mentions his own loquacity: "You're a quiet one. Can you imagine two of us gabbling away like me?" (81). He draws the audience's attention to the

underinformative and overinformative maxims of quantity while contrasting the motives and personalities between their reticient and loquacious demeanors. We have already examined how Lenny and Anna openly disregard expectations for truth and sincerity. Mick, too, focuses attention on the unreliability of what is said onstage when he tells Davies:

> Mick. . . . I can take nothing you say at face value. Every word you speak is open to any number of different interpretations. Most of what you say is lies. (82)

This is true, not only of Davies, but of many, if not most, of Pinter's characters (Dukore 8). Just as Mick unknowingly comments on the maxim of quality, his brother Aston draws attention to that of relevance:

> Aston. . . . Anyway, we were just sitting there, having this bit of conversation ... then suddenly she put her hand over mine ... and she said, how would you like me to have a look at your body?
> Davies. Get out of it.
>
> *Pause*
>
> Aston. Yes. To come out with it just like that, in the middle of the conversation. Struck me as a bit odd. (34)

Following a discussion about a drill, this anecdote about the woman, is, ironically, a perfect example of an odd remark. Aston invites the audience to notice and scrutinize these ostensibly irrelevant interjections. Spooner's reference to "imaginative leaps" informs the audience that, in spite of the violations of the relevance and manner maxims, we must relate one ambiguous remark to another, one obscure exchange to another, one seemingly unrelated incident to another to draw conclusions as best we can.

Conversational implicatures are largely a naturalistic technique. In the course of everyday conversation, we use these devices to convey unvoiced meaning. Pinter's characters use them to insult, warn, test, antagonize, evade, appeal, explain and

manipulate without rupturing the facade of civilized exchange. These implicatures can be the actual vehicle for unspoken meaning or the response which points to threat, menace and hidden meaning. Pinter exaggerates these everyday nuances, not only in the interests of dramatic vitality (drama generally tends to exaggerate the norm), but also to ensure that the audience notices the conversational strategies. As we grow accustomed to Pinter's unique dramaturgy (the absence of exposition, for example) and to interpreting implicatures, he can employ increasing subtlety including a reduction in the number of their appearances. Furthermore, the audience no longer requires the density of implicatures occurring in a single passage found in the earlier plays; where Pinter once required half-a-dozen implicatures, he needs only one or two to attract attention and arouse curiosity and suspicion. These refinements parallel and interact with those of the verbal devices discussed in the previous chapter. As the audience grows in sophistication, Pinter reduces the number of implicatures, tones down his patterned syntax and relies more on pauses and silences to convey meaning. The use of visual effects, to be discussed in the next chapter, undergoes a similar process of adjustment and refinement. In addition to creating unspoken meaning, the widespread exploitation of conversational principles expands to include that of dramatic conventions creating a sustained subtext, challenging audience expectation and shaping audience response.

CHAPTER III: VISUAL DEVICES

John Russell Brown compares Pinter's use of gesture with Beckett's, claiming these two playwrights have "discovered how to link gestures with dialogue so that they make a more subtle impression" ("Dialogue" 138). Pinter, like Beckett, does use action to complement or underline conversation. However, he also employs a startling technique in which the action contradicts or undermines what is being said; additional, implied meaning arises from the tension between words and gesture. The area of proxemics, the physical relationship between characters, provides further means of reinforcing and clarifying the dialogue. All of these techniques undergo a refining process which, in turn, affects the nature of menace in Pinter's plays.

Although the absence of conventional exposition in Pinter's plays may be unsettling, most of the gestures, in the early plays at least, are familiar or easily interpreted. These provide the audience with a recognizable, concrete point of reference. Stanley's reaction to Meg's announcement of the two expected visitors in *The Birthday Party* is consistent with that in any suspense thriller:

> Meg. . . . I've got to get things in for the two gentlemen.
>
> *A pause.* Stanley *slowly raises his head. He speaks without turning.*
>
> Stanley. What two gentlemen?
> Meg. I'm expecting visitors.
>
> *He turns.*
>
> Stanley. What? (29-30)

Cautiously raising his head, holding it as if he fears to move or even to breathe, Stanley betrays his instant suspicion and fear. Thus commences the slow emersion of a subtext brimming with mystery and contradiction. Unlike the conventional who-done-it,

however, the mystery is never entirely explained; yet the similarities between this and a conventional version create a certain reassuring familiarity for an audience floundering in the foreign sea of the inexplicable.

Unconscious gesture like Stanley's betrays a character's state of mind. Following the passage quoted above, he paces and grinds his cigarette, underlining the anxiety betrayed in his insistent questioning of Meg. However, gesture can also be used to underline or emphasize a character's words and intentions. Mick, in *The Caretaker*, reinforces his verbal taunts, the confusing questions and sudden changes in topic, by flicking Davies' trousers in the tramp's face. In *The Homecoming*, Ruth adds emphasis to her verbal sexual advances to Lenny, proferring the glass of water and physically advancing toward him:

> *She picks up the glass and lifts it toward him.*
>
> Ruth. Have a sip. Go on. Have a sip from my glass.
>
> *He is still.*
>
> Sit on my lap. Take a long cool sip.
>
> *She pats her lap. Pause.*
> *She stands, moves to him with the glass.*
>
> Put your head back and open your mouth.
> Lenny. Take that glass away from me.
> Ruth. Lie on the floor. Go on. I'll pour it down your throat.
> Lenny. What are you doing, making me some kind of proposal?
>
> *She laughs shortly, drains the glass.* (50)

Stanley's, Mick's and Ruth's actions complement and clarify their words for the audience.

Sometimes, however, a character's emotions cannot be expressed in words. In *The Birthday Party*, Stanley's overwhelming anxiety finally manifests itself in this disturbing scene:

> Stanley (*flatly*). It's a drum. A boy's drum.
> Meg (*tenderly*). It's because you haven't got a piano. (*He stares at her, then turns and walks towards the door, left.*) Aren't you going to give me a kiss? (*He turns sharply, and stops. He walks back towards her slowly. He stops at her chair, looking down upon her. Pause. His shoulders sag, he bends and kisses her on the cheek.*) . . .
> *He hangs the drum around his neck, taps it gently with the sticks, then marches round the table, beating it regularly, . . . he begins to go round the table a second time. Halfway round the beat becomes erratic, uncontrolled. Meg expresses dismay. He arrives at her chair, banging the drum, his face and the drumbeat now savage and possessed.* (46)

We can trace the range of Stanley's impulses as he equivocates between submission, not only to Meg but also to his inevitable fate, and the hopeless resistance ultimately manifested in his frenzied drumming. By attacking Joey and Sam in *The Homecoming*, Max similarly resorts to physical means in order to vent the frustrated anger he feels toward Lenny. In contrast, Aston, in *The Caretaker*, reinforces his verbal rejection of Davies by turning away to look out the window. His silent profile expresses more forcefully than words the finality of his decision.

John Russell Brown regards Stanley's drum as a "crude device," but claims that in subsequent plays "Pinter no longer tries to overwhelm with a single gesture" ("Dialogue" 142). He prefers a repetition of gesture which acquires its own meaning unique to the play as the latter progresses. Citing the example of McCann's newspaper strips, he compares the Irishman's obsession to the quirky behaviour of two of Beckett's characters in *Waiting for Godot*. The manner in which Vladimir continually fiddles with his hat becomes "an expression of the uncertainty of his attempt to live by conscious effort. Estragon's repeated struggles with his boots show, by the end of the play, how he becomes individually responsible through pain" ("Dialogue" 138). Through the repetitious tearing of strips, through the warning to Stanley not to touch (85), and through Goldberg's rebuke when he realizes what McCann is doing (49), Pinter draws special attention to the Irishman's actions. This encourages the audience to focus on the impulse prompting this curious activity. McCann's strips of newspaper become a kind

of refuge distracting his conscience from "the job" of destroying Stanley ("Dialogue" 138).

Pinter further refines this technique of repeated gesture in the later plays. He uses less eccentric, more common movements, like Vladimir's and Estragon's preoccupations with their hat and boots. In *Old Times* and *No Man's Land*, a pattern of serving coffee and making drinks emerges. These familiar activities become an excuse to move, breaking or alleviating the accumulating tension. In a passage already examined in Chapter I, where Anna addresses Kate with sexual overtones, Deely interrupts, "Stop that!" and then pours himself a drink (31). In the second play, Hirst rises in indignation when Spooner insults Arabella Hinscott (134). With Spooner's persistent provocation, he paces the room com[illegible]g drinks from Briggs finally sinking into confusing halting reflections on his youth, g[illegible]ing whisky and underlining the intensity of his distress (135-37). As this consistent pattern for avoiding confrontation or betraying agitation emerges, the audience learns to chart the ebb and flow of tension, to follow the evolving relationships as first one then another character resorts to these evasive tactics.

In contrast to the technique Brown discusses in which gestures underline or complement the dialogue, there are occasions when the action undercuts or contradicts dialogue and an awareness arises from the ironic tension between action and words. In *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon do not leave in spite of their repeated agreement to do so. Eventually, we begin to doubt that they can ever leave whether they wish to or not. In *The Birthday Party* and *The Caretaker*, Pinter's use of this technique is comparatively underdeveloped, brief and infrequent, but still illuminating. McCann, for example, offers a friendly hand while congenially introducing himself to Stanley: "I'm glad to meet you, sir . . . Many happy returns of the day." However, he holds the grip while shaking Stanley's hand, undercutting his warmth with intimidation. Mick similarly feigns friendliness seconds after chasing Davies in the dark with an electrolux:

> ***. . . The nozzle moves along the floor after Davies, who skips, dives away from it and falls, breathlessly. . . . The electrolux stops. The figure jumps on Aston's bed. . . . takes out the electrolux plug from the light socket and fits the bulb. The light goes on . . .***
>
> **Mick. I was just doing some spring cleaning. (*He gets down.*) There used to be a wall plug for this electrolux. But it doesn't work. I had to fit it in the light socket. (54)**

Mick's words do not satisfactorily explain the aggressiveness of his vacuuming, heightening our awareness of his continued hostility toward the tramp. In both of these examples, the tension between action and words conveys an indirect but obvious threat.

Pinter refines this undercutting technique in *The Homecoming*. The unease and tension with which Teddy and Ruth enter his childhood home is, in part, conveyed through this contradiction between words and action:

> Ruth. Can I sit down?
> Teddy. Of course.
> Ruth. I'm tired.
>
> *Pause*
>
> Teddy. Then sit down.
>
> *She does not move.* (36)

While Teddy appears disconcerted by her contrariness, the audience senses something amiss between the husband and wife. Ruth does not sit, despite her expressed desire to do so, until Teddy seems to have forgotten it. She may feel too nervous to sit quietly or she may resent Teddy's command-like solicitousness, or both. Later, when Ruth becomes better acquainted with the family, this tension between words and action takes an outrageous turn:

> *Lenny sits on the arm of the sofa. He caresses* Ruth's *hair as* Joey *embraces her . . .*
> Joey *lies heavily on* Ruth.
> *They are almost still.*
> Lenny *caresses her hair.*
> **Max. Listen, you think I don't know why you didn't tell me you were**

> married? I know why. You were ashamed. You thought I'd be annoyed because you married a woman beneath you. . . .
>
> *He peers to see* Ruth's *face under* Joey, *turns back to* Teddy.
>
> Mind you, she's a lovely girl. A beautiful woman. And a mother too. A mother of three. You've made a happy woman out of her. It's something to be proud of. I mean we're talking about a woman of quality. We're talking about a woman of feeling.
>
> Joey *and* Ruth *roll off the sofa onto the floor.* (75-6)

Max's initial, surprising assessment of his daughter-in-law, her calm reaction to Lenny's stories, the nervousness with which she and Teddy arrive and the fear of disapproval are all explained and justified by Ruth's actions. Yet, while the audience's desire for exposition is partially satisfied here, the shocking discrepancy between Max's praise and Ruth's behaviour effectively undermines our unquestioning expectation for a certain degree of uniformity in dialogue and action. Whereas McCann's held handshake conveys a threat to Stanley, the irony created here directs menace at an audience accustomed to a decorum of language and action in the theatre. Moreover, if Max can praise Ruth as a woman of feeling and quality while she is prostituting herself, Pinter implies that the relationship between language and reality is arbitrary and meaningless.

Pinter further undermines the assumed connection between language and action, language and reality in *No Man's Land.* Hirst's reaction to Spooner's offer of friendship and assistance undercuts the latter's sincerity:

> Spooner. . . . Heed me. I am a relevant witness. And could be a friend.
>
> *Hirst grips the cabinet, rigid.*
>
> You need a friend. You have a long hike, my lad, up which, presently, you slog unfriended. . . . I offer myself to you as a friend. . . .
>
> *Hirst attempts to move, stops, grips the cabinet.* (95)

Hirst reacts as if to a threat. Spooner's verbal thrusts just preceding this passage have cut deeper than his present cheerful solicitousness would imply. His offer is cruelly

ironic: instead of helping his host, he merely watches as Hirst staggers, falls and eventually crawls out of the room. This is perhaps a more subdued use of the discrepancy between action and language than that found in *The Homecoming*, but it creates the same unease in the audience.

Although audiences once complained about the lack of exposition and the uncertainty surrounding the characters in the early plays, movement and gesture were still sufficiently familiar and recognizable for easy interpretation. Most gesture and movement guide the audience, underlining and clarifying revelations and developments found in the dialogue in Pinter's works. As the audience grew accustomed to Pinter's style, he was able to reduce the amount of stage business, especially eccentric gesture, and exploit the potential for everyday activities to signal and guide the audience. He also experiments with action that contradicts dialogue, raising awareness, even creating expositional meaning while challenging the audience's expectation for uniformity in dialogue and action.

The action in most of Pinter's plays arises from a standard situation: a new party enters a room and, therefore, into the lives of its occupants, forcing a readjustment in the existing relationships to accommodate him. The verbal and gestural manoeuverings that we have been examining are part of this readjustment. As Pinter subdues his use of gesture, he draws increasingly on the area of proxemics, the physical relationship of characters to each other, to guide the audience through the maze of evolving subtextual relationships. Lateral movement, vertical positioning and tableaux serve to underline and reinforce audience perception of these complex and often confusing developments.

Like the individual gestures discussed near the beginning of this chapter, lateral movement generally forms familiar or easily recognized patterns. A good example is McCann's menacing dance with Stanley, at the beginning of Act II in *The Birthday Party*, in which he matches each of Stanley's moves in order to prevent the latter from

leaving the house (49). The threat of being confined or trapped is again typical of the thriller suspense play. The manner in which Mick circles Davies, in *The Caretaker*, prepares the audience for his final devastating dismissal of the tramp (82). In *The Homecoming*, characters enter and exit during moments of critical confrontation. For instance, Sam leaves just as Lenny and Teddy commence an argument over a cheese roll. Framed in silences, his departure signals the gravity of the argument. It contributes to our perception of how the trivial theft provides a focus for the antagonism arising from the more serious theft of Teddy's wife (79). In *Old Times*, significant lateral movement becomes even more mundane than an entrance or exit. Whenever Anna, Deely or Kate grow uneasy or disturbed, they move to the window or make drinks. As the amount of stage business decreases, each shift toward and away from another character acquires subtle overtones of an aggressive advance or anxious retreat. The characters in *No Man's Land* cleverly attempt to hide their agitation and, therefore, the impulse to shift position:

> Spooner. There are two mugs on that shelf.
> Hirst. The second is for you.
> Spooner. And the first?
> Hirst. Would you like to use it? Would you like some hot refreshment?
> Spooner. That would be dangerous. I'll stick to your scotch, if I may.
> Hirst. Help yourself.
> Spooner. Thank-you.
>
> *He goes to the cabinet.* (83-4)

Unnerved by Hirst's evasiveness, Spooner attempts an inconspicuous change in topic and position. Hirst achieves the same evasive goal with even more subtlety by asking Spooner to make him a drink. In plays involving so little action, every movement and gesture becomes a signal steering the audience through the subtextual smoke screens of verbal evasiveness.

The patterns of lateral movement are generally easy to recognize and interpret. In contrast, vertical positioning is more complex, its significance emerging as the play

progresses. In *The Birthday Party*, the positions of standing and sitting acquire meaningful associations: sitting becomes a sign of weakness; standing, one of domination. When Goldberg and McCann first arrive at the boardinghouse, they quibble over who should sit down:

> Goldberg. Don't worry yourself, McCann. Take a seat.
> McCann. What about you?
> Goldberg. What about me?
> McCann. Are you going to take a seat?
> Goldberg. We'll both take a seat. (37)

Although we might not initially glean the significance of this altercation, their arguments here and later with the reluctant Stanley focus our attention on the importance of standing and sitting:

> McCann. Nat.
> Goldberg. What?
> McCann. He won't sit down.
> Goldberg. Well, ask him.
> McCann. I've asked him.
> Goldberg. Ask him again.
> McCann (*to* Stanley). Sit down.
> Stanley. Why?
> McCann. You'd be more comfortable.
> Stanley. So would you.
>
> *Pause*
>
> McCann. All right. If you will I will.
> Stanley. You first.
>
> McCann *slowly sits at the table, left.*
>
> McCann. Well?
> Stanley. Right. Now you've both had a rest you can get out! (56-7)

Beneath the childishness of this exchange is a serious principle. Later, when the two intruders crush Stanley's spirit during their interrogation, they stand over him. The ease with which Goldberg and McCann impel Stanley to sit during the party (65) and the next morning (91) underlines his submission.

The Caretaker opens with Davies pacing the room in agitation, refusing to take the seat Aston offers (17). Aston unhesitatingly sits, perhaps to encourage Davies to relax. His brother Mick often sits; he even lies down at the beginning of Act III. He may be nurturing a false sense of security in Davies who is sitting comfortably at the beginning of this scene. However, the tramp rises and paces whenever he grows disturbed, as when Mick is momentarily direct:

> Davies. I got a knife, sure I got a knife, but how do you expect me to cut a good loaf of bread with that? . . . No, what I want--
> Mick. I know what you want.
>
> *Pause*. Davies *rises and goes to the gas stove.*
>
> Davies. What about this gas stove? . . . (68)

The pause, the movement away to the stove and the change in topic all betray his unease. Later, when he commences his final verbal attack on Davies, Mick rises (82). Similarly, Aston rises to stand framed in the window when he finally rejects the tramp (86). Sitting, therefore, denotes a relaxed, secure state of mind. Standing is associated with either agitation or aggression.

In the later plays, standing is still associated with domination. However, the success with which a standing figure dominates a seated one is no longer guaranteed. Despite his violent stories in *The Homecoming*, Lenny is unnerved and controlled by the seated Ruth. She even invites him to assume the highly vulnerable position of lying down. After her initial reluctance upon arriving, Ruth sits secure and confident throughout much of the play. Like Lenny, Deely, in *Old Times*, tries to dominate his wife and her friend by standing but only succeeds in betraying his uneasiness. Anna sits through most of the first Act, but in response to Deely's "Warefarer's Tavern," counteroffensive story, in Act II, she spends more time on her feet. The most secure of the three, Kate generally remains seated except in brief moments of agitation. In this play and in *No Man's Land*, standing no longer ensures power, nor does sitting denote

submission. Foster, Briggs and Spooner usually remain standing in each other's presence, wary of one another. These three are often grouped around the seated Hirst in a kind of mutual supportiveness; they are as dependent on him as he on them. Hirst's wealth appears to provide the ultimate security and power that draws the other three to him. Power and confidence, insecurity, distrust and agitation are all revealed in these physical relationships.

The last position, lying down, denotes weakness, vulnerability and defeat. As mentioned earlier, Mick lies down feigning trust, reassuring Davies with this vulnerable position. Sam's collapse in *The Homecoming* underlines his total loss of power in divulging his secret (Dawick 41). Anna's prostrate figure on the couch signals her defeat at the hands of Kate's story. Hirst's emotional breakdown is brought on by Spooner's cruel insinuations concerning his alleged impotence. Except in the first example where Mick exploits its associations, the lying position proves the weakest. Again, once the audience learns the significance of vertical positioning, we can determine the subtextual status of characters on more evidence than simple intuition.

Tableaux are another means by which Pinter clarifies our perceptions of characters and their relationships. Often certain positions are held so that they impress a visual image on us, which reinforces our awareness. In the early plays, this technique is not yet fully developed, but there are some partial tableaux. The interrogation scene, in *The Birthday Party*, is staged with Stanley in a chair downstage, his back to the audience with Goldberg and McCann on either side (59). This creates a very threatening image of a Nazi-like interrogation. A brief tableau in *The Caretaker* appears with Aston's entrance near the end of the play. Both he and Mick have told Davies to leave:

> Aston *comes in. He closes the door, moves into the room and faces* Mick. *They look at each other. Both are smiling, faintly.* (84)

This moment is the strongest argument in favor of the conspiracy theory. The guarded

smiles seem to celebrate the success of their cruel game, now almost complete. Opposing critics explain the smiles as a moment of fraternal understanding; Mick has allowed Aston the right of self-determination, to decide for himself that Davies should be sent away.[12] For either interpretation, this moment is crucial. It emphasizes the unity of the brothers as they face each other, a unity which excludes Davies.

Tableaux are better developed in *The Homecoming*. The final scene is the best example. It resembles a rather bizarre family portrait: Sam motionless on the floor; Lenny standing off to one side; Ruth seated at center; Joey kneeling at her feet with his head in her lap; and Max kneeling beside Ruth's chair (96-8). Each posture is indicative of each character's position in the new family power structure. Sam's prostrate figure denotes weakness, impotence. Lenny's stance suggests domination, at least over the kneeling and lying figures. His position off to one side qualifies his power, indicating an inability to dominate Ruth, though his standing implies resistance to her power over him. Ruth sits with confidence at center stage, the kneeling men her subjects. Joey's willingness to kneel contrasts with Max's resistance and his subsequent collapse to the kneeling position. Although the old man displays some lingering defiance in the way he straightens himself even while kneeling, his resistance remains diminished. Throughout the play, we have followed the changing relationships resulting from Teddy's and Ruth's return. This last image provides a pictorial resolution, visually outlining the new family hierarchy.[13] In addition to complaints concerning a lack of exposition in Pinter's plays, there have been others about the absence of resolution. Yet, in the ever-changing nature of human relationships, the characters here have reached as close a resolution as is possible, a stable, though temporary, plateau.

Of all the full length plays, *Old Times* has the most intense and extensive use of tableaux.[14] The play opens with three figures perceived in the dim light.

Deely slumped in armchair, still.
Kate curled on a sofa, still.

Anna standing at her window, looking out. (3)

Anna, the outsider, is looking out the window at center back rather than in. Deely sits slumped in a chair off to one side. Kate curls comfortably, securely on a sofa, though a little to one side. No one occupies the dominant position: sitting upright at center stage. At the close of Act I, Kate has left the room; Anna sits composed on a sofa; Deely, the outsider, stands, excluded from Anna's and Kate's recent conversation. Anna, with deliberation, turns her head to return Deely's menacing stare. A change in the balance of power is indicated in the new positions but this balance is not yet settled. After Kate's story in which Anna is dead, the latter lies down, powerless. Deely is not dead but merely soiled in the story; he is not rejected, merely put in his place. He first lies submissively across his wife's lap, then sits slumped in a chair off to one side. Kate remains seated upright at center, dominating the other two. The uneasy balance of the opening tableau, in which no one seems to dominate, is resolved in this last image. Pinter underlines its significance with the sudden bright lights at the very end.

In *No Man's Land* there is so little movement one could almost trace a sequence of slowly evolving tableaux. The last image in this series would be that of Hirst seated at center stage surrounded by the three standing men. Spooner is a little further off than the other two, by the liquor cabinet. As previously mentioned, there appears to be a kind of interdependence between the seated and standing figures. The latter seem simultaneously imposing yet dependent, focused on Hirst, who in turn seems only secure through the support of the others. Hirst, Briggs and Foster remain motionless from the moment Spooner's initial proposal (146) until Hirst drinks at the end. This motionlessness [illegible] unwillingness to change: Spooner will remain an outsider. Cont[illegible] resolution of a formerly uneasy balance in the tableau at the conclusion [illegible] *Times*, the tableau here reconfirms the pre-existing relationships.

Interpreting proxemics is, for the most part, an easily acquired skill. Pinter

provides some guidance, drawing attention to positioning through the altercations in *The Birthday Party* and to tableaux through the use of bright lights at the end of *Old Times*. The relative absence of action alone, in later works, naturally focuses attention on the slightest movement or change in position. And once we, the audience, overcome our unquestioning expectation to find a clear resolution stated in the dialogue, tableaux provide a meaningful denouement.

The general trend in emphasis from gesture to proxemics parallels a trend toward increasingly subtle manifestations of menace. Although the early plays display some subtle gestures, these are outnumbered by the overt mannerisms. *The Birthday Party* has a modest share of the less openly menacing gestures such as stares and McCann's protracted handshake. However, there is also a whole series of violent outbursts: Stanley plays his drum with frenzy (46), he attacks Goldberg and McCann with a chair (62), he attempts to rape Lulu and strangle Meg (73-6), and finally, Goldberg attacks McCann (86). Stanley's mental breakdown not only destroys his power of speech, it allows the intruders to physically remove him. In *The Caretaker*, the subtle manifestations of threat include stares and Aston's exit during Davies' monologue (74). Among the more frequent, overt incidents that occur are when Mick wrestles with Davies (38), when Mick attacks the tramp with an electrolux (54) and when Davies defensively waves his knife at Mick and then at Aston (54, 76-78). In spite of all this violence, Pinter discovered that murdering Davies to resolve the action was unnecessary:

> At the end . . . there are two people alone in a room, and one of them must go in such a way as to produce a sense of complete separation and finality. I thought originally that the play must end with the violent death of one at the hands of another. But then I realized, when I got to the point, that the characters as they had grown could never act in this way. . . . (Taylor 336)

John Russell Taylor sees this as an important step in an evolution toward greater realism. In previous plays, victims, such as Rose in *The Room*, Stanley, and Gus in

The Dumb Waiter, were physically harmed. Mick bullies Davies physically and emotionally, taunting him with absurd and confusing questions and accusations. Similarly, Davies' attempt to play one brother off another is a more insidious form of threat than outright violence. And if we accept the conspiracy theory, the game the two brothers play on the tramp is as horrifying as Goldberg and McCann's interrogation; the only difference is in the outward signs of destruction we see in Stanley. Physically unharmed, Davies is not bodily removed but still compelled to leave. Taylor sees this emotional conflict without the physical harm as the first sign of psychological realism (336).

The progress toward greater psychological realism is continued in the later plays where words and psychological power increasingly gain precedence over brute force and physical intimidation. The most physical member of the family in *The Homecoming*, Max shakes his stick, striking only the members he can still dominate, Joey and Sam. Yet his physical power proves insufficient when Lenny and Ruth turn the living room into a verbal battlefield. Although they still indulge in less overt gestures such as stares, these are subordinate to the verbal strategems. Lenny's stories of violence ultimately prove weaker than Ruth's sexually insinuating fictions, for the latter prey on the sexual focus the exclusively male family lacks. Ruth consistently resists Lenny's intimidating tactics, coolly negotiating her new, central role in the family. In *Old Times*, there is a singular exclusion of overt violence. Menacing and defensive manoeuvres are restricted to stares and subtle physical advances and retreats. Anna's and Deely's bids for possession of Kate assume the form of song snatches and stories. Kate asserts herself, by creating the most emotionally devastating story. *No Man's Land* is characterized by the same general absence of overt physical violence, except for a few disturbing, ineffectual gestures such as when Foster turns off the lights (115) and when Hirst pitifully throws his glass (94). Spooner's attempts to ingratiate himself into Hirst's confidence culminate in his final verbal appeal to become Hirst's secretary. The

exclusion of the tramp is also effected through verbal means; Hirst refuses to answer Spooner's appeal directly but implies his rejection by unceremoniously changing the topic (149). Spooner is not thrown out; he is not even asked to leave; he is simply ignored. In all of these later plays, only those who become frustrated with verbal tactics betray their weakness through resorting to overt physical expression. The strongest prove the most verbally adept.

In John Russell Brown's discussion of Pinter's use of gesture, he examines such devices as Stanley's drum and McCann's newspaper strips, favorably comparing the latter with Beckett's technique of repeated mannerism in *Waiting for Godot*. But in addition to these reinforcing, guiding functions, in which gestures are linked to dialogue, Pinter employs action to undercut and contradict language. The resulting dissonance challenges the audience's expectation for conformity between these elements, raising the issue of the arbitrariness between language and reality. Once accepted, however, this dissonance heightens and clarifies our awareness of characters' states of mind, motivations and intentions. Pinter's use of proxemics further reinforces our perceptions of these subtextual strategies. Lateral movement underlines subtle advances and retreats or betrays uneasiness and agitation. Through vertical positioning, we can chart the shifts of power in the evolving relationships. Tableaux serve similar functions, culminating in unique visual resolutions. The emphasis on proxemics grows as characters begin to avoid excessive movement which, like excessive talking, usually betrays more than desired. As movement and gesture decrease and verbal control gains power and precedence, overt manifestations of violence disappear. This reflects the trend toward greater psychological realism which focuses on everyday origins of menace within relationships rather than "an indeterminate threat derived from a vague source" (Gale 18) from the outside world.

CONCLUSION

In his article "Pinter's Progress," Noel King discusses the recapitulatory nature of *No Man's Land*. In addition to reworking such themes as identity, verification, memory and menace, Pinter incorporates situations and motifs from his previous works. As a disreputable visitor who tries to secure himself a place in the household, Spooner resembles Davies in *The Caretaker*. In exchanging reminiscences that appear to be more fiction than fact, Spooner and Hirst bring to mind Deely, Anna and Kate in *Old Times*. The pairing of quick-wittedness and muscle seen in Foster and Briggs is reminiscent of Goldberg and McCann in *The Birthday Party*. King notes the allusion to *The Dumb Waiter* in which Briggs answers the phone, picks up the tray and leaves, after which Spooner remarks, "I have known this before. The voice unheard. A listener. The command from an upper floor" (126). One might accuse Pinter of self-parody but King feels the playwright "does not so much rework old ideas and obsessions as work through them" (251).

However true this may be in *No Man's Land*, the danger of self-parody makes it clear that Pinter has reached the end of a phase in his career. He has exhaustively explored his themes and concerns within the confines of neo-absurdist drama. The techniques he uses to create unspoken meaning reveal a trend towards realism that anticipates the final shift from neo-absurdism to realistic drama in *Betrayal*. The verbal devices are increasingly subtle and naturalistic, less stylized and, except for pauses and silences, used with less frequency. The changing emphasis from gesture to proxemics is also a step toward mainstream realism; tableaux are traditionally used to end a play just as the curtain falls. The difference lies in the weight Pinter gives his tableaux; they become not just a means of reinforcement but actually embody the resolution. The evolution toward increasing subtlety in his techniques parallels and interacts with the

growing sophistication of his audience to decode his subtextual signals. Whether he intended to or not, Pinter has educated his audience through neo-absurdist drama to detect and interpret these devices and the resulting subtext in realistic drama. It seems unlikely anyone watching *Betrayal* would grasp all of the nuances of motivation, intention, emotion and states of mind without having watched any of Pinter's earlier plays.

Pinter also used limited exposition as an educational influence on his audience forcing us to focus on the nuance and innuendo created by these devices. Now that we automatically focus on the subtextual manoeuverings, he dispenses with the expositional technique he had made a convention within his plays. With its reversed chronological presentation, *Betrayal* becomes almost entirely exposition in which the events leading up the state of affairs in the first scenes are revealed in subsequent scenes. Memory is still unreliable, but the audience is eventually provided with the event itself, revealing where the faultiness lies. The audience is not so much menaced by uncertainty in *Betrayal* as by the realism of the play: the sources of menace and the subtextual manoeuverings might be found in our own relationships.

NOTES

[1] Quigley (11), Esslin (30) and Dukore (1-2, 25) discuss these complaints from the audience and the critics.

[2] Numerous critics mention the function of the pause; Brown ("Dialogue" 128) and Dawick (42) provide two valuable discussions.

[3] Dukore cites Richard Schechner ("[illegible]" *Tulane Drama Review* 11, 179-80) who proposes that Mick and Aston deliberately bring Davies into the house to destroy his sanity. Two of Pinter's comments ("Harold Pinter: An Interview" Ganz 28) might be interpreted to support this theory. He relates how not long after he finished writing the play he had a dream in which the two brothers burned down his house. Instead of receiving compensation from them, he paid them £50. He also points out that not everything Aston says about his experience in the mental hospital need necessarily be true. Durbach (26), Dukore (54) and Esslin (112), on the other hand, assert that Aston is recovering from a genuine nervous breakdown and unfortunately chooses Davies in a tentative attempt to reintegrate himself into society. Recognizing the detrimental influence the tramp has on his brother, Mick delicately manoeuvres Davies into revealing his true nature so that Aston has no choice but to dismiss him.

[4] Brown ("Dialogue" 124-26, 139-41) and Esslin (209-11).

[5] The definitions I provide of these rhetorical devices in the text are based on those in Weathers and Winchester.

[6] I have elaborated here on points made by Dukore (52) and Thompson (120).

[7] Googly is a cricket term for an "off-break ball bowled with apparent leg-break action" (*COD* 7th edition). For those of us unfamiliar with cricket the bowler determines the direction of spin and the subsequent bounce of the ball by flicking his hand either to the left or the right as he releases it. The batsman anticipates the bounce by the flicking motion. A googly is a deceptive manoeuvre to confuse the batsman whereby the ball is bowled off the back of the hand changing the direction of its spin and subsequent bounce. Its deceptiveness makes it a particularly appropriate inclusion in a Pinter play.

[8] Pinter, "Writing for the Theatre" (14).

[9] I have incorporated into the title of this thesis a chapter subheading, "The said and the unsaid," from Elam, 170.

[10] Mick's subsequent remarks and accusations concerning Davies' name and origins among other things imply he has been eavesdropping. See below p. 46.

[11] Wardle, "The Territorial Struggle."

[12] Among a number of critics who interpret this scene as a moment of reconciliation and reconfirmation of the fraternal bond are Durbach (27) and Dukore (54). See also note 3 above.

[13] Thompson discusses how Pinter "uses an image, a 'tableau', to create the 'curtain'" (47), but only implies this might serve as a resolution as well.

[14] I have partially based my interpretation of these tableaux on Dukore's (96-97).

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