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A Stylistic Study of Nonsentences in Selected Absurd Dramas

Keywords: Nonsentences, Independent NP, Formulae, Interjections.

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Abstract

This study deals with the important yet neglected or peripherally studied category of English sentences: *nonsentences* (NSs). This unusual sentence type consists of a set of fossilized spoken and written sentences or a set of spoken and written sentences with fixed openings. The present study aims at investigating and analyzing the occurrence of NSs in the language of four randomly selected absurd plays. The essentiality of each type of NSs is determined, analyzed and studied stylistically. The study aims to answer the following questions: Do NSs occur in these dramas?, if they occur, are there degrees of diversity in their occurrences ?, do these selected dramas present all NS types?, and if it is so, which NS type is used most frequently in these dramas?

A theoretical background is presented to achieve the aims of this study. Through the adoption of Quirk et al.'s (1985) model of nonsentences and the statistical analysis, the study concludes that the communicative process is full of syntactically defective sentences. Nonsentences are commonly found in spoken and written English. They are defective in themselves. Thus, nothing is missing and nothing can be inserted. It is found that all nonsentence types are present in the sample with various degrees.

1. Introduction

Nonsentences (NSs) is unfamiliar sentence type to most readers because textbook writers or grammarians handle the regular sentence type and ignore NSs or mention them marginally under different headings despite the fact that many instances of each type are frequently used in everyday conversations and when conversations are presented in fiction. Therefore, this study is commonly concerned with the stylistic study of NSs in selected absurd English dramas. It aims to investigate the occurrences of NSs in the absurd dramas and determine the most, less, and the least frequently used NS type.

1.1 Nonsentences

Nonsentences is another type of English sentences besides regular sentences (RSs) and irregular sentences (IrSs). To understand what is meant by NSs, it is important to clarify first what will be understood as RSs and IrSs. According to

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Quirk et al (1985:720) and Greenbaum and Nelson (2002:14), RSs are normal sentences that confirm to the regular patterns of clause structures (i.e.: Subject (S) + verb (v) + adverbial(A), subject + verb + object(O), etc.) or to the variations of those structures in the main syntactic clauses, e.g.:

1. John [S] is [V] outside [A].
2. John [S] broke [V] the window [O].

Both IrSs and NSs have not been given the same attention and importance as RSs in most textbooks and grammar books. However, some grammarians such as Quirk et al. (1985 :838) and Greenbaum and Nelson (2002: 14) mention these types of sentences in their books defining IrSs as these sentences that do not confirm to the regular patterns of clause structures or to the variations of those structures in the main syntactic classes. Concerning the completeness of IrSs, Mala (2000a :80 and 2001:42) declares that IrSs are of "elliptical character " and describes them as elliptical sentences that are derived from the regular patterns of clause structures according to the special rules of the language, e.g.:

3. Want another cup?

 NS is "a complete thought lacking formal subject and predicate" (Bryant and Aiken, 1962 :33). It cannot be analyzed in terms of sentence structure at all. Instead, it may have phrase structure. Besides, it generally takes place without any surrounding context (Nelson, 2010 :169 and Berry, 2013 :54). Nonsentential constructions are usually NPs that occur commonly in speech , especially in informal conversation , and to less degree in writing (Quirk et al , 1985: 849).

In generative linguistics, there are two challenging approaches suggested in the literature to the analysis of structures underlining NSs : *an ellipsis analysis* and *a nonsentential analysis* (Barton, 1990 :23 and Barton and progovac, 2005 :71).

The standard *ellipsis analysis* in the traditional and generative grammar was advanced by Morgan (1973 cited in Barton,1990 :23). It is assumed that nonsentential constructions are derived from complete sentence representations truncated by the process of ellipsis, e.g.:

4. Stop !
4a. You will stop.
In (4), a process of imperative ellipsis omits the formative *you will*, which is explicitly mentioned in the RS (4a).

The first systematic challenge to the ellipsis analysis came from Yanofsky (1978, cited in Barton, 1990 :31) who argues that it is not possible to explain all NSs by a theory of ellipsis. Therefore, she introduces *a nonsentential analysis* that assumes independent *NP* like those given below may be a base generated. Thus, they cannot be derived from complete sentence structures because such

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discourse-initial *NP* utterances take place without a previous linguistic context to support a deletion rule. Moreover, there is no 'mutual pragmatic controller' to support recoverable syntactic deletion (ibid), e.g.:

5. The time ?
6. Thief ! Thief !
Paul (1920 :129, cited in Graffi, 2001 :119) appears to solve the problem of one-member sentences by arguing that they are simply sentences in which one element, normally *S*, has no linguistic expression. For example, if someone sees a fire and shouts *' fire! '* in this case **S** is the situation and *Pred* is the concept *fire*, while if someone hears one shouting '*fire !*' before seeing it, then *S* is the concept *fire* and *Pred* is the situation. In sum, what is *Pred* for the speaker is *S* for the hearer.

In some other cases, the linguistic expression is *S* and the situation is *Pred* both for the speaker and for the hearer. For example, if one sees a child who is about to fall in the swimming pool and he shouts *'The child!'* so as to call the caretaker. The general concept *'the child'* will be **S** for both the speaker and the hearer since the attention of both the speaker and the hearer has to be directed to the child, while the dangerous situation is *Pred* (ibid).

1.2 Towards Typology of NSs

Among the grammarians who shed light on NSs and their types in their books are Crystal and Davy (1969 :49-50). As it has been mentioned earlier, they have studied them under the heading 'Minor sentences' but their clarification does not cover all NS categories. Contrary to them, Quirk et al (1985 :849) assign a separate section for NSs and handle them in details. They group NSs under three main categories. Table (1) below displays NSs classifications according to Crystal and Davy (1969) and Quirk et al.(1985).

Table (1) Types of NSs

Types	Syntactic classification according to Quirk et al.'s model (1985)	Syntactic classification according to Crystal & Davy's model (1969)	Examples	Discourse function
NS1	Nominal exclamative		The things they get up to!	Disapproval
	NP (mostly pronoun) + and + NP (with possessive pronoun)		You and your statistics!	
	Of all + NP		Of all the impudence!	
		NP or Adj	Excellent meal!	Approval or

Types	NP or Adj phrase	phrase	Stupid!	disapproval
			Your book?	Inquiries
			Boring?	
	independent NP		Attention!	Command
			Next slide , please.	Request
			Cigarette?	Offer
			My apartment?	Invitation
			False alarm	Convey information
			Fire!	Warning
			No pushing!	Prohibition
			Lovely evening.	Express sociability
			The cake!	Convey the hearer's alarm or frustration after forgetfulness
	Vocative	Vocative	John	To call up, rebuke, question whether the person addressed is present or to remind the addressee of an order or a request
	Syntactic classification according to Quirk et al.'s model (1985)	**Syntactic classification according to Crystal & Davy's model (1969)**	**Examples**	**Discourse function**
	Name or NP in verbless introduction		My mother and FAther, SUsan.	Introducing people to each other
NS2	Fixed expressions that belong to different word-classes		Good morning	Greetings
			Goodbye	Farewells
			How are you ?	Introductions
			Yes , No ,…	Reaction signals
			Thank you	Thanks
			Good health	Toasts
			Merry Christmas	Seasonal greetings
			Help!	Alarm calls
			Careful!	Warnings
			(I'm) sorry	Apologies
			That's OK	Responses to apologies
			Congratulations	Congratulations

			Go to hell	Expressions of anger or dismissal
			(Good) Heavens	Expletives
			Shame	Miscellaneous exclamations
NS3	words or sounds that cannot be classified into word-classes		Ah , Eh? , Oh , Hey , …	Express the speaker's various emotions

1.2.1 Well-formed Independent Phrases

These independent phrases, mostly noun phrases (NPs), cannot be derived syntactically from complete sentence representations in their discourse. Examples with the illocutionary force of each phrase are given below:

(i) Nominal exclamatives is a miner type of exclamative construction in English that display usual pairing between the grammatical structure and the semantic and pragmatic function (Portner and Zenutttini, 2005: 57), e.g.:

7. The strange things that he says !
7a. What strange things he says !
8. The clothes she wears !
8a. What clothes she wears !

Examples in (7) and (8) are exclamatory *NPs* containing a restrictive relative clause, mostly with the zero relative pronoun. Such constructions are used to show *disapproval*. Portner and Zanuttini (2005 :57) argue that *NPs* in (7) and (8) are equivalent to the sentences in (7a) and (8a) for they communicate the same meaning as that of the clauses in (7a) and (8a).

(ii) Exclamatory phrase made up of a *NP*, mostly *objective pronoun*, + *and* + another *NP* with *a co-referential possessive pronoun*. Such constructions express *scornful disapproval*, e.g.:

9. Him and his malicious gossip !
9a. He and his malicious gossip !
10. Pat and her childish hobbies !

The phrase (9) with a pronoun in the objective case is more commonly used than that (9a) with the subjective pronoun.

(iii) Exclamatory prepositional phrase (PP) with initial *of all* is used to show strong *disapproval*, e.g.:

11. *Of all* the stupid things to say !

(iv) Abbreviated noun-headed or adjective-headed forms are pronounced with appropriate intonation to express *approval* or *disapproval* (Downing and Locke, 2006 :191) , e.g.:

12. Big deal !
13. Stupid !
14. Poor thing !

If the *NP* or *adjectival phrase* (Adj P) is directed to the person addressed, it can be initiated by *you*, e.g.:

14a. *You* poor thing !

The possessive pronoun *my* is used initially to express a more familiar and more affectionate relationship (Quirk et al, 1985 :850), e.g.:

15. *My* poor baby !

(v) *NP* with illocutionary force of commands or requests

The most common example of this construction is the command :
16. Attention !

Sometimes , an adverbial such as *please* can be used with *NP* to make a polite request, e.g.:
17. The letter, please.

The interpretation of examples such as *The door!* relies on the situational context. Thus, it might be understood as '*shut the door!* , *watch the door!, open the door*!, or *leave the door!'*.

(vi) *NP* spoken with rising tone may have the illocutionary force of *offers* or *invitations* (ibid), e.g.:

18. Sugar ?
19. My apartment ?

Downing and Locke (2006 :204) study such structures under the title elliptical yes /no questions. They argue that these constructions are elliptical and consider them as a subtype of verbless clause.

(vii) *NP* or *adjP* spoken with rising intonation has inquiry illocutionary force. It serves as yes/no questions, alternative questions, or as wh-questions (Quirk et al, 1985:850), e.g.:

20. New hat ?
21. Boring ?
22. Your car or your mother's ?
23. Your name ?

Examples in (20) and (21) can be replaced by *NP* followed by a tag question, e.g.:

20a. New hat, is it ?

21a. Boring, was it ?

NP in (23) is equivalent to *What is your name ?*, *Tell me your name, Could you tell me your name ?*

(viii) *NP* conveys information to make assertions (ibid), e.g.:

24. Business call

(ix) *NP* expresses a *warning* (ibid), e.g.:

25. The police!

(x) *Negative NP* is used to express *a prohibition* , e.g.:

26. No smoking !

(xi) *NP* conveys *sociability*, e.g.:

27. Nice day again.

(xii)Self-addressed *NP* conveys the hearer's alarm or frustration after forgetfulness, e.g.:

28. My interview!

(xiii) Vocatives that occur in isolation are used to *call up* , *to rebuke* , to question *if the person addressed is present , or to remind the addressee of an order or a request*, e.g.:

29. John

(xiv) verbless introductions consist of *names* or *NP* referring to person, commonly with *a vocative* (ibid), e.g.:

30. DAD - John TObin, a good friend of mine.

1.2.2 Formulae

Most formulaic expressions used for structured communicative situations are syntactically defective in that they cannot be analyzed in terms of clause elements S , V , C , A (Quirk et al , 1985 : 852).

Biber et al (1999 :56) declare that these formulaic expressions belong to the category '*inserts*' including words that "do not form an integral part of a syntactic structure" and have an emotional or interactional meaning . In the list given below a few examples of the major types are given:

(*i) Greetings*, e.g.: 31. Good afternoon.

(ii) *Farewells*, e.g.: 32. Good night.

(iii) Introduction, e.g.: 33. How do you do ?

Although '*How do you do ?*' can be grammatically broken down into clause elements, it is considered as formulaic expression because (a) the V cannot be made past (*How did they do*?), (b) the S 'you' cannot be replaced by another pronoun *(*How do they do?)*, (c) How do you do ? cannot be subordinated as indirect question *(*They asked him how he did)*, and (d) it cannot be answered in equivalent statement form (** I do very well*) (Quirk et al, 1985:852).

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(iv) Reaction signal:
(a) assent, agreement, e.g.: 34. Yes
(b)denial, disagreement, e.g.: 35. No

(v)Thanks, e.g.:   36. Many thanks

(vi) Toasts, e.g.:   37. Good health

(vii) Seasonal greetings, e.g.: 38. Happy new year

(viii) Alarm calls, e.g.:   39. Help!

(ix) Warnings, e.g.:   40. Watch out!

(x) Apologies, e.g.:   41. (I beg your) pardon

(xi) Responses to apologies, e.g.: 42. Never mind

(xii) Congratulations, e.g.:   43. Congratulations

(xiii) Expressions of anger or dismissal, e.g.:   44. Damn you

(xiv) Expletives, e.g.:   45. (Good) God

(xv) Miscellaneous exclamations, e.g.:   46. Over my dead body

1.2.3 Interjections

Interjections are "sentence-words expressing various emotions" (Sweet, 2014 :151) such as, *surprise, joy, grief*, etc. Biber et al (1999 :56, 1083) list interjections under the category of 'inserts' referring to a type of "inserts which have an exclamatory function, expressive of the speaker's emotion".

Towards a typology of interjections, Ameka (1992 :105) and Sweet (2014 :152) classify them into two types:

(i) Primary interjections are little words or non-words which we make involuntarily under the influence of the different emotions. They are complete in themselves and do not normally form construction with other word classes, e.g.:

47. Ah(satisfaction, recognition), Ahem (mildcallfo attention), Boo (disapproval), Mm (casual 'yes'), Sh (request for silence), Ooh (pleasure or pain), etc.

(ii) Secondary interjections are those words from various word classes which come to be used as interjections by virtue of their independent semantic value. Ameka (1992:111) uses the term secondary interjections for *alarm calls, attention getters, swear and taboo words* (see the examples given in (1.2.2).

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2. Sampling the Data

The data that the researcher used for the purpose of analysis in the present study are four selected absurd dramas. They are:

1- Jean Genet's *The Maids* (1953) is Genet's first play to be performed and it is the first play in which Genet frees himself from the world of prisoners (Esslin, 1961 : 170). In this play Genet intends to show that each female character has totally lost her individualism and becomes alive only when she acts the part of another personality (Roberts , 1980: 13).

2-Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* (1957) is one-act play that is first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1957 (Mc Donald , 2012; preface:1). The title "Endgame" is derived from the last part of a chess game when there are few pieces remain on the board. This indicates that it opens at the end of life or the end of the world (Roberts , 1980 :51). *Endgame* is more difficult and elliptical than Beckett's first play *Waiting for Godot*. Its language is reduced to its minimal form (ibid).

3- Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* (1960) is Pinter's first play to be filmed. It gets the Evening Standard Drama Award in 1960. Pinter's theatrical reputation was established by this play. In this play , Pinter portrays the absurdity and the meaningless of human life and how man has lost interest in work and preferred to be jobless in modern society. This made him suffer a lot (Mir,2015 :29).

4- Harold Pinter's *The Dwarfs* (1960) is Pinter's last radio play that is derived from unpublished autobiographical novel (Hinchliffe , 1976 :79). This play talks about insecure person called Len who suffers from hallucination. Len inhibits himself in a world of simulation in which he lives with the dwarfs in their wasteland. The dwarfs in Len's mind act as spies for Len to protect him from his friends Pete and Mark (Burkman, 1971 :68-70).

The researcher selects these absurd plays because they have been ranked among the first plays written in this genre of drama and considered the pioneering and revolutionary works of these absurdist playwrights. Besides, the playwrights of these selected absurd plays are regarded the founders of the absurd theatre. They belong to the older and younger generations of absurd drama. Moreover, those absurdist dramatists use elliptical and brief language to reflect the real life of human life.

3. Procedures and Methods of Analysis

There are many linguistic levels of analyzing any given written or spoken text. These are phonetic/graphitic, phonological/graphological, grammatical, lexical, and semantic levels. Data analysis of the present study falls into the grammatical level and more specifically at the sentence level. Quirk et al (1985 :838) give a great importance to sentence structures that cannot be studied in terms of regular

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sentence patterns. They classify such structures into three types of NSs. These types with their subtypes, which have been explained in (1.2), will be the structures according to which the selected data will be analyzed.

The process of analysis is represented by quantitative and qualitative discussions. In the quantitative discussion it is intended to identify and classify the three NS types in each drama of the sample. They are explained in terms of frequencies and percentages. Thus, the frequency of occurrence of each type of NSs in each selected absurd play will be counted and the total occurrence of NSs in these absurd plays will be specified. A table is given to show the results and also show the most, less, and the least frequent NSs types occurred in each drama.

In the qualitative discussion, the researcher discusses the quantitative results shown in the table. Moreover syntactic and semantic justifications are given to identify the reasons behind using certain type of NSs at a certain degree in each play.

4. Analysis of NSs Occurrence in Absurd Dramas

The total number of NSs found in these four selected absurd dramas are (549) syntactically incomplete and non-elliptical sentences. Each selected absurd play shows the presence of all NS types in various degrees. Table (2) below displays the frequencies and percentages of NS types in each selected play.

Table (2)
Frequency Distribution of the Total Uses of NS Types in Four Selected Absurd Dramas

NS types / Dramas	NS1	NS2	NS3	Total
The Maids	32 (26%)	28 (22%)	66 (52%)	126 (100%)
Endgame	51 (29%)	88 (49%)	39 (22%)	178 (100%)
The Caretaker	13 (6%)	120 (60%)	68 (34%)	201 (100%)
The Dwarfs	1 (2%)	31 (71%)	12 (27%)	44 (100%)
Total	97	267	185	549

4.1 Discussion and Analysis of The Maids

This drama shows not only the existence of syntactically complete, incomplete and elliptical sentences but also a significant presence of grammatically

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defective and non-elliptical sentences. Thus, (126) NSs are used in **The Maids** as shown in table(2) given above.

The quantitative results given in the table (2) above show that all NS types are present in **The Maids**. This is because NSs are commonly used in spoken and written language. The most prominent NS type in this drama is NS3 (*Interjections*) which occupies the highest rank in the frequency order. This result shows the significance and essentiality of this type in social communication. All (66) NSs are "purely emotive words ", as called by Quirk et al (1985 :853), that do not have a syntactic relation with other word classes. According to Ameka (1992 :105) and Sweet (2014 :152), such interjections can be grouped under 'primary interjections ' that play a vital role in expressing the speaker's emotions in real life situations. They are made automatically under a violent stimulus, examples of this type are shown below:

48. Solange : Ah! Ah!   (Genet's **The Maid** : 3)

Ah is used above as a cognitive interjection which conveys the meaning "I now understand or recognize this " (Quirk et al , 1985: 853 and Stange, 2009 :30).

49. Claire : Eh?   (ibid :8)

In (2) the interjection *Eh* is used as an impolite request for repeating what has just been said.
50. Solange : Oh !   (ibid: 10)

Oh is used to convey surprise. Thus, when Claire describes Solange as bungler, Solange is astonished at hearing this because she misunderstands *bungler* as *burglar*.
NS1 (*Well-formed independent phrases*) comes next. It appears for (32, 26%) times in this drama. The great difference,(34) NSs, between this NS type and NS3 indicates that NS1 is less important and less significant than NS3. NSs of this type are isolated NP or Adj P which are mainly used in informal conversation. They are pronounced with different intonation to communicate various functions. According to their discourse functions, they can be distributed as follows:
(i) isolated phrases that convey approval or disapproval are used for (17) times. Examples of this subtype are given below:
51. Claire : the fur cape !   (ibid :27)
The fur cape is a NP used to express Claire's approval on the magnificent *fur cape* that Madame has given to Solange.

52. Solange : Twaddle !   (ibid :12)
This NS consists of an Adj only which is used to show Solange's disapproval on the idea that Claire has the power to prevent her from talking about Monsieur.

53. Solange : My angel !   (ibid: 22)

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This NS is a NP prefaced by ***My*** to convey more familiar and more affectionate relationship.

(ii) NPs as vocatives are occurred (7) times. An example of this type is:

54. Claire : Claire !   (ibid : 7)
This vocative which has the form of a person's name is used to summon the person addressed.

(iii) NPs that have the illocutionary force of request are used (4) times, e.g.:

55. Claire : My tea !   (ibid :42)
This request composed of a NP only. At the end of the play, Claire asks Solange to give her the poisoned cup of tea to drink it.

(iv) NPs that seek information are rarely used. They occur only three times, e.g.:

56. Claire : My infamy ?   (ibid : 9)
It is pronounced with rising intonation and it corresponds to the regular yes-no question '*Is it my infamy ?*' In place of such question, it is possible to use this NP followed by a tag question, e.g.: *my infamy, is not it ?* and

(v) only one NS is used to make assertion, e.g.:

57. Claire : No weakness !   (ibid :23)
Claire asserts that she and her sister must be strong in order to be able to kill their mistress.

NS2 (***formulae***) has the least frequency (28, 22%) which makes it in the final rank in the frequency order. The little difference between this type and the NS1 indicates that they nearly have the same importance and essentiality in this drama. Ameka (1992 :111) has grouped most of the formulaic expressions belonging to this type under the heading "*secondary interjections*". They are single words, phrases, or clauses used to refer to various protypical discourse functions. According to their discourse contexts and functions, these fossilized expressions are classified into:

(i) reaction signals are used for (15) times. It heads all other subtypes. This is because in absurd drama language does not make a serious human communication. It is full of speech that requires just affirmation or negation, e.g.:
58. Solange : It's been close all day.
Claire : Yes.   (ibid :13)

(ii) thanking and *(iii) apologies* are used equally in this play. each subtype occurs (3) times, e.g.:
59. Madame : Thank heavens   (ibid :30)
60. Claire   : I beg your pardon.   (ibid :21)

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(iv) alarm calls and *(v) expressions of anger and dismissal* are also used in the same degree. Thus, each appears twice here, e.g.:

61. Claire : Help !   (ibid :36)
Claire was yelling for help because she was exhausted and ill.

62. Solange : to hell with you !   (ibid :12)
It is repeated twice. First, Solange is talking about the milkman whose youth and vigor excited Claire and this thing makes Solange get angry. Then, Solange acts Claire's role and she corrects what she has said as "Ah! Yes, Claire, Claire says: *to hell with you !*" Here Solange is talking about Madame and her lover.

(vi) farewell, *(vii) expletives*, and *(viii) warnings* have the same frequency in *The Maids* for each subtype is used only once, e.g.:
63. Claire : Good bye.   (ibid :20)
64. Claire : My God.   (ibid :35)
65. Solange : Careful now.   (ibid :36)

4.2 Discussion and Analysis of Endgame
Like *The Maids*, *Endgame* has an excellent presence of NSs. Thus, (178) NSs having the characteristics of those found in *The Maids* are used in *Endgame* and, as in *The Maids*, they are distributed among all NS types but this drama differs from *The Maids* in the frequency distribution of NS types.

According to the quantitative results given in the table (2) above, NS2 (88,49 %) is the most noticeable and salient NS type in *Endgame*. Its occurrence increases from the last rank in *The Maids* to the highest position in the frequency order of *Endgame*. Its significance comes as a result to Beckett's use of a very elliptical and brief language that in fact does not convey anything important but mostly requires agreement or disagreement. NSs representing this type fall into:
(i) reaction signals which has a strong presence in this play. It appears for (78) times classified into (42) NSs that show assent or agreement and (36) NSs that convey denial or disagreement. Examples of this subtype are:
66. Clov : Something is talking its course.
Hamm : *All right*.   (Beckett's *Endgame* :10)
67. Hamm : Did your seeds come up ?
Clov : *No*.   (ibid :10)

(ii) apologies and *(iii) expressions of anger and dismissal* are also found in this drama. They are used equally in this play. Each subtype occurs (4) times, e.g.:

68. Nagg : So sorry   (ibid :16)
Nagg tells his wife about how the tailor every time apologies to an Englishman, who needs a pair of striped trousers in a hurry, for not sewing his trousers in the limited time and asks him to come back in a week.

69. Hamm : To hell with the universe.   (ibid : 33)

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Hamm gets angry when Clov starts talking about death. Clov informs Hamm that he will know when Clov dies because he would start to stink by the passage of time but Hamm rejects this idea telling Clov that the whole universe stinks of corpses and asks him to think of a better idea.

And *(iv) formulaic expressions that have the discourse function of expletives* appear twice in this drama, e.g.:

70. Clov : Christ   (ibid : 52)
It is used to express Clov's surprise and astonishment to see something under water in the sea.
As in ***The Maids***, NS1 is the less prominent NS type and occupies the second position in the frequency order but its occurrence in ***Endgame*** is better than that in ***The Maids***. Thus, it is used for (51, 29%) times in this play. They are NP or Adj P distributed as follows: *(i) (20) NSs are NP and Adj P used to express the speaker's approval or disapproval on something*, e.g.:

71. Hamm : Old wall !   (ibid :19)
This NS has the structure of NP that consists of Adj + N. It conveys Hamm's disapproval on the back wall of the room. When Clov pushes Hamm's chair close to the back wall of the room, Hamm puts his hand against it and he realizes that it is very bad and old.

72. Hamm : Scoundrel   (ibid :51)
The above NS consists of an Adj only that is used to describe Hamm's father. This shows Hamm's hatred of his father.

(ii) vocatives that have the form of a single name and standard appellatives (family relationships) are used for (18) times, e.g.:

73. Hamm : Clov !   (ibid :4)
It is used to remind Clov of Hamm's order. Hamm orders Clov to go and get the sheet but Clov refuses and does not move. Therefore, Hamm threatens him if he does not obey his orders he will give him nothing to eat.

(iii) NSs that are pronounced with rising intonation occur for (12) times. They are used as *inquiries*, e.g.:
74. Hamm : A sail ?   (ibid : 22)
It is an NP that has the illocutionary force of yes-no question. When Clov was looking at the ocean using the telescope, he states that he has "never seen anything like that". This makes Hamm anxiously wondering what Clov has seen.

And *(iv) NP which has the force of request or command* comes finally. It appears only once in ***Endgame***, e.g.:

75. Hamm : A bright idea !   (ibid :33)
The above NS is used by Hamm to ask Clov to think of a good idea that can enable Hamm to know when Clov is dead.

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NS3 (39 , 22 %), in opposite of **The Maids** in which it heads all NS types, is the least frequent NS type in this play. Its occurrence decreases from the highest position in **The Maids** to the final position in the frequency order of **Endgame**. This is due to the significance of NS2 and NS3. As it has been mentioned previously, sounds or words belonging to this type convey the speaker's joyful, surprise, fears, etc.

76. Hamm : Do you know what it is?

Clov   : *Mmm*   (ibid :52)

This primary interjection is used to mean 'yes'.

4.3 Discussion and Analysis of The Caretaker

According to the results given in Table (2) above, **The Caretaker** does not differ from the previous two absurd dramas regarding the use of NSs. (201) syntactically defective and non-elliptical sentences are used in **The Caretaker**. They are classified among all the three NS types but their positions in the frequency order of **The Caretaker** are different from those in **The Maids** and **Endgame**.

Similar to **Endgame**, NS2 which is used for (120,60 %) times in this drama heads all the other NS types. Its noticeable occurrence (120) makes it come first in the frequency order. The great difference, (52) NSs, between this NS type and the less frequent NS3 shows that NS2 is the most essential and important in this drama. This is not only because of the brief language used in absurd drama but also NSs of this type are very commonly used in most situations and by all people especially in informal speech.

Like **Endgame**, *(i) reaction signals* are the most predominant subtype. It is used for (73) times to express agreement or assent and (30) times to convey disagreement or denial, e.g.:

77. Davies : You got an eye of him, did you ?

Aston : *Yes*.   (Pinter's **The Caretaker** : 2)

78. Davies : This gas stove work, do it ?

Aston : *No*.   (ibid :6)

(ii) NSs that communicate '*thanks'* comes next. It occurs only (10) times, e.g.:

79. Davies : Thanks anyway, mister.   (ibid :5)

Davies informs his mister (Aston) that he is grateful for giving him his shoes.

(iii) expletives come third in the frequency order and appear for (5) times, e.g.:

80. Davies : Ah God   (ibid : 22)

And (iv) fossilized expressions that function as *apologies* appear only twice, e.g.:

81. Mick : Pardon ?   (ibid :16)

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Mick asks Davies to repeat what he has just said because he does not hear or understand it.

Unlike **Endgame** in which NS3 has lost its prominence, the occurrence of NS3 increases in *The Caretaker*. Thus, (68) emotive words are found in **The Caretaker**. It comes secondly in the frequency order, e.g.:

82. Aston : Hey   (ibid : 35)

According to Quirk et al (1985 :853), this interjection is used as a "call for attention ". Aston shouts to attract Davies's attention in order to ask him to stop making noises.

83. Davies : Carpenter, eh?   (ibid : 6)

This interjection is used as impolite tag question appended to a statement. It invites the listener's response (Quirk et al, 1985 :814).

Finally comes NS1 that is used only (13, 6%) times. This is the first time in which NS1 decreases to the final rank in the frequency order. The significance difference between this type and the previous two types indicates that NS1 is the least important and least essential in this play. They are divided into:

(i) as usual, *NPs or Adj P that convey the speaker's approval or disapproval* are the most frequent subtype. It is used for (7) times, e.g.:

84. Davies : Stink !   (ibid : 37)

Davies informs Mick that Aston has called him stinking and this thing annoys him.

(ii) NPs that make assertion occur for (4) times, e.g.:

85. Mick : No argument   (ibid :17)

(iii) nominal exclamatives and *(iv) NP with offer illocutionary force* are used in the same degree here. Each subtype occurs only once, e.g.:

86. Davies : Meal they gave me !   (ibid :5)

It is an exclamatory NP modified by a restrictive zero relative clause use to express the speaker's disapproval. In the play, Davies was dissatisfied with the little tiny bird that he has been given as a meal.

87. Mick : Salt ?   (ibid :24)

 If this NP is compared with its regular version " would you like salt ?" it is found that both have the same semantic value despite the fact that the sentence in (87) is syntactically defective. In other words, both have the illocutionary force of offer. Mick offers salt to Davies.

4.4 Discussion and Analysis of The Dwarfs

The Dwarfs shows little presence of NSs in comparison with the previous three absurd dramas. Consequently, (44) sentences having the same properties of those found in the previous three dramas are used here. Like in the preceding three dramas, all NS types exist in **The Dwarfs**. They have the same frequency order as those of NSs in Pinter's first drama "**The Caretaker**". This indicates that

the occurrence of NS types vary with regard to the playwright's style. The constant use of NS types in the same order in Pinter's two dramas can specify the "singularity" of Pinter's style.

NS2 (31, 71%) is the most prominent and noticeable NS type for it occupies the highest rank in the frequency order. Similar to all dramas discussed previously. They are as fpllows: *(i) reaction signals (agreement or disagreement)* are the most frequent subtype which occur for (22) times, e.g.:
88. Pete : Can I sit down ?
Mark : *Sure*.   (Pinter's **The Dwarfs** :12)
The formulaic expression "*sure*" is used to convey the speaker's agreement.

(ii) *formulaic expressions* belonging to '*Thanks*' subclass appear for (3) times, e.g.:
89. Mark : Thanks   (ibid :11)
The NS (thanks) is more informal than the expression "Thank you". It is used not to tell somebody that you are grateful for something but to accept something that somebody has offered. Mark accepts the biscuits that Len has offered to him.

(iii) *formulaic expressions* that convey '*greetings*' are used (twice) in **The Dwarfs**, e.g.:
90. Pete : *Hullo*, Mark.   (ibid :12)
The NS (Hullo) is a single word interjection used for greeting somebody.

(iv) farewells, *(v) expletives*, *(vi) introductions*, and *(vii) warnings* have the same occurrence in this play. Each subclass exists only once, e.g.:
91. Pete : See you Mark.   (ibid : 9)
92. Pete : Oh Christ.   (ibid :9)
93. Pete : How are you ?   (ibid :3)
The NS in (93) is a fixed expression used in a first meeting with somebody to warmly acknowledge his status as a new acquaintance.

94. Pete : Mind how you go.   (ibid :14)
Pete's NS is a warning. He warns mark to be careful in talking with himself and not to push him into a struggle with him.

Then comes NS3 (12, 27%). It is the less frequent NS type that occurs in the second rank in the frequency order. It consists of the interjections that are very frequently used in the previous three plays, e.g.:

95. Mark : Uh?   (ibid :7)
Generally, this sound is used to convey the speaker's agreement or disagreement. In this drama, it is used as interrogative sentence ending with question mark. When Len informs Mark that Pete asked him to give him a shilling, Mark questions Len whether he has agreed to lend him or not.

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NS1, as in *The Caretaker*, is the least frequent and essential NS type because it occurs in the lowest rank in the frequency order. It has a very rare presence in this play. Thus, it appears only once, e.g.:

96. Len : Paddington   (ibid:3)

This NS is used as a yes-no question in that it begins with capital letter and ends with a question mark. Moreover, it is pronounced with rising tone. It has the illocutionary force of inquiries. When Pete asks Len about his work and how it is, Len replies "Paddington ? " He interrogates Pete if he knows this place.

In nutshell, all NS types are present in the selected absurd dramas in various degrees. The following figure displays the percentages of each NS type in each selected absurd drama.
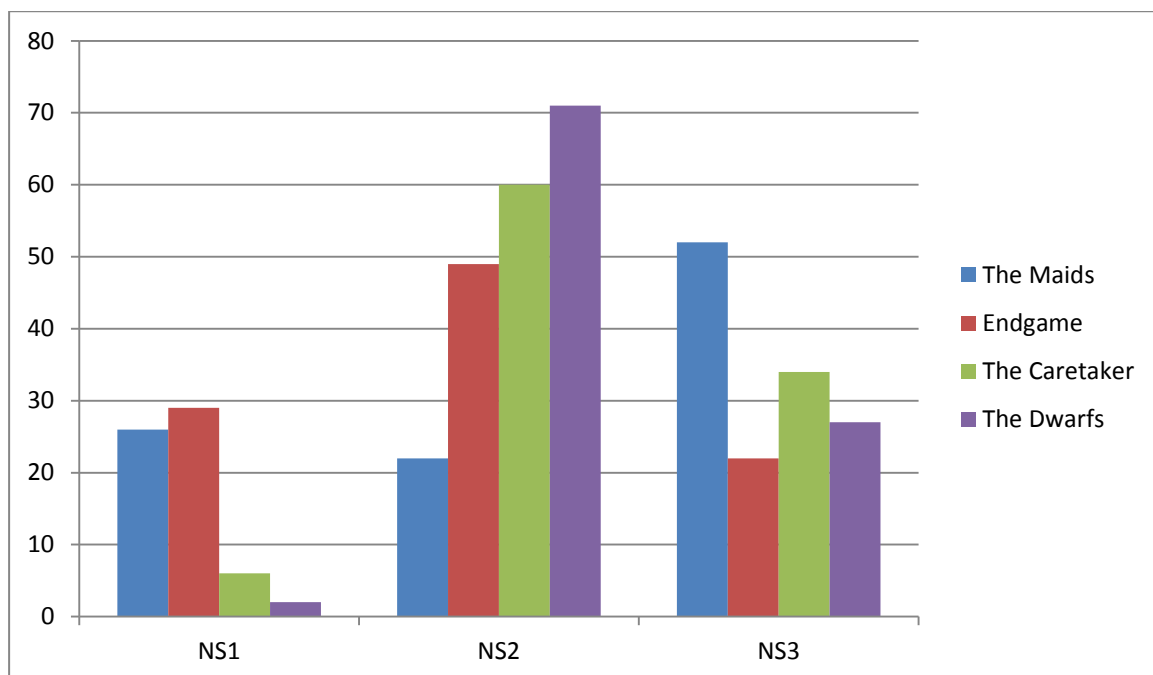
Figure (1) The outcome of each NS type in each selected absurd drama

Conclusions

The communicative process is full of grammatically defective sentences. NSs are defective in themselves because nothing is elliptical and nothing can be added. Although they are syntactically incomplete, they communicate complete thoughts in themselves.

The total number of NSs used in these selected dramas are (549) grammatically defective and non-elliptical sentences. All NS types are used in the sample but in various degrees. NS2 occupies the highest rank in the frequency order of NSs and this is NS2 situation in *Endgame*, *The Caretaker*, and *The Dwarfs*. It comes firstly with great difference, (82) points, from NS3 that follows it in prominence and importance. NS2 consists of stereotyped expressions that have emotive or communicative meaning. Such stereotyped phrases are frequently used in our day-to-day conversation. This attributes its prominence in the

selected absurd plays since absurd drama truly reflects our time. The less frequent type is NS3. It takes the second rank in the frequency order. Its frequencies in the four selected dramas are (66, 39, 68, and 12). Similar to NS2, NS3 is commonly used in day-to-day situations to express complete meaning or states of mind in themselves. NS1 is the least frequent type in comparison with the frequencies of the above two types. It takes the final rank in the frequency order. It occurs in the second position in the frequency order of *The Maids* and *Endgame* and the third rank in Pinter's two dramas. NS1 consists of mostly NP or Adj P that are more frequently used in spoken conversation than in writing. They are used to convey various functions.

دراسة اسلوبية للأجمل في مسرحيات عبثية منتقاة

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الملخص

تتناول الدراسة نوع مهم لكن مهمل او درس بشكل سطحي من الجمل الانكليزية: وهو اللاجمل. ان هذا النوع غير القياسي من الجمل يتكون من مجموعة من الجمل المنطوقة والمكتوبة الثابتة او مجموعة من الجمل المنطوقة والمكتوبة ذات البداية الثابتة. وتهدف الدراسة الحالية الى بحث و تحليل مدى استخدام اللاجمل في لغة اربع مسرحيات عبثية منتقاة عشوائياً. وحددت مدى اهمية كل نوع ومن ثم تم تحليلها ودراستها اسلوبياً. وتهدف الدراسة الى اجابة الاسئلة التالية: هل توجد اللاجمل في تلك المسرحيات؟ إذا وجدت هذه الانواع، هل هناك درجات تفاوت في استخداماتها؟ هل ظهرت كل انواع اللاجمل في هذه المسرحيات المنتقاة ؟ واخيرا إذا كان الامر كذلك، اي نوع من اللاجمل اكثر استخداماً في تلك المسرحيات؟

تم تقديم تمهيداً نظرياً عن اللاجمل لتحقيق اهداف هذه الدراسة. ومن خلال تبني نموذج كورك واخرون(١٩٨٥) للاجمل و التحليل الاحصائي، استنتجت هذه الدراسة ان عملية التواصل في هذه المسرحيات كانت تحوي جمل من هذا النوع والتي هي غير الصحيحة من الناحية النحوية. تلك اللاجمل موجودة بشكل شائع في اللغة الانكليزية المنطوقة والمكتوبة وهي تكون ناقصة نحوياً في حد ذاتها وبالتالي لا شيء مفقود ولا يمكن إدراج أي شيء. ووجد ايضاً أن جميع انواع اللاجمل مستخدمة في العينة لكن في درجات متفاوتة.

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