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**Education is Inner Reformation in Preference to Outer
Appearance - A Study with *Pygmalion* of G.B. Shaw**

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Abstract:

In the play Shaw try to define true educational is to amend someone's thinking, behaviour, and helps to make their lives better rather than change one's appearance. Here Higgins failed to be a good teacher. He focuses more on Eliza's looks and speech but less on how she feels and her actual character building.

Key Words: Pygmalion, Education, Appearance, Identity,

Introduction:

The contribution on Bernard Shaw to the modern English drama is significant. He discusses a serious problem of the contemporary society as intensely as he can. Therefore, the readers call his plays 'Comedies of Purpose' 'In writing plays, Shaw had the deliberate object of converting society to his views and ideas. He had no other incentive to write plays. G.K. Chesterton says: Bernard Shaw has much affinity to Plato in his instinctive elevation of temper, his courageous pursuit of ideas as far as they will go; his civic idealism, and, it must be confessed, in his dislike of poets and a touch of delicate inhumanity. Education is enlightenment. It also hovers into remedial programmes for backward students. It is an artistic science and a scientific art. It is not reading books but understanding. It is the art of imparting knowledge, not thrusting knowledge into the unwilling throat, it should focus on overall developments of learn.

Objectives:

- Education as holistic development of learners.
- Transformation of Eliza after having education.
- Impacts of education on identity and social status.
- Explain good education focuses inner reformation more than outer appearance.

Research methodology:

The present study is research in life and is concerned basically with analytical and interpretive type of research.

Education in contrast of Pygmalion: In Pygmalion, education is used as a tool for emancipating working-class individuals. Eliza gets uprooted and has to give up personal feature. Language is linked up with identity and finds a new identity through education. Eliza's transformation demonstrates that social



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distinctions such as accents, age, class barriers can be overcome by language training. It becomes questionable however if language reveals or forms one's character. Eliza's outcry at the end of the play denies the idea. Yet she understands herself that better education is connected with social progress. Eliza's problems show that language alone provides a superficial transformation. She lacks education to become fully integrated. By this Shaw illustrates the impossibility of moving classes in those days. Pygmalion is a complex work of art with a number of themes. But its central theme is the education of Eliza Doolittle. She rises from ignorance and darkness to spiritual light through successive stages of despair, self-realization, illumination and social identity. Eliza Doolittle is introduced in the play as an illiterate ignorant girl selling flowers in Convent Garden. She speaks the kind of Cockney which only the native Londoners can the note-taker takes notes through her speech. He reads, reproducing her pronunciation exactly. He says, "Cheer up, keptin; n'baw ya flahr orf a pore gel". (Pygmalion: 12) Eliza protests that she cannot be arrested and driven on the streets for speaking to a gentleman. She defends herself saying that she is like any other moral woman. She says: He's no right to take away my character. My character is the same to me as any lady's (Pygmalion: 14) Colonel Pickering who is also a student of Phonetics, has come to London all the way from India to meet Professor Higgins. He meets Higgins during his encounter with Eliza; he expresses his happiness over meeting him. He stays in Higgins' house. Colonel Pickering is proud of the fact that he can pronounce as many as twenty-four distinct vowel sounds but he is much surprised to find that Professor Higgins can distinguish among as many as one hundred and thirty distinct vowel sounds. Now Eliza worries herself but still she is ambitious. She wants to rise high in life, at least to become a salesgirl in a flower-shop. The very next day, Eliza calls on Prof. Higgins and expresses her desire to take lessons in Phonetics. But Higgins thinks, she has come there as an object of his experiment. So, he dismisses her saying that he has already recorded what he wanted of her dialect. Then Eliza tells him that she has come there to take lessons on pronunciation from him. She finds fault with him for not having offered her a seat. She says that she is prepared to pay him like any other lady. Higgins accepts her as his student. But he tells her that he is a strict disciplinarian. He remarks "If I decide to teach you, I'll be worse than two fathers to you" (Pygmalion: 25) Higgins says to her first she must talk grammar. This is an easy way to improve her pronunciation. She tells Higgins, "I don't want to talk grammar. I want to talk like a lady in a flower-shop" (Pygmalion: 29). Higgins decides to transform the shabby flower-girl into a fashionable lady. Eliza Doolittle and Professor Higgins are involved in a social experiment that involves education. Eliza comes to the Professor so she can learn to "talk like a lady." Higgins proposes a bet with his friend Pickering that he can turn this "common



guttersnipe", as he calls her, into a lady who can pass the test of going before the social elite without blowing her cover. Eliza's perspective is that education can offer her opportunities so she can stop selling flowers on the street and instead begin working in a proper flower shop and act like a lady.

In fact, when Higgins and Eliza attend social outings, Eliza is able to trick everyone into thinking she is a refined lady, perhaps even of noble bloodline. Shaw shows the reader and watcher of his play that both plans are flawed. Eliza's feelings are hurt and Higgins acts like a god more than a teacher, asserting that he has created the Eliza that has fooled everyone. He gives little credit to the pupil. His pride does not allow him to share the success. Shaw's commentary is that education needs to be about the whole human and not just one aspect. No matter how great the teacher, the pupil is equally, perhaps even more, important.

Shaw describes Eliza in the following words,

"She is not at all a romantic figure. She is perhaps eighteen, perhaps twenty, hardly older. She wears a little sailor hat of black straw that has long been exposed to the dust and soot of London and has seldom if ever been brushed. Her hair needs washing rather badly: its mousy colour can hardly be natural. She wears a shoddy black coat that reaches nearly to her knees and is shaped to her waist. She has a brown skirt with a coarse apron. Her boots are much the worse for wear. She is no doubt as clean as she can afford to be; but compared to the ladies she is very dirty. Her features are no worse than theirs: but their condition leaves something to be desired, and she needs the services of a dentist."

In the opening scene, as people from different walks of life are forced to take shelter under the same portico, characters' social class is discernible through their clothing: the poor flower-girl (later revealed to be Eliza) and the gentleman, for example, easily know each other's status through their different attire. As Pickering comments in Act Four, many noble people believe that one's appearance displays one's natural identity and character, thinking that "style comes by nature to people in their position." Somewhat similarly, at the end of the play, Higgins tells Eliza that he cannot change his nature. But the importance of appearances in the play reveals that identity often is changeable and does not come naturally so much as it is performed or put on like a costume. Eliza is the most obvious example of this. As she wins Higgins' bet for him, she fools people into assuming that she is from a noble background by changing her appearance. Even before her complete transformation, her own father fails to recognize her in act two only because she has changed clothes and bathed.



One of the things Eliza values the most about herself is her morality and dedication to being virtuous. These core values are part of what truly makes Eliza who she is, more than other aspects about her identity such as where she lives or how she speaks. She spends most of the play confirming, "I'm a good girl, I am;" (16). Even after Higgins changes most of her life, the way she speaks, the way she acts, her clothes, when she finds herself feeling exposed and sold, she wants nothing more than to return a time where it felt easier to maintain those virtues which are so important to her. "I sold flowers, I didn't sell myself. Now you've made a lady of me and I'm not fit to sell anything else. I wish you'd left me where you'd found me." (52). This dedication to her values shows that even though Eliza's identity has changed quite a lot, defying the place in society where she was born, she is still Eliza Doolittle.

Literature Review:

According to **Charles Benjamin Purdom (1963)**, has a large place for women as 'he honoured women, showing in his plays that they were not only to be loved, but respected, even feared. Therefore, this study examines the voices of Women as portrayed in the female characters of his play. Pygmalion, Candida, so on and Shaw was well placed to draw such an issue into his plays. He created female characters with various economic and social backgrounds, from the lower and the middle, to the upper classes. Interestingly, these characters have the distinctive manner of occupying a particular rank in which some of them 'ascribe' their status from their family, whilst others 'achieve' their status after going through the process of social change. Although Shaw's plays were written around a hundred years ago, the female characters of his plays are important for examination as its topics of discussion are still relevant for women nowadays. Firstly, in terms of gender equality, even though women today have their own rights in education and the workplace, some of them are still treated unfairly. Secondly, Shaw's female characters who have strength and independent minds are always necessary because it will be helpful for women as they pursue their careers and make contributions to public life, such as politics. Lastly, discussing the opinion of these characters about marriage may give today's women.

Manju Joshi: Shaw's Pygmalion in light of Michel Foucault order of discourse.

This article discusses Shaw's *Pygmalion* contexts of Michel Foucault's 'Order of Discourse', studies social relations. Discourse or the utterances in general, find meaning in establishing relations of power in our day-to-day life. Discourse also considers the languages that are excluded due to the imposition of a set of rules. It



is these very rules that establish the validity of one form of language over the other. The use of a language that is preferred in a social set up leads to concentration of knowledge with the chosen few and the resulting web of power relations. He avers how discourse comes to be associated with power and knowledge. Eliza is a marginalised character in the play. The objective of this paper is to analyse Pygmalion as a feminist text in the light of Michel Foucault's Order of Discourse which studies the predicament of poor Eliza as a specimen for Higgins' language experiment. The play is a journey of Eliza, who emerges a much stronger woman and capable of realising her way up in the society.

Ahmad Makassar: Women and social equality in the plays of George Bernard Shaw

George Bernard Shaw, according to Charles Benjamin Purdom (1963), has a large place for women as 'he honoured women, showing in his plays that they were not only to be loved, but respected, even feared.' Therefore, this study examines the voices of New Women as portrayed in the female characters of his plays: Widowers' Houses, Mrs Warren's Profession, Major Barbara, and Pygmalion. Shaw, as a Victorian writer for whom social distinction, especially the position between the rich and the poor, was the greatest problem in society, was well placed to draw such an issue into his plays. He created female characters with various economic and social backgrounds, from the lower and the middle, to the upper classes. Interestingly, these characters have the distinctive manner of occupying a particular rank in which some of them 'ascribe' their status from their family, whilst others 'achieve' their status after going through the process of social change. Although Shaw's plays were written around a hundred year ago, the female characters of his plays are important for examination as its topic of discussion are still relevant for women nowadays. Firstly, in terms of gender equality, even though women today have their own rights in education and the workplace, some of them are still treated unfairly. Secondly, Shaw's female characters who have strength and independent minds are always necessary because it will be helpful for women as they pursue their careers and make contributions to public life, such as in politics. Lastly, discussing the opinion of these characters about marriage may give today's women an understanding that marriage is also important for them. Nonetheless, Shaw, who stands for the feminism movement, has advocated equal rights/social equality for women by presenting women issues and inserting a doctrine of women's liberation into his plays.



Dr. D. Prasad: (The Criterion an International Journal in English), **The Central Theme of Education in Shaw's Pygmalion**

Eliza was not a dunce. She was inherently intelligent. Higgins cannot claim to have made Eliza. All that he gave to Eliza is her language. Even before she met him, she possessed intelligence, dignity and individuality. After all the education she received from Higgins, she is able to express herself better. Higgins' contribution in the making of Eliza is not a bit more and not a bit less than this. Thus, it is clear that Eliza's inherent quality of intelligence has been shaped by education that she acquired from Higgins.

G. K. Kriflik L. S. Kriflik (2006) "Leadership Learning: to explore the role of critical reflection in leadership learning" (Yeppoon, Australia: 20th Anzam Conference), This study builds on the findings of the most successful leadership strategies, the most successful strategies are those in which leaders focussed on their own behaviours, attitudes and actions.

Conclusion:

As Eliza tells Higgins and Pickering in Act Five, she believes that she has entirely forgotten her original way of speaking and behaving: she thinks that she has really transformed and cannot return to her old life. Higgins, on the other hand, is sceptical of this. He is confident that Eliza will "relapse" into her old ways. The play thus raises (but doesn't completely answer) a number of questions about the stability of identity. Has Eliza really changed, or can she not escape the identity she was born into? Has she become noble, or is she naturally lower-class? Moreover, is there anything natural about class identity at all? Shaw's play takes its title from the myth of Pygmalion, famously told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. (In it, Pygmalion sculpts a beautiful statue that transforms into a real woman.) Ovid's work is a poem about numerous mythical metamorphoses. But Shaw's play of transformation asks: however much one changes one's appearance, can anyone really ever change?

Higgins' philosophy is that he can educate this common girl into passing as a duchess, not really because he wants what's best for her but because it becomes a testimony of his powers. *Pygmalion* explores how social identity is formed not only through patterns of speech, but also through one's general appearance. Much like speech, one's physical appearance signals social class. The precise extent to which Eliza really changes, though, is highly ambiguous. By the end of the play, it is unclear whether she has really changed her nature or whether she has merely learned to pretend to be someone else.



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