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Academic Writing IV

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July 29, 2016

**Anatomy of Perception**

**in Tom Stoppard’s *The Real Inspector Hound***

**1. Introduction**

Had Oscar Wilde been in the auditorium of the Criterion Theatre presenting *The Real Inspector Hound* (1968), he would have been reminded of his own saying, “Life imitates Art, far more than Art imitates Life” (Wilde, 1980, p. 62). This carefully constructed short comedy by Tom Stoppard (1937- ) suggests the dominant power of theatre over reality by using a fluid *mise-en-abyme* structure. Following two plots—those of the frame play and the inner play—the spectator see how the former shadows the latter, and how these two worlds are subtly intermingled in the dénouement.

Considering that so-called “Stoppardian” dramas are thematically metatheatrical, we would never be puzzled at his keen interest in René Magritte’s (1898-1967) philosophical paintings, the main features of which is, as is widely known, self-reference. …..

**2. Human Condition**

Most of Stoppard’s dramas are noted as a “network of allusions” drawn from his vast reading (Levenson, 2001, p. 156). A variety of materials from literary and nonliterary genres are cleverly and densely united with this playwright’s original fiction by his craftsmanship. Those sources can be roughly divided into two groups: the explicit and the implicit. …

**3. Daydream Dramatized**

First, it is necessary to touch on what *The* *Human Condition* represents. Magritte frequently denies authenticity of his motifs in a playful way as in *The Treachery in Images* (1928-1929), in which a realistic pipe is portrayed with the caption, “Ceci n’est pas une pipe.” The first point to notice is that *The Human Condition* indicates its unreality not by words but by another device: a meta-picture. …

**4. Theatre of Perception**

It is commonly known that Stoppard himself worked as “a second-string drama critic on a newspaper in Bristol” before becoming a playwright (Delaney, 1994, p. 31). This experience of his …

**5. Conclusion**

In the present article, we thoroughly examined how Tom Stoppard’s *The Real Inspector Hound* had been influenced by René Magritte’s *The Human Condition*. After briefly looking at …..

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