A Study of Power Relation in Pinter's Plays from Foucault's Power View[1]

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Abstract

Pinter's works are characteristic of the language, which are always the focus of the critics. Pinter has added a new brand of colours to the English stage dialogue and this is attested by the frequent use of terms like "Pinteresque language" or "Pinterese" in current dramatic criticism. This paper reviews Foucault's reflections on power and analyzes the power relations of the characters in The Birthday Party, pointing out that they all possess desire for power. By doing this, it discusses the relation between power and truth, and concludes that power exists everywhere and knowledge is but the outcome of power struggle.

Keywords: Harold Pinter, Foucault, Power, Power relation

1. Introduction

The English theatre has gone through another revival after World War II, which proves to be fertile and flourishing. The range and accomplishments of its playwrights, most of whom are still producing fine works and inspiring their younger colleagues, are unparalleled. Harold Pinter is, among them, a practical instructor and a spiritual mentor to the younger generation in modern and postmodern theatres around the world. Kimball King ranks Pinter even higher than Samuel Beckett and John Osborne. Pinter's twenty nine plays have established and somehow permanently secured his position in the theatrical range of contemporary

Due to Pinter's significant contributions to modern drama, more and more scholars begin to reassess his oeuvre. A number of monographs and articles on Pinter research have been issued, yet criticism of his plays has been keeping pace with the development of his plays. The terminology of Absurdism was applied with great frequency to Pinter's work in the 1960s. In 1961, Martin Esslin published his book *The Theatre of the Absurd*, in which he promotes Pinter from the margin to the centre and puts him in the camp with Samuel Beckett, presenting him as a major absurd playwright whose plays are often without "recognizable characters" and present the audience with "almost mechanical puppets" (3).

Since the late 1950s, the psychological analysis of his plays appeared and peaked in the 1980s. Lucina P. Gabbard analyzes the plots and characters in Pinter's plays from the psychoanalytic approach in the book of *The Dream Structure of Pinter's Play: A Psychoanalytic Approach*.

Then, the small body of scholarship on women's roles and on women's issues in Pinter's plays has increased. In the 1970s, Victor L. Cahn discusses Pinter's plays from feminist point of view in *Gender and Power in the Plays of Harold Pinter*, offering critical analysis of the construction of sex and gender in Pinter's plays. He believes that the women in Pinter's plays seem to have "greater awareness, both of their own natures and of the nature of men, and this understanding gives women a strength, a capacity for survival" (132).

From the last decade of 20th century, criticism of Pinter focuses on Pinter's political characteristics. Mac Silverstein gives detailed analysis of language and politics in Pinter's plays from the postmodern perspective in his *Harold Pinter and the Language of Cultural Power*.

Besides, many scholars have done researches on his obvious features of his use of language which have been copied to the point of parody by a large number of authors.

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He is consistently recognized for his innovation in language. Austin E. Quigley, in a book entitled *The Pinter Problem*, invokes the analysis of language to call attention to that aspect of Pinter.

He claims that language is pre-eminently used by characters in Pinter's plays as an instrument to negotiate relationship of power—that is what he calls the "interrelational" function of language (54). The study of Pinteresque language becomes one of the most popular investigation objects for Harold Pinter scholars.

Its linguistic techniques are varied. And the techniques that he employs are the use of common vocabulary, malapropisms, non sequiturs, repetition, the rhythms and patterns of everyday conversations, pauses, and silences. Critics have applauded Pinter's mastery of pause, silence, and non sequiturs for their expression of modern alienation and lack of genuine connection between human beings.

Pinteresque language, either its humor or word play, attracts many critics. Moreover, the power issue is also an important aspect to interpret Pinter's works. Martin Esslin states in *Pinter: A Study of His Plays* that "behind the highly private world of his plays, there also lurk what are, after all, the basic political problems: the use and abuse of power, the fight for living-space, cruelty, terror" (32). The power struggle or people's desire for power in the play bring to light that the hunt for domination often becomes a disease among his characters, something that they themselves are unable to control. Often these characters are engaged in a struggle for survival or control. And with this particular power struggle's emergence, some have lost the struggle and some have won toward the end of the play. It seems that nobody can get rid of it.

To investigate the inner most of Pinteresque language and offer a new angle to analyze power in Pinter's early works, this paper tries to tackle the power issue in *The Birthday Party* from Michel Foucault's Power View.

2. The Universality of Power and Power in Relation

What Michel Foucault means by power, is, however, a kind of political technology of body-dominating, which does not refer to the one possessed by a class, a group or an individual, but the way of how to exert power in order to hold it.

The conception of power here does not merely apply to the macro power, such as the political or economic power, which people discussed frequently. According to the new definition by Foucault, it also includes micro power relations. According to Foucault, power is relations. It is "not a thing, it is a relationship between two individuals, a relationship which is such that one can direct the behavior of another, or determine the behavior of another" (1996: 410). There exist different kinds of power relation, between men and women, between family members, between teachers and students, between the person with knowledge and the one without knowledge. Such kind of micro power relations incarnated between men and women is accepting or rejecting the control of the other side. And the person may try to avoid or resist such control or attempt to control the actions of others in turn, thus forming a complex network of interpersonal power relations. Power is "exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations" (1978: 94). In this way, Foucault does not understand power relations as a one-way operation. Emerging from "innumerable points", power in the Foucauldian sense refers to not only the force which is imposed by the ruling in the ruled but also other possible forces in all directions, including the ones from the ruled to the ruling. Power, in this case, is more than domination; rather, it is an ever-changing network of relations.

Omnipresence is a characteristic of Foucauldian power. Because it is an inescapable facet of being relational, it is an inevitable component of human existence. It means that power cannot exist separate from varying forms of relations and relations can not remove themselves absolutely from power's dynamic grip. Foucault concludes that relations of power are immanent and are the "immediate effects of divisions, inequalities and disequilibriums". Power is omnipresent not because it embraces everything, but "because it comes from everywhere" (1978: 93-94). He argues that power is productive and multi-faceted. It is working in all directions. "It seems to that power must be understood in the first stance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization…the omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to anther" (1978: 92-3). Power is not an institution or a structure, neither a certain strength people are endowed with. It is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society. Foucault contends that power is less related with class struggle than mechanics and strategies.

Power should be understood in terms of its operation, technicality and implementation rather than merely what it is. According to Foucault, power should be viewed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth.

"Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization…Individuals are not only their inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation… Individual are the vehicles of power, nor its points of application" (1980: 98).

3. Discipline Power and Menacing Discourse in the Birthday Party

Foucault thinks that there is a kind of power that is neither rude nor cruel, finally controlling the bodies according to its will by acting on bodies repeatedly. This kind of power is nominated as discipline power. In *The Birthday Party*, the most obviously power struggle occurs between the two intruders and Stanley. These two intruders are attempting to dominate Stanley, whom has been controlled ultimately. This part analyzes the power relation between the two intruders and Stanley from the view of discipline power, pointing out that Stanley cannot escape from the bondage of power and he loses himself in the menacing discourse in which the discipline power operates.

3.1Discipline in Society

In his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault investigates the way in which the modern society is disciplined and discusses the power in the history of punishment. Here, his conception of power is related to the specific form of punishment—discipline.

First of all, discipline is a kind of political technique of power. Modem society is producing, training, cultivating submissive bodies. Controlling the bodies of the governed is the crucial step of controlling and governing them in a whole. In order to obtain the submission from the governed, it is necessary to tame their bodies. So the control and domination of bodies is indispensable for any manipulation of power.

Foucault mentions that punitive methods are applied in order to consolidate social orders and control the bodies from the 18th century. *Discipline and Punish* opens in 1975 with an excruciating portrait of a prisoner who is publicly executed by being "torn", "burnt", and "quartered". The prisoner's body is the object of the punishment. The punishment involved in torture or excruciation shows that power is being manifest in an effort to control the crime. This kind of power, however, it is "a bad economic of power" because it tends to incite unrest among the viewers of the spectacle (1979: 79). Over time, protests against public executions increased. While a new system of punishment is coming forth. Torture disappears in the range of punishment. Punishment becomes less physical and much more subtle. Prisoners are free from the torture or excruciation; instead, they are confined in a prison where their rights are suspended but their basic needs can be guaranteed. Spatio-temporal surveillance and control over their bodies replaces the cruel punishment. "The age of sobriety in punishment had begun" (1979: 14).
The change described above represents a humanization of the treatment of criminals: punishment has become more kind, less painful, and less cruel. According to Foucault, the reality is that punishment has developed more rationalized on one hand and in many ways it has an effect on prisoners as well as on the larger society on the other hand. Such kind of punishment may have grown less intense, but it is at the expense of greater intervention into peoples' lives.

As Foucault puts it, the punishment of the criminal is "a living lesson in the museum of order". Thus the new forms of punishment are less ceremonies and spectacles and more schools for the larger population. "Long before he was regarded as an object of science, the criminal was imagined as a source of instruction." While in the ancient time, there are huge ceremonies involved torture and execution, in the modern world we have instead "hundreds of tiny theatres of punishment" (1979: 112-3). More generally, the prison has replaced the scaffold which implies that power is inscribed into the heart of the state since the penal system is run by the state. In Foucault's eyes, the prison plays the role of training, deterring, and constraining tame individuals. It is the miniature of the whole society. When the system, form, method and procedure of prison are enlarged and transmitted to the whole society, the society is transformed into a prison. Prison is the most typical representation of society which is composed of numerous miniature prisons. All the people in the society live in the prison because every member of the society has to be closely watched, disciplined and manipulated. People who live here are unable to find a way to escape the domination by the state power.

Even in their private life, this surveillance system, with its eyes and ears, is watching. Foucault describes "a tendency towards a more finely tuned justice, towards a closer penal mapping of the social body…controls become more premature and more numerous" (1979: 78).

Foucault relates this to the boarder development of what he calls the disciplines, which becomes the general mechanism for exercising domination in the 17th century and 18th century. The discipline involves a series of exercises designed to exert meticulous control over the body. "Discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile bodies" (1979: 138). Discipline involves a series of procedures for distributing individuals, fixing them in space, classifying them, extracting from them maximum time and energy, training their bodies, coding their continuous behavior, maintaining them in perfect visibility, surrounding them with mechanisms or observation, registering and recording them, and constituting in them a body of knowledge that is accumulated and centralized.

In *The Birthday Party,* the intruders represent the discipline power of the institution. Stanley's suffering shows that nobody can escape from the power.

3.2 The Implementation of Discipline Power

Discipline involves the distribution of individuals in space including the enclosure and partitioning of individuals and the development of functional sites and ranks. "In organizing 'cells', 'places' and 'ranks', the disciplines create complex spaces that are at once architectural, functional and hierarchical" (Foucault, 1979: 148). This new technology, the technology of discipline power, is based on the military model:

Foucault labels three instruments of discipline power, derived from the military model to a certain extent. First is hierarchical observation, namely, the capability of functionary to watch over all of what they control with a single gaze. The military camp is regarded as a pattern here. The goal is observation that is discreet, largely silent, and permanent. The observation system is effective when it functions like a beacon. With a light on the top, it sheds rays far and near, to all directions. And just like a pyramids, its top is underlaid by several layers of foundation. This hierarchical modality is essential for the smooth operation of observation.[2]

Foucault states that discipline power is implemented by the means of strict observation which is the technology of being able to observe without being noticed. In *The Birthday Party*, the two interlopers Goldberg and McCann play the role of the light. They are the top functionaries and principal parts of observation. They carry out the discipline power by observation. And Stanley is at the bottom of observation system, being observed. On Act Two, Goldberg and McCann are beginning to interrogating Stanley with rapid-fire questions that range from the accusatory to the ridiculous. Goldberg takes Stanley's glasses off.

GOLDBERG. What can you see without your glasses?
STANLEY. Anything.
GOLDBERG. Take off your glasses. (59）

Then, Goldberg and McCann keep on inquiring him. And at that time, Stanley is on a position that he is watched over by these two men but cannot see them. Just like in the prison, criminals should obey the rules in that they know some one is watching over them. There is nothing Stanley can do but respond those unintelligible questions. Later, when they play games on the party, McCann takes off his glasses once again.

MCCANN. I'll take your glasses. (73)

Then, they break his glasses. "Stanley stands blindfold. McCann backs slowly across the stage to the left. He breaks Stanley's glasses, snapping the frames" (73). Every time when Stanley is in front of them, he is deprived of his glasses. The two intruders always attempt to take off Stanley glasses aiming at observing him well. Thus, Stanley cannot see them. Besides taking his glasses off, the two intruders try to observe Stanley in the dark. When the party begins, the intruders intend to start their surveillance.

GOLDBERG. Say what you feel. What you honestly feel. It's Stanley's birthday. Your. Look at him and it'll come. Wait a minute, the light's too strong. Let' have proper lighting. McCann, have you got your torch?

MCCANN. (bring a small torch from his pocket). Here. (64)

[2] See Michel Foucaultl. Discipline and Pinish: the Birth of the Prison. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1979. pp.173-176.

GOLDBERG. Switch out the light and put on your torch. (Mccann goes to the door, switches off the light, comes back, shines the torch on Meg. Outside the window there is still a faint light.) Not on the lady, on the gentleman! You must shine it on the birthday boy.

(Mccann shines the torch on in Stanley's face.) Now, Mrs. Boles, it's all yours. (64)

"McCann switches out the light, comes back, and shines the torch in Stanley's face. The light outside the window is fainter" (67). On the party, McCann turns off the light and everything is indiscernible but Stanley because of the torch shining on his face. It is Goldberg who orders that Stanley should be kept spotlighted all the time. In this way, Stanley is strictly observed by the two strangers again. So the goal of the surveillant is achieved.

However, as Foucault points out, top and bottom alone can not enable the observation system to operate efficiently. Without a succession of middle layer and channel linking the top and bottom and transmitting the information, the observation system is half-baked. Linked by the channel, the member within the observation system serves as a node, which is sending and receiving information. Therefore, the system is closely interwoven into a net and becomes a best way to carry out the task of observation and enhance its possible effect. In Act One, Goldberg and McCann appear for the first time and talk about their job. Goldberg advises McCann to relax and speaks of his family ties and his partnership with McCann, who responds as if Goldberg is his mentor.

GOLDBERG. You know what I said when this job came up. I mean naturally they approached me to take care of it. And you know who I asked for?

MCCANN. Who?
GOLDBERG. You.
MCCANN. That was very good of you, Nat.
GOLDBERG. No, it was nothing. You're a capable man, McCann. (39)

While in the course of interrogating Stanley questions, the conversation between Goldberg and McCann also reveals that McCann is in a subordinate position to Goldberg.

MCCANN. Nat.
GOLDBERG. What?
MCCANN. He won't sit down.
GOLDBERG. Well, ask him.
MCCANN. I've ask him.
GOLDBERG. Ask him again. (56)

So in the observation system, Goldberg is the top of the light and McCann is the middle layer, both of who regard Stanley as the bottom. Under their observation, Stanley is on the edge of being controlled.

Foucault argues that normalizing judgments is the second method. It is the capability to make normalizing judgments and to punish those who disobey the norms. Its prior task is judging from homogeneous standards and criterions, to find out difference and contrast. The final aim of normalization is to shape a homogenous standards and modes. Instead, there exists a wide range of "decorum", "rules", "standards" and so on, express or not, to distinguish the right, normal from the wrong, abnormal. Thus, one might be negatively judged and subjected to micro-penalties for violations relating to such things as time for being late, activity for being inattentive, behavior for being impolite, and body adopting the incorrect attitude. Such normalizing judgments serve to compare, differentiate, hierarchicalize, homogenize, and where necessary, exclude people.[3]

Discipline power makes the object of its control to submit a certain mode or procedure which is the norm by imposing pressure constantly on it. It is a technology by which power controls the body. In *The Birthday Party*, Goldberg is the principal of discipline power exertion who serves as a judge. What he says is the norm and what he thinks is the standard.

MCCANN. How do we know this is the right house?
GOLDBERG. What makes you think it's the wrong house?
MCCANN. I didn't see a number on the gate.

[3] See Michel Foucault. *Discipline and Pinish: the Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1979. pp.178-183.

GOLDBERG. I wasn't looking for a number.
MCCANN. No?

GOLDBERG. (settling in the armchair). You know one thing Uncle Barney taught me? Uncle Barney taught me that the word of a gentleman is enough. That's why, when I had to go away on business I never carried my money. One of my sons used to come with me. He used to carry a few coppers. For a paper, perhaps, to see how the M.C.C. was getting on overseas. Otherwise, my name was good. Besides, I was a very busy man.

GOLDBERG. True? Of course it's true. It's more than true. It's a fact. (38)

From the conversation above, it can be seen that he is absolute sure of his any decision. And it is Goldberg who decides the norm. With the norm and standard, he decides other's behaviors. After he arrives at the house and hears about Stanley, he considers him as the one who he is looking for, although this play never gives the affirmative answer. But according to Goldberg's norm, Stanley is the one who they are going to take away. However, Stanley is not accepted by the discipline power and doomed, he denies that he is the one who they are looking for.

STANLEY. I've explained to you, damn you, that all those years I lived in a Basingstoke I never stepped outside the door. (52)

Goldberg's task is to accomplish the homogenization of his norm—making Stanley submit and take him away through his own punishment. In the play, his punishment is accomplished by means of language, which is the form he rules. He tries his best to make Stanley lose the self-understanding in the course of questioning him. He says that Stanley is dead.

MCCANN. You're dead.
GOLDBERG. You're dead. You can't live, you can't think, you can't love. You're dead. You're a plague gone bad. There's no juice in you. You're nothing but an odour! (62)

In the conversation, Stanley becomes mute gradually confronting with Goldberg's language attack and finally he has lost any power to resist, being taken away. In front of the discipline power or external menace, he loses natural ability of resistance.

Thirdly, the use of examination helps to observe subjects and to make normalizing judgments about them. This instrument of discipline power involves the other two. In other words, examination involves, "a normalizing gaze". An examination "established over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them". An examination is a great example of the power-knowledge linkage; those who have power to implement examinations to obtain additional knowledge and thereby more power through the imposition of examination on subjects. According to Foucault, "The superimposition of the power relations and knowledge relations assumes in the examination all its visible brilliance" (1979: 184-5). This is incardinated in the conversation between the intruders and Stanley. They actualize their punishment on Stanley by means of interrogation and meanwhile, watch over him in the process.

3.3 Power and Manipulation

The most obvious struggle for power is occurs between Stanley and the two intruders, Goldberg and McCann. In the play, Stanley is completely controlled by these two men after the birthday party. Goldberg and McCann manipulate Stanley by means of their menacing discourse. Most critics thinks that Stanley's menace mainly comes from the two intruders and they are the principal antagonist of Stanley and the most powerful characters in the play.

In Pinter's poem "A View of the Party"[4] published in his book *Poems and Pose*, he puts Goldberg into the centre and suggests that Goldberg and McCann might, essentially, be forces in the mind:

The thought that Goldberg was
Sat in the centre of the room,
A man of weight and time,
To supervise the game.

[4] Dated 1958, the year of the first performance of the play

The thought that was McCann
Walked in upon this feast,

A man of skin and bone,
With a green stain on his chest. (1978: 32-33)

They are the uncertain agent of the power Stanley has somehow disobeyed. In the course of disciplining and dominating Stanley, they do not employ any physical violence but interrogate their target. Through interrogation, they take control of Stanley's mind at first, and then manipulate his body. Along with the conversation with the two intruders, Stanley loses himself and collapses finally. In this way, he is disciplined and controlled by these two men.

In this play, Stanley is level-headed and also has considerable consciousness and courage before the birthday party. When he meets McCann for the first time, he tries to pry into the real identities of these two strangers and their motivation to come here. He meets the stranger and attempts to discover what connections McCann and Goldberg have in common and what associations the two strangers have with his previous life.

STANLEY. I've got a feeling we've met before.
MCCANN. No, we haven't.
STANLEY. Ever been anywhere near Maidenhead?
MCCANN. No.
STANLEY. There's a Fuller's teashop. I used to have my tea there.
MCCANN. I don't know it.
STANLEY. And a Boots Library. I seem to connect you with the High Street. (49)

Stanley decides to get the drop on the stranger. He wants to know why they would suddenly come to the house in which few visitors live. At this time, he is asking to McCann all the time. He even dares to deny the birthday in front of McCann.

STANLEY. Why are you down here?
STANLEY. Why did you choose this house?"
MCCANN. You know, sir, you're a bit depressed for a man on his birthday.
STANLEY. (sharply). Why do you call me sir?
MCCANN. You don't like it?
STANLEY. (moving away). No. Anyway, this isn't my birthday. (51)

However, the answers of McCann that does not satisfy him irritates Stanley and he begins to shout.
Voices from the back.

STANLEY. Where the hell are they? (Stubbing his cigarette.) Why don't they come in? What are they doing out there?

MCCANN. You want to stead yourself.
Stanley crossed to him and grips his arm. (51)

Until that moment, Stanley remains conscious and fearless. He even tries to convince Goldberg pack up and leave. He says that he is the landlord and their rooms have been booked. But Goldberg just simply talks about the celebrate life. Then, after a little "game" of sitting down and standing up, Stanley finds himself being questioned. McCann and Goldberg begin their ways to pull down Stanley in order to discipline and control the poor man through an interrogation that takes form of litany. To Goldberg and McCann, words become the instrument or weapon to hold power and control Staley. And Stanley is subjected to a process of brainwashing through a torrent of incomprehensible questions and assertions fired at him by the two intruders.

These two men ask him a series of questions in a powerful and unconstrained style. They ask him who he is. Then they mention the "organization" which Stanley is condemned to betray. And they even accuse Stanley of having killed his wife and never having married, and of treason and of nose picking.

GOLDBERG. What you have done with your wife?
MCCANN. He killed his wife.
GOLDBERG. Why did you kill your wife?
STANLEY. What wife?

MCCANN. How did he kill her?
GOLDBERG. How did you kill your wife?

MCCANN. You throttled her.
GOLDBERG. With arsenic. (59)

What they have done is disturbing Stanley's thinking by the unintelligible questions, in which some irrelevant topics are also included.

GOLDBERG. Which came first?
MCCANN. Chicken? Egg? Which came first?
GOLDBERG. Which came first? Which came first? Which came first?
Stanley screams.
GOLDBERG. He doesn't know. Do you know your own face? (62)

In the face of the absurd questions, Stanley does not know what to say. He gradually becomes weak and answers much more slowly which indicate that the confusion and fear in his heart aggravate. And these two intruders also monopolize the conversation and give no chance to Stanley to speak.

GOLDBERG. Why do you treat that young lady like a leper? She's not the leper, Webber!
STANLEY. What the—
GOLDBERG What did you wear last week, Webber? Where do you keep your suits?
MCCANN. Why did you leave the organization?
GOLDBERG. What would you old mum say, Webber?
MCCANN. Why did you betray us
GOLDBERG. You hurt me, Webber. You're playing a dirty game. (57-58)

Their interruption and distortion of Stanley's expression actually deprive his right to explain and think. Stanley already has become confused. As if this was not sufficient, Stanley must also give an opinion on eternal philosophical matters, from "Is the number 846 possible or necessary?" to "Why did the chicken cross the road?" And no matter how he replies, he is always wrong.

GOLDBERG. Is the number 846 possible or necessary?
STANLEY. Neither.
GOLDBERG. Wrong. Is the number 846 possible or necessary?
STANLEY. Both.
GOLDBERG. Wrong. It's necessary but not possible.
STANLEY. Both.
GOLDBERG. Wrong. Why do you think the number 846 is necessarily possible?
STANLEY. Must be.
GOLDBERG. Wrong. It's only necessarily necessary! We admit possibility only after we grant necessity…Right? Of course right! We're right and you're wrong. Webber, all along the line. (60-61)

In their chant-like rhythm and responsive structure, these questions are like dreadful incantations. They are also verbal puzzles, a mumbo-jumbo melange of nonsense and serious but unsubstantiated accusations and inactivated threats. The words are powerful, not because of what they literally mean but because of the intimidating way in which they are delivered. They are not physical force, but they seem as physical as punches delivered with violent force to the abdomen or head, and, like such brutal attacks, Stanley cringes before them and he is reduced to inarticulacy under their quick-fire questions that serve as a technique in brainwashing, designed to fluster and confuse. Stanley who has rational thinking at the beginning becomes incoherent and puzzleheaded. In this way, Goldberg and McCann make Stanley lose himself and dominate his mentality, and finally, manipulate his whole body.

After the interrogation, Stanley is no longer the one appeared in our mind. He "is dressed in a dark well cut suit and white collar. He holds his broken glasses in his hand. He is clean-shaven" (91). This is quite different from the one who is "unshaven, in his pyjama jacket and wears glasses" (24). Compared to the one who speaks a lot in front of Meg before the arrival of these two intruders; Stanley, after the birthday party, is much silent. When the pair make him sit and begin another harangue about Stanley's health and necessary recuperation. He can only emit nonsensical, gagging sounds.

GOLDBERG. What's your opinion of such a prospect? Er, Stanley?
STANLEY. Uh-gug…uh-gug…eeehhh-gag…(On the breath.) Caahh…caahh…
GOLDBERG. Well, Stanley boy, what do you say, eh?
STANLEY Ug-gughh…uh-gughhh…
MCCANN. What's your opinion, sir?
STANLEY Caaahhh…caahhh… (94-5)

Here, we can feel the power that manipulates his body, even life. Stanley is disciplined and controlled under the less cruel measure. In front of the intruders, his body is disciplined as tame and manipulative. Even living in the small boarding house, he can never escape from the bondage of power. This may allude to author's implication that nobody can escape from the power of the society.

4. Power and Truth---The Myth of Truth

Foucault argues that the operation of all kinds of power and the contest of all kinds of force are always interlaced in the western traditional game of truth. As a matter of fact, to catch, keep and expand the power of a certain person or social groups and to make the operation of power more effective is the actual goal of the game of truth. Foucault hold that the essence of the games of truth reveals the fact that the ruling class employs tactics and control the forming process of knowledge, truth and discourse through the exercise of power.

According to Foucault, the truth is not something about "the discovery of true things", but "the rules according to which a subject can say to a certain things the question of true or false". Truth does not exist in the natural world. It is a succession of game rules developed to form and maintain social order under specified social and historic conditions. Everyone acts and speaks in a specified mode, living a "common" or "legitimate" life within the rule. Basically speaking, truth is judgment criteria, according to which, one disciplines and trains himself into a subject demanded by the entire society. "The truth is of this world; it is produced there thanks to numerous constraints. And there it serves to regulate the effects of power. Every society has its regime of truth, its general politics of truth, that serves to regulate the production, distribution, functioning and circulation of some discourse and not of others" (Cooper, 134).

Heidegger thinks that a statement is true if what it says or means is in accordance with the matter about which the statement is made, namely, only when the matter is in accord with the statement can we say the statement is true.[5] According to Foucault, rather than a matter of true or false, it is a matter of power since truth and power are closely intertwined. "We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through production of truth" (Foucault, 1980: 93).

Foucault thinks that truth is "to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statement" and it is "linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extends it" (Rabinow, 1984: 74). Truth is, actually truth by power and power decides what is true and false.

Mireia Aragay in his article "Pinter, Politics and Postmodernism" lays bare the fact that "access to reality (past and present) is not unmediated but inflected through discourse and hence through power relations" (247). In *The Birthday Party*, words by the people who are powerful are imposed upon the reality. In Act One, the landlady and the tenant talk about a concert. Stanley tells Meg that he had given a concert at Lower Edmonton and describes the scene of the concert.

STANLEY. I had a unique touch. Absolutely unique. They came up to me. They came up to me and said they were grateful. Champagne we had that night, the lot. (Pause.) My father nearly came down to hear me. Well, I dropped him a card anyway…My next concert…Then, when I got there, the hall was closed, the place was shuttered up, not even a caretaker. They'd locked it up…" (33)

However, when the two strangers arrives the boarding house, they asks Meg something about Stanley. The story of the concert narrated by Meg is completely different from the one dictated by Stanley.

[5] See Martin Heidegger Basic Writhings from Being and Time (1927) to the Task of Thinking (1964). Ed. J. Glenn Gray and Joan Stambaugh. Trans. David Farrell Krell. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1977. pp.119.

MEG. In…a big hall. His father gave him champagne. But then they locked the place up and he couldn't get out. The caretaker had gone home. So he had to wait until the morning before he could get out. (With confidence.) They were very grateful…And so he tok the tip. And then he got a fast train and he came down here" (43).

The description of Stanley's experience is quite different from the two people. Meg struggles for power in the communication with Stanley, trying to win the control over Stanley, and it seems that she is much more powerful than Stanley. Stanley's words are not accepted by others. As to Stanley's former living experience, no matter how it was, she will rearrange and reconstruct it because of her massive power. When she narrates the story to the two interlopers, the original story is changed and a new one is organized and created. It is clear that people in power can create or change the truth, and, to be exact, truth and knowledge are produced through powerful discourse.
In the end of the play, Goldberg intends to take Stanley away. He tells Petey that Stanley had suffered a sudden, unexpected mental breakdown.

GOLDBERG. (sighs). Yes. The birthday celebration was too much for him.
PETEY. What came over him?
GOLDBERG. (sharply). What came over him? Breakdown, Mr. Boles. Pure and simple. Nervous breakdown. (81)

Petey, growing suspicious, says that if Stanley does not improve, he will fetch a doctor, but Goldberg assures him that things are under control. Goldberg says that they will be taking Stanley to "Monty," and that the doctor is not needed. To this more powerful man, his words are much more close to the realty. The truth ready for the people can be decided by the authorized intruders. All that is decided is the result of power relation.
In his Nobel Acceptance Speech, Pinter delivers the speech through the video tape.

Truth in drama is forever elusive. You never quite find it but the search for it is compulsive. The search is clearly what drives the endeavour. …But the real truth is that there never is any such thing as one truth to be found in dramatic art. There are many. These truths challenge each other, recoil from each other, reflect each other, ignore each other, tease each other, are blind to each other. Sometimes you feel you have the truth of a moment in your hand, then it slips through your fingers and is lost. ("Art Truth & Politics", 22)

Pinter attempts to tell us through his plays that in such a society which is filled with desire for power, there is no absolute truth. The intellectual cannot convey universal truth, which under the manipulation of power cares little about what the reality is. Consequently, knowledge is but the outcome of power struggle. The play sharply reveals to us the harsh confrontation between the omnipresent power and the individuals.

5. Conclusion

Although Pinter did not deal with politics at the very beginning of his writing career, through the above analysis of the *The Birthday Party*, we get to know that what Pinter has really done is covering the realm of political condition. The presentation of power in his works also reveals his attitude towards the world filled with power in his early years. Pinter has usually been interpreted in terms of his connections to the "Theatre of the Absurd". Absurdism has generally been seen as apolitical or antipolitical, signifying and furthering an agenda of social indifference.[6]Since the early 1980's, Harold Pinter's emergence as a political playwright is accepted gradually. The production of *One for the Road* (1984) and *Mountain Language* (1988) promotes a critical reevaluation of Harold Pinter's drama and its implied politics. Specifically, these plays and those that followed *The New World Order* (1991), *Party Time* (1991) and *Ashes to Ashes* (1996) seem to touch more on political issues. In this sense, this may be the charm of his works. "He has charted a territory, a Pinterland with a distinct topography" (Art Truth & Politics, 24).

[6] This connection is portrayed by Tom Stoppard in the final speech of *Jumpers*-Tom Stoppard. *Jumpers*. New York: Grove Press. 1972. p.84

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