Ichkalat journal E ISSN: 2600-6634 / ISSN:2335-1586
Volume 13 , No 2, June 2024 Pp 333 - 354

Bernard Shaw's Play "Pygmalion" As Pedagogical Discourse

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Dep. Day : 13/2/2024	Acc. day: 18/3/2024	Pub. day: 2/6/2024

Abstract :
The current article rooted in discourse linguistics analyses George Bernard Shaw's play 'Pygmalion". The term "discourse" is interpreted in accordance with Michel Foucault's views, highlighting the cultural and sociohistorical dependences of discourses. In other words, according to the adopted Foucauldian discourse theory, language and identities of the speakers and authors are predetermined by a number of different factors, most prominent of them being historical, societal and cultural contexts of the production of statements. The underpinnings that the research heavily draws on include thematic and discourse analyses. Pedagogical discourse is interpreted in relation to learning and/or teaching, either institutional or outside of school or university. The teacher and the student are recognized as the main actors of this discourse. George Bernard Shaw's literary work is presented as pedagogical discourse, and yet it would be even more accurate to speak of it as an interdiscursive phenomenon, with pedagogical elements at its core. The article sheds light on peculiarities, superstitions, fallacies and prejudices of the early twentieth century pedagogical discourse, presenting an opportunity to continue research by tracking the historical development of pedagogical discourse up to the present time.
Keywords: discourse, interdiscursivity, pedagogical discourse, power, knowledge, George Bernard Shaw.

Introduction

Since its use in 1952 by Z. Harris, a prominent American linguist, the term "discourse" has become common currency not only in linguistics but a wide variety of humanitarian disciplines, including philosophy, sociology, anthropology, cultural and literary studies. The notion of discourse proved to be applicable in the fields of ethics, pedagogics, psychology, politics,

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economics, psychiatry. With time, the multidisciplinary term amassed a great variety of meanings to cover all of which is a challenge not only in one article but, most likely, in one book. However, as some authors justifiably point out, the scientist drawing on the concept of discourse cannot leave it entirely unexplained as if the term "discourse" were univocal (Kujawa, 2014, p. 15).

In the current article, pedagogical discourse as it takes place in a B. Shaw's play "Pygmalion" is considered. In accordance with some of M. Foucault's seminal ideas, adopted by linguists, discourse is a form of social practice or, to be more precise, a set of practices which shape the system of people's views. One can speak of Weltanschauung facilitated by discourses, for they create mental and social worlds. To maximize the control exercised over communicants, discourse sets prohibitions but, more importantly, norms to be acted upon. The result of discourse is the establishment of a complicated net of power relations (Abderrazag & Serir, 2022, pp. 16–17).

Within the framework of a linguistic study, it is worth noting that language lies at the very heart of discourse (Smith, 2005, p. 9). However, it equally needs to be emphasized that discourse is never limited to its verbal embodiment. As M. Foucault put it, "[o]f course, discourses are composed of signs; but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this more that renders them irreducible to the language (langue) and to speech" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49).

Pedagogical discourse may be defined as a diverse set of social practices transmitted primarily, but not exclusively, through linguistic means which relate to the recurring themes of upbringing and teaching in their broadest understanding. Pedagogical discourse does not have to be confined to the formal pedagogical setting, be it school or university, but can unfold in any situation of meaningful interaction between a knowledgeable – or sometimes just perceived to be so – person, i.e., the parent, the teacher, the mentor, the guru, and another one, the child, the student, the trainee, the cult follower, who is supposed to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of the first.

1. Pedagogical Discourse as A Cultural Phenomenon

Discourse is determined by the cultural and sociohistorical settings in which it is created, these settings inseparable from one another. Culture is inextricably connected with language, art, music, history, philosophy, pedagogics, religion, politics, economics, geography, cuisine, etc. Being both spiritual and material, it primarily encompasses people's traditions and

customs, beliefs and superstitions. Culture is a way of life and it is this versatility and multifacetedness of culture that denies the social scientist a possibility to come up with a universal understanding of it.

There is already extensive research showing the inner congruence of culture and pedagogical practices, which, according to Uzbek linguist K. M. Z. qizi Rakhmatullayeva, are constituted by the regulative and instructional registers. While the first one embodies goals, purposes and methods of education and the second one is more about the content of studies, both contribute to the construction of the discursive subjects' positions and, above all, the shared understanding of the world. At the heart of culture lies the "common knowledge" transmitted through the means of pedagogical discourse (Rakhmatullayeva, 2023, p. 231).

It is indispensable to consider a wide range of cultural factors that may be only indirectly connected with the linguistic side of discourse. Hence, it is easy to overlook their importance. However, even such "insignificant" details, such as the clothes the discursive actors decide to wear, their choice determined by culture or subculture, can transmit no less information than the actual words they say. A classical example, in this regard, may be the French Mouvement des Gilets Jaunes whose main message is conveyed by the colour of the protest. The symbolic power of the yellow attire is undeniable though it is open to various interpretations, themselves not divorced from cultural contexts. One of such contexts can be named by the term "cancel culture" aimed at reconsideration and rejection of all cultural truths (Fefelov, 2022). Another example of subtle factors influencing discourse may be summed up in the statement that debates over school uniform and attitudes to it shown by pupils, parents, teachers and members of the larger social community are part and parcel of pedagogical discourse inevitably intersecting with some other discourses, viz. every day, youth and sometimes even governmental and, hence, political discourses.

Hybridization of discourses and interdiscursivity resulting from it are two ineluctable processes justifiably starting to command linguists and more broadly social scientists' attention (Alexeyev, 2023, p. 197). As John Donne, an English poet of the early modern period, once famously said "No man is an island", so it can equally be claimed that "No discourse is an island". The role of culture in the process of discourses being intersected or even meshed together can hardly be underplayed. Yet it is equally important to find the center, the nucleus of a particular discourse. In case with pedagogical

discourse, it is obvious that it is the interaction between the teacher and the pupil, which abounds in different subtle – linguistic, emotional, attitudinal, etc. – nuances (Shin et al., 2023), that makes its core.

The pupil-teacher's relationships, whose effects have already been amply studied by researchers (Coristine et al., 2022), have traditionally been of vital importance for some Asian and African countries, where the authority of the teacher is still rarely questioned. In a few cultures, in particular the African ones, the discursive power of the teacher is underpinned by the resort to the old-fashioned method of corporal punishment. In oriental languages, e.g., Vietnamese, with its complex system of politeness, the standard equivalents for the word "teacher" can already connote certain degree of respect. The Vietnamese have at least three common ways of referring to the teacher "giáo viên", "thầy giáo" [1] , "cô giáo"[2]. Often contracted forms "thầy" and "cô" are used. In Vietnamese, while talking to the teacher, as in any other instance of interaction among the people with unequal social status, it is common for the pupil to emphasize the differences in age and social standing between him/her and the teacher by employing special grammar. The concepts such as "student autonomy", "student-centric approach" or "self-paced learning", which are particularly prominent within the framework of the modern Western pedagogical thought (Shin et al., 2023), are slow to make their way in the pedagogical practice of the Far East, despite some progressive Oriental research highlighting the need to nurture individual voices (Tee, Tan, & Symaco, 2018), still steeped in dogmatism and, above all, obedience.

On the contrary, as S. Mills demonstrates, Western students behave themselves freely to the extent that it might be they who decide what content to learn and what didactical materials to use (Mills, 2004, p. 35). Indeed, this situation seems extreme[3], but, overall, it is a well-known fact that American and European students are much more likely to ask the teacher questions and correct his/her mistakes than their Chinese or Vietnamese counterparts who might come across as shy. In Russia, the country being overall an example of the Western cultural pattern[4], it is not unusual for the university or college teacher to negotiate grades – with the department and sometimes even the student[5]. In the Russian school jargon, rather denigrating words "uchilka"[6], "rusak"[7], "rusichka"[8], etc. are not unusual. Teachers, especially school teachers, may be given insulting nicknames. However, one should not jump to the conclusion that the Russian or, for that matter, Western teacher has no discursive authority. It is worth emphasizing the point that much depends on

the educational institution and its policies, the subject being taught[9], the teacher's individual traits of character, etc. With this said, deferential references to the Russian teacher, such as the Arabic شـــيخ[10] or Swahili "mfunza"[11], are rather uncommon.

Closely linked to cultural and linguacultural aspects is the sociohistorical background of pedagogical discourse reflected, for example, in the study conducted by Malaysian and Chinese scientists focusing on the transformation of Malaysian education since the times of the fall of the British colonial empire (Tee, Tan, & Symaco, 2018).

To trace historical development of education is a complex task that ideally requires separate multidisciplinary research, in particular, in the light of non-simultaneous and relatively independent flourishment of different civilizations. It is clear nevertheless that pedagogics was formed as an academic field in the modern era, but for a long time gnoseological and epistemological questions were considered in the field of philosophy. For example, they are already touched and sometimes even dwelt upon in Plato and Aristotelian treatises (Aristoteles, 1999). Transition of knowledge has always been the main driving factor of any social progress and, hence, it would be merely logical to assume that some primitive forms of pedagogical discourse are as old as mankind itself.

The institutional status was attained by pedagogical discourse with the emergence of schools and, most notably, universities, the first of them having been opened, contrary to the popular belief, not in Europe but in the Arab world. For centuries, however, the rich people would prefer to bring up their children at home and home education has not outlived itself. Besides, it may be predicted that the contemporary epoch is likely to give way to unconventional systems of teaching-learning which, paradoxically enough, will probably have some similarities with the half-forgotten pedagogical practices of the past thus further reinforcing close links between different epochs, the links of which modern historians are well aware of (Van Straaten, Wilschut & Oostdam, 2018, p. 46). The recognition of this underscores the scientific urgency of analyzing the pedagogical discourse of the past, with classical books providing the best materials for the research in question (Alexeyev, 2023, p. 198).

Pedagogical discourse, like any other type of institutional discourse, tends to be rather conservative. Indeed, the discourse in question does not change quickly and yet nowadays it is being transformed by contemporary

digital technologies, with distant education catching on. The Covid-19 pandemic, as it is demonstrated by Russian researchers, has only accelerated this trend (Rozhkov, Taratuhina & Tsyganova, 2022, p. 195). The Internet is supplying students with volumes of useful information, new educational vistas and opportunities (Sakharova, & Revyakina, 2020, p. 1; Shin et al., 2023), but many data taken from the world web prove to be of dubious nature. Against this backdrop, contributing to the fragmentation of the individual (Kochetkov, Kovalevich, 2022, p. 269), critical thinking skills allowing to navigate through digital content are becoming more crucial than ever, which explains why exposing harmful stereotypes of the past as well as flawed ideologies, enlightening the young people on the dangers of falling for their pitfalls, should become part and parcel of the modern pedagogics.

In general, the demand for good-quality education is steadily growing – the trend that reflects the already increased and yet constantly increasing value of education, able to empower certain groups of people that traditionally were not only devoid of any say in the questions pertaining to the functioning of society but also lacked critical thinking skills, being unaware of their own identities (Bendjemil, 2024, p. 66). Unfortunately, due to poverty and persisting cultural superstitions, there are still hundreds of millions of young people, living mostly in developing countries, that seem to have limited or in extreme cases no options whatsoever to study. To surmount this challenge is one of the most pressing and urgent issues of the modernity, above all, presenting a serious ethical problem, the solution of which will determine the path of the world in this century and beyond.

Thus, reflections about recent developments in the field of pedagogics make it obvious that the discourse in question, under strong influence of culture and sociohistorical factors, is in a constant state of flux with new terminologies constantly being developed (Dobrova, 2022, p. 49), the state, which despite the ideas of the end of history having infiltrated even the pedagogical thought (Fedotova & Latun, 2020, p. 4), is not going to yield ground. Even if discourses may adopt some of the ideas, concepts, etc. which have already been in use, there is no denying inherency of creative revision to discourse in general and pedagogical discourse in particular. The human brain, called by a German author “kreatives Chaos”, always seeks ways to transform the reality (Loschek, 2007, pp. 17–18). Having acknowledged this, one has equally to admit that in pedagogical discourse major roles performed by discursive actors have remained unchanged for centuries. While it has been mentioned that, at least in the West, the discursive authority or power of

the teacher might have been declining, the discursive role of the teacher, that, irrespective of all undertaken efforts, still falls short of being "the perfect tutor", is only little modified, for discursive change is slow, conventions, traditions and customs strong to the point that, even having become almost extinct, they may still exert certain degree of impact on the social practice embodied in discourse.

2. The Setting and Interpretation of Bernard Shaw's Play "Pygmalion"

In the field of literary studies, the term "setting" can refer to the sociohistorical background and location of discourse, correlating with the plot of the book and M.M. Bakhtin's seminal notion of chronotope. The author likened the latter to the physical category of space-time[12] meaning by it "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 84). Applying the idea of space-time, it can be said that the plot of Bernard Shaw's play takes place in London in the 1900s. In the narrower sense, the main location of the play is professor of phonetics Higgins's home.

As noted above, the leading agent of pedagogical discourse is the teacher or the person taking on the role of the teacher. In "Pygmalion", the teacher is personified in the figure of professor Higgins. His discourse is marked by certain peculiarities that offer a deeper insight into the man's personality and, more importantly, shed light on the pedagogical discourse of the early twentieth century as it is noted down by the author. The professor is portrayed as a man of abundant knowledge and expertise who has a flair to determine what region of the country a man or a woman comes from by merely listening to his or her accent. The following dialogue, where professor Higgins, not yet properly introduced to the reader, is called "the note taker", demonstrates it:

> THE BYSTANDER. He ain't a tec. He's a blooming busybody: that's what he is. I tell you, look at his boots.
> THE NOTE TAKER [*turning on him genially*] And how are all your people down at Selsey?
> THE BYSTANDER [*suspiciously*] Who told you my people come from Selsey?
> THE NOTE TAKER. Never you mind. They did. [*To the girl*] How do you come to be up so far east? You were born in Lisson Grove (Shaw, 2004, p. 19)

However, Higgins, supposed to be the torchbearer of education, is not exempt from the linguistic superstitions, prejudices and biases of the early

twentieth century as well as his own fallacies and shortcomings, not least, connected with bad manners and the use of "inappropriate English"[13]. He shares the false belief in supremacy of the standard, eloquent English over everyday speech of common people, not devoid of mistakes and inaccuracies, some of which are often subconsciously made by the professor himself, the belief, which justifies the division of society on rather dubious grounds of mythical linguistic primacy and purity. Examples in this regard can be many, but, above all, the professor is portrayed as a person showing rather unethical behavior to other people, including his would-be student, Eliza Doolittle. In the next fragment of the play, Higgins's insulting attitude to the flower girl is contrasted with Pickering's polite but condescending treatment of hers. To highlight the difference in attitudes, contextual antonyms "baggage" and "my girl" are employed by the author:

> HIGGINS. Pickering: shall we ask this baggage to sit down or shall we throw her out of the window?
> THE FLOWER GIRL [running away in terror to the piano, where she turns at bay] Ah—ah—ah—ow—ow—ow—oo! [Wounded and whimpering] I won't be called a baggage when I've offered to pay like any lady.
> *Motionless, the two men stare at her from the other side of the room, amazed.*
> PICKERING [gently] What is it you want, my girl? (Shaw, 2004, p. 19).

It ought to be noted the extracts cited so far cannot be classified as pedagogical discourse per se, but they are a prelude to it and as such give valuable insights into the main protagonists of the play's characters.

Throughout the play, it can be seen that Higgins displays short temper, arrogance and proclivity for the very vices of the "higher" society that he might despise. Speaking about "aristocratic ways", it is fair to say that for the author of the utmost importance are the social implications of being educated / uneducated. B. Shaw was one of the penmen who attempted to expose the sham, outdated system of social hierarchy based not on virtue but extrinsic, easily acquirable and commodifiable values. The very fact that within a relatively short time, just a few months, Eliza Doolittle manages to enter the circle of the privileged classes testifies that the boundary between the rich and the poor, the "noble" and the "ignoble" is effortlessly crossable since it is an artificial construct.

To better understand the play, it makes sense to draw on some influential sociological theories. One of them, advanced and developed by P. Bourdieu, deals with different forms of capital. It differentiates the economic but also cultural and social varieties of capital. While the notion of economic capital has been widely circulated since the emergence of economics as a science, it is the overall idea that power is not only embodied in money / financial assets or, for that matter, physical prowess that is of interest. The spread and success of non-resistance movements around the world in the twentieth century proves this point. Not only were these anticolonial protests rooted in the philosophy rejecting the use of force and violence, but often they were underfinanced. Despite this, they managed to sweep large parts of Asia, Africa and exerted impact on both Americas and Europe.

A. Gramsci's concept of *cultural hegemony* and J. Nay's idea of *soft power* may also be cited here to underscore the subtle character of power relations in the modern world. Indeed, throughout the article the term "discursive power" has been preferred. Discursive power is inextricably linked to sociocultural capital, cultural hegemony and soft power, encompassing relationships between people and highlighting the indispensability of knowledge. One of the many examples of how discursive power works is given by S. Mills. The author notes that almost everybody can submit an article to a scientific journal. However, to be published, one has to possess certain knowledge, viz. knowledge of the language, of the appropriate style, etc. Insights into main concepts and leading theories in the field of the journal's specialization are required. By definition, the professor has more technical knowledge of this kind than, for example, the postgraduate student, no matter how bright the student might be. Hence, in general, the chances of the professor getting published are higher, not to mention the unspoken rules of the academic discourse that are less obvious and this is why sometimes overlooked. For instance, the rank of the professor representing a prestigious educational institution gives the scientist authority. Furthermore, he, as an owner of certain social capital, may personally be acquainted with the editorial board of the journal which increases the likelihood of publication too (Mills, 2004, p. 13).

It is interesting to track how discursive power shifts throughout the play: in the beginning of it, Eliza Doolittle is hesitant and shy while Higgins is a strict teacher who is ready to use corporal punishment to achieve pedagogical objectives:

> HIGGINS. Somebody is going to touch you, with a broomstick, if you don't stop snivelling. Sit down.
> LIZA [obeying slowly] Ah—ah—ah—ow—oo—o! One would think you was my father.
> HIGGINS. If I decide to teach you, I'll be worse than two fathers to you. Here [*he offers her his silk handkerchief*]!
> LIZA. What's this for?
> HIGGINS. To wipe your eyes. To wipe any part of your face that feels moist. Remember: that's your handkerchief; and that's your sleeve. Don't mistake the one for the other if you wish to become a lady in a shop (Shaw, 2004, p. 23).

However, at the end of the play, it is already Eliza Doolittle who blackmails Higgins, her blackmail based on the knowledge that she has received from the professor. The latter still might mock his pupil or even threaten her physically, but he does not have any more discursive power over the former flower girl: her defiance of his status, of his scholarship is at the same time pretension for a higher social standing for herself and, hence, Higgins has to treat her differently, whether he wants it or not:

> LIZA [*rising determinedly*] I'll let you see whether I'm dependent on you. If you can preach, I can teach. I'll go and be a teacher.
> HIGGINS. What'll you teach, in heaven's name?
> LIZA. What you taught me. I'll teach phonetics. … I'll offer myself as an assistant to Professor Nepean.
> HIGGINS [*rising in a fury*] What! That impostor! that humbug! that toadying ignoramus! Teach him my methods! My discoveries! You take one step in his direction and I'll wring your neck. [He lays hands on her]. Do you hear?
> LIZA [*defiantly non-resistant*] Wring away. What do I care? I knew you'd strike me some day. [*He lets her go, stamping with rage at having forgotten himself, and recoils so hastily that he stumbles back into his seat on the ottoman*]. Aha! Now I know how to deal with you. What a fool I was not to think of it before! You can't take away the knowledge you gave me. You said I had a finer ear than you. And I can be civil and kind to people, which is more than you can. … (Shaw, 2004, p. 82).

Eliza Doolittle cites the fact that she has better moral qualities than her teacher, but it is obvious that her discursive stance depends not on morals but knowledge – otherwise, it would be impossible to explain the discursive

power shift. While defying Higgins, she refuses even to call him a teacher – instead, she treats him as a preacher ("If you can preach, I can teach"). On the other hand, she imagines that she can be a teacher herself ("I'll go and be a teacher") or even an assistant to another professor. This is a remarkable change in Eliza Doolittle's behavior and attitude.

The proverb "knowledge is power" became a beacon of the rational Weltanschauung. Apparently, in Europe, it was first coined by Francis Bacon but, most likely, the saying had existed in the Middle East much earlier. In the second half of the twentieth century, the development of the concept of discourse-power, manifested in social practices, by M. Foucault gave further rise to the popularity of the Baconian idea. However, at a closer look, the question arises: what knowledge matters? The concept of knowledge is not so straightforward as it might seem at first blush. In fact, knowledge is produced within a complex net of discourses and is inseparable from them. To categorize knowledge in terms "right" and "wrong" is a challenge in itself due to the following observation: it is only in the process of discourse unfolding that truths, sometimes dubious and outright false ones, are provided. The stereotypical representation of Muslim women is one of those "evident truths" popularized by the media and books (Abderrazag & Serir 2022, p. 16). Agents of a particular discourse by definition have the knowledge and, hence, they can exercise control over the people not well familiar with the discursive knowledge system or, in Bordieuan terms, lacking adequate *habitus*. Even becoming themselves actors within certain discourse, such people suffer from what P. Bourdieu termed *split habitus*.

The example of Eliza Doolittle may prove relevant here: the flower girl, having mastered the art of eloquence, has never really forgotten "broken" Cockney English and is able without any problem to use it while talking to her father or when she is exasperated. Her "good" manners also disappear in such cases:

> DOOLITTLE. Well, what else would I want money for? To put into the plate in church, I suppose. [*She puts out her tongue at him. He is so incensed by this that Pickering presently finds it necessary to step between them*]. Don't you give me none of your lip… (Shaw, 2004, p. 40)
> Cf.: LIZA [*looking fiercely round at him*] I wouldn't marry YOU if you asked me; and you're nearer my age than what he is.
> HIGGINS [*gently*] Than he is: not "than what he is."

LIZA [losing her temper and rising] I'll talk as I like. You're not my teacher now (Shaw, 2004, p. 82).

Time and time again, Eliza Doolittle questions the discursive position of Higgins as her teacher, often as a teacher, indeed. Yet the quoted passage highlights superficiality of the change in her, split habitus[14] in the sense that she still makes mistakes.

Pedagogical discourse serves as a vital connector between the underprivileged and disenfranchised people and various discourses providing them with an access to social mobility. Ideally, it should prioritize knowledge over all other considerations. In actuality, however, it is itself included in a complicated and ramified net of discourses, wholly dependent on the cultural and sociohistorical settings and aimed at the promotion of power in its broad understanding. Knowledge is treated as a commodity presenting nothing more than capital – primarily, cultural capital, but lying not far from economic and social gains.

The story of Eliza Doolittle proves this point: a common flower girl is transformed into a lady under certain circumstances and not necessarily as a result of her talents or achievements. It is the primitivization of knowledge that facilitates the heroine of the play's epic but accidental transition. Thus, superfluous discursive knowledge based on a number of false premises and myths, as the one that exalts politeness and the linguistic standard, underlies Eliza Doolittle's social success. In the process, unfortunately, she loses some essential moral qualities and her naturalness and turns into a soulless creature – this change in the simple girl with a Cockney accent is emphasized by the title "Pygmalion" chosen by B. Shaw, drawing on inverted analogies from the Greek mythology. If in the original myth about Pygmalion, the king with the help from Gods is able to transform a statue into a beautiful woman, in the analyzed piece of literature, the opposite takes place: as a newly-made "lady", Eliza Doolittle can be metaphorically likened and, indeed, is likened to a statue.

3. Interdiscursivity of Bernard Shaw's Writing. Ordinary Pedagogical Discourse

Bernard Shaw's play is not restricted to pedagogical discourse and yet it may be claimed that it is the pedagogical aspects that form the core of the analyzed book. On the other hand, the pedagogical discourse in this piece of writing is intersected and intertwined with a number of other discourses, most

importantly, the ordinary, everyday discourses to the point that it itself may be called ordinary pedagogical discourse, devoid of any institutional status and allowing for its agents to use insults as well as jargon or colloquial words. Thus, speaking of corporal punishment – the theme that surfaces in the play now and then – the protagonists of the play often choose expressions like "wallop" or "give a lick", i.e., the expressions that teenagers would opt for rather than teachers or parents:

> HIGGINS. Take her away, Mrs. Pearce. If she gives you any trouble wallop her (Shaw, 2004, p. 24).
> HIGGINS. Doolittle: you have brought your daughter up too strictly.
> DOOLITTLE. Me! I never brought her up at all, except to give her a lick of a strap now and again. Don't put it on me, Governor. She ain't accustomed to it, you see: that's all. But she'll soon pick up your free-and-easy ways (Shaw, 2004, p. 40).
> DOOLITTLE. … If you want Eliza's mind improved, Governor, you do it yourself with a strap. So long, gentlemen. [*He turns to go*] (Shaw, 2004, p. 40).

The knowledge people receive as a result of interaction in a particular discourse is life-transformative. Higgins puts it this way:

> HIGGINS. You let her alone, mother. Let her speak for herself. You will jolly soon see whether she has an idea that I haven't put into her head or a word that I haven't put into her mouth. I tell you I have created this thing out of the squashed cabbage leaves of Covent Garden; and now she pretends to play the fine lady with me (Shaw, 2004, p. 72)

Talking to his mother, Higgins uses colloquial wording ("You will jolly soon see"). While the professor deprecates unnaturalness of his student's behavior, he takes the full credit for her transformation to the point that he hyperbolically expresses an opinion that there is not a single word in Eliza Doolittle's lexicon that has not come from him. She, on her part, parries the idea that everything she has learned so far has been taught to her by her teacher, by reminding the professor of his lack of self-control and manners that has served as a bad example to her:

> LIZA. It's not because you paid for my dresses. I know you are generous to everybody with money. But it was from you that I

> learnt really nice manners; and that is what makes one a lady, isn't it? You see it was so very difficult for me with the example of Professor Higgins always before me. I was brought up to be just like him, unable to control myself, and using bad language on the slightest provocation. And I should never have known that ladies and gentlemen didn't behave like that if you hadn't been there (Shaw, 2004, p. 72)

It would be wrong to say that there is no place for professionalism in ordinary pedagogical discourse. On the contrary, as it can be gleaned from the play, professor Higgins is proud of his knowledge and sometimes he succeeds in coming across as a truly competent person, not devoid of professional tact:

> HIGGINS [*with professional exquisiteness of modulation*] All I propose is that we should be kind to this poor girl. We must help her to prepare and fit herself for her new station in life. If I did not express myself clearly it was because I did not wish to hurt her delicacy… (Shaw, 2004, p.25).

However, in most cases, as it has been already noted above, Higgins is far from being a good teacher. In a philosophical tirade, he himself recognizes his and his contemporaries' ignorance in a variety of subjects of which a good pedagogue is supposed to have at least some inkling. Moreover, the professor displays skepticism about the reasonability of humans' actions which does not depend on one's knowledge for, according to him, it is observed in society at large and not only in Eliza Doolittle who might not understand something. At the linguistic level, the speaker's doubt is expressed in a series of rhetorical questions:

> HIGGINS. You see, we're all savages, more or less. We're supposed to be civilized and cultured—to know all about poetry and philosophy and art and science, and so on; but how many of us know even the meanings of these names? [*To Miss Hill*] What do you know of poetry? [*To Mrs. Hill*] What do you know of science? [*Indicating Freddy*] What does he know of art or science or anything else? What the devil do you imagine I know of philosophy?
> MRS. HIGGINS [*warningly*] Or of manners, Henry? (Shaw, 2004, p. 47).

> Ch.: HIGGINS. … She's incapable of understanding anything. Besides, do any of us understand what we are doing? If we did, would we ever do it? (Shaw, 2004, p. 28)

The fact that the professor is reproached by his mother, Mrs. Higgins, is quite revelatory: in some way or another, the renowned linguist is himself a child and he needs advice from other people as well as support from them. Actually, in many cases, it is Mrs. Higgins who is in charge and, hence, it is not uncommon for her to play a role of a teacher as well as a parent:

> MRS. HIGGINS. Do you know what you would do if you really loved me, Henry?
> HIGGINS. Oh bother! What? Marry, I suppose?
> MRS. HIGGINS. No. Stop fidgeting and take your hands out of your pockets. [*With a gesture of despair, he obeys and sits down again*]. That's a good boy. Now tell me about the girl (Shaw, 2004, p. 47).

The laudable remark "That's a good boy" usually pronounced to praise children underscores the point that some degree of infantility is inherent to Higgins's character. As a result, his competence is compromised, not to say that in most fragments of the play, the professor himself casts a shadow over his professionalism stooping down to "bad language", i.e., from the standpoint of the early twentieth century morals, the language that ought not to be employed by the educated and erudite and, consequently, privileged social classes.

Sometimes the role of the teacher is performed by other protagonists, for example, Mrs. Pearce who attempts to moderate professor Higgin's behavior, a situation comical in itself, in the following episode made even more comical by the professor's denial of the fact that he swears and the use of a swear word at the same time:

> MRS. PEARCE [*unmoved*] No, sir: you're not at all particular when you've mislaid anything or when you get a little impatient. Now it doesn't matter before me: I'm used to it. But you really must not swear before the girl.
>
> HIGGINS [*indignantly*] I swear! [*Most emphatically*] I never swear. I detest the habit. What the devil do you mean?

> MRS. PEARCE [*stolidly*] That's what I mean, sir. You swear a great deal too much. I don't mind your damning and blasting, and what the devil and where the devil and who the devil… (Shaw, 2004, pp. 30–31).

Despite everything that has been said or can be said against Higgins's personality, it should be pointed out that he is not a bad human being, rather a product of his time – this point emphasizes the creative, transformative nature of discourses dependent, as it has been shown, on the sociohistorical background in which they are placed. Higgins strikes a controversial figure and it is worth noting that his help to Eliza Doolittle, even if this help is carried out reluctantly at first or just to win a bet, is laudable. It also should be considered that the professor, being a lifelong bachelor, in addition to it, prone to philosophizing, never takes advantage of his pupil and helps her more or less sincerely. His general attitude to teaching women may be summarized by the following replica:

> HIGGINS. What! That thing! Sacred, I assure you. [*Rising to explain*] You see, she'll be a pupil; and teaching would be impossible unless pupils were sacred. I've taught scores of American millionairesses how to speak English: the best-looking women in the world. I'm seasoned. They might as well be blocks of wood. I might as well be a block of wood (Shaw, 2004, p. 30).

On the other hand, the philosophical discourse in the play, especially passages against women, declaimed by Higgins, can be classified as misogynic, but again they reflect not so much the teacher's personal views as the general societal attitude to women at that time – it is not fortuitous that nobody in the play really questions Higgin's beliefs, not even his mother, with the exception, probably, of only Eliza Doolittle:

> HIGGINS … I find that the moment I let myself make friends with a woman, I become selfish and tyrannical. Women upset everything. When you let them into your life, you find that the woman is driving at one thing and you're driving at another. … (Shaw, 2004, p. 29).

> Cf.: HIGGINS. Oh, I can't be bothered with young women. My idea of a loveable woman is something as like you as possible. I shall never get into the way of seriously liking young women:

> some habits lie too deep to be changed. [*Rising abruptly and walking about, jingling his money and his keys in his trouser pockets*] Besides, they're all idiots (Shaw, 2004, p. 44).

It can be said that Higgins never restricts himself to teaching just phonetics or good manners. He also tries to pass on to Eliza some general principles of conduct. In this, Higgins the philosopher manifests himself to the fullest extent:

> MRS. PEARCE. Mr. Higgins: you're tempting the girl. It's not right. She should think of the future.
>
> HIGGINS. At her age! Nonsense! Time enough to think of the future when you haven't any future to think of. No, Eliza: do as this lady does: think of other people's futures; but never think of your own. Think of chocolates, and taxis, and gold, and diamonds (Shaw, 2004, p. 28).

In the above cited passage, Higgins is an adept of hedonism. He also unconsciously promotes ageism by saying that to think of future is the destiny of old people.

Another important aspect of interdiscursivity highlighted in the analyzed play underscores the unnaturalness in the flower girl's behavior trying to pass off for a blue-blooded lady. This effect is achieved not just by mere discourse hybridization but rather enmeshment of discourses. It is the situation when one discourse spills over in the sphere of communication where it is inappropriate, as in the example that follows, in which Eliza combines if not two discourses than two totally different styles of communication[15]:

> LIZA [*darkly*] My aunt died of influenza: so they said.
> MRS. EYNSFORD HILL [*clicks her tongue sympathetically*]!!!
> LIZA [*in the same tragic tone*] But it's my belief they done the old woman in.
> MRS. HIGGINS [puzzled] Done her in? …
> MRS. EYNSFORD HILL. What does "doing her in" mean? (Shaw, 2004, p. 49).

Of course, in the case of professor Higgins, as it has been clarified before, it is usual for him to superpose pedagogical, philosophical and

everyday discourses. While the first two may have something in common, insults, jargon, colloquialisms, etc. are rarely associated with the pedagogue.

CONCLUSION

The current research has been based on the postulates of the discourse theory, mostly its linguistic and sociological, or to be more precise, Foucauldian strands. The multidisciplinary term "discourse" has been applied here to the field of literary studies, viz. the analysis of B. Shaw's play "Pygmalion". The latter has been viewed as primarily pedagogical communication with multiple inclusions from other discursive spheres, most notably, every day and philosophical discourses, to the point that it can be claimed that the main discourse in the book is ordinary pedagogical one – so important is this everyday component of the characters of the play's speeches.

As a result of the study, it has been found out that knowledge and power are key factors in pedagogical discourse that ought to be scrutinized; it has been demonstrated on concrete examples how discursive positions change depending on the discursive agents' acquisition of relevant knowledge. The undertaken work has also shed some light on the peculiarities of the early twentieth century discourse, its prejudices and fallacies. Above all, it focused on the idea that discourses are not isolated from one another but exist in a close connection. The recognition of this point led the authors to the use of the terms like "discourse hybridization" and "interdiscursivity". The analyzed play is interpreted as an essentially interdiscursive phenomenon, with pedagogical discourse at its core.

The present research does not pretend to be an exhaustive interpretation of B. Shaw's writing, not even of "Pygmalion". It is obvious that many of the issues that have been mentioned in the article have been proposed either tentatively or have been simply not elaborated upon. The authors do not see it as a shortcoming of the study but rather they tend to consider it as an opportunity for further exploration of pedagogical discourse in general and the pedagogical discourse of the early twentieth century as it is portrayed in "Pygmalion" in particular. In their opinion, the questions like the shift in the attitudes towards the teacher, noticeable at least in the West, historical changes introduced in pedagogical discourse, rearrangement of discursive power, etc. deserve a closer look into both in synchronicity and diachronicity, not necessarily from the standpoint of linguistics alone but an interdisciplinary approach based on the discourse theory.

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Notes:

[1] A male teacher.
[2] A female teacher.
[3] In the light of the most recent, and for the lack of a better epithet, shocking Iowan news, according to which, two American adolescents killed their Spanish teacher to get a higher grade, one is tempted to reconsider what extreme is (https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/nov/02/two-teenagers-killed-spanish-teacher-iowa-bad-grade-prosecutors-allege).
[4] The idea that Russia is an integral part of the West was advanced by Peter the Great and his proponents that later would be called Westernizers.
[5] The failure to do so may result into a serious conflict.
[66] A slang word for a woman teacher. In Russian, to put an emphasis on the gender of a person doing certain work is usually impolite. Thus, the Russian word for doctor "vrach" is masculine. The substandard feminine word "vrachikha" ignored by most dictionaries is as impolite as the word "uchilka". For this reason, the famous Soviet address "tovarishch" (comrade) does not have the feminine form at all.
[7] A male teacher of the Russian language.
[8] A female teacher of the Russian language. Another even more denigrating variant is "rusachka".
[9] There is an unspoken hierarchy of importance of subjects, often sustained by the educational institution itself.
[10] In Arabic, however, the word شـــيخ is used far less than the more standard words أســـتاذ (a male teacher) and أستاذة (a female teacher).
[11] The second meaning of this word is "magician". A more common way of referring to a teacher in Swahili is "mwalimu". The title "Mwalimu" may be used in reference to politicians, e.g., Julius Nyerere, a Tanzanian president was given that name. In Russian and most European languages, the designation "Teacher" is restricted to the use in religious contexts. In Vietnamese, in such contexts, instead of the word "Teacher" the word "Bác" ("Uncle") is preferred. Thus, Hồ Chí Minh, a famous Vietnamese revolutionary, is called Bác Hồ. It shows that the Vietnamese deferential names prioritize the age difference as well as emphasize some degree of kinship.
[12] The idea of space-time also underlies A. Einstein's theory of relativity.
[13] Indeed, at the time of B. Shaw writing the play, the theory of linguistic equality, according to which all variations of the national language do not corrupt but enrich it, was not even in the making yet. In the modern world, the so-called "bad English" has been enhanced in its status to the point that there is some research of it, not to mention the fact that it is sometimes –and not unsuccessfully – incorporated in the rhetoric of leading politicians, trying to present themselves as "plain folks", with D. Trump's political speeches being one of the most prominent examples in this respect. The Russian President is also known for his ability to crack a joke, not always polite or appropriate for a politician of his rank.

[14] Split habitus correlating, in psychological understanding, with split consciousness or even double personality, is common among educated workers or peasants by origin, regardless of what heights, climbing the social ladder, they may achieve in their life, as it is demonstrated by D. Eribon. The author shows that, despite him, a son of a worker, gaining recognition in French academical circles, despite him having intentionally abandoned his family and broken away from the past, throughout the years, he would still maintain a strong bond with his humble background. Notwithstanding his efforts in using only "correct" French grammar and avoiding words like *fière* while talking about the taste of an apple, replacing it with the standard variant *acide*, the renowned sociologist could never really leave his origins behind him (Eribon, 2013: 107).

[15] Compare the stylistic differences between the words "influenza" (official, medical discourse) and "do in" (informal, slang).