

THE PROBLEM OF ALIENATION IN HAROLD PINTER'S DRAMA

Olga Sienkova

Polotsk State University, Polotsk, Belarus

Among the younger generation of playwrights who followed in the footsteps of the pioneers of the Theatre of the Absurd, Harold Pinter has achieved the status of a major force in the contemporary theatre. He is one of the most prominent dramatists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who has written twenty-nine plays and twenty-one screen plays and was awarded Nobel Prize. Pinter's plays have generally been classified into several key groups: comedies of menace, memory plays, political plays and comedies of mannerism. The trilogy "*Other Places*" (1980) takes up a special place among the author's later plays, it includes such dramas as "*Family Voices*" (1980), "*A Kind of Alaska*" (1982) and "*Victorian Station*" (1982). The trilogy is a transition from comedies of manner to political plays, that's why a complete examination of this problem is extremely urgent issue in the modern study of British literature. The aim of this study is to illuminate the problem of alienation in Harold Pinter's drama and to comprehend the problem of "non-communicative dialog" in his plays. The researcher Elin Diamond notes, "Pinter focuses on the world that language limns for each speaker" [1, p.213].

**Material and methods.** The study material is Harold Pinter's later works: "*Other Places*" (1982), "*Party Time*" (1991) and "*The New World Order*" (1991). Comparative-typological and cultural-historical research methods are used to reveal the author's conception and specific features.

**Results and discussion.** There is no doubt that the problem of alienation and the lack of a constructive dialogue are discovered in the author's early plays. But it is likely the manifestation of the characteristic feature of the theatre of the absurd in his work. So, Martin Esslin considers Pinter as "one of the most promising exponents of the Theatre of the Absurd in the English speaking world" [2, p. 205] and examines his works in the light of the absurdist conventions. Pinter sees the funny side of the absurd. In his early plays he employs a comic way of expression to laugh at everything, even at the tragic parts of existence. Nonetheless, to Pinter, fun isn't mere laughable farce. The comedy in his works is based on alienation and meaningless. Life for his character is arbitrary and painful. The same features we can find in an existential drama of Sartre and Camus, but Pinter doesn't give his characters an opportunity of transcendent understanding. Pinter, like existentialists, is involved in the discord of living. That's why his characters are mostly isolated people (e.g. "*The Room*") who have sought out refuge in a small room, trying to escape an unknown danger. In his early play "*The Room*" (1957), Pinter examines man's life that is not always perceptible and predictable. Security and peace are two vulnerable states of being. The vulnerability leads to alienation and characters try to isolate themselves from the outside world and other people. The evolution of such a comprehension of non-involvement in reality is observed in the trilogy "*Other Places*". While the social force intends to impose its dominating, signifying and regulating power on a human being, the privet impulse constantly reminds him of the gap between his desire and obligation. The escape from personal responsibility leads to anonymity and depersonalization. The representation of elimination of personal responsibility is observed in "*Family Voices*". There are no characters in the play; it is only voices that remain in the play. Every voice tells its own version of events. The degree of alienation has reached the highest point of tension and is reflected in the final remark: "I have so much to say to you. But I am quite dead. What I have to say to you will never be said [3, p.148]". Thus, we face the tragedy of modern family takes where there no place reliance and love among family members. People try to dissociate themselves and hide behind empty, meaningless words.

In the second play "*Victorian Station*" the dramatic portrayal of the contradictory relationship between the controller and the driver exemplifies the pattern in the three plays and the general situation of man in society as a whole. The opening scene of the controller sitting at the microphone in the lit-up office with the driver cruising somewhere on the road immediately paints a symbolic picture of the man and society. The controller wants the driver to go to Victorian Station to meet a customer there and send him to other place. When he says, "I am just talking into this machine, trying to make some sense of lives. That's my function" [3, p. 198]. The dilemma and psyche of the driver invents us to think of social gap: on the one hand, the driver declares that he is lost and doesn't know what he has been doing all these year; but on the other hand, when the controller is to give him up for another driver, he is scared. We can see a paradoxical situation and understand the dilemmatic state both the driver and controller.

If the play “*Victorian Station*” portrays a man’s dilemma in the society, “*A Kind of Alaska*” depicts the frustrating and painful experience of man’s ego and self-identification. And this problem is also connected with alienation as a reflection of depersonalization. The play tells the moment when a woman who has slept for decades wakes up after injection. The whole play, built on the dialogues between the woman, Deborah, and the doctor, Hornby, represents the situation of alienation. The woman refuses to look at herself in the mirror and admit that she is no longer a small girl, who she was twenty years ago. The female character remains in the frozen state of renunciation of recognition of the reality.

Thus, Harold Pinter lines up a peculiar regularity: at first a man renounces from his nature and his predestination, then he loses the connection with reality and, at last, he turns away from another person, choosing more enjoyable way of existence.

**Conclusion.** In his later play “*Party Time*” Harold Pinter emphasizes that the violation of the system of values, family disruption, refusing to call a spade a spade as well non-elimination of personal responsibility can lead to “*The New World Order*” (Pinter’s play of the same name), the situation where, instead of real people, blindfolded puppets bring the situation under their control. Like the existentialist playwrights Pinter has given expression to the hopelessness and the anxiety felt by the individual in the modern society dominated by despotic groups and crime syndicates. But he tries to raise a question about the man’s role in this atmosphere of alienation and isolation.

As a conclusion to what we mention previously, we can say that Harold Pinter’s plays reveal the state of alienation, nothingness and meaninglessness. In our world words don’t unite but they separate and lead to the non-communicative dialogue. Language has lost his power and significance. People feel that they are outsiders and alienated, but the author believes that each of us is to win our battle between nature and responsibility.

#### Reference list:

1. Diamond, E. *Pinter’s Comic Play* / E. Diamond. – Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1985. – 241 p.
2. Esslin, M. *The Theatre of the Absurd* / M. Esslin. – New York: Vintage 2004. – 480 p.
3. Pinter, H. *Plays 4* / H. Pinter. – London: Faber & Faber, Incorporated, 1998. – 530 p.

## THE MODERN BRITISH PRIMARY EDUCATION FEATURES

**E.A. Skobeleva**

Novgorod State University named after Yaroslav the Wise

*At the heart of the educational process lies the child.  
Good teaching makes a difference.  
Excellent teaching can transform lives.*  
Professor Robin Alexander /Cambridge University/

Education throughout the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) falls into 4 categories: pre-school or nursery, primary, secondary; further and higher.

Pre-school caters for children below the age of 5, is not compulsory and is invariably part-time. Much of the provision is privately provided.

Primary schools take pupils from 5-11 years. Children aged are in *key stage 1* (infant school), 7-11 are in *key stage 2* (junior school).

Secondary schools cater for pupils aged 11-16. Pupils aged 11-14 are *key stage 3*; 14-16 are *key stage 4*. Many schools offer additional education until the age of 18.

Further and Higher Education is provided in colleges and universities for students aged 16 and over. There is no upper age limit.

The minimum leaving age is 16 but it is usual for students to do at least a further two years either at school or a college of further education, where vocational qualifications can be studied.

Scottish schools operate a slightly different system with the transfer age from primary to secondary being 12 not 11. Pupils take the Scottish Certificate of Education (SCE) examinations at Standard Grade and Higher Grade (equivalent of English GCSE and E-level).

Great Britain does not have a written constitution, so education is determined by National Educational Acts.

The National Education Act of 1944 provided three stages of education: primary, secondary and further education. Compulsory schooling in England and Wales lasts 11 years, from 5 to 16.