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Analysing the Artistic Use of Silence in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*

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Dedication

In the NAME of ALLAH, the MOST GRACIOUS, the MOST MERCIFUL

I dedicate this work to my family, friends and my supervisor. I want to express my warm gratitude to Mr. Harhoura Kamel for being such an amazing person and guider and brother

“I owe you brother for every moment of support”

I further want to dedicate myself who suffers but never gives up, I'm proud of me.

Declaration

I, undersigned, do hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “**ANALYZING THE ARTISTIC USE OF SILENCE IN SAMUEL BECKETT’S WAITING FOR GODOT**” has been carried by me as partial part in the fulfillment of Master degree in English Literature and Civilization under the guidance of my supervisor MR. Kamel Harhoura, Faculty of Letters and Languages, English Language Division, Mohamed KHIDER University of BISKRA, ALGERIA.

I further declare that the findings of this work are a result of my own readings and understanding of the original works. Also, I declare that this work is not published anywhere in any form.

Benguellah Linda.

Acknowledgments

All my praise and gratitude is to ALLAH the ALMIGHTY,

Who has guided me to this achievement

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Abstract

This dissertation is an attempt to unmask the artistic use of silence in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* inside the postmodern context, it searches for the different meanings of silence regarding Absurdism and Existentialism. It contends that the Absurd existence typified in this play at all levels mainly the language. The problematic that is raised is in how Beckett through this play expressed the existential pain is felt by postmodern man after World War, through using silence to speak up what the language failed in. This investigation aspires to fathom artistically and philosophically the metaphorical meaning of silence and pause existed in the play. It draws on an eclectic approach of the existentialist, absurdist thoughts in postmodern context. The analyses demonstrates that silence that is interfering between character's conversations each time determines the existential collapse of them, they find no sense to their existence and keep on turning in the unknown. Beckett abandoned the language as a meaningful tool of communication and replaced it by silence. Thus, he tends to convey the individual's struggle in an absurd world that lost its meaning, and the failure of language in transmitting full and comprehensive message that silence is more expressive and powerful.

Key terms

Theatre of the Absurd, Postmodernism, Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, Existentialism, Silence, Absurdism, Existential Crises.

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General Introduction

After the end of the Second World War, the world was fragmented and lost in an existential chaos, so literature was the stage to perform such reality. The English literature during the postmodern era was on a journey in search of a different entity in terms of literary styles, themes and techniques. The journey resulted in a refusal movement called British postmodernism, it attempted to portray what reality was during the late of the twentieth century; it is a literary movement that was born out of a dilemma to question the previous features of literature (modernism).

Beckett's (*Waiting for Godot*) tends to merge the Existential crises with a particular use of silence that was exchanged between the characters in a postmodern landscape, the language is fragmented and appealing to moments of silence full of artistry, that provoke a sense of curiosity to discover what silence can say?

Waiting for Godot is a masterpiece play of the twentieth century and merely the greatest publication during that time, it presented in a dark scene the arbitrariness of the world during Postwar. In addition to that, it plays with the language with absurdity, similar to the reality lived in Britain at that time, as everything was moving on the path of change convincingly, Beckett was capable of conveying the state of wandering that people suffered from during postwar. The play is full of skeptical pauses where Beckett tried to give silence the freedom to speak. He succeeded well through this play, which not only broke the laws established in the constitution of playwright, but was able to prove that language is not much important to express the conditions being lived, so silence had a share in this play (*Waiting for Godot*), whether through the dialogues, characters or the plot in itself.

Beckett was an Irish playwright and a novelist, theatre director, poet and a literary translator who wrote many plays and two short stories and a Nobel prize winner for Literature in 1969, he wrote in French and English and some of his best works are (Molloy,

Murphy, *The Unnamable*, *Watt*, *Endgame* and *Waiting for Godot* “*En Attendant Godot* 1948” that was originally written in French language and translated by Beckett into English. He was one of the main figures that founded what known as the “Theatre of the Absurd.”

The present thesis aims to analyze from a postmodern view, how silence is used as a language to express the Existential crises Postwar man suffered from; through analyzing the silence present in the conversations and the setting, to understand what is behind such silence and focusing also on one character that exemplifies silence, to find out why Beckett silenced this character’s words, down to the plot and time dependent on waiting that turns into a silent emptiness. The results will give a voice to the silence that many critics ignore while they read a literary work and find different uses of it, yet they do not pay attention to it, so this study will try as much as possible to shed the light on this marginalized aspect in the analytical studies of literary works in general and in (*Waiting for Godot*) in particular within the limits of postmodernism.

Postmodernism is the Beckettian era and the theatre that holed his existential absurdity. Beckett through (*Waiting for Godot*) was able to voice the postmodern man in a postmodern form. (Alshalan) this dissertation will be an analysis to the work of Samuel Beckett *Waiting for Godot*, it is an attempt to figure out the disguised meanings of silences included in the dialogue, and to understand the Postmodern existential crises of men portrayed again through the use of silence. Besides providing some critics interpretations to the Beckettian silence. This will be supported by examples from the play to give enough space for various interpretations.

To address the elaborated problematic, one has to provide an approaching answer to

The following primary question: How does Samuel Beckett approach existentialism in his play (*waiting for Godot*) in a Postmodern context, to reflect the cruelty of men's existence through the metaphorical use of silence?

In line with this, several key questions will preoccupy a central space in the analysis. They are as follows: How Samuel Beckett is a postmodern writer? How *Waiting for Godot* is a postmodern play? What is the silent literature? And how waiting for Godot is a silent play? In what way the existential conflict is presented in the random or the absence of dialogues between characters? How has the postmodern reality affected the silence of words and fragmented the existence of beings in an absurd waiting?

Following the light of postmodernism, digging down to an existential path, this investigation tackles a postmodern context and an existential approach to analyze Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot*, especially, dropping the usual masks in dramatic texts in a creative artistic way, represented in the real artistry behind the use of silence. Besides giving a space to understand how the play depicts the postmodern features.

Methodologically my research nature is qualitative, following interpretive and analytical methods. thus, data collection will be reliable on profound reading of primary sources, dissertations, essays, articles and books that are relevant and support the aim of the study. furthermore, I will also use biographical materials to the English silent literature in general that helps in understanding and gives a feedback to the view.

The study is structured around as mentioned in the proposal, making an analytical study to Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot*, through approaching existentialism in a postmodern landscape. Attempting to raise the marginalized voice of silent language in literature. For that, the limitations of the study are expressed as follows:

The research does not fully provide a sufficient argument due to the lack of sources dealing with the aspect of my study and the hard accesses to some of them.

The result of this thesis may not be strongly convincing as mentioned before due to the lack of

studies about the aspect of the research. I will try to find more relevant sources through including another relevant interpretation to the study.

Time imposes more limits to our research, since the process of gathering data takes time and effort to afford the needed information's, and learning how to apply methodological approaches in classroom during the process of writing the research thesis causes the lack of practice and difficulty to apply them.

Chapter One: Theoretical framework

“When a person can't find a deep sense of meaning, they distract themselves with pleasure” (Viktor franki)

Introduction

The late of the twentieth century was a questionable time in the history of British literature; a literature that survived World War two but turned into one of its defective ones. Postmodernism was the canon to save this literature damaged by post war ashes and by the previous treatments. Hence, *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett was the shelter to represent the postmodern existential crises as a dark pleasure, this play brought silence into investigation and gave it a large space in the dialogue as a reliable tool of communication as words.

Waiting for Godot is a masterpiece in English literature with post modernistic point of view. The characters Vladimir and Estragon represents the miserable condition of life in the present, The play gives deep insight into the human conditions, and reflects a mirror to the audience which makes them ask, is this me and my life circumstances? (MHETRE 1).

This chapter is important in our investigation in the sense that, it highlights the contextual framework of postmodernism and also provides the relation between the existential

philosophy and the theatre of the absurd as well, mentioning the silent trend in literature that was mostly used in Beckett's writings, he merges it in the dialogues to convey a sense of meaning that lays behind the unuttered language.

1. Postmodernism:

Reality is irrational, cruel and meaningless that what postmodernism stands for, since its beginning from the late of the 20th c as a respond to modernism, yet it was not a real break with the past but it re treated literature from a specific point of view. Postmodern literature is narrated from a subjective angle; it swallows the linear stream of time and rebels against the authority of rationality as the power that gives sense to the world. In the light with this, *waiting for Godot* by Beckett harshly and amazingly brought into our sight the inner destruction caused by the two World Wars and it was performed as a Shakespearian tragedy, the characters were suffering to understand their existence in a world full of absurdity.

Within a complicated end of two world wars and the beginning of cold war, postmodernism emerged as tragic hero who scarifies his existence for the sake of saving others; thus, it protected men's skepticism to reality and celebrated fragmentation as a way to reach the truth. It is a philosophy of making art and specifically literature able to speak on itself. For that, postmodernism is an umbrella term to describe philosophy, literature, paintings, drama and all kind of arts were produced after the end of World War two. Moreover, postmodern literature is distinguished from other literatures in the case that it uses different literary styles, themes and techniques such as metafiction, unreliable narration, self-reflexivity, dark humor and intertextuality. The previous mentioned techniques were used to serve the thematic context of political, social, existential and cultural anxieties during post war. Moreover, Postmodernism is distinguished as a dramatic deviation of man's thought line.

It dismisses the existence of an absolute reality. (Mhetre 2) “Postmodernism is among other things a sick joke at the expense of ... revolutionary avant-gardism.” (Eagleton).

Within a tragic atmosphere, postmodernism tried to cover all aspects of the existed reality, for that, it adopted principles from other philosophies such as surrealism, existentialism, absurdism and nihilism that served the postmodern thought. Convincingly, postmodern literature mixes different elements, features or genres with another to create a specific narrative voice, such as parody which serves to highlight self-reflexivity of postmodern works through the imitation of another’s style. Hence, Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* is a comedy of men’s darkest feelings and situations that was performed in a desperate age of human’s existence, it is a play of two acts with no clear end that leads the audience to make different interpretations to what may happen?

Through the play postmodernism is present within the characters Vladimir and Estragon. These main characters in the play primarily depict the concept of having “hope” in a situation which does not seem to give hope. (Mhetre 2). The main concept of the play is the waiting process, yet this waiting with hope to someone or something the characters are not acquainted with, it resembles the postwar life conditions where people had to believe sometimes in illusions to save their hope of tomorrow. However, time is no longer strong and has no effect, and also no clear identity to terrify them in order to try to act something to save their lives, because time is passing and life is not waiting for them with a sick pleasure as they do. Hence, the absence of a clear act in the play is one of the main features of postmodern writing style.

The conditions you endure, you endure by chance. There is no well-crafted plan, no scheme of justice in most parts of the world by which the universe operates (Torkamaneh 41), that was the 21th century’s faith about the universe. For that postmodern literature had a skeptical nature and *waiting for Godot* is a circle of skeptical nothingness and chaos. In postmodernism you cannot find any certainties in any section of the universe and everything

has been brought into question (Torkamaneh 41). Aesthetically, the postmodern writings excluded the Victorian dream of beauty for the sake of beauty at the expense of the lived reality, also it refused to romanticize the world and write about it as the incomparable paradise to live in. As it is noticeable in their writings, the postmodern authors were the prophets of reality; they unmasked men's real situation during postwar and presented publicly the cruelty and the suffrage of being a part of such universe.

From all the mentioned characteristics above of postmodernism, we can say that its principles are closely related to various philosophies mainly the existentialist philosophy.

2. Philosophy of Existentialism:

“Being is being is in-itself. Being is what it is.”

(Jean Paul Sartre)

Chaotic world with no sense, men is on a search to understand his place in the universe and to question his state of being as a partial part of the world .Existentialism, it is the philosophy of doubting the idea of existence and how beings are stuck in a vicious cercal of nothingness, also it is the philosophy of owning the right and the freedom of choice, this existential thought was the trend of the ninetieth and the twentieth century, it emphasized the issue of being's existence and it was developed by Jean Paul Sartre, a philosopher, novelist, playwright, politician and a Nobel prize winner in philosophy and literature. He was born in Paris, France in 1905. He was the only child of an officer of the French navy, Jean-Baptiste Sartre, and Anne-Marie Schweitze. His first time to acquire philosophy was in 1920s, thanks to the essay of Henri Bergson “Time and free will”. Through this, Sartre choose his path in the world of philosophy, he began to study philosophy at the École Nonmale Supérieure. He was influenced by the Western philosophy and philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. His most famous work is “the being and Nothingness”. Ultimately, Sartre was a humanist who wanted men to own the ultimate freedom of choice

away from the world's restrictions. Like this, Sartre relates the nothingness that presented the empty, silent atmosphere in *Waiting for Godot* to postmodern men's state of life, where meaninglessness and nothingness conquered their lives, routines and even the way they perceive things around them to the choices and decisions they come to make. Hence, *Waiting for Godot* is a Sartrean philosophy full of purposeless waiting, random existence, silence and no free will to act in a place where no one is sure about anything.

Being and saying nothing in Beckett's waiting for Godot exemplifies Sartre's philosophical world of presence. The silent scream of the characters, in the middle of no place and nowhere draws a tragic smile on the Mona Lisa of the twentieth century (*Waiting for Godot*), where there was only a random colour, a fragmented ideas and feelings about what is happening, what should happen and if there is really something happening? Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophy of existentialism can also be seen in the play because of the fact that Vladimir and Estragon also freely decide to wait for Godot without even being certain that he will show up (Día 4).

Existential philosophy is divided into two groups: Clerical and Aesthetic. Clerical existentialism champions the power of God as the supreme authority that control man's life, this group in another word considers God "the source of one's being". The philosophers of this religious existential group include: Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel, Martin Buber and Paul Tillich. On the other hand, the Aesthetic group denies the idea of the existence of any rational power, they exclude the idea of God. Atheistic existentialists include Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger, Simone de Beauvoir and Albert Camus. Existentialism from Sartre's perspective is to justify human existence rather than the world in itself. His famous book "Being and nothingness" putted consciousness that represent the nothingness, in opposition with being "Thingness". Consciousness as a one process for Sartre can never determine being's existence because, it is non-rational way to understand the world. In

Sartre's view we give meaning to our lives only through acting in a certain way. There are no clear rules to control our existence, also there is no purpose given to beings by any supreme power (God). He believes that the choices we make defines the human that we should be. In his philosophical masterpiece "Being and nothingness", he defines two types of reality related to our consciousness: the being of the object of the consciousness and the being of the consciousness itself, the object of the consciousness exists as "in-itself", it is un true and irrational, however consciousness always defines the relation to something else, it exists "for-itself". Hence man is responsible on defining himself in the universe. For Sartre, human reality is free because it is not full and sufficient like the being-in-itself (material object). (Rajkhowa 876).

Existential reality is characterized by the existential conditions like in authenticity, absurdity, anxiety, alienation, despair, dread, nothingness and facticity (Azhar 4). In addition to that, existential philosophy as postmodernism was a result of two destructive world wars, in which man lost his conscious understanding to every aspect in his life. Believes were shacked, the universe was no longer a good place to live in, and the choices must be taken by man only. Beckett's play was another face to this depressed view towards the postmodern life; he made the characters, the setting and the silence able to pronounce the existential dream of freedom. Therefore, Sartre has a voice in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Sartre asserts that in his book "Being and nothingness", "man is a useless passion" (Sartre 615).

Sartre's view of being and nothingness and the free will of choice are one of the main themes explored in *waiting for Godot*; when the protagonists Estragon and Vladimir choose to wait the arrival of Godot whom they don't either know, nor sure about his coming .Yet, the process of waiting is totally a free choice they made , yet at the same time they are obliged under the tyranny of their state and hopeless situation to wait .Their being is felt through their waiting and doing nothing accept exchanging meaningless conversations full of

silences. They are condemned to exist within their free choice of waiting (Karli 17). Sartre's philosophy of being and nothingness, paved the way to the recognition of existential thought. His masterpiece "The Being and Nothingness" is a rudimentary reference to study Beckett's play. In order to understand the impact of Sartre's philosophy on *Waiting for Godot*, it is needed to understand his view of essence and presence. Sartre points out that Presence is prior to essence, the Being is something or anything that we can state it is (Karali 8). It requires only itself to exist, this notion is present in Beckett's play mainly in the dialogues through the absence of a powerful language, yet the presence of silence to talk.

Freedom in Sartre's philosophy exemplifies Beckett's world. The characters are at a state of choice, they choose to wait at the same time, they are obliged to make this choice. For him, freedom does not lie behind the action, in the motive, or before it, in the end; it is not a spiritual entity like the self in its capacity as a unique causal agency among others (STONE 141). For Sartre "freedom is not a being; it is the nothingness of being" (Rajkhowa 876), thus the state of absurdity the characters of *Waiting for Godot* are in, explains the postmodern man's existential dilemma. Moreover, freedom is the presence of man as a conscious creature. Therefore, the characters (Vladimir and Estragon) are suffering from an existential gap in their state of being physically present, but consciously absent and lost, Sartre comments on the idea of freedom, "freedom appears in an alienated form when we fail to apprehend our own agency" (STONE 139)". That what Sartre's, Camus and most of the existential philosophers try to speak of. They sought to liberate being's existent and their understanding of universe around them.

Camus describes man's eagerness to reach a full meaning to their existence as Sisyphus; the man who get the punishment to roll a rock (a big rock) to the top of a mountain, when the stone would absolutely fall back down of its own weight and it's done again and again. (Makhfuddin 123). Hence the existential philosophy is a matter of human's conscious and

unconscious state in the world, and also their search for meanings, and also owning the freedom of choice. Yet these choices are usually out of their control and pull them into an absurd nothing.

3. Theatre of the Absurd:

With no clear action, no smooth flow of ideas, no normal stream of time and no meaning, absurdity came to celebrate the nonsensical pleasure of nothingness. Based on that, the playwright took a different path since the late of the twentieth century and a new theatre was born to hold the postmodern anxieties. Martin Esslin introduced it at first time through his book titled “The Theatre of the Absurd” in 1961. Yet; *Waiting for Godot* is classified too as many other plays to belong to this new setting of playwright. In his book “theatre of the absurd”, Esslin puts the play in a place to sound highly absurd according to the rules of his book about the conditions of absurdity, “...it is often unclear whether the action is meant to represent a dream world of nightmares or real happenings” (Esslin 3)

The absurd movement came to exist after the Second World War, it represents the human worries in life. Essentially, mankind was left to access life in an unfamiliar way without being equipped for the adjustment. (Día 8). Hence, the absurd drama deconstructs the usual frame of playwrights setting, characters, themes and language. Hussain asserts that Samuel Beckett’s ‘*Waiting for Godot*’ belongs to the tradition of the Theatre of the Absurd. It is unconventional in not depicting any dramatic conflicts. In the play, practically nothing happens, no development is to be found, there is no beginning and no end. (1479).

Absurdum is the art of relieving the self from the injuries were left by two terrible and bloody World Wars; it allowed people to question publicly their faith of the universe. And also *Waiting for Godot* performed to the people their inner gaps, purposeless living and their absurd faith of things they don’t even know. In absurdity, no meaning exists in this universe

for man, but it is man himself who has to search for the meaning. (Ullah, Iqbal and Rehman 48). Beckett's contribution in the theatre of the absurd honored him to be considered as the father of the absurd theatre, since most of his works are mainly absurdist pieces.

Unsurprisingly, Absurdism is heavily influenced by the existential philosophy since its emergence, both are a kind of search to find out the relationship between human's existence and the world. Albert Camus's view to the philosophy of absurdity is just like the existentialist in excluding any sufficient reason to exist, the existence is absurd and man has to deny the meaning of rationality, yet welcoming the arrival of arbitrariness that destruct everything used to be convincingly understandable. This notion or philosophy explores man's clash with loneliness, alienation and the non-direction they are walking to. For that reason, *Waiting for Godot* is considered as the jowl of the absurd theatre.

Albert Camus is like Beckett were most of his writings are influenced by existentialism and absurdism, he writes about absurdity and like Beckett, he invites people to watch, read and feel how insane their life is, he said that "we want the world to make sense, but it does not make sense. To see this conflict is to see the absurd." (Camus 179), his view to absurdity asserts that man observes himself as a chaos, thus he is the responsible to determine his role in the universe. Hence, the process of seeking meaning is a universal absurd show. Moreover, seeking meaning in a seek world transfer man to a desperate clown, he dances and laughs in the middle of his destruction. Herby one can say absurdism is the philosophy of nothingness and it has much in common with existentialism. One can find pleasure in the journey of searching meaning as Camus said, but the salvation of humans of all is achieved through their death. This innovative type of theatre raged the war against traditional theatre; it was more an independence call because it set the playwright free. The postmodern authors unlike the old ones were able to write about the taboos were not allowed to write about previously. So, the

Theatre of the Absurd is a new artistic form that has never been known before, it makes the spectacle astonished and feels the strangeness of the scene (Dhiyaeddine 17). the theatre of the absurd had strange and unique characteristics in terms of the setting, language plot

3.1. The Absurd Language:

The language did not survive the hunting spire of absurdity bow, it became a shedder of blood to the normality used to be found in writing. The language was another stage to act the non-act of absurdity, it was fully failure to hold a clear meaning, hence it could not send a rational and full idea. The language of the absurd drama was more a metaphorical tool to mock the meanings was given to life before, thus language is futile and more precisely empty. Beckett and other postmodern authors like Harold Pinter and Edward Albee, the characters of these writers' literary works found themselves exchanging nothing but meaningless conversations condemned by long silences. *Waiting for Godot* breathes absurdity at all the aspects (themes, language, plot and characters). Usually, the most important part in a literary work is its powerful language, where the characters of the work feel a great pleasure in exchanging wisdoms; thus, a wisdom demands a full comprehensive language.

In absurdity, the language is vaguer and sillier, it does not reflect anything and some critics after they analyzed the patterns of speech in the absurd writings, they at once came to agree that the absurd language is more like Gibberish; a very old language that is almost impossible to understand it. The language was created to seek meaning; however, in the absurd drama it is failure and fragmented as human's spirit. One can notice that language in *waiting for Godot* is presented only as meaningless sounds, and the characters were struggling to understand each other. They mix the words and say random phrases that do not convey any logical grammatical flow.

3.2. The absurd plot:

The absurd theatre had a strange way in presenting literature. Its plot is famous by its purposeless actions or, its purposeless non action. The audiences are always left astonished and puzzled from the nothing they watched, or read. The main characteristics of a normal plot are absent in the absurd theatre, there is no beginning, no climax and no clear, satisfying end. One when reads or watches any work belonging to the absurd, would never make a rational sense of what happened. Abnormality of time flow where the audience travel backward, forward and stops at any unexpected point is another feature of the absurd plot. More than this, the center of the absurd literary work is no longer the setting where the events take place, nor the language (conversations). It is the characters center, the absurd plot sails us deeply into the characters mind, self and consciousness. We live and feel the misery of these characters. Moreover, the actions in the traditional plot are not repeated; however, in the absurd we find a repetition of the same action. *Waiting for Godot* is two acts play yet; nearly the same thing is repeated with slid changes.

The absurd theatre or plot is famous of presenting a black humor, or tragicomedy (*waiting for Godot*); a mixture between comedy and tragedy that puzzles the audience and confuse them, whether a funny show to laugh at is or a tragic one that asks them to sympathize and feel guilt. Indeed, the absurd plot has a strange structure that excludes normality and rationality.

3.3. The Absurd Setting:

Another specific feature of the absurd theatre is the absurd setting; usually it is empty and unknown place. In *Waiting for Godot*, one can see that the entire play is performed in unknown road near to lifeless tree. It is an absurdist atmosphere where the whole attention is spotted on the characters. It resembles the alienation, loneliness and depression the characters

suffered from. Beckett begins the play through describing the setting “A country road. A tree” (Beckett 2), there is no precise name for this setting, no one could identify it. The absurd drama is a plotless plot; there is no significant event or place. Moreover, the absurd setting portrays the world state after the Second World War as an empty and meaningless decoration, it is pessimistic and dark. It reveals the depressed view of men through addressing the meaninglessness of the physical environment. In *Waiting for Godot*, the setting portrays the nonsensical and destroyed world beings are living in.

A dead tree stands in the middle of a barren road besides a rock, this environment is vague and empty because the characters could never distinguish what land they are standing on. That is absurdity of life; being is a chaotic entity lives for nothing and in nothing.

4. Silent Literature:

Following World War II changings in literature and all the new notions that redefined the postmodern literary style, silence was another attempt to express the world crises. The language was unconvincible way to address what is in the writer’s mind. Hence Words were replaced by silence to produce specific artistic pieces of art. Authors Contemplated silence as another face of being’s nature, through their use of it to communicate their unexpressed feelings and ideas through language. This phenomenon sought to find its place in all arts, music, paintings and literature. Silent literature had a complex origin and unstable meaning. It became a special way of expression, authors considered silence to be more expressive and aesthetic than language and to unmask the futility of literature. Consequently, this new aspect of art declared war against the artistry of language, since it used to be the main tool to communicate and to create literature. However, things changed after the fall of the traditional kingdom of writing, the silent thought were searching for a place to settle and literature welcomed warmly this new gust. Many postmodern authors used silence in their novels and dramas as a way to show the miserable state of man in the world, hence silence became a

legacy mainly in modern and postmodern literature, so many writers were influenced by the magic of the un uttered and un written words. In Ihab Habib Hassan's view, silence in literature is "attainted through radical irony, a term I apply to any statement that contains its own ironic denial". (Hassan 12)

Beckett's tragic comedy ironically expressed his lost faith of postmodern language, it never changes reality but it betrays man's thoughts. Thus, he mocked the language and included a lot moments of silence. Amazingly, silence was the writer's new power to express and make higher effect on the readers, by silencing the characters which creates a curious image to try to fulfill the absence of words, this way of expression shifted the focus from the setting and the events toward the characters and used silence as a technique to see what is behind language. Hence the presence of the characters is felt more through saying nothing, however saying a lot without uttering a word. Writing silence, absence, or ineffability allows us not only to sketch the literary communication of speechlessness with or without words, but also to discuss the question of how (un)important words are to texts and to communication in general. (Rieger 2).

This artistic phenomenon raised the challenge in the analytical studies, the critic has to pay attention and listen carefully to the silent voice. Hassan assumes that the analysis of a specific work of literature requires a deep digging and synthesizing, he says that «criticism should do more than clarify," that it should also "possess wisdom of the senses and of the spirit" (Hassan 17). According to Stephen Dedalus that narrative emerged out of lyrical literature, namely, out of the "simplest verbal vesture of an instant of emotion". Hence, silent literature was a creative challenge; it invites the authors and the critics to go beyond the language in a text.

Conclusion:

The postmodern literature was the stage of the twentieth century's philosophies, existentialism and absurdism both notions are related and strongly influenced their writings .It became a genius mixture of thoughts to express human's lost self during postwar period, literature could meet their inner needs .Indeed most of the postmodern novels and dramas were a tragic Orchestra , it pleased the audience as much as astonished them .Also the silence was added as another tool to announce that man lost his faith in the world .Hence one can say that postmodern literature joins various trends of expression and philosophies , for that it was famous for its unusual features .Beckett through his play Waiting for Godot build a powerful bridge between literature and madness , he founded different ways of expression . Indeed, writing literature after the Beckettian age became an easier task, since the authors owns the authority to deliver their real views about the universe. Taboos became a celebration of art because postwar literature allowed the prohibitions of the previous stages of literature. Consequently; the postmodern writings had a special identity.

Chapter one: Thematic Framework of postmodern literature and the existential crises presented in Waiting for Godot:

*“And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane
by those who could not hear the music”*

(Friedrich Nietzsche)

Introduction:

Postmodern writings paved the way to the creation of a strong contact between reality and fiction as realism. However, Postmodern literature is distinguished with its unusual dealings with the universal context of beings; it fragments man's consciousness and deconstructs their concepts of life. It experiences life and death through the process of writing, yet the postmodern authors can be described as the creatures of the Frankenstein of literature. This literature escaped the laboratory of rationality and went away in a search of freedom and life. Unfortunately, reality was deformed his face was full of scars that were caused by two world wars. Thus, the postmodern authors and literature were influenced by such reality; the impact of the miserable conditions of people was shown in their writings. Pessimism and purposelessness were the driving inspiration of their literature; this realm of expression always had sorrowful endings without reaching anything. It is very skillful in making the audience taste the tragic real life.

New settings and new themes were introduced in the postmodern literature, thanks to the abnormal settings they lived in. The two world wars had a great impact on the writing direction and reality was a sick hallucination. Man's anxieties found a refuge in literature to show up, thus the themes produced in this literature served the beliefs they had about their position in life. Postmodern literature found itself examining the horrors left by World War two, it attempted to translate the tragic depression felt by them. Hence literature was the

most desirable shelter to express their despair. In this section, it seems necessary to shed the light on some themes were explored in the postmodern context, and mainly in *Waiting for Godot*.

This chapter is divided to discuss the thematic context of *Waiting for Godot* as a postmodern play, which shares the same reality within other writings. The second section of this chapter, will be a practical framework to pave the for the analyses process. It will be investigation about silences are used by Beckett in the play, attempting to relate it (silence) with the sense of emptiness, existential chaos and meaninglessness.

1. War effect on postmodern literature:

The World War two had a long effect on the writers, because they could not escape reality. The authors used their literature to depict what hard state people were living during that time. Hence, the content of post-modern literature was different and unusual partly through addressing the psychological and existential issues of man. Postmodern literature was more a result of its environment, and World War two effects transformed to a main theme in post-war writings. Literature began to see reality from irrational way, the subconscious, the anti-sentimental, or the highly individualistic. Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* challenged all the traditional literary models and recreated unusual way to transmit man's worries during post-war, also the changes were happening. Nevertheless, one can say that *waiting for Godot* transforms a clear message about the war effect on man. The characters Vladimir and Estragon were trying to hide the hole in their chests and find out a way to fool themselves, through creating fake hopes and wait, they were lost in uncertain gaps. Here the world war is viewed because man was broken mentally, he was in vague pain and could not recognise himself nor understand it. This dilemma became one of the main themes in postmodern literature. Simultaneously, War theme serves the purpose of the endless pain in people's

mind. This theme consequently summarizes the pessimistic thought about the world after war; it was a manifest of destruction and loss.

It was a journey of thought and experience that represented through literature the psychological, existential and rational crises. Recent literature rewrote war to address people that they were all lost in the dark destinations of life, all hope bridges were broken. Yet, in *Waiting for Godot*, war was reshaped in various forms, the characterless characters, the meaningless dialogues and the traumatized individual, also the bare unknown setting. All these aspects represent the war destruction and how people were living inside a psychological clash with no salvation to save them from pain. Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot*, survives from death in world two, but they were totally destroyed and like a liven dead, both were struggling to get read of the past memories, that deformed their present and hid their future. Sometimes, they attempt to disappear in different ways, through committing suicide and trying each time to move away from their place. But they go no other where, their life became an ultimate suffrage and a burden, they needed to throw it away.

Estragon. The best thing would be to kill me, like the other.

Vladimir: What other? (Pause) What other?

Estragon: Like billions of others. (Beckett 46).

From the above dialogue we can taste the depression and pain was felt by Estragon, the war effect still hurting everyone. They could not sleep to rest from the monstrosity of their pain, war would never let them find any peaceful spot inside themselves and around them. Although their unbearable situation, they were stuck and they were obliged to keep bleeding terribly, silently from war spear. Their conditions turned to a depressed joke that was narrated in a dark context.

2. Dark humor:

It is also called black comedy a mixture between elements of comedy and tragedy to express a sense of an insane pleasure, this literary device or theme is used in all forms of literature. Hence it was exhausted due to the excessive use of it in postmodern literature, yet postmodernism was not the first to explore this special way of expression. Black humor was also a theme which titled the modern literature. Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is a tragicomedy play, Beckett used this literary technique as a way to destroy the common sense of playwright. His pessimism about humanity shouts loudly through the very expressive mixture between tragedy and comedy, as an attempt to say how sick the world is. The mixture of tragedy and comedy conveys an insane taste of pleasure, it became a hallmark theme in postmodern writings.

Dark or black humor was a result of frustrated authors for World Wars that destabilized their position in the world. Hence one can say that this literary technique and theme depicts the painful experience of two legendary destructive world wars, thus they sought to reach a kind of dark pleasure. Beckett's comic dark tragedy symbolizes the vision of man to his purpose in life. Ironically man is living a painful and funny experience, his life became a mad joke that calls the dark feelings to overwhelm his faith. Nevertheless, *Waiting for Godot* was an exercise of absurd entertainment, the stage become his landscape to give a lecture about the postmodern life. The characters were described to be a tragic hero and the clowns of the depressed age.

According to KRUSI "Vladimir and Estragon are two sordid clowns presented as the tragic heroes of contemporary society" (krusi 14). Both tramps (Vladimir and Estragon) met at daylight, near to a lifeless tree that symbolizes the tragic atmosphere Beckett sought to present. They keep on waiting for Mrs. Godot, at the same time they exchange an absurdist

conversations and nervous clowning. However, one when reads or watches the characters way of telling jokes to make fun of themselves, can feel the tragedy of their attempts to laugh. In both acts dark humor communicates to audience the nonsensical and absurdist sick contemporary life. “*Waiting for Godot* as a tragicomedy arouses fear and pity through laughter. Estragon and Vladimir, the two main characters, appear to be comical characters in the beginning; only later do we realize how tragic they are, because they reflect all mankind.” (Sydow 7). Both characters decide to hang themselves in that dead tree, this situation seems to be very comic since the tree was helpless more than them. Hence it was impossible to hang themselves using it, the tree would not handle their weight. Though, it seems such a funny situation however it was completely dark and desperate, Vladimir and Estragon found no other way except killing themselves to pass time and get read of their boredom. Unfortunately, life was nothing for them but a cruel burden and an infinite suffrage they don’t know its causes.

Dark humor became a mode of expression as silence in recent literature, it is a tool to portray man’s sickness and non-stable state of consciousness, were they find a weird pleasure through the tragic and funny terror. *Waiting for Godot* was the joker of the twentieth century; so painful and absurd conditions, but very comic and stupid behaviors, Beckett put his characters in a dark milieu. Yet, they are performing a comic gestures that provoke the audience to laugh despite the misery. Moreover, Beckett expressed the tragedy and the comic sense through his special style, to let the people feel that their funniest conditions maybe their most miserable one at one time. When Pozzo enters the scene Vladimir and Estragon thought of him to be Mr. Godot, but soon they recognized that they were mistaken. The comic part in this situation was their attempt to understand the identity of that person (Pozzo). Yet it was tragic when they knew that he was not Godot, their savior thus they have to wait more and

more. The existence was the question of man, a question they felt hopeless to find an answer to it.

3. The existential questioning of man:

Postmodern writings and existentialism were inseparable, because the postmodern being all the time is searching for something that can fulfill his existence. For that the individual is hesitating about his function. The existential questioning of man is found in most of the postmodern literary works, unsurprisingly Beckett is one of the authors of this long list. In his play *Waiting for Godot*, he plays with the characters state of consciousness about their sureness of their existence. He tested the world of beings through this play, it is an existential scream of man, through stealing meaning from all life aspects. For that, The existential confusion is an important theme in postmodern writings. In *Beckett's Waiting for Godot* we see human beings on earth always expect somebody to save them from all existential problems.” (KUMAR 459). two tramps (Vladimir and Estragon) seat in no place and wait for someone they believe in, yet this mysterious waiting turn to be an existential curst. In the whole play we notice that the existential theme is strongly present, according to Kumar “The two heroes of this play neither recognize their own existence as accidental, nor think of transforming it into something positive with which they can identify themselves” (Kumar 459).

Indeed, the postmodern man represents the theme of existentialism; he is the Hamlet of the existential hesitation. Humans are putted in the universe for nothing, we notice this view in the play, where the protagonists in the hole play, they do nothing. In fact, they were totally helpless to change their miserable condition. Beckett and existentialism go along together for many critics, his works always are discussed from an existential point of view. For Makhfuddin, “Every human who want to search the meaning of their life will be experienced

the tartness of life.” (Makhfuddin 126). This theme can be an attempt to fulfill people’s unexpressed existential harm, it become the propaganda of the postmodern literature. Man turned to be a foolish clown who could not secure himself and find a meaning to his life.

4. Folly of Seeking Meaning:

As existentialism spotted the light on men disbelieve of the world, Beckett as a postwar hero brought into the sight the un ability of human to understand things. Postmodern writings in general dealt within this theme, it is a way to grasp how irrational creatures become. They created foolish characters who are puzzled all the time and faces difficulties to seek correct meanings. In *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon attempt desperately to achieve a point of understanding. Ironically, they foolish themselves through trying to give sense to the senseless and to the unknown. For Alsharadgeh, “Although it is unclear who or what Godot represents, by waiting for him, Vladimir and Estragon are clearly seeking some type of meaning outside themselves” (Alsharadgeh 35). It is a way to find out some hope and purpose, yet they are not either aware about what Godot really is. Each time they try to dress him a specific identity, “In Act 1, they remember making a "kind of prayer" to Godot, expecting it to give them some direction and they decide it is safer to wait and see what Godot says rather than die by hanging themselves”. (Alsharadgeh 35).

Meaning is an existential play in postmodern literature, it is impossible to reach the truth of something. Thus, losing the meaning of life and welcoming the absurd purposelessness. It is noticeable that in Beckett’s play (*Waiting for Godot*), the difficulty and confusion to understand things is publicly shown. Indeed, through the characters anxiety about what should they behave to finish the long racing with the unknown, also through the language that is a kind of meaningless jokes and phrases. All the previous aspects and others were not

mentioned here explains how hard is the activity of seeking meaning in a world nothing seems to hold meaning in.

5.Uncertainty of Existence and Time:

Amazingly one can see that most of the postmodern writings share a similar direction, they explore themes that addresses the individuals unstable state of mind. The authors are thinkers and philosophers to depict humanity's uncertainty and disbelieve of universe. Beckett did the same in *Waiting for Godot*, he put the characters in a vague state where they could not even believe their existence to exist. Withanage comments on this idea through saying, "The tramps lack of knowledge about everything seems to be a metaphor for mankind's lack of basic understanding of the universe and life itself". (Withanage 20). Through the play the universe and man are scandalized of their instability, many questions were proposed yet there are no answers as shown in the following dialogue, Vladimir and Estragon could not seek certainty of their situation "Vladimir: ...Nothing is certain when you're about." (Beckett 11).

ESTRAGON: You're sure it was this evening?

VLADIMIR: What?

ESTRAGON: That we were to wait.

VLADIMIR: He said Saturday. (Pause.) I think.

ESTRAGON: You think.

VLADIMIR: I must have made a note of it. (He fumbles in his pockets, bursting with miscellaneous rubbish.)

ESTRAGON: (very insidious). But what Saturday? And is it Saturday? Is it not rather Sunday? (Pause.) Or Monday? (Pause.) Or Friday?

VLADIMIR: (looking wildly about him, as though the date was inscribed in the landscape). It's not possible!

ESTRAGON: Or Thursday?

VLADIMIR: What'll we do?

ESTRAGON: If he came yesterday and we weren't here you may be sure he won't come again today.

VLADIMIR: But you say we were here yesterday.

ESTRAGON: I may be mistaken. (Pause.) Let's stop talking for a minute, do you mind? (Beckett 11).

From the quotation of the script, it is noticeable that the entire plot is uncertain dream, they await the arrival of the unknown but they are not sure whether they reached the right place of the mysterious appointment or not. This sense of uncertainty about anything puts the characters in a cruel infinite pain. Both are not sure about the correct time of their appointment; thus, it becomes a burden they are weaker to hold it.

6. Cruelty of life:

Another theme had a place in postmodern pieces of literature is cruelty; it expresses how cold merciless conditions was left by World War. Again, Beckett and his debatable play *Waiting for Godot* portrayed the frustrated postwar men in another way, through expressing the sense of cruelty and loneliness his characters felt. Suffering in this play is a result of the absence of a clear understanding of their state of being, and because suffrage turned to be an essential part of being's life after War. The play from the starting point to the end speaks about men's pain and misery, the process of waiting in itself shows the depression of people during postwar time. Furthermore, the setting also is prepared to reflect cruelty. Vladimir and Estragon are stuck in the middle of a dark place; which seems to be a bare harsh desert. It seems to reflect their empty souls. In both acts the absence of mental salvation is unbearable, the characters cruel reality is an executioner to their hopes. When reading the play, the

psychological and existential violence are easily felt. Estragon once said “Do I look like a man that can be made to suffer?” (Beckett27), This question was asked by him at the beginning of the play, he seems to express his misfortune in life and how gloomy and painful the conditions they are in. This is an example from the play expresses how life turned to be a joke, in this scene one can feel Vladimir and Estragon’s failure attempt to make a decision. Their life is not important; all what is important is to run away from reality and pain at anyway.

Estragon: Let’s hang ourselves immediately!

Vladimir: From a bough? (They go towards the tree.) I wouldn’t trust it.

Estragon: We can always try.

Vladimir: Go ahead.

Estragon: After you.

Vladimir: No no, you first.

Estragon: Why me?

Vladimir: You’re lighter than I am.

Estragon: Just so!

Vladimir: I don’t understand.

Estragon: Use your intelligence, can’t you?

Vladimir: uses his intelligence.

Vladimir: uses his intelligence.

Vladimir :(finally). I remain in the dark. (Beckett 13).

They sought to commit suicide as an attempt to joy them and pass the time, yet they could not even decide or think, thus they remain in the dark. It is something that brings them some pleasure, since the process of killing themselves is able to fulfill their time permanently. Their

lives have no meaning and their souls are stuck in their bodies, thus escaping pain is harder as long as they live.

7. Meaninglessness of language:

Language in postwar literature is studied also from a thematic point of view. Since it is another way of expression, authors used it to convey metaphorically their ideas about humanity. Beckett did that through *Waiting for Godot*, he eliminated the meaningful language in his work. One can read both acts but without reaching a full comprehensive conversation between the characters, it is vague and empty. To be clearer, one has to talk about this specific use of language by Beckett and how it can serve the thematic context of the play.

Saying a lot of words but reaching no clear rational understanding that is the language aim in the work. In the entire play, the characters are not able to meet at one purposeful sentence. "In a world that has lost its meaning, language also becomes a meaningless buzzing (Esslin 83). The discourse of speech between the characters is broken. Abbas comments on Beckett's language through saying that, "Beckett, in his use of language, highlights the imperfection of language as a medium for the finding and communication of abstract reality". (Abbas 3). The words are meaningless; there are no links between them. Furthermore, these fragmented uses of language determine that they do not believe in it as a human privilege. Throughout the play Vladimir and Estragon faces difficulties to understand each other, the language failed completely to reflect any sense of hope and rationality. The lack of ability to seek out comprehensive phrases and Lucky's chaotic speech announce that they no longer consider language their mean of expression, they are pessimistic about everything and nothing still have a purpose. Hence, Beckett's language represents the meaninglessness and the absurdity of the world, life is full of boredom and emptiness thus the desire to think and create a well understood speech is absent. Moreover, this futile language can express man's mistrust of the process of communicating to create logical dialogues. The

setting is another important aspect in the postmodern or the absurd play, it helps to make a visual interpretations and images about what the author wants to say. In *Waiting for Godot*, the setting was unusual as the plot and the language.

8. Minimum setting:

In postmodern works the setting is minimized to speak on itself, one can feel the painful barren life of humanity through it. They use a minimum decoration; usually the stage gives more information to the audience to help them understand the work. Beckett's setting in *Waiting for Godot* seems to be unknown, two tramps met near a lifeless tree in a nameless road, this setting urges the audience to focus on the characters and dialogues. However, the use of such weird setting has something to say. At the first beginning of the play, Beckett describes the setting, "A country road. A tree. Evening" (Beckett 1). The road has no name and the tree is dead and seems to have no function in the whole play. Yet, this few tools in Beckett's stage convey the emptiness he wanted to share. Throughout the play one can see that the centers of the work are the characters, and their hopeless hope. Usually, the minimum setting serves the theme of depression, darkness, loneliness and alienation. It represents the chaos of the inner world, this setting also used in comedy shows to let the focus falls on the comedian and his jokes only. Yet, *Waiting for Godot* was a tragicomic show that demanded the presence of all the needed elements to create the suitable atmosphere. The characters are lost in a barren space.

This was the trend of the twentieth century theatre. The setting of the absurd drama should reflect the real life; however, Beckett's setting has its own special atmosphere in representing reality. In the dead tree, the unknown road and the rock one can understand that the postmodern theatre has a little interest in the setting. Unlike the Romantic and Victorian ages, where the space seems to be more important than the plot in itself, however, in *Waiting for Godot* neither the plot nor the setting are the interest spot. It is the characters suffrage, yet the

only observed and recognized thing in the setting is the dead tree. Estragon and Vladimir are not able to identify the road they were standing on, but the tree is the only thing they could know. "This vast emptiness surrounding the characters should help to emphasize their dependence upon one another and their isolation in the universe." (Sydow 12). Through this simple minimum space, one can feel the alienation of the characters and more specifically the universe state after world war, it is no longer the same as before.

9. Meaninglessness of time:

Alsharadgeh in his work described Beckett's time in the play; "Time is a slippery thing in *Waiting for Godot*". (Alsharadgeh 36). It became an essential theme in the play, Beckett raised the challenge through playing with taboos of the normal theatre. He pulled the time into the skeptical zone and became uncertain; the time of the play was not clear. Moreover, the characters Vladimir and Estragon seemed to doubt it, they are the prey of the hungry timeless time. As the events has no meaning and no significance; the time also lost its power, it no longer able to terrify man.

The uncertainty and meaninglessness of time is expressed by Estragon's questions to Vladimir about when they should wait for Godot. "Vladimir. How time flies when one has fun!", they keep speaking and sometimes dancing, laughing and trying to feel the existence of everything they met. However, each time they are coldly fall in the merciless silence and feel that time is more terrifying while saying and doing nothing. Also, it is noticeable that time is repeated the same in both acts, it is presented as cyclical and slow. this temporal irony reveals postmodern man's dead desire to progress and race life, they lost their believe of human qualities and lived in a complete madness and emptiness.

10. Waiting in Waiting for Godot:

The entire play revolves about two friends (Vladimir and Estragon) sitting and waiting, thus waiting is the main purpose of our play. However, though the characters know that they have to wait for Mr. Godot, they absurdly have no certainty about the appointment or the appointed. Despite that Beckett related his characters' life with waiting, in both acts Vladimir and Estragon meet each other and try to pass time until the arrival of Godot. Yet, at every evening the Boy (a messenger pretends to be sent by Godot) comes and burns their only half-hope, he tells them that Mr. Godot will not come tonight but he will come tomorrow. Then they met the next day and repeat the same thing and suffer from the waiting that seemed to be infinite and unending.

Waiting in the entire play is an unbearable burden; it causes pain and suffering to the characters. Vladimir and Estragon's waiting is repeated with the same tragic feelings, both seem to be a postmodern Sisyphus; a man who is condemned to spend his life in pushing a rolling stone to the high hill, yet each time he is about to succeed in reaching his purpose, the stone falls back. Ironically the waiting in the play is a source of Vladimir and Estragon's pain, it is a burden like the rolling stone of Sisyphus and absurd in its unending repetitions. It is a hard journey that caused nothing more than pain and chaos, since they were uncertain about anything but kept on waiting. During all the time they are trying to find any game or something to discuss, in order to pass the miserable time. Both Vladimir and Estragon believed in the idea of waiting, it is the only certain thing in the whole play.

Svalkvist comments on the waiting of the waiters and said, "Vladimir and Estragon are faithfully waiting for Godot, and find it essential to wait for him regardless of his identity or if he will come or not" (Svalkvist 12). For that, the waiting is an attempt to find meaning for their life.

1.Silence as an Existential crisis:

This part will be an analysis to the silence used in the dialogues of *Waiting for Godot*, to Understand how it represent an existential worry through saying nothing? In postmodern works one can find a various use of silence; it conveys certain meanings as the full texts and dialogues. Notably, Beckett in his works liberated the language from any traditional confinement so that he could apply his unfamiliarity on it. In his play *Waiting for Godot*, the language is less a tool of communication and more as a tool to depict the meaninglessness of life. The absence of a strong and full of meaning conversations contradicts the purpose of language, since it is considered since the beginning of humanity the only way for human to communicate clear thoughts. Hence the absence of such particular quality has something to say. Beckett's abandonment to language and his uses of pauses in *Waiting for Godot* expresses the tragic postmodern reality where men had little to say and much to feel.

1.2. Absence of language in waiting for Godot:

Beckett used language to point to the chaotic, empty and absurd reality of postmodern man. Human lost his value as a rational creature who uses a complex, yet understood instrument of communication (language). Dr. Oteiwy describes the essence of Beckett's language through saying that "Language is reduced by Beckett making it nothing more than a deserted castle whose gaping cracks let in the wind and rain". (Oteiwy 13). It is a total failure to beings, the characters in the entire play exchanging nothing more than nonsensical and meaningless conversations, silence appears at every section in the dialogue. Thus, language for Beckett is not an essential aspect to create communication between the characters and between the play and the audience, the absence of a powerful speech can reflect the characters loneliness and inability to say what they have in their minds. Also, their desire to share ideas seems to be absent, Vladimir and Estragon kept talking all the play without reaching a clear point, and they repeat the same dialogue more than one time. Throughout the play, the

conversations are full of pauses. Metaphorically, they express their depression and the lost hope, no point is found in communicating since nothing was real and sane. Language is a being's sin and misfortune, Vladimir and Estragon are forced to talk to pass time, thus their conversation were full of nothing.

In the play Estragon is the character who sought meaning from the discussion but there is no hope to understand. In the other hand, his partner Vladimir who mostly had no answer except fragmented phrases and silences, shows the broken contact through language between them. In Beckett's drama language and silence are intimately bound, he silenced his characters at a specific time. Showing the powerful symbolism of pauses, he created a mysterious atmosphere where the audience seat to search for a clear interpretation to that silence at the moment. Usually, muteness goes in parallel with sadness, pain and confusion. Thus, Vladimir and Estragon during both acts are living in a state of wondering and chaos, they ask questions but they have no answers. Also, they change the subject of the conversation unconsciously or maybe consciously to run away from the trap of the unfulfilled question and exclamation marks.

The play opens with an ambiguous note "Nothing to be done", this phrase leads us to focus on the characters character in itself; how mentally is disturbed? Exactly, since the opening of the play our attention was directed to Vladimir's impatient attempts to take off his boots. Unconsciously the attention is drawn to Vladimir's pain and struggle regardless what his is saying. Moreover, Beckett presented the characters to be clearly a true war victim; they speak yet out of no planning silence eventually fall on them like a hunting cloud. It reminds them of their real situation as two friends who were lost in nothing, only the waiting can give some sense to their life. For Dr. Oteiwy "Beckett uses language not as a divine instrument but as mere senseless buzzing" (Oteiwy 13).

Once Beckett was asked about the way he prefers to mirror his world, he said that "The expression that there is nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no desire to express, together with obligation to express". (Beckett 194) Indeed, in *Waiting for Godot*, he reflected the existential nothingness through every element in the play. He expressed the nothing through nothing. There is no actual action, the dialogues are repetitive and silly. In short language lost its communicability in an absurd world. The human essence in the play is related to the absence of man's privilege (language), since it is his gifted capacity given by God and postmodern man lost his faith. Ironically, in Beckett's world there is no divine authority, hence the language is like everything meaningless and empty. Human is not rational to think in a correct way, thus he would never produce well comprehended ideas.

Silence would be a better way to say the truth, since his language is meaningless codes, neither the audience nor the characters in themselves could understand what they are saying. We remember Sartre's view of essence and presence, that essence precedes the presence and determine the existence. The language in the play is absent as a full and comprehensive tool of expression, thus silence gave the meaning to its absence. More clearly, Sartre's idea of existence and the way meaning of things is achieved, through the play the essence of language produced noticeable moments of silence, yet that silence held meaning. Based on that one can say that the meaning of language is felt through its absence (silence). Alphabet and grammar were only empty symbols, impossible to give any logical sense and reality begin outside language.

1.3. Inefficacy of Beckett's language:

The absence of language in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, brings us to understand how meaningless it become for the recent men. In the play Beckett presented the language as a being's failure, it is unable to identify one's self. It is noticeable that our protagonists

(Vladimir and Estragon), were completely incapable to utter full and well-organized sentences. Words are nothing more than a manner to escape time, both tramps kept speaking without understanding, only to pass time and keep themselves busy of remembering their misery. Dr. Abbas highlights the inefficacy of Beckett's language through saying that "characters engage in ridiculous language to pass the time and to give them the impression that they exist." (Abbas5). Indeed, language was nothing more than a meaningless "buzzing" and un-understandable codes, the conversations seemed to be a massacre where language is victimized and slaughtered.

In an absurd world, language can never represent knowledge, yet it becomes a sufficient way to reflect the meaninglessness and the nothingness of postwar reality. Indeed, that what Beckett portrayed through his use of it (language), and the characters of the play seem to present human in the world. Confused patterns full of wordiness and silences are exchanged repetitively between Vladimir and Estragon, but achieving no common point. The insufficiency of language in postmodern writings depicts more the existential disbelief of everything.

Silence.

Vladimir. This is awful!

Estragon. Sing something.

Vladimir. No no! (He reflects.) We could start all over again perhaps.

Estragon. That should be easy.

Vladimir. It's the start that's difficult.

Estragon. You can start from anything.

Vladimir. Yes, but you have to decide.

Estragon. True.

Silence.

Vladimir. Help me!

Estragon. I'm trying.

Silence

The above conversation seems silly and nonsensical and leads to nothing. They talk about everything but they never talk about what they really feel, it's the language confinement that jails their ability to express. Hence silence intervenes and speaks on behalf of their misery.

Conclusion:

The themes in the postmodern drama are slightly related to reality, the authors tended to show how life has changed after two World Wars. They wanted to say that the postmodern man was psychologically traumatized, thus they presented through their works the postwar dilemmas. Beckett through *Waiting for Godot* a master piece of postwar literature and the absurd genre, portrayed amazingly humans existential chaos in a destroyed world. He presented the themes of life and the disorders man is suffering from, his play was like a philosophical theory that tends to heal and uncover people's pains. At the same time, the play presented men's lost faith of language, indeed language was a way to say that the twentieth century man was liberated from all the chains. Language had no efficacy in postmodern world, the state consciousness, the individual suffrage and the existence is much more important to be the spot of interest. As it is noticed in the play the silences are stilling the light from the dialogues, immediately when one of the characters finds himself in a moment of silence, an overwhelmed feelings are felt and provokes us to search for a meaning to that silence. For that one has to search and investigate what does Beckett's silence mean? Not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as an artistic use express thing. What does Beckett intended to say through the silent characters, setting and time? Another point is that his language is poetic and full of musicality, so why he used silence? And after that silence the characters seemed to be in a horrific state, terrible and confused. Hence the third chapter will be specified to analyze the artistic use of silence in the play, and to see the significant of Beckett's language.

Chapter three: Practical framework: Analysis of the Artistic Use of Silence as a Meaningful Language in *Waiting for Godot*:

“Music is not in the notes, but in the silence between the notes”

(Mozart)

Introduction:

Waiting for Godot is an artistic literary piece of unfamiliarity belongs to the absurd theatre, Beckett had his own way to point out men's suffering as most postwar writers did, his drama insists on the absurdity and comic darkness of being's reality, through excluding the usual plot elements, he never wrote a complete and full events in most of his plays. In this chapter we will focus on his famous work *Waiting for Godot*, in this play Beckett astonished the world by his weird and puzzling structure. This absurdist work led the audience and the critics to question what Beckett wanted to say?

Silence is the main core of this chapter; the focus of the analysis will be the artistic use of it in *Waiting for Godot* as an attempt to understand Beckett's muteness. Ironically, Beckett is the messenger of the twentieth century's drama, he liberated the concept of theatre and paved the way to the writers to express in different ways. Thus, he became the prophet of the Absurd drama; a drama that has no limits. Yet, his special use of pauses has things to say, silence is no longer nothing. It became in this play a hunger wolf who wants everyone to hear his howler and understand it. The characters were committing suicide each time they speak something, because their conversations hold nothing but an ultimate pain, they feel their weakness and inability to perform the normal discourse they are born to do (communication). Thus, many critics tried to decode Beckett's silence in *waiting for Godot*, and they provided various interpretations. One has to ask what Beckett wanted to say through saying nothing?

1. Beckett's dealing with nothingness:

Waiting for Godot is an empty drama full of austerity and cruelty; the stage, the language and the events are all un-outsider elements for the traditional playwrights. Beckett was an ultimate rebellious to the old scripts, he created a voice through his writings. *Waiting for Godot* was a play of nothing and Beckett inspired this work from a painting he saw to a German painter named Kasper David Frish, the painting was about man and woman who wears a traditional German dress, standing on a high hill beside a dead tree and a rock, where both silently contemplated the moon. From this poetic view Beckett had the idea of waiting for Godot, he wrote nearly the same landscape; a lifeless tree, a rock and unknown road. In this play we can feel that Beckett tried to reflect man's unfulfilled wish to escape the hard life, hence he evacuated the setting, the language and time even the identity of existence and dropped his characters to lost in nothing.

Being in *Waiting for Godot* is an empty existence and mind, he is unable to perform any sane behavior. For that Vladimir and Estragon are unable to saturate the nothingness inside them and around them, they keep talking all the time yet at any moment of silence, the pain is overwhelming them and they immediately hug each other. Beckett throughout the play expressed the nothing postmodern man is living in, Vladimir and Estragon are all the time looking for something to give them a sense of meaning, however each time they were failing to rationalize their situation. There are no rules, no knowledge and no clear goals from being alive. Hence Life becomes an unbearable prison where silence and nothingness keep roaming there.

Besides that, we notice time and the space were very limited; a small space (road, dead tree and a rock) and time of two days. Yet a circular repetitive actions or behaviors and conversations since the absurd drama contains no plot or well-constructed event. Beckett hunted human's emptiness and skepticism toward everything and portrayed it in his stage,

where the nothing had things to say more than the actual performance of things, the Irish literary critic Vivian Mercier once commented that “Godot is a play in which nothing happens, twice” (Svalkvist 2). We find that our protagonists did nothing the entire play, they sat in an unknown road beside a dead tree and a rock. Life around them was completely dead and empty, even after the tree had a few leaves in the second act as a sign of hope and life. However, nothing has changed in their conditions, they move nowhere and they make no sense of anything. Beckett concentrated the nothingness that equals muteness of life and meaning. Man was a foolish creature to understand through speaking and acting something, for that Beckett silenced his world. The nothing he dealt with portrays that people no longer own the capacity to understand through language nor through performance (actions). Thus, the nothing was much powerful also the muteness of nature; a dead tree which seems meaningless, yet it represents depression and the death of everything used to be as a sign of life. the tree was silent because it could not perform its nature; being a shelter from sun shine or rain or maybe storms. However, it was only a mute dead tree which could not either speak what season the play happened in.

Sometimes it is better to understand the story through nothingness and silence, and it seems that this is what Beckett believed in. He never justified the meaninglessness of his language, nor explained his dealings within nothingness. Nevertheless, one when reads his works mainly *Waiting for Godot*, would have an idea about beckett’s style of expression. His way invites an endless interpretation. Bryden wrote about Beckett’s silence in her book “*Sounds and Silence: Beckett's Music*”, she quotes Beckett’s answer in an interview, she said that “Beckett once said in an interview that his own writing seemed to him "like an unnecessary stain on silence". (Bryden 1). It seems that Beckett joined paradoxical elements (silence and writing), he enjoyed listening to the sounds of nothingness and silence. Moreover, he presented the silent being at his extreme lost and this is an example from the

play, “Estragon. Oh... this and that I suppose, nothing in particular. (With assurance.) Yes, now I remember, yesterday evening we spent blathering about nothing in particular. That’s been going on now for half a century.” (Beckett 49). Vladimir and Estragon spent most of their life wandering in places they don’t know, seating under a dark sky that could never inform them what time they are in, they are homeless friends who had no clear destinations to go through. Hence, they are meeting one another each day, pretending to wait for someone they named Mr. Godot. There is no sure sign about what they are doing, they sometimes seat and talk, other times they laugh and make a silly but dark joke. Painfully, they are lost to the extent of being unable to make any decision, they withdraw any idea comes to their mind and keep on waiting for Godot to suggest them something.

2.Silence in Waiting for Godot:

To be silent is to fail and neglect communication, in Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* language was in a state of collapse from the beginning into the end. Vladimir and Estragon where victims of silence around them (setting) and inside them, it indicates a total loss and a linguistic gap. Artistically, silence replaced the absence of language in the play, it occurs at a specific time where both tramps were stuck in an extreme moment of trauma, thus language becomes tiered and exhausted and silence finds his way to speak. It is an aesthetic silence that expresses more than words. The homeless characters of our play Vladimir and Estragon had a silence phobia; whenever they fall in his trap their pain becomes unbearable, thus they escape to language and keep speaking nonsense. For that, language was nothing more than an illusion or a drug to keep them less conscious about their reality. the following quote is an example from the play of:

VLADIMIR: You should have been a poet.

ESTRAGON: I was. (Gesture towards his rags.) Isn't that obvious? Silence.

VLADIMIR: Where was I . . . How's your foot?

ESTRAGON: Swelling visibly.

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

ESTRAGON: No.

VLADIMIR: Shall I tell it to you?

ESTRAGON: No.

VLADIMIR: It'll pass the time. (Pause.) Two thieves, crucified at the same time as our Savior. One—. (Beckett 5).

This is a small example about the moments of silences imposing their authority over our protagonists, it is noticeable at the first use of silence when Estragon answered his friend Vladimir when he told him that “he should have been a poet”. Estragon’s response is condemned by silence, through his answer (I was. (Gesture towards his rags.) Isn't that obvious?) than (silence), one can feel that Estragon knows the fact that he no longer looks like a gentle man but was he someday a gentleman? Maybe before war or in his imagination. In fact, poets are considered to be one of the elites of the society and the cultivated and wise class, thus they have much privileges and chances in life. Ironically Estragon is a poet yet a homeless one, the silence that interrupted his answer said what he did not say (Estragon). Indeed, he knows his reality, he is only a lost man wearing un appropriate cloths, waiting at a place he has no idea about, and more painfully he is waiting for something he thinks it may give him the green light of a new rebirth. Hence silence uncovered the illusion he had. For Beckett, silence in this play was the real language of pain, when there is nothing left to say silence expresses everything. In the other hand, the second use of the pause in the answer of Vladimir when he wanted to narrate the story of the thieves, but Estragon had no desire to listen to it. He said that telling this story will pass the time, then a moment of silence. Through this pause one can understand much things such as; the characters seemed to hate speaking because they knew there is no point in it, however they needed to full their time and language

is the clown to entertain them. We see that it is not important for the characters to express through language, but through silence because it is much expressive.

The second pause says how depressed the characters are, Vladimir suggested the story as an attempt to get read of their boredom and pass the time while waiting. Yet silence is much powerful to impose his authority, he awakes them each time and urges them to taste the emptiness and chaos they are in. Weigel in his essay "SILENCE IN JOHN CAGE AND SAMUEL BECKETT: 4' 33" and *Waiting for Godot*" comments on Beckett's use of pauses, "there is power in the silence which becomes productive space" (Weigel 254).

Silence is able to speak on behalf the language, since the language is a purposeless noise. Beckett's silence in his play has an existential position, it isolates the characters and embraces the pain of the uncertainties they are suffering from. Afia Shahid noted that "The silence has become nihilistic, gloomy, vexing and empty." (Shahid 109). The failure of communication between the characters indicates that man has no hopes in language; it could never be able to save them from being isolated and lonely. Through that, silence in the play stole the characters presence in the physical world to the psychological and mental one. Moreover, Language is a nonsense that conveys nothing, Vladimir and Estragon found no link between their inner pain and the silly conversations they are exchanging. Moreover, each pause in the dialogues speaks something, for Shahid "The language is incapable to answer the questions of postmodern world". (Shahid 109). Thus, silence is invented and dramatized to replace language, it gives a chance to the audience to investigate the linguistic gap of words. Though silence is an abstract way to express things, yet it is present in Beckett's drama, powerful and holds a lot of meanings unlike language that is empty Alphabet. Here it is silence which means meaning, "Utterances became hollow, language is mutilated and punctured thus losing its essence as a meaningful bearer of messages" (Khan 413).

Beckett silenced his world in *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon are sick and tired of their existence; at every time they consume the words, they had in mind silence visits them.

This is an example from the play:

(Silence): They put on their hats.

Estragon: Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful! (Beckett 8).

Nothing was happening and life is a sick silence, Vladimir and Estragon seems to be at many moments the second version of Charlie Chaplin; the silent tragic Comedian, through typifying the silent life that is full of noise and meanings. Shixiao noted that Vladimir and Estragon's silence is not more than confession about their miseries, "The silence they feel the intolerable pressure of their pathetic existence" (Shixiao 94).

2.1. The absence of Godot as silence:

The absence of language in *Waiting for Godot* is one aspect of Beckett's silence, it gives a new meaning of the absentees occurred in the play. Godot what is it? Who is he? And where is he? A plenty of answerable questions are asked about this mysterious character, in the entire play Godot is physically absent yet present through Vladimir and Estragon's waiting. His absence raises the hesitation in the characters mind, yet it is noticeable that all the absentees in the play are the most powerful instruments to convey something, Godot is another face of silence, he never appears in both acts. Paradoxically Godot's presence is felt through his absence, it seems to be like the metaphysics of "Presence and Essence"; where the absence of something determines the existence of the other thing. However, the interest in this idea is spotted on the silence is felt due to Godot's absence. He seems to be the dream of the characters, the savior and the final salvation from chaos.

Godot never appears in the entire play despite that his voice is heard, it is necessary for Godot to not appear. His absence gives some meaning to Vladimir and Estragon, because the only thing they are sure about is to wait for him, though he never arrives to the appointment,

there is an abstract contact between him and them (Vladimir and Estragon). Ironically everything is an absurd illusion, each behavior, phrase and thoughts they had in mind are condemned of absurdity and meaninglessness; for that the waiting for the unknown Godot brought some hope to them. Beckett silenced Godot physically and verbally too; Vladimir and Estragon had no idea about how he looks like. Beside that they never heard anything from him, in both acts he sends them a messenger (a boy) to tell them on his behalf he is not coming today. “Boy (in a rush). Mr. Godot told me to tell you he won’t come this evening but surely tomorrow. (Silence.)”. (Beckett 37).

His absence equals the silence each time Vladimir and Estragon are falling in, when they remember that they are still waiting for Godot immediately silence takes a place. “Although Godot never comes, he might still be the most important character in the play and the most important character for Vladimir and Estragon’s existence” (Svalkvist 4). The only purpose they have in their life is to wait for him, every time they decide to leave the place and give up, they remind each other that they must keep on waiting wishing him to come. They are afraid to miss the appointment with him, thus Godot’s silence created some hope and gave some certainty to Vladimir and Estragon because they have nothing to do in life, Godot’s absence is the dream that keeps them together.

Estragon: let's go.

Vladimir: we can't.

Estragon: why not?

Vladimir: we're waiting for Godot.

Estragon:(despairingly.) ah! (Pause.)

Vladimir: how they've changed!

Estragon: who? Vladimir: those two.

Estragon: that's the idea, let's make a little conversation. (Beckett 46-47)

One can see from this quoted dialogue from the play, how they insist to wait though it causes them pain, thus they each time seeks to find an excuse to speak and pass the time. The idea of Godot becomes a habit for them, a source of some meaning that they eager to achieve. Svalkvist highlights the idea of Godot through saying that, "It is not the question of what he is, but rather the acknowledgment that he exists". (Svalkvist 10). Yet Godot's presence is abstract and silent physically and verbally again, but it is felt and heard through the faithful waiting of the characters, they seemed to be sure about his existence though he never appears.

2.2. Waiting as Silence:

Waiting is considered to be the ultimate purpose in the play, Vladimir and Estragon waits in both acts, however while waiting is there something happening? did they achieve something? The answer is provided through the continues waiting without reaching any solution, Vladimir and Estragon kept searching for a way to pass the time, they created verbal games to avoid the silence of waiting. In the end of each game, they comment "that passed the time", they are frightened to seat side by side with silence, likewise while waiting they speak in an idiotic way and unstoppably. Nevertheless, their appointment twice leads them to meet Mr. Silence.

The process of waiting become the link between Vladimir and Estragon, they come back every time to the same unnamed place, after they are harmed more by life. They have no other options accept wandering in the same places, they meet and seat and wait. In the entire play the waiting provides them with nothing, it is a silent journey that seems at many times a question that seeks answers. However, the answer is never complete, so our protagonists keep walking on a path they don't know where it will lead them, *Waiting for Godot* has turned into the only thing they have to do in life but nothing happens all the time, they just keep sitting and time is passing in nothing. The only thing that happens with them is meeting two strangers and exchanging comical conversation, it is a miserable attempt to hide behind the

cloak of words, and yet silence is not merciful to them. It fell like an exploding shell on their barren land, choking their throats with it and rushing to search for any excuse to speak again:

(Long silence.)

Vladimir. Say something!

Estragon. I'm trying.

Vladimir (in anguish). Say anything at all!

Estragon. What do we do now?

Vladimir. Wait for Godot.

Estragon. Ah!

(Silence.)

Vladimir. This is awful!

Estragon. Sing something. (Beckett 47_48).

Time and waiting are nothing but a silent mental hospital for these two people (Vladimir and Estragon) where nothing happens, it is a silent waiting that keeps messing with them all the time, and because of this tiring waiting they tried to commit suicide as a way to kill time and win over the silence imposed on them. This waiting that doesn't seem to end, but again they fail at the tree trunks because they are two people who could never understand what they want, thus maybe *Waiting for Godot* will give them some consolation. Waiting for Vladimir and Estragon is murder because it is imbued with silence, Beckett put silence in its rightful places Dr. Khan commented on that saying, "Beckett has shown the breakdown of communication in the form of pauses and silence which represent uncertainty and waiting as the characters are not at all sure if Godot will appear at all" (Khan 414). Silence in this play has always been a terrifying nightmare for the characters because it strips their souls and whips them with a cruel whip.

3. Beckett's musicality and silence:

Beckett's language is poetic and musical; one when reads or hears the dialogue between the characters cannot deny the musicality founded in them. However, these poetic rhythmical phrases are empty of any meaning. Beckett played with words as a musical instrument; he composed a melody of words and silences. The music goes beyond the language, at many times Vladimir and Estragon seemed to sing a song rather than speaking, this is an example:

Vladimir. You're right, we're inexhaustible.

Estragon. It's so we won't think.

Vladimir. We have that excuse.

Estragon. It's so we won't hear.

Vladimir. We have our reasons.

Estragon. All the dead voices.

Vladimir. They make a noise like wings.

Estragon. Like leaves.

Vladimir. Like sand.

Estragon. Like leaves. (Beckett 46).

It is observed in the above dialogue the musicality of it, it seems a tragic song they are singing it together above the War ashes. Beckett's poetic language is merged within Silence and one can notice the influence of music on Beckett. In this play he had no interest in vocabulary, grammar and order of language, he focuses on the sounds produced and on the silences are taking a place in each conversation. Mary Bryden comments on Beckett's musicality, "When we read or hear Beckett's texts, we are being drawn into their musicality, exhibiting as they do an extraordinarily acute attunement to sound: not just to noise, but to intimate, ambient sound." (Bryden 279); she also adds that "... they also demonstrate the peculiarly rich role allocated to silence in Beckett's writing." (Bryden 279). Hence silence and

the musical sounds Beckett's language are like a tragic Orchestra, full of sounds and music that pleases the listeners. Also, silence has his own magical sound that interrupts all the noise. Convincingly, *Waiting for Godot* is a musical, poetic piece of art, Vladimir and Estragon seems to be the second version of Beethoven in the 20th c, they are unable to understand their language, nor hear their silence. As Beethoven; the musician who was not able to listen to his music because he was deaf, yet he felt it inside him and it was admired, heard and felt by the audience. Thus, silence and the musical sound in *Waiting for Godot* holds a high aesthetic value, since the language had nothing to deliver. The play puts the audience at an attention spot to enjoy listening the sound of silence. This is another example from the work:

Vladimir: Listen!

They listen, grotesquely rigid.

Estragon: I hear nothing.

Vladimir: Hsst! (They listen. Estragon loses his balance, almost falls. He clutches the arm of Vladimir, who totters. They listen, huddled together.) Nor I.

Sighs of relief. They relax and separate.

Estragon: You gave me a fright.

Vladimir: I thought it was he.

Estragon: Who?

Vladimir: Godot.

Estragon: Pah! The wind in the reeds.

Vladimir: I could have sworn I heard shouts.

Estragon: And why would he shout?

Vladimir: At his horse.

(Silence). (Beckett 15).

Easily the attention is combined to the sounds and to the silence it ends with, it merges our sensations within the environment to taste, hear and feel the sounds of silence. Weigel comments on that through saying, “The coexistence of sound and silence is a particularly significant feature in *Waiting for Godot*. Beckett creates a certain musical rhythm in the play” (Weigel 254). Another example from the play that portrays the world of silence:

“A country road. A tree. Evening. Estragon, sitting on a low mound, is trying to take off his boot. He pulls at it with both hands, panting. He gives up, exhausted, rests, tries again. As before. Enter Vladimir” (Beckett 1). This is the first scene in the play the audience are put in front of a silent view, Estragon is suffering with his boots silently. From this scene one can understand Beckett’s attempt to travel of his audience out away from the linguistic world, he calls them to hear the voice of silence and feel it with all of their sensations. The world is not restricted to language but silence is a huge part of being’s life.

4. Lucky’s muteness:

In Beckett’s world the words are foolish voices that suits the foolish being, silence for him is the mirror of beings unspoken pain. In his play *Waiting for Godot* Didi and Gogo (Vladimir and Estragon’s nicknames), keep chatting with one another and inventing verbal games to pass the time. Pozzo who is the strange man who meet them and keep talking to them about silly topics, Pozzo was a master of a slave named Lucky. In both acts it is noticeable that lucky is silent, though he gave a speech yet it was uncomprehensible to anyone, thus muteness did not depart him. One has to ask why Beckett silenced Lucky’s voice? He is a poor and helpless slave why did Beckett silenced his existence?

Lucky is completely submissive to his master Pozzo, he never spoke or acted anything without his master’s orders, he seems to accept the brutal treatment of Pozzo. This character is silenced physically and verbally, he had no freedom to do any act he wants though he seems not to have any desires. His body become a mute property of his master who abuses him

mercilessly, lucky never complain or express his refusal to his terrible life within Pozzo. Yet he was the only character in the play who had no questions to ask about her state in life, despite the hard condition he faces with his master. One can comment that lucky never moves from his place, unless Pozzo gave him the order to do something, his muteness reflects the powerless being who has nothing to exchange with life. The pain he is suffering form is unable to liberate his tongue to shout, through Lucky's muteness one can understand Beckett's view to postmodern men, the language is an obstacle to speak pain and lost. Lucky is a slave of a man, who had no power accept terrifying others through his voice, he tries to impose his power again through his voice and the cruel treatment of his slave (lucky.) Lucky is a mute clown, who dances and bares the pain silently, as if Beckett wants to say through this character how postmodern men is enslaved. Moreover, Lucky's silence may express also the lost hope of life and humanity; he knows that there is no hope in such universe. He never had the desire to communicate with others, it is noticeable when Vladimir and Estragon tried to create a contact with him. Surprisingly his reaction is violent despite they had positive intentions to him because they sought to help him.

Lucky's miserable state is not able to call him to rebel against his silence, though he speaks nothing Vladimir and Estragon had an interest to him. His silence is hearable by them, they sow the physical representation of their pain in front of them, without uttering a word lucky is able to capture others attention, he seems to perform a dark clowning though it pleases others when he dances. Yet it remains a painful silent show that finds a weird pleasure inside the audience's heart. Beckett intended to abandon the language; he says nothing through words, and through the characters. Shahid described Beckett's muteness in her work and silence that, "Silence and pauses paradoxically invite the carnivalesque notion of them to bring many voices on the stage and to induce meanings subjectively" (Shahid 110).

Beckett created an amazing bond between two paradoxes; silence and language, he perfectly placed silence in every conversation to show the reasons that causes man's suffering, and it is unusual attempt to unmask beings' souls through placing them in the center spot in a dark and silent stage. Indeed, he used the language as a loud nonsense to represent the universe's tragedies with man. Beckett's language for Khan is described as "... a jargon of ambiguity full of cynical self-denial" (Khan 414). Throughout the play we notice that the conversations are only a failure attempts to deny reality. Lucky's monologue in the end of the first act is nonsensical and purposeless, he is not able to exercise full and comprehensive words, it is an attempt to think when Pozzo ordered him to do so. Thinking is a silent process; Lucky's monologue exemplifies the absurdity of men; they never speak what they have in their mind yet when they own the chance to think and express. Ironically the result is a silly and absurd monologue that is exhausting to them. Moreover, lucky keeps being silent all the time waiting for the orders of his cruel master, Beckett tried to emphasis the importance if the unsaid words, through Lucky's character one can realize that being mute is a provocative trap, it grasps all the attention to seek meaning beyond the unsaid.

5. Silence as a Linguistic Phenomenon:

Silence in *Waiting for Godot* from a linguistic point of view is considered to have similar function as punctuations, it deviates the speech between the characters. The dialogues are exchanged between Vladimir and Estragon falls in silence and repetition; it represents their disordered life. For Kouachi "Silence is used to understand the perplexed meaning" (Kouachi 177). Thus, a fragmented world produces nothing except a fragmented speech and the language becomes a linguistic gap to human. Beckett through his play he divides the speech into two categories, sounds and silence.

Jacques Derrida once said that "there is nothing outside the text"; all the meanings lay in the text in itself and silence is a linguistic phenomenon that occurs inside the text. In *Waiting*

for Godot, the meaning is achieved more through the moments of silence and pause, it is a literary technique that gained a recognizable power. Silence paved the way for further interpretations of a given text, it functions as language despite the absence of words and phrases. In *Waiting for Godot*, the language is a weak tool to express the needs of the characters, still they keep using it as a verbal game empty of any meaning. Silence and pause become the linguistic need in the play, because the conversations are a meaningless illusion that carries no message.

Estragon: We are happy. (Silence.) What do we do now, now that we are happy?

Vladimir: Wait for Godot. (Estragon groans. Silence.)

From the above quote, one can see the position of silence and how it functions as a strong language that matches the characters jesters. Silence in the middle of the conversation, it separates the speech and function as punctuation marks, thereby provides a strong meaning. In this example silence speaks, it creates a sense of gloomy inside Vladimir and Estragon and pulls them once again to face their inescapable pain. Language transformed to a poor widow who is tired of her burden, since it is convicted to satisfy human mind yet it failed. Thus, expressing once self and ideas turned from being limited only with linguistics into philosophies and theories, hence silence escaped the linguistic limitations and broadened the scope of expressing.

According to Hassan, *Waiting for Godot* is a play where man is suffering to stabilize his state in the universe; he is all the time hesitating and uncertain about everything that seems to be nothing. Beckett presented the absence of rationality and faith through Vladimir and Estragon, they use the language as a medium of silly clowning, it is unable to dig deeply into their minds and hearts; thus, failed to help them uttering their pain to the world. For that, silence and pause took the brand from words and become linguistically observed. For Shahid

Beckett's characters are turning in an empty circle, she declares that "The conversation of the characters has failed to progress any significant communication among them" (Shahid 109). Indeed, throughout the play, neither Vladimir nor Estragon achieved something from their discussions. Beckett taught us to listen to the sound of silence and read it, it does not require words to be noticed just like the pulsation of the blood. Silence in linguistic is called the zero-sign; silence is a sound that can be heard and gives a meaningful meaning to the texts, conversations and speech pattern, Shixiao noted that silence used by Beckett serves the meaning of the play "In *Waiting for Godot*, it functions in a dual capacity, both as a vehicle of meaning and as a reinforcement to the dialogue" (Shixiao 93). Likewise, the fundamental use of Beckett of silence in *Waiting for Godot*, adds a mad touch with the combination with the context of the play and the psychological state of the characters, he masters the use of it to portray the world of sounds and absence of words. In both acts silence is presented on the stage, it speaks on behalf the language:

POZZO: [...] (Silence.) Pozzo! (Silence.) [...] (Beckett 15)

VLADIMIR: [...] (Pause.) I can't go on! (Pause.) [...] (Beckett 38)

(Silence. Estragon takes a step forward.) You had something to say to me? (Silence. [...])(beckett12).

In these examples one can see that silence works in parallel with language, it portrays the world inside humanity where the noise of silence powerful then language. Weagel asserts that Beckett's use of silence created eased the path for the analytical process; he said "My assertion is that it is very useful in the analysis of *Waiting for Godot*, in illustrating its organic coherence." (Weagel259).

6. Estragon and Vladimir silent conversations:

Beckett's mute world invites us to think about the importance of language in our lives, he creates a unique artistic atmosphere through *Waiting for Godot*. Vladimir and Estragon are

thrown into a wasteland to face their fate, they meet and seat and the show is on. Silence was the third companion of both and language turned to be nonsensical symbols, moreover they used it as toy to entertain themselves. Throughout the play we see the silence speaking each time, Estragon and Vladimir start a conversation then out of no planning their words are lost somewhere.

Vladimir: We are happy.

Estragon: We are happy. (Silence.) What do we do now, now that we are happy?

Vladimir: Wait for Godot. (Estragon groans. Silence.). (Beckett 44)

Both are cruelly whipped by this silence, the fact that they are happy is illusions they want to pretend or believe, yet going back to reality of being a poor, tired and homeless two man's burns the idea of happiness they wished to taste and feel. Man is obliged to keep conversing and talking about anything because language is significant to being's existence. From the above quote the phrases seems to disappear at the expense of silence, we as an audience are directly moved when they stop speaking; a strong negation is felt and transforms successfully what the characters did not utter. "The two men are helpless in their meaningless existence is incarnated in sheer verbiage" (Shixiao 95).

Estragon: In the meantime, let us try and converse calmly, since we are incapable of keeping silent.

Vladimir: You are right, We're inexhaustible.

Estragon: It's so we won't think.

Vladimir: We have that excuse.

Estragon: It's so we won't hear.

Vladimir: We have our reasons. (Beckett 46).

Vladimir and Estragon are incapable of keeping silent because they are afraid to go inward, it seems a brutal suffrage for them to look deep into their inner world. Silence mirrors

our private feelings and that what both felt afraid to face, they sought miserably to cover their pain and avoid silence in their conversations. At the same hand, they felt that silence is the terrifying face of their existential gap, thus they must escape it and keep on talking even repeating the same thing. Dr. Khan comments on the failure of language in Beckett's world saying, "When the existence itself is absurd words are unable to expurgate the gap between what is being uttered and what it signifies". Man in postmodern world no longer needs words to express.

Estragon: All the dead voices.

Vladimir: Like sand.

Estragon: Like leaves.

(Silence.)

Vladimir: They all speak at once.

Estragon: Each one to itself.

(Silence)

Vladimir: Rather they whisper.

Estragon: They rustle.

Vladimir: They murmur.

Estragon: They rustle.

(Silence)

Vladimir: What do they say?

Estragon: They talk about their lives.

Vladimir: To have lived is not enough for them.

Estragon: They have to talk about it.

Vladimir: To be dead is not enough for them.

Estragon: It is not sufficient.

(Silence)

Vladimir: They make a noise like feathers.

Estragon: Like leaves.

Vladimir: Like ashes.

Estragon: Like leaves.

(Silence)

Vladimir :(in anguish). Say something at all!

Estragon: What do we do now?

Vladimir: Wait for Godot.

Estragon: Ah!

(Silence)

The above passage opens with “the dead voices” it is maybe their silent voices that died in an absurd world, the sound of the leaves and wings speaks on behalf the language. The dead people can be Vladimir and Estragon and all the humanity, they “murmur, rustle and whisper” but they never speak. “They understand that their language is nothing but the noise of wings, leaves and sand which leaves no mark or trace” (Shixiao 95). The frequent presence of silence every time indicates the meanings lay behind each conversation, “Silence breaks the continuity of words and conveys meaning in its totality.” (Aspasia, 1982). Hence the entire conversations between the characters are a meaningless, they express the postmodern man’s linguistic and psychological disorders. “The text of the play highlights the unpredictable and uncertain condition of the two persons: Vladimir and Estragon, displaying their loneliness, pessimism and nihilism.” (Iqbal, Akhter, Hayat 358). Indeed, the language is empty it portrays a reality that is full of question, yet there is no significant answer to identify things for being. Hereby silence exhibited in the right place of the characters pain, thus it is more powerful and expressive than words. “The mechanism of silence questions the totality

of their linguistic experience of stating a truth". (Iqbal, Akhter, Hayat 112). Language for Beckett was a silly illusion for postwar man; it is incapable to indicate the truth.

Conclusion

Beckett's use of silence in his play *Waiting for Godot*, invites the readers to investigate the world lay behind speaking no words. Silence in this play was able to fulfill the linguistic gap of language, despite that the characters kept on creating excuses to continue talking, it seemed clear for us as an audience and readers the breakdowns of the conversations between the characters. The communication is fragmented and the language could not convey any sane meaning, unlike silence which transmitted the powerful messages each time. Words were the enemy of the characters to speak up their pain, yet silence has a direct contact with their inner existential questioning. For that, Beckett depended on using it in his play, it empowered the meaning and expressed the insufficiency of life where human suffers, lost, dance, wait and keep silent. Beckett's silence in the play tells the painful experience of two friends, in an unworthy world to live in. It is an unbearable tale of suffering yet it must be lived till the end because there is no escape, Vladimir and Estragon lived for the dream of meeting Godot, he is the only thing they believed in. It is a hard journey on them that seems to be mortal, maybe they are dead for long years and the play is a wish they had in their lives. For that Beckett wrote it to tell the world the story of man who is stripped from his language, his soul, his mind and thrown randomly into a bare land where there is no sign of life. Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* become the perfect text to apply any literary, philosophical and linguistic theory due to its puzzling nature, for that it is the most debatable literary work in the recent age. Through its Beckett opens the windows for unlimited interpretations.

General Conclusion

The postmodern world is the Wasteland for the authors, they are liberated to dream and write their dreams with no limitation. Beckett through his masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* gained glory and shocked the writing world, he invented or unmasked the real world of beings. Through *Waiting for Godot*, the audience had a sight into their inner chaos, unambitiously people after the Second World War were living in a broken state of mind, yet they found no way to express for that literature is the stage that explained their philosophical pain. *Waiting for Godot* is a world of black and white and silence, this postmodern play typified the suffering of humanity stuck in one place, time is unknown and nothing holds meaning.

Non sense is one of the main features of postmodern literature, mainly the notion of the Absurd that exploded the inner worlds of man, and invited the writers to loss sanity with words because nothing is rational and real after the Second World War. Beckett's world is an Existential question mark incapable to find answers or heal human's pain, he puzzled the language and put it into an empty discourse. The characters of the play are walking into nothing, their conversations are a painful nonsense full of silence; a silence that created the existential and absurd atmosphere in the play. Moreover, *Waiting for Godot* a silent tale that reduces the presence of the physical world and travels us into a journey in the sounds of silence, one can hear human soul's voice through silence.

This dissertation is an attempt to spot the light on the artistic use of silence in *Waiting for Godot*, it is an analytical study to figure out the disguised voices behind silence.

Consequently, Beckett amazingly proved the powerful of the unuttered words in addressing meaning, his characters shared the stage with emptiness and silence which added a magical touch to the Beckettian dark but silent suffering. Through this artistic use of silence and

pause, the play allows for unlimited number of interpretations. The first part of this investigation is concerned with the theoretical basis of Postmodernism, Existentialism and the notion of the Absurd in literature. Collected data suggests that Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is a philosophical piece, it joins various elements of different theories and philosophies yet merge them in way they melt within Beckett's unique style. Postmodernism is the setting of the play that opens an awkward window to see reality from different perspective, thus sinking in the World's thoughts after World War two, where nothing is real and rational. Human celebrated his insanity, madness and disbelieve of truth.

The Existential perspective in this play (*Waiting for Godot*) reveals being's distracted mental state, Beckett portrayed the emptiness and pain outside through the environment, language and the entire concept of the play itself. Man is unconscious and unstable he is jailed in his mind's unexpressed desires. Moreover, the notion of the Absurd is another representation to man's existential crises, the world is a nonsense joke and human is a clown who is unable to rich any meaning of his silly shows in life.

The second chapter is devoted for two parts, one is concerned with the thematical frame of postmodern themes that are explored in *Waiting for Godot*. It is an explanation to the presence of the existential and absurd voice in the play. The uncertainty of life and the ultimacy of pain are the main concept of *Waiting for Godot*, moreover the broken language leads the characters to a depressed failure, it creates a dark view where our protagonists are victimised. They seem to communicate the voice of their dead souls. In the other hand, the second part of this chapter, is concerned with paving the way to the analytical investigation of silence used in the play. It spots the attention over the Existential crisis of language and the emergence of silence as a meaningful tool of expression. In addition to that, the third chapter is continuing analysis to the silence and pause are placed in the play.

Overall Beckett suppressed the language and replace it with silence, he used it as a toy to pass the time while silence is more powerful and expressive. The main purpose in this investigation is to point out to Beckett's silent world, and also to deconstruct the sounds of nothing because silence in *Waiting for Godot* is the language of pain. The characters are falling in the trap of muteness each time, yet their shared silence is merged with the empty setting and the meaninglessness of all conversations, that draws a philosophical painting for two men represents human's existence as a silent gap.

In the end, this investigation is still far from perfection. Beckett's silence is concerned with existential scream where words mean nothing, this modest study has not covered all the aspects of Beckett's dealings with silence in *Waiting for Godot*. It is an attempt to pave the way for further research to explore more this specific side in Beckett's world of literature. In short, this thesis could be significant data for future researchers in Literature to make space for new readings.

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Résumé

Cette thèse est une tentative de démasquer l'utilisation artistique du silence dans *L'attente De Godot* de Samuel Beckett dans le contexte postmoderne, elle recherche les différentes significations du silence concernant l'absurdisme et l'existentialisme. La problématique qui est soulevée est de savoir comment Beckett, à travers son utilisation du silence, a exprimé la douleur existentielle ressentie par l'homme postmoderne après la guerre mondiale, en l'utilisant pour dire dans quoi le langage a échoué. Cette enquête aspire à sonder artistiquement et philosophique du sens métaphorique du silence et la pause existaient dans la pièce. Il s'appuie sur une approche éclectique des pensées existentialistes et absurdes dans un contexte postmoderne. Les analyses démontrent que les silences qui s'immiscent entre les conversations à chaque fois leur effondrement existentiel, ils ne trouvent aucun sens à leur existence et continuent de tourner dans l'inconnu. Beckett a abandonné la langue en tant qu'outil de communication significatif et l'a remplacée par le silence. Ainsi il tend à véhiculer la lutte de l'individu dans un monde absurde qui a perdu son sens, et l'échec du langage transmet le message plein que le silence est plus expressif et puissant.

Les Mots Clés

Théâtre de l'absurde. Postmodernisme. Samuel Beckett. *En Attendant Godot*.
Existentialisme. Silence. Absurdisme. Crises Existentielles.

ملخص

هذه المذكرة هي محاولة لكشف الوجه المخفي للاستخدام الفني للصمت في مسرحية صامويل باكيت "في انتظار جودوت" داخل سياق ما بعد الحداثة فهي تبحث عن معاني مختلفة للصمت فيما يتعلق بالعبثية والوجودية. تكمن الإشكالية التي أثارت في كيفية استخدام باكيت للصمت الذي عبر عن الألم الوجودي الذي يشعر به الانسان في فترة ما بعد الحداثة بعد الحرب العالمية لتوضيح ما فشلت فيه اللغة. ويطمح هذا التحقيق الى محاولة فهم المعنى المجازي للصمت من الناحية الفنية والفلسفية. الصمت والتوقف عن الكلام موجودان بكثرة في المسرحية. انه يعتمد على نهج انتقائي للأفكار الوجودية والعبثية في سياق ما بعد الحداثة. توضح التحليلات ان الصمت يتداخل بين محادثات الشخصيات وفي كل مرة يحدد الانهيار الوجودي لها. ولا يفهمون أي معنى لوجودهم فيستمرون في المضي الى المجهول. تخلق باكيت عن اللغة كأداة للتواصل المعنوي واستبدالها بالصمت. لذلك فهو يميل الى نقل نضال الفرد في عالم عبثي فقد معناه وفشل اللغة ينقل رسالة كاملة مفادها ان الصمت أكثر تعبيراً وقوة.

الكلمات المفتاحية

مسرح العبثية. ما بعد الحداثة. صامويل باكيت. في انتظار جودوت. الوجودية. الصمت. العبثية. الازمة الوجودية.