



Class Distinction and Its Social Implication in Capitalist Society as Depicted in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*

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Abstract

Class distinction is a differentiation of social class in capitalist society in which the dominant class i.e., the capital owners exploit the subordinate class i.e., the working class to gain big economic profit in the process of mass production. The extreme class distinction results in form of bad treatments such as low wages, long working hours (12 to 19 hours per day), and the imposition of bad discipline and fine system. The objective of this research was to reveal the class distinction encountered by the main character – Liza Doolittle – in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* as a reflection of a real social condition in capitalist society. In fact, this condition has brought along with it some social implications toward the society such as dehumanization, human exploitation, and poverty that affect social life of British people all over the country. This was a qualitative research using two main theories i.e., 1) Theory of Homology postulated by Lucien Goldmann which was used to prove the interdependent relationship between the society which is told in Shaw's *Pygmalion* and the real society in England, and 2) Marxist criticism of some scholars which is utilized to analyze class distinction in *Pygmalion* which is assumed as the portrait of the unstopped struggle of the proletariat to achieve their rights ignored by the bourgeoisie for hundreds of years. The result of the study showed that the social condition in England in the end of nineteenth century to the early twentieth century was mostly affected by the practice of class distinction and human exploitation in industry sphere. Meanwhile, the class struggle which was experienced by the main character of *Pygmalion* was the portrait of the struggle of the working class to free themselves from poverty, to release them from the capitalist' oppression, and to gain the admission from the society that they have equal dignity as other human beings in society.

Keywords: Class Distinction; Social Implication; Capitalist Society

I. Introduction

Literature does not stand in isolation. It arises in its strong connection with other elements outside the text. One of the most obvious elements is social context. This is to say

that literature never exists without any reciprocal relationship with social condition at the time when a literary work is written. Wolff (1989) asserts,

So far I have argued that art is not necessarily produced in isolation and in opposition to any social group. I now want to examine the actual nature of artistic production, and compare this with other forms of production. (p. 12)

Most sociologists of art believe that literature is the expression of society. Louis Althusser, for example, argues that literature is influenced by dominant hegemony or prevailing ideology of a society that shape the authors' worldview in producing arts (Bressler, 1999:217). It also happens to George Bernard Shaw, the writer of *Pygmalion*. His meeting with Henry George in 1884 who proposed that national revenue should be collected by a single tax on land rather than by a numerous taxes on several things, and his new acquaintance to the works of Karl Marx introduced by H.M. Hyndman are considered as a turning point in his life to be an activist in Fabian Society and Social Democratic Federation.

Pygmalion was written by Shaw between 1913 and 1916 as a comedy on a phonetics professor who attempts to make a lady out of an uneducated flower girl for his linguistic and social experiment. The comic nuance is found in the vision of the folly, the lack understanding and the stupidity of the professor who thinks that social reconstruction can be simply conducted by teaching people to speak proper English. In this sense, *Pygmalion* is a satirical comedy that not only stimulates its audience to laugh but it also satires certain social ignorance and injustice. In fact, class distinction is not simply the matter of different way of speaking but a reality of the presence of capital holding class and the working class as the consequence of the concept and the practice of capitalist system.

When the industrial revolution occurred in 19th century, the notion of class changed. Kuper (1996) asserts,

In the course of the first decades of the nineteenth century the term class gradually replaced estates, ranks and orders as the major word used to denote divisions within society. The change of vocabulary reflected the diminishing significance of rank and ascribed or inherited qualities in general, and the growing importance of possessions and income among the determinants of the social position. (p. 90)

Since this period, class no longer refers merely to the existing social groups but also to the new characteristics of social classes in industrial society. It is the new social divisions created by a new way of interactions and behavior among people based on the possession of capital – the capital owner and the waged workers. Class, here, has an economic meaning located in the economic process of production, distribution, and consumption. This new understanding creates a clear cut distinction between the owners of the capital (the capitalists) and the laborers (the working class) who work by selling their labor power.

As a social reformer, Shaw was so concerned with that new atmosphere of human interaction and behavior in society. With his strong background in economics and politics, his socialist viewpoint reacts toward the problem through *Pygmalion*. He objects the way the capitalists treat the laborers and supports the struggle of the laborers to release themselves from the capitalists' exploitation through the presence of Eliza Doolittle who protests the rudeness and sarcasms of Professor Higgins toward her. Therefore, in this study there are two main questions to be answered through this research:

1. What social phenomena in capitalist society that constitute class distinction?

2. What social implications of class distinction are depicted in *Pygmalion*?

The first question deals with the social condition portrayed in *Pygmalion*. To answer this question the writer used sociological approach to see the relationship between the society in the play and the real society in the end of nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. The description of society both in the play and in real life at the given time helped the writer to answer the second question and understand the social implications of class distinction portrayed in *Pygmalion*. The second question was analyzed by using Marxist criticism since class distinction which usually leads to class conflict – that was performed by Shaw in *Pygmalion* satirically - is one of the main concerns in Marxism.

II. Methods of the Research

The object of this research was the text of *Pygmalion* written by George Bernard Shaw. The discussion focused on the plot of the play that presents the relationships between sequences and acts. It is assumed that the relationships between those elements can be elaborated with the use of sociological approach and Marxist criticism to find the answers of the research problems.

Sociological approach was used to find the answer of social condition based on the theory of sociology of literature that considers literary work as social product of certain identifiable social group in certain historical period and as social document that reflects social reality. Sociological approach was used here to analyze literary pieces as instrument to emphasize the nature and the effect of the social forces that shape power relationships between groups or classes of people. In this sense, as Gary Day cites from Goldmann, literature is considered as the representation of the world-view of a particular group or classes in society (Day, 2001:2). In line with this consideration, the interdependent relationship between the society in the play and the society in real life based on the theory of homology must be revealed.

As this was a qualitative research, the data collection were done through a library research. There was no interview with certain people or questionnaires distributed to particular group of respondents. The collection of data was conducted by findings and reading references that go together with the discussion on the theories used in the analysis.

There were three steps taken in the research, i.e. explication, interpretation, and description. In the explication step, the researcher attempted to master the primary data in details as the material object of the research. In this step the researcher got the surface meaning of the story. The second step was to find the hidden meaning of the primary data. It was done by finding out the meaning from the written text or from things which were not stated in the play. The availability of the secondary data was very crucial in this step. In this sense, the information that uncovered the sociopolitical context of *Pygmalion* was very helpful. The understanding of the sociopolitical background provided important clues to make more accurate and qualified interpretation since interpretation demands adequate historical informations to correlate the research findings and the *Zeitgeist* of the play. The third step dealt with the effort to formulate the interpretation in forms of description or explanation sequenced in logic sentences and paragraphs.

III. Review of the Related Literature

There were two main theories to support this analysis. First, the theory of homology in genetic structuralism was postulated by Lucien Goldmann; and second, Marxist criticism which talks about the theory of class distinction. The theory of homology and Marxist criticism are elaborated with those of George Bernard Shaw's view points about society which he conveys through *Pygmalion* as the medium to promote his socialist teaching.

3.1 Theory of Homology

Homology is one of the many theories used in sociological approach that examines literature in the social, economic and political context. It is to say that literary works represent and reflect the way of thinking – and even the way of life – of certain human community of a particular era and place. Influenced by this assumption, the authors of literary works put the social structure of their time into plays, novels, or poems. Consequently, the society which is told in the literary works has homolog characteristics with the society in real life.

Quoting Wilbur Scott's statement, Kennedy and Gioia (1999, 1955) writes, "Art is not created in a vacuum. It is the work not simply of a person but of an author fixed in time and space, answering a community of which he is an important because he articulates its part." Higgins-Eliza relationship told in *Pygmalion*, for instance, is a portrait of the capitalist-labor relationship that really existed in British society in early twentieth century. Shaw is strongly affected by his society that his writings promote the social, economic and political values through his characters, plot and setting.

In accordance with Kennedy's and Gioia's view about the relationship between society and literature, Janet Wolff, one of the most prominent and respectable sociologists of literature (1989), states,

Works of art are not closed, self-contained and transcendent entities, but are the product of specific historical practices on the part of identifiable social groups in given conditions, and therefore bear the imprint of the ideas, values and conditions of existence of those groups, and their representatives in particular artists. (p. 49)

It is very tangible here that Wolff views works of art, including literature, in a tight relationship with their social and historical practices from where they are created, and therefore they are called as social products of identifiable social groups. Wolff underlines that works of art do not stand in isolation, but always interdependently stand with other aspects outside the aesthetic sphere.

The theory of homology, which is postulated by Lucien Goldmann, underlines the interdependent correlation between the content of a literary work and its social, historical and cultural context. Therefore, literary analysis should involve a sociological approach to reveal all those contexts from which an author gives birth to a literary work. With homology, it is not simply to say that a literary work is an imitation of society or even a report of what happens in society. A literary work does not provide a note of real events in details to let the readers know about what really happens in society, conversely it is an artificial and aesthetic text written by an author to reflect the society. Boelhower, in his introduction to Goldmann's lectures collection (Goldman, 1981) argues,

By homology, Goldmann does not mean that the literary work is reduced to the level of imitation. ... It is not a matter of relating directly the content of a literary work to the historical fact outside it. Instead, it is a question of relating the collective consciousness of a social class or classes to the imaginary structure of a literary work. (p. 29)

If homology functions to relate the consciousness of a social class to the imaginary structure of literary work, it can be now understood that there are so many authors who compose their novels and plays with certain structural plot to create imaginative society in those works as the representation of certain existing classes. Since Goldmann is a sociologist, he, then, explains homology in the structure and function of both literary work and society in their relation to the human facts. He asserts that historical reality is linked to a number of habits, activities, and mental structures. In addition, whenever human beings are dealing with historical and social phenomena, they can only make those phenomena sufficiently intelligible

on a large scale and in their wholeness by relating them to collective subjects (Goldmann, 1981:86).

Regarding to *Pygmalion*, what facts are employed in the framework of homology? There are two issues which to be analyzed: the issues of class distinction and the issue of social implications affected by class distinction. These two social phenomena are reflected in *Pygmalion* and are considered as the ultimate causes of many social problems in British society.

3.1.1 Class Distinction

Talking about class distinction, it is important to know the context of the term 'class' and its implication in social life regarding human relations in capitalist society. Day (2001, 2-11) explains that 'class', in very broad terms, refers to divisions in society. Formerly, in medieval society, class is based on heredity as the only factor to put people into social groups. Therefore, there are the nobels, clergy and commoners. Yet, as the transition from feudalist to capitalist system takes place, social class is no longer dependent on birth. The ascendancy of the bourgeoisie proves that hard work can change one's social class. Even the hard effort run by the bourgeoisie has yielded in a certain point that is an exclusive class in capitalist society to oppose another class called the proletariat. Marx and Engels assert in Swingewood (1975) by stating

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses ... this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonism. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. (p.115)

Regarding this fact, the members of capitalist society are then divided into two main classes: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. *Pygmalion* reflects class distinction in a very realistic way as if a report of what really happens in British society. It tells about class considerations such as dress, house, attitude and behavior, and way of speaking that distinguish an individual from others or a group of people from other groups. In this sense, the theory of homology plays its strength since the analysis will deal with the juxtaposition of the society in *Pygmalion* with that of the real life. Yet the problem is not as simple as distinguishing an individual from others or grouping individuals into the same social class based on their clothes or houses or behavior. It is assumed that the main problem portrayed by Shaw is the domination of one class on other as Day (2001:13) asserts that the major paradigm of the class distinction is a view of the social formation where dominant class exploits the subordinate groups to get economic benefits.

3.1.2 Human Exploitation

The term exploitation – which has been used in England since the early nineteenth century as a borrowed word from French – may carry two different meanings. The first meaning is related to the act of utilizing something for any purpose. In this case, *to exploit* is a synonym for *to use*. The second meaning refers to the act of utilizing other people in an unjust or cruel manner (Williams, 1985:130).

In economy, exploitation involves a long-term social-economic relationship in which the working class are mistreated or unfairly used for the benefit of the capitalists. The workers, in this case, are exploited by working in the 24-hour production process of goods (known as mass product) from which the capitalists get surplus value that is the value added to the capital accumulation which its ultimate source is the unpaid surplus labor performed by the worker for the capitalist. Precisely, the concept of surplus is explained by Day (2001, 12) as follows,

The calculation of labour in terms of time rather than kind brings us to Marx's theory of surplus value. At its most basic level, this states that the capitalist sells his or her product for more than he or she pays the workers who produce it. More specifically, the capitalist pays the worker for the time it takes for him or her to earn the minimum amount of money he or she needs in order to survive. If this time amounts to three hours a day, and the worker is employed for eight hours a day that means the capitalist obtains five hours of free labour from the worker and this is the source of profit. The worker is therefore exploited by the capitalist since he or she does not receive the full remuneration for his or her labour.

With the unpaid surplus labor, Marx points the practice that the capitalists apply in their factories by forcing the laborers to work in long working hours to increase the productivity of goods without any sufficient compensation.

The revolting practice of forcing other people to work in the factory leads the workers become the slaves of the capitalists since they are asked to work all day long like machines for the profit accumulation of the capitalists. Day and night work using the relay system, which is described by Tucker (1978:372) as the alternation to shift the workers to work one week on day-work and the next week on night-work, does not give any influence to reduce the practice of worker exploitation. In fact, there are still many workers who are forced to work more than twelve hours without any extra-time payment. Relay system is only applied to overcome the fact that it is physically impossible to exploit the same individual labour-power continuously during the night as well as the day. The workers are not treated as human beings who can be exhausted or hungry or thirsty after working for certain span of time. They are punished whenever they break the factory discipline which is made without their agreement and knowledge. Instead of receiving extra-payment for the long working hours, they, even, have to pay certain amount of money as the capitalists impose a very strict fine system, and therefore the salary becomes much smaller that cannot support their family daily life. The capitalists take this kind of exploitation to keep the process of production on the track of the accumulation of big economic profits.

Shaw witnesses this practice of human exploitation happening everywhere in the factories all around England. As a social reformist, he finds that the practice of waged slavery in industry – the use of man by man – is the main reason of all human problems in society including poverty, unemployment and crimes. He fights the capitalist's mind set that considers capital as the most important determining factor in the process of production and treats the workers as the objects in process of production. Therefore he struggles through his propaganda and lectures to promote that the process of production will not run unless there are workers who cannot be positioned in the same degree as raw materials and machines. The workers must be treated as human beings who innately have right, feeling, desire, ideals, and freedom. In *Pygmalion*, Shaw portrays so many things around this concern and together with Fabian Society he voices the struggle against the social and political power of the oppressor that gives wide opportunity to the growth of human exploitation. For him, it is inhumane to force the workers to work in twelve to nineteen hours a day. It is sadistic to whip and beat the workers only because they come late at work. It is also very irrational that children of 4 years old are forced to work in the factory like adults.

By employing the main character, Eliza Doolittle, in a conflict along the play with Higgins, Shaw highlights the spirit of struggle to abolish the practices of treating other people as objects and means to collect economic benefit, of seizing other people's right and freedom without their agreement and knowledge, and of forcing other people to work without adequate compensation. These issues become the focal points of the discussion in this section.

Shaw satirically places Eliza and Higgins as the focus of his play since Higgins represents the capitalist and Eliza is the portrait of the working class. Eliza's inability in speaking properly is used by Higgins to exploit her as object of a language experiment. Thus, Higgins' exploitation on Eliza in the language laboratory both as the object of his scientific experiment and as the object for his economic profits – if he wins the betting with Pickering as he can pass Eliza as a duchess in the ambassador's garden party – is considered as the portrait of the social reality in industrial society picturing the relationship between the factory owner and the workers.

3.2 Marxist Criticism

The use of Marxist criticism departs from a strong conviction that it is appropriate to analyze social problems depicted in literary works, especially those dealing with the social changes occurred in industrial society in which the struggle of the oppressed working class to be free from the capitalists' oppression becomes the focal point of a literary analysis. Abcarian, et al. (1998, 1373) write,

The Marxist critic analyzes literary works to show how, wittingly or unwittingly, they support the dominant social class, or how they, in some way, contribute to the struggle against oppression and exploitation. And since Marxist critic views literature as just one among the variety of human activities that reflect power relations and class divisions, he or she is likely to be more interested in what a work says than in its formal structure.

Based largely on Karl Marx's writings, it claims that literary works are essentially political because they either challenge or support economic oppression of the dominant social class. On the other hands, literary works also mostly criticize the practice of human exploitation in the mode of production, distribution and exchange that in turn give big inspiration to the working class to struggle against the exploitation. Due to its strong emphasis on the political aspects of the texts, Marxist criticism focuses more on the content and themes of literature than on its form. Nonetheless, as concluded by Kennedy (1999: 48), such approach to literary texts "can illuminate political and economic dimensions of literature other approaches overlook".

Class distinction is one of the many theories postulated by Karl Marx. It arises originally from Marx's concept of classless society – a concept that is based on the common ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. Since Marx sees the progress in society as coming about through the struggle for power between different social classes, class struggle then becomes a class conflict which is caused by the exploitation of one class by another especially in capitalist society (Barry, 1995:156-157). It occurs when the members of society are segregated into classes related to their functions in industry and therefore occupy different position in the industrial organization to utilize the technical and industrial equipments. Despite changes which have taken place in the industrial society, the divisions into classes and the struggle between these classes have persisted in industrial environment. Therefore the history of mankind has been a continuous struggle of classes as Karl Marx and Friederich Engels wrote, "The written history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle" (Berberoglu, 1994:21).

There are two main classes in capitalist society that relate to one another in the production sphere: the capitalists (the possessing class) and the waged labor (the working class). The first class possesses the means of production and accumulates capital through the exploitation of labor. This class includes anyone who gets their income from the surplus value they get from the workers who create wealth. The income of the capitalists, therefore, is based on their exploitation of the workers. The second class does not possess the means of production but uses their labor power to generate value for the capitalist as a condition for its

survival. This class includes anyone who earns their livelihood by selling their labor power and being paid a wage or salary for their labor time. They have less power to determine their future because they have to work for capitalist since they typically have no independent way to survive. The capitalist society is mainly divided into these two groups: the class of modern capitalists – the owners of the means of production, and the employers of wage-labor. The clear-cut segregation between the possessing class and the working class represent one and the same human alienation that brings different impacts to the two classes. The possessing class feels satisfied and affirmed in this self-alienation, experiences the alienation as a sign of its own power, and possesses in it the appearance of a human existence. Conversely, the working class feels destroyed and isolated in this alienation or as Hegel describes that this class is indignation against the depravity, an indignation necessarily aroused in this class by the contradiction between its human nature and its life-situation, which is blatant, outright and all-embracing denial of that very nature (Tucker, 1978:133-134).

In the age of capitalism, Marx describes an economic class where membership of a class is defined by one's relationship to the means of production, i.e., one's position in the social structure that characterizes capitalism. Marx talks mainly about two classes that include the vast majority of the population – the working class – and the capitalist. In accordance with this understanding, class struggle is a conflict arisen in this capitalist-laborer/ exploiter-exploited/ oppressor-oppressed relationship because each of the two main classes has their own interests in common. The collective interests are in conflict with those of the other class as a whole. This in turn leads to conflict between individual members of different classes.

Providing an analysis of class struggle based on the exploitation of labor, Berberoglu (1994) writes,

Marx and Engels stressed that such an analysis must be placed within the framework of the dynamics of social change in the world historical process and that in this context the crucial task is to identify and examine the *primary motive force of social transformation* that defines the parameters of societal development: *class struggle*. (p. 19)

This quotation underlines the existing framework of the shifting of one type of society to another (from primitive to feudal, from feudal to capitalist, and then capitalist to socialist) as a process occurred in the history of human society. Every type of society brings with it special characteristics reflected in the relationship and behavior among its members. It also questions the primary motive force of social transformation that encourages the society members to do class struggle. Quoting Marx's letter of March 5, 1852, to his friend Joseph Weydemeyer, Tucker (1978: 220) describes that the class struggle is mainly generated by the vision of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the very strong conviction that the dictatorship itself can constitute the transition to the abolition of all classes and direct it to a classless society.

IV. Discussion and Findings

Dealing with the first research question, this discussion scrutinized the social conditions reflected in *Pygmalion* in accordance with the action, thought, and attitude of the characters. The discussion was based on the dialogues among the characters and the technical stage directions which describe the performance and the movements of the characters on the stage. The analysis departed from the perception that considers literary text as a social document from which the readers can study the social conditions of a society in a given time and place.

Since *Pygmalion* was written in the early twentieth century and was deliberately utilized by Shaw to criticize the practice of human relationship in the process of goods

production, the discussion focused on the social conditions in capitalist society i.e., a society characterized by the principles of production relationship between waged labors and the owners of the means of production (Berberoglu, 1999:44). This society had created the distinction between the capital owners (the bourgeoisie) and the workers (the proletariat) that gave the chance to the capital owners to apply human exploitation on the workers by forcing the workers to work in long working hours with very low wage. In turn, class distinction and human exploitation resulted in dehumanization and poverty as the most visible consequences.

4.1 Class Distinction

Influenced by the spirit of late Victorian age that viewed social class as one of the most important issue to consider, in *Pygmalion*, Shaw showed that class structure of society was the most visible and distinguishing marks in England. He wrote about a situation in society where everything was constructed and understood in class dimension: physical appearance (such as personal appearance and clothes, ornaments, furniture, and homes), the names of the characters, and the way of speaking and behaving. As a socialist, Shaw maintained that the difference between a flower girl and a lady was a matter of education that sharpened one's brilliance, good attitude and right moral behavior. This notion caused him to object an unscientific, but common, assumption that the upper classes were superior by virtue of their birth. Thus, *Pygmalion* echoes a new way of thinking that in a class society it is possible for an individual to change his/her social class membership which is usually ascribed at birth and is considered as something hereditary.

4.1.1 Physical Appearance

This aspect is so obvious to show class distinction since personal appearance and clothes, ornaments (pictures, photographs, etc), furniture and place of living owned by the characters are closely related to the social status. Shaw develops this aspect interestingly by providing detailed stage directions composed in novel-like style. Conveying a social message to a variety of decoders, clothes or accessories or human physical appearances have become reliable ways to denote social status, profession, and economic situation. In fact, it really happens in society that clothes have become one of the most crucial parts of a person's social class. Shaw knows about this fact, and therefore he catches the phenomenon, arranges it aesthetically in his drama, and uses it to clarify the social distinction that exists in British society.

There are some descriptions of clothes and personal appearance in the beginning of an act or somewhere in the middle of the play to show what kind of clothes the characters wear and how they look like. These clothes and physical appearance are considered as indicators of one's social class and they give strong influence in daily human relation in society.

The story in Act 1 begins at a quarter past eleven at night in London during a heavy downpour of summer rain. A group of people are seeking for shelter under the portico of St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden. Among them are Mrs. and Miss Eynsford Hill, Colonel Pickering and Professor Henry Higgins who is preoccupied while taking notes. Freddy, the son of Mrs. Eynsford Hill, who is looking for a cab for his mother and sister to ride back home is also from this class. They wear evening dress to show that they have special attires to wear in the evening. The dress shows that they are not common people. They must be people of middle or upper class because, like in many other societies, people of that class reserve special kinds of clothes for special occasions as symbols of their social status. Wearing an evening dress here is not just to protect the human body from extreme weather, but also other features of the environment. It is not only worn for safety and comfort due to the cold weather at night, but also to convey a social class message of the wearers. In this sense, clothes has a social meaning understood socially and culturally by all members of a society

since clothes maintain in their models, basic materials, ornaments, and functions the social classes of the people who wear them.

When the audiences turn their attention to the flower girl (Eliza Doolittle), they find other kinds of clothes. Instead of wearing a luxurious evening dress, the flower girl just wears a little sailor hat of black straw that has long been exposed to the dust and soot of London, a shoddy black coat, a brown skirt with a coarse apron, and old boots which are much the worse for wear. Perhaps she has only two or three pairs of dresses which make her having no choice to change clothes everyday so that the clothes "have seldom if ever been brushed." Her limited income of selling flowers is not enough to buy new clothes to make her appearance more interesting to add and polish her natural beauty.

Furthermore, it is because of the matter of clothes that Eliza experiences a bad treatment from Higgins who extremely dislikes seeing the clothes she is wearing when she comes to his laboratory at the first time. She is very surprised when Higgins orders Mrs. Pearce (Higgins' housekeeper) to put all her clothes off and throw them away into the dustbin. While waiting for the arrival of the new clothes, Eliza is wrapped in brown paper just like an object. It is to say that Higgins cannot bear to see her 'ugly' clothes and prefers to witness her wrapped in paper. How disgusted are the clothes so that Higgins treats them like garbage. How low the social status of a flower girl so that her clothes must be stripped down and replaced by a brown paper. Of course, clothes are more precious and decent to wear by civilized human beings than a piece of paper, but the point is the fact that the upper class people have no respect at all to the lower class. They tend to force the lower class to wear particular kind of clothes they wish, including the imposition of the uniform policy in industrial environment to distinguish the common workers with the higher officers and the owner of the factory as well. In industrial environment, the owners of manufactures also have no respect to the workers and treat them as if they have no right and freedom. The manufacturers ask the overlookers to wallop the workers to force them to work harder and to be more disciplined. They give inadequate wages that the workers cannot use to fulfill their basic needs. They give no rest time to the workers and prohibit them to eat and drink during the working time.

It is interesting to give special attention on the brown paper used to wrap Eliza. The problem of using paper as cloth is its endurance. It is only a short-time 'cloth' that has no ability to protect the body from bad weather, for instance. It gives a very minimal guarantee of comfort since it is easy to tear. Related to the social condition in capitalist society, this metaphorical paper refers to everything given by the manufacture owners that provides slightest guarantee to the laborers for their barest necessities of life. This condition leads most of the laborers to a serious poverty.

When Eliza knows that Mrs. Pearce is ordering new clothes for her, she says to Higgins,

"Mrs. Pearce says you're going to give me some (clothes) to wear in bed at night different to what I wear in the daytime; but it do seem a waste of money when you could get something to shew. Besides, I never could fancy changing into cold things on a winter night" (Chin, 2000: 914).

This quotation shows Eliza's disagreement to the replacement of her old clothes with new garments ordered by Mrs. Pearce. She is not familiar with the habit of wearing clothes different in the day time and at night. For Eliza, the clothes she usually wears when she sells flowers in the curb of Tottenham Court Road are also the same clothes as she wears when she goes to bed at night. But who cares to her objection and disagreement. She must accept whatever order of his 'master'. This is one of the typical social conditions in capitalist society

where laborers' voice is usually ignored by their masters. They have no other choice except to agree what the masters have decided for them.

The same situation of wearing simple clothes is found in Alfred Doolittle, Eliza's father. He wears the costume of his profession, including a hat with a back brim covering his neck and shoulders. Since he is a dustman, the readers can imagine what is meant by "the costume of his profession". A dustman never wears a suit or a light coat as that of Colonel Pickering. Instead, he might wear a long-sleeve shirt, coarse and grimy trousers, and boots on his feet merely to protect his body of the heat of the sunlight and the dust that fly everywhere whenever he sweeps the road and collects the disposals. When people meet a man who wears this kind of clothes, it is not difficult for them to guess the profession of the man, even when he is not working with his broom, dustpan, or garbage barrow.

To understand how house, furniture, and room decoration gives effects to and influenced by one's social class, Mrs. Higgins' home in Act 3 is a wonderful text to begin this discussion.

... Her drawing-room, in a flat on Chelsea embankment, has three windows looking on the river; and the ceiling is not as lofty as it would be in an older house of the same pretension. The windows are open, giving access to a balcony with flowers in pots. If you stand with your face to the windows, you have the fireplace on your left and the door in the right-hand wall close to the corner nearest the windows. Mrs. Higgins was brought up on Morris and Burne Jones; and her room, which is very unlike her son's room in Wimpole Street, is not crowded with furniture and little tables and nicknacks. In the middle of the room there is a big ottoman; and this, with the carpet, the Morris wall-papers, and the Morris chintz window curtains and brocade covers of the ottoman and its cushions, supply all the ornament, and are much too handsome to be hidden by odds and ends of useless things. A few good oil-paintings from the exhibitions in the Grosvenor Gallery thirty years ago (the Burne Jones, not the Whistler side of them) are on the walls. The only landscape is a Cecil Lawson on the scale of a Rubens. There is a portrait of Mrs. Higgins as she was when she defied fashion in her youth in one of the beautiful Rossettian costumes which, when caricatured by people who did not understand, led to the absurdities of popular estheticism in the eighteen-seventies.

In the corner diagonally opposite the door Mrs. Higgins, now over sixty and long past taking the trouble to dress out of the fashion, sits writing at an elegantly simple writing-table with a bell button within reach of her hand. There is a Chippendale chair further back in the room between her and the window nearest her side. At the other side of the room, further forward, is an Elizabethan chair roughly carved in the taste of Inigo Jones. On the same side a piano in a decorated case. The corner between the fireplace and the window is occupied by a divan cushioned in Morris chintz. ... (Chin, 2000:918)

As the issue of clothes has been used to bring to light the fact of class distinction, Shaw also elaborates the description of place for living in his plays to inform the audience about the social status of the owner of the home. He writes every detail of the room like a magazine-reporter tells to the readers what he/she catches through his/her eyes. All those details are deliberately presented to bring the focus to the understanding of home as symbols of capitalist values and social stability as corner-stones of class distinction. Living in an exclusive and luxurious environment supported by high income as the result of labor exploitation in manufactures is one of the value maintained by the capitalists in their life. Such ornament and furniture as if speak about that value, and Shaw is a skillful writer who

voices the phenomenon by describing home and its interiors to reflect the economic prosperity possessed by the capitalists.

Mrs. Higgins' home is very luxurious fulfilled by expensive and elegant furniture and paintings. It is contrast to Eliza's dormitory which she considers, "It wasn't fit for a pig to live in; and I had to pay four-and-six a week" (Chin, 2000:894). Shaw reveals the contradiction of situation of possessing and not-possessing a home and of living in the comfortable central town and living in the slums. He criticizes the fact of no possessed home-space encountered by the working class because the capitalists have no good will to provide homes for the laborers. Through the description of Mrs. Higgins' home above, the readers are exposed to the issue of social class distinction between the wealthy bourgeois Mrs. Higgins against the poor but struggling Eliza.

The fact that the home of bourgeois has balcony, for instance, indicates that the home must be consisted of more than one floor. Only upper class people have the home like that. The balcony is usually located on the higher floor as a special place to be relaxed while viewing what happens outside the home. From a balcony people interact with the external world of a home and broaden their perspective of seeing things. Balcony brings into the viewer a new intellectual and emotional activity since it stimulates the individual mind to consider home-outside aspects as things to ponder regarding to every effort of human improvement. Shaw includes balcony of home in some of his plays – the balcony in front of Raina's bedchamber in *Arms and the Man*, for instance – to represent his desire to provoke in the audience's mind to think that capitalists should not only focus on the economic matters of accumulating profits and bank interests. Instead, they must broaden their perspective to the socio-economic problems encountered by their labors due to the minimum wage, the long working hours, and the working contract system. Through a balcony as the symbol of high position in decision-making process, the capitalists relate themselves to the concepts of the relationship between the external world and the workings of the individual mind, particularly as they apply to moral responsibility toward labors' daily and future life.

Other facts to highlight is that homes which belong to the upper class people are always completed by expensive furniture such as big ottoman, Chippendale chair, Elizabethan chair carved in the taste of Inigo Jones, a decorated case, elegant writing-table, a divan cushioned in Morris chintz; beautiful portrait and paintings of Morris and Burne Jones, good oil-paintings from the exhibitions in the Grosvenor Gallery, the Morris wall-papers, Cecil Lawson on the scale of a Rubens, a portrait of Mrs. Higgins in one of her beautiful Rossettians costumes when she attended a fashion contest; and other 'accessories' such as the fireplace, carpet, the Morris chintz window curtains, brocade covers of the ottoman and its cushions. In *Pygmalion*, St. Paul's Cathedral and Covent Garden are mentioned in the first act and become important places from where Eliza's life journey gets its start. Instead of showing his well-knowledge about the famous artists of his time and their prominent works of art, Shaw deliberately presents situation of a home of upper class people by mentioning all those prestigious paintings and furniture to underline that with the money they collect from their manufacture business they are able to buy such expensive paintings and furniture.

All those furniture and paintings create a very comfortable feeling when one sits in Mrs. Higgins' drawing room. Regarding to this comfort, Shaw offends the upper class way of thinking that considers wealth and prosperity as the objective of life. Furthermore, for that objective, they allow whatever ways including exploiting their fellowmen. The situation aroused by that way of thinking is that the upper class people tend to live for themselves. In other part of *Pygmalion*, Shaw, using Alfred Doolittle as his mouthpiece, criticizes the middle class morality run by the upper class people who live in full of hypocrisy (remember Higgins throws a handful of coins into Eliza's flower basket right after the sound of church bell to

show his Christian charity), who do not live for others but for themselves, who rob whatever they wish from the poor because of their greed.

Eliza's house is very different from Mrs. Higgins' home. It is not a home but only a hiring room, as described in the following interesting passage.

... Her lodging: a small room with very old wall-paper hanging loose in the damp places. A broken pane in the window is mended with paper. A portrait of a popular actor and a fashion plate of ladies' dresses, all wildly beyond poor Eliza's means, both torn from newspapers, are pinned up on the wall. A birdcage hangs in the window; but its tenant died long ago: it remains as a memorial only. These are the only visible luxuries: the rest is the irreducible minimum of poverty's needs: a wretched bed heaped with all sorts of coverings that have any warmth in them, a draped packing case with a basin and jug on it and a little looking-glass over it, a chair and table, the refuse of some suburban kitchen, and an American alarm clock on the shelf above the unused fireplace: the whole lighted with a gas lamp with a penny in the slot meter. Rent: four shillings a week. ... (Chin, 2000: 898)

In contrast to Mrs. Higgins' home - which is fulfilled by expensive and elegant furniture and paintings - Eliza's dormitory is considered as "wasn't fit for a pig to live in" (Chin, 2000:894). These two homes are really far different. One is so luxurious and comfortable, but the other is so dirty and unfit for human to live. The reasons of all those differences are the social status. Whenever the descriptions in that stage direction are read, every item in Mrs. Higgins' room is as if directly compared with those in Eliza's bedroom.

It seems that the descriptions of the place for living which are reflected by Shaw in *Pygmalion* voices the reality in details about the real conditions of houses where thousands of the workers live in. Engels reports that in the most extensive working-people's district lies east of the Tower in Whitechapel and Bethnal Green, for example, there exists 1,400 houses, inhabited by 2,795 families, or about 12,000 persons where it is nothing unusual to find a man, his wife, his four or five children, and sometimes both grandparents, all live in one single room of ten to twelve square feet, where they eat, sleep, and work (Engels, 1979:62). It can be imagined how crowded and uncomfortable the houses are. While their masters are enjoying the comfort of luxurious 'palaces', the workers have no other choices instead of living in those slums. It is clear here that *Pygmalion* is so homolog with the situation in real life by exposing Eliza's dorm to show the similar situation of the workers' houses in Whitechapel and Bethnal Green.

Different from Mrs. Higgins' home, there is another home which is used as a language laboratory in Wimpole Street. It is Higgins' Laboratory. Shaw describes the laboratory as follows,

It is a room on the first floor, looking on the street, and was meant for the drawing-room. The double doors are in the middle of the back wall; and persons entering find in the corner to their right two tall file cabinets at right angles to one another against the walls. In this corner stands a flat writing-table, on which are a phonograph, a laryngoscope, a row of tiny organ pipes with a bellows, a set of lamp chimneys for singing flames with burners attached to a gas plug in the wall by an India rubber tube, several tuning-forks of different sizes, a life-size image of half a human head, showing in section the vocal organs, and a box containing a supply of wax cylinders for the phonograph. Further down the room, on the same side, is a fireplace, with a comfortable leather-covered easy-chair at the side of the hearth nearest the door, and a coal-scuttle. There is a clock on the mantelpiece. Between the fireplace and the phonograph table is a

stand for newspapers. On the other side of the central door, to the left of the visitor, is a cabinet of shallow drawers. On it is a telephone and the telephone directory. The corner beyond, and most of the side wall, is occupied by a grand piano, with the keyboard at the end furthest from the door, and a bench for the player extending the full length of the keyboard. On the piano is a dessert dish heaped with fruit and sweets, mostly chocolates. The middle of the room is clear. Besides the easy-chair, the piano bench, and two chairs at the phonograph table, there is one stray chair. It stands near the fireplace. On the walls, engravings; mostly Piranesi and mezzotint portraits. No paintings. (Chin, 2000:900)

Higgins' house contains every object that supports his phonetic experiment. The description in the quotation leads the readers to grasp that it is not a common room. Instead of considering it as a living room, they may guess it is a studio or music room because there are piano and other instruments used to measure human voice such as phonograph, laryngoscope, a box containing a supply of wax cylinders for the phonograph, and a row of tiny organ pipes with a bellows. Others perhaps consider the room as an office because there are file cabinets with documentation of Higgins' work and a flat writing-table. And the rest may also think it is a laboratory since there stands a life-size image of half a human head, India rubber tube, and a set of lamp chimneys. Yet when the readers follow the story in Act two, then, they are aware that it is a laboratory of a professor of phonetics; it is a room for a scientific research and experiment that usually belongs to an educated person.

The description of the devices needed to conduct an experiment due to the effort to record particular language sounds proves Shaw's expertise in evoking in the readers' mind an imagination of a phonetic laboratory. It indicates Shaw's wide knowledge on the characteristics and functions of a laboratory. His acquaintanceship and good communication with Henry Sweet, a professor of Phonetics whose name he mentions in the Preface of *Pygmalion* as the best phonetician he has ever known might be able to explain the reason why he knows so many details related to a linguistic laboratory and the teaching-learning process held in such laboratory to change or to improve the pupils' language ability (Chin, 2000:887). Nevertheless, the focal point is not the laboratory and the activities held in it. It is presented in *Pygmalion* to voice a social critique in industry.

Shaw's understanding on the facilities and the activities in the laboratory helps him to criticize the malpractices in industrial environment. He metaphorically uses the laboratory as the symbol of industry where goods are produced. In line with this, the role of Higgins' laboratory in the plot of *Pygmalion* as a whole is very central. It is the place where Eliza is transformed from a cockney flower girl with a chaotic way of speaking to a lady with well-spoken ability. Shaw presents Eliza as the object of a language experiment to show his socialist objection to the capitalists' treatment to the workers as objects just like capital, machines, and raw materials.

4.1.2 Names of Characters

In Act 1, all characters are identified not by name, except Freddy. They are called as the Mother or the Lady, the Daughter, the Bystanders, the Flower girl, the Gentleman, the Note-taker, and the Taximan. In this case, *Pygmalion* is different from *Arms and the Man*, for example, which mentions all its characters' name from the beginning of the play. It is not without any intention that Shaw 'hides' the characters' name in act one. He wants to highlight the characters' social status by calling them the lady, the gentleman, the note-taker in one group and the flower girl, the bystanders, and the taximan in another group. The first group refers to the upper class people, and the second one affiliates to the lower class.

The Lady, her daughter, and Freddy must be from a rich family who are able to buy evening dress, who can hire a taxi, and who have much money to buy expensive tickets to watch interesting performances in an opera house. They have economic capability not only to suffice their basic needs (food, clothes, and home), but also to enjoy entertainments and live luxuriously with other comfortable living facilities. The Gentleman and the Note-taker live in more or less the same situation. In the end of act 1, the Gentleman introduces himself to the Note-taker as Colonel Pickering, the author of *Spoken Sanskrit*, and the Note-taker introduces himself as Henry Higgins, author of Higgins's *Universal Alphabet*. This is to say that they are not ordinary people; they are scholars and experts of linguistics. They earn their living from their professional job and from their expertise on the subject matter they master very well.

How about the flower girl, the bystanders, and the taximan? They are 'unlucky' people who have less access to enjoy worldly happiness due to their poverty. The flower girl should wait for hours in the curb of Tottenham Court Road to get one penny. The bystanders must be patient to look for job by walking from one place to another as job-seekers. The taximan must drive around the city to look for passengers till midnight. They all represent the proletariat who struggle for their daily needs as workers in industries both permanent workers and casual workers based on the temporary contract of employment. They are the majority of British Isles citizens who earn daily wage only for one-day consumption.

The flower girl's name starts to be mentioned in the middle of Act two. When she introduces herself as Liza Doolittle, Higgins sneers her by mentioning some other names as Eliza, Elizabeth, Betsy and Bess and then continued by a mockery, "They went to the woods to get a bird nests" (Chin, 2000:902). It shows as if the name "Eliza" is not a human name, while the name "Doolittle" implies something negative regarding to class distinction. Since "Doolittle" represents the working class, perhaps this name brings with it a perception that generally exists in capitalist society that laborers are less important among other means of production; that the workers don't contribute something special in the process of production; or that the labor force can DO so LITTLE in capitalist system since it cannot do anything without capital, machines, and raw materials.

4.1.3 Ways of Behaving and Speaking

The opening act operates on the principle of contrast both the way of behaving and the way of speaking of all characters. For instance, it explicitly contrasts the characters of Higgins and Colonel Pickering as well as Eliza and Clara. There is a subtle contrast between the socially refined Clara and the uncouth Eliza. Compared to Eliza, Clara appears to be ill-mannered. She evidently has the civilizing benefits supported by wealth and education but shows bad manners. She represents the worst traits of the middle-class. She is quickly bothered by Eliza's presence and wants to avoid any interaction with her, when she asks her mother, "Do nothing of the sort, Mother. The idea" (Chin, 2000:893). She speaks imperatively to strangers and rebukes Higgins for his audacity to speak to her, "Don't dare to speak to me" (Chin, 2000: 896). Yet later when she discovers who Higgins is, she becomes respectable towards him. While Eliza, she is a strong and independent young woman, self-sufficient through her business of selling flowers on the street, and with a highly developed moral sense and self-respect.

The daughter and her mother speak Standard English as most of other people of their class. Comparing with these two women, the bystander's sentence is grammatically incorrect. He uses negative forms more than once in the same sentence and mispronounces 'Mrs.' as 'missus' in the sentence "He won't get no cab not until half-past eleven, missus, when they come back after dropping their theatre fares."

Other example to explore the dynamics of manners in a society that assumes that speech patterns determine social class can be taken from the conversation between The Mother and The Flower Girl.

THE FLOWER GIRL. Ow, eez ye-ooa san, is e? Wal, fewd dan y' de-ooty bawmz a mather should, eed now bettern to spawl a pore gel's flahrzn than ran awy athaht pyin. Will ye-oo py me f' them?

THE DAUGHTER. Do nothing of the sort, mother. The idea!

THE MOTHER. Please allow me, Clara. Have you any pennies?

THE DAUGHTER. No. I've nothing smaller than sixpence.

THE FLOWER GIRL [*hopefully*] I can give you change for a tanner, kind lady.

THE MOTHER [*to Clara*] Give it to me. Now [*to the girl*] This is for your flowers.

THE FLOWER GIRL. Thank you kindly, lady.

(Chin, 2000:891-893)

The conversation indicates that the flower girl's answer, in her peculiar dialect and way of uttering words, is something special that shows her cockney background. She says, "Ow, eez ye-ooa san, is e? Wal, fewd dan y' de-ooty bawmz a mather should, eed now bettern to spawl a pore gel's flahrzn than ran awy athaht pyin. Will ye-oo py me f' them?" Annoying with the strange sound getting out of the girl's mouth, the daughter interrupts and asks her mother not to continue the conversation. Yet generated by her eagerness, after giving the girl some money, the mother asks the girl for the second time, "Now tell me how you know that young gentleman's name?" The answer of this same question is rather funny. The flower girl shows that it is not important to call a stranger as Freddy or Charlie. Not as simply as the flower girl thinks, for the mother, it is a sort of indication that the girl is not a good woman. The girl might have an affair with her son. Therefore, she asks the flower girl to explain what happens between her and the son. In this sense, the flower girl is actually being suspected of soliciting as a prostitute simply because she belongs to a class that often relied on prostitution as a way to earn money.

Shaw smartly composes the dialogue to point out how language – including dialect – creates class distinction in society. He regards phonetics and the proper pronunciation of the English language as a serious instrument of social change. Shaw, that is to say, has serious and important views about this question and makes use of them in his play. The idea that speech and accent are one of the great class barriers is certainly one of the important ideas of this play. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that it is necessary to read and understand Shaw's views on phonetics in order to understand *Pygmalion*. The study of language and the science of phonetics is an extremely complex subject. Nor is it clear that a phonetic alphabet is the solution to the problems of the English language. A student who really wishes to understand these questions would not learn very much about them by reading *Pygmalion*. A complex academic subject of this kind can hardly be grasped immediately by an audience in a theatre, and Shaw provides them only with a minimum of easily assimilated information. In his preface Shaw writes:

But if the play makes the public aware that there are such people as phoneticians, and that they are among the most important people in England at present, it will serve its turn. (Chin, 2000:890)

The importance of phonetics is only the most obvious, not the most vital, idea in the play. *Pygmalion* can hardly be called a play that expresses very accurate or particularly profound ideas about the study of the English language. It does, however, make use of some fairly simple ideas about the English language in order to make some very accurate observations about the nature of English society, and it asks a number of questions about the

relations that exist between individuals in such a society which are both important and profound.

Shaw indicates that Pickering is a military gentleman while Higgins is only a note-taker. Right from the beginning Shaw emphasizes the gentlemanly behavior of the Colonel which serves to highlight Higgins' more boorish behavior. Obsessed by his interest in changing Eliza through language, he has no idea that his behavior might be unusual. His manners are boorish. But at the same time it is significant that it is Higgins and not the Colonel who performs an act of Christian charity by giving Eliza, whom he had mercilessly humiliated earlier, a handful of money. Eliza's vulgar need of money from prospective customers is motivated by her poverty circumstances, as shown in the following conversation,

THE FLOWER GIRL [*rising in desperation*] You ought to be stuffed with nails, you ought. [*Flinging the basket at his feet*] Take the whole blooming basket for sixpence.

The church clock strikes the second quarter.

HIGGINS [*hearing in it the voice of God, rebuking him for his Pharisaic want of charity to the poor girl*] A reminder. [*He raises his hat solemnly; then throws a handful of money into the basket and follows Pickering*].

THE FLOWER GIRL [*picking up a half-crown*] Ah-ow-oooh! [*Picking up a couple of florins*] Aaah-ow-oooh! [*Picking up several coins*] Aaaaaah-ow-oooh! [*Picking up a half-sovereign*] Aaaaaaaaah-ow-oooh!!!

(Chin, 2000:897)

In this conversation, a note of social conscience enters the play. Higgins flings a handful of coins into Eliza's basket when he is reminded by the striking of the church clock which he considers as a rebuke for his lack of Christian charity. This again reveals the hypocrisy of the middle class. Here he is not so much doing it out of a genuine act of generosity but in order to realize a higher order and guarantee his salvation. The background elements of the church bells that remind Higgins of Christian charity, symbolically introduce the element of the medieval morality play in the opening act. According to Abrams (1993:118), a morality play, popular during the Elizabethan Age, depicted the fierce battle between the forces of good and evil for the possession of the soul of the individual character. The medieval world picture believed in a chain of being which determined each individual's position in the scale of social hierarchy. There is a conflict in Higgins' mind whether to buy or not the flowers offered by Eliza till the church bell reminds him to show his charity. Using the money given by Higgins, at the end of act one Eliza is shown as challenging and disturbing that rigid social hierarchy by hiring a cab. She dares to challenge the common perception that poor flower girls cannot hire cabs.

All acts introduce the idea of what defines being a gentleman and lady. For instance, a bystander says of Higgins, "E's a gentleman: look at his boots" (Chin, 2000:894), while Eliza says of him, "He's no gentleman, he aint, to interfere with a poor girl" (Chin, 2000:895). For the bystander clothing and general appearance is the distinguishing mark of a gentleman while for Eliza behaviors and manners are the essential criteria of gentility. This idea about what constitutes a lady and a gentleman continues throughout the play. It is very interesting to reflect that a flower girl has a very deep and rigid notion of the difference between a lady and a flower girl when she asserts that "the difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she's treated." This statement comes after another dialogue between Eliza and Pickering in which Eliza praises Pickering's gentility and good examples of treating others. Eliza says to Pickering,

... 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 difficult for me with the example

of Professor Higgins always before me. ... And I should never have known that ladies and gentleman didn't behave like that if you hadn't been there.

(Chin, 2000:944)

The question is what actually Pickering has done makes Eliza becomes so impressed of him. Eliza admits that from Pickering she gets real education. And when Pickering asks her what real education he has given, Eliza points out his calling to her as "Miss Doolittle" at the day when she first came to Wimpole Street. Eliza mentions that event as the beginning of self-respect for her. In Act Three, most of the characters – the Parlor Maid, Mrs. Eynsford Hill, Mrs. Higgins, Pickering, and Freddy – call Eliza by "Miss Doolittle", except Higgins and Clara. Instead of calling her Miss Doolittle, Higgins calls her using objects name that sounds very sarcastic such as "baggage" (Chin, 2000:902), "draggled-tailed guttersnipe" (Chin, 2000:903), "creature picked from the mud" (Chin, 2000:943), "thing out of the squashed cabbage leaves" (Chin, 2000:944), and "common idiot" (Chin, 2000:949).

4.2 Social Implications of Class Distinction and Human Exploitation

Class distinction brings with it three social implications in society i.e., human exploitation, dehumanization, and poverty. Dehumanization occurs since class distinction and human exploitation constitute a gap between the capitalists and the workers which consequently lead the capitalists to give low respect to the workers and consider them as human beings of different level or objects of certain interest. Poverty is the consequence of the unfair treatment and the despotic policy in capitalist society in which the labor power of the workers are compensated so low. Poverty is also caused by the great unemployment since man-power loses in its competition against the machinery-power in industry.

4.2.1 Human Exploitation

Most of the dialogues in *Pygmalion* tell about human relation established among the characters that leads them to involve in a linguistic experiment using Eliza as 'the main object'. The experiment happens in one single setting of place that is Higgins' laboratory. Pickering comes to the laboratory due to Higgins' invitation. In the previous meeting, in Covent Garden, Pickering introduces himself as the author of spoken Sanskrit, while Higgins tells Pickering that he is the author of Higgins' Universal Alphabet. This same concern in exploring language scientifically unifies Higgins and Pickering into an experimental cooperation in Wimpole Street to 'repair' Eliza's way of speaking. For Higgins, a woman should have a well-spoken ability unless she will not be recognized as an existence. Higgins says to Eliza,

A woman who utters such depressing and disgusting sounds has no right to be anywhere – no right to live. Remember that you are a human being with a soul and the divine gift of articulate speech: that your native language is the language of Shakespeare and Milton and the Bible: and don't sit there crooning like a bilious pigeon. (Chin, 2000:897)

It is actually a very extreme statement to say that Eliza has no right to exist and to live as human being only because of her improper way of speaking. What does Shaw want to say to his audience through this statement? It is assumed that instead of underlining that language can become the benchmark to distinguish one's social status from others, Shaw also wants to utilize the statement to trigger the lower class people to think about their existence in society. Shaw encourages the lower class to contemplate about their own future which is designed freely as independent human beings who have "souls and the divine gift" to improve their lives day by day. He opens their eyes to strive for their rights to live as respectable people, not as slaves of the capitalists along their life time. He hates the proletariat who lead their

life of servant-hood only to fulfill the demands of the bourgeoisie as if they were born to be exploited by that class. In his ideals, the proletariat must revolt and seize the mode of production in the capitalist society and become the subjects who determine their own lives.

Eliza leads herself to be the object of the experiment by visiting the laboratory on the day after her meeting with Higgins and Pickering in the portico of St. Paul's Church Covent Garden. She is very interested in Higgins' statement that he could pass her off as a duchess in six months. She is very convinced if Higgins' statement can be realized her, life will be better compared with the life of a cockney flower girl. The following dialogue tells about her coming to the laboratory.

MRS. PEARCE. A young woman wants to see you, sir.

HIGGINS. A young woman! What does she want?

MRS. PEARCE. Well, sir, she says you'll be glad to see her when you know what she's come about. She's quite a common girl, sir. Very common indeed. I should have sent her away, only I thought perhaps you wanted her to talk into your machines. I hope I've not done wrong; but really you see such queer people sometimes—you'll excuse me, I'm sure, sir—

(Chin, 2000:900-901)

This conversation shows the first seconds of Eliza's coming to the laboratory. It tells to the audience that firstly Eliza comes to the laboratory voluntarily encouraged by her own desire to improve her English. However, what happen after she becomes the student of Professor Higgins is the despotic treatments she gets since the Professor's hegemony dominates her freedom and rights. This hegemony pictures the great domination of the capitalist on the workers practiced everywhere in England in the industrial revolution era.

Another interesting reflection from the dialogue above is how Mrs. Pearce views Eliza. She introduces Eliza to Higgins as a young woman, a quite common girl, very common indeed. This introduction shows how Mrs. Pearce treats other people based on their social class. She differentiates privileged and common people, lower class and upper class, and – regarding to the capitalist society portrayed in this play, she also distinguishes – the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is not her fault since it is usual in England at that time to relate people to their social class.

Moreover, Mrs. Pearce also underestimates Eliza as a girl who has nothing to contribute to the experiment in the laboratory, even for whatever social relationship. What can a young-inexperienced woman contribute to the laboratory? Can a "common girl" give something special to a scientific experiment? As most of the common people are uneducated, what does an uneducated-common girl know about phonetics? It seems that through Mrs. Pearce, Shaw wants to criticize human relationship based on the binary opposition distinction: common – special/privileged; educated – uneducated; experienced – inexperienced; and scholar – laymen. Although Eliza says that Higgins will be glad to see her, Mrs. Pearce remains confused and thinks what Higgins can get from that common girl. Mrs. Pearce bases her consideration on the advantage Higgins may take from Eliza as she knows that Higgins is so concerned to his scientific business and takes in charge with others only for his linguistic 'business'. The sentence "I should have sent her away, only I thought perhaps you wanted her to talk into your machines" proves Mrs. Pearce's basic thought of the advantage.

Actually, it is ambiguous to interpret what Higgins means with 'interesting accent'. Does he really mean a nice accent which Eliza has? Or he means a unique language sound Eliza produces which becomes something 'interesting' to observe in the laboratory? It is assumed that Higgins is interested in the uniqueness rather than the niceness of the accent since Eliza's accent is very unique and therefore it is interesting to be explored. This notion of uniqueness is not well grasped by Mrs. Pearce. She has misunderstood what Higgins

means with 'interesting accent' when she replies the question by saying, "Oh, something dreadful, sir, really. I don't know how you can take an interest in it." Eliza's ideals to be a lady of a florist shop that meets with Higgins' boast to polish Eliza's language in six months is of course out of Mrs. Pearce's understanding. Mrs. Pearce's intends to ask Eliza to go away since Eliza is just a common girl and probably useless for Higgins. On the other hands, she delays her intention since she assumes that Higgins may need Eliza to speak to his machines. Higgins is, then, very interested in the 'dreadful accent' Eliza has and starts to arrange a schedule of six-month language course for Eliza. He says,

HIGGINS: Eliza, you are to live here for the next six months, learning how to speak beautifully, like a lady in a florist's shop. If you're good and do whatever you're told, you shall sleep in a proper bedroom, and have lots to eat, and money to buy chocolates and take rides in taxis. If you're naughty and idle you will sleep in the back kitchen among the black beetles, and be walloped by Mrs. Pearce with a broomstick.

(Chin, 2000:906)

This is the beginning of a six-month contract that creates a new cooperative relationship between Higgins and Eliza regarding to the language experiment to produce well-spoken manner for Eliza and economic benefits for Higgins. It is Eliza's chaotic manner of uttering words that is considered by Higgins as a qualified raw material to be refined in his "language factory" due to her original and unique way of speaking. Without that qualification, Eliza may not get the permission from Higgins to come into the laboratory when Higgins says, "Lets have her up. Shew her up, Mrs. Pearce!" Nevertheless, at the same time this is also the beginning of a new bad human relationship Eliza encounters.

People come from countryside and villages to the town, to the centre of industrial complex seeking for jobs. As people who seek for work to earn for living by selling their labor power – the only property they have – the workers are warned not to break any rules made by the job provider. They should obey rules in the factory or they will be punished by the overseers who get the power from the factory owner to keep the discipline in the factory. For this purpose, every factory owner has arranged a strict discipline. The most famous rule due to the working system in the factory is the Factory Act (imposed since 1834) that regulates the length of the working day in mills in which wool, silk, cotton, and flax are spun or woven by means of water or steam-power. This law also reduces the working hours to an average of twelve to thirteen, and forbids the employment of children less than nine years of age (Engels, 1978: 199).

"Sleeping in the proper bedroom" is not more than the picture of living in some houses provided by the factory owner for the staffs of the factory who are considered as loyal men and women who dedicated their life for the survival of the company. It is a kind of award for those who behave well and give bigger contribution to the accumulation of the surplus value. On the other hand, those who are naughty and idle and give less contribution in the production of goods should live in the houses which are mentioned by Eliza as "wasn't fit for a pig to live in" or as described by Engels as places "that no human being could possibly wish to live in them"(1979, 61). As Higgins has less attention to Eliza's daily needs, it seems that the factory owners also do not have good will to give good income to fulfill the workers' daily needs such as proper houses, enough food and clothes. The capitalists think that giving high salary to the workers may decrease the profit and reduce the surplus value which they get by exploiting the workers. Therefore, since a factory may have thousands of workers, it is easier and cheaper for the capitalists to provide a kind of boarding house than a proper house for each family of the workers. It proves that the factory owners give more attention on the profit they may get from the process of production than the workers' welfare. They merely exploit the labor power of the workers without giving to the workers a balanced

compensation such as adequate wage, proper houses, good health service, and good condition of work. Instead of receiving good compensation, the workers are often punished and fined whenever they break the discipline of the factory. Even, the workers who involve in factory strikes or labor movements will be put in jail without any fair court process as illustrated by Shaw as “sleeping in the back kitchen among the black beetles, and be walloped by Mrs. Pearce with a broomstick.”

By exposing Mrs. Pearce as the figure who controls Eliza, Shaw reminds his audience about the role of the factory overseers who observe and command the workers to work in the name of the capitalists. About the existence of the supervision mechanism in the factory, Tucker (1978) explains,

An industrial army of workmen, under the command of a capitalist, requires, like a real army, officers (managers), and sergeants (foremen, overlookers), who, while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist. The work of supervision becomes their established and exclusive function. (p. 385-386)

As the number of labourers increases to a large scale of working army, the capitalists need to have a kind of supervising staffs in order to create and to secure the harmonious team-work for their factory. If the supervision of the capitalists through their overlookers is to maintain the smoothness of the process of production, people may have no comment and objection on it. The problem is that the supervision and the control which is applied by the capitalists in the factory tend to be very despotic. “To be walloped by Mrs. Pearce with a broomstick” shows that brutality, including whipping, beating, and loss of wages have become a usual despotism that is deliberately penetrated by the capitalists.

The fact that the workers are treated as the object and the commodity of industry is reflected in *Pygmalion* by exposing Eliza as the object and the commodity of Higgins' phonetic experiments. Higgins treats Eliza as if she has no other potentials as human being except her capability as a producer of language sounds. For Higgins, the language sounds are more important than Eliza, the producer of sounds. From the opening of the play it is emphasized that Higgins knows more and cares more about sounds than about people. In this sense, Shaw criticizes the perception of the capitalists who consider goods or the products of their factory as the ultimate things, more than the workers, the producers of the goods.

Shaw deliberately puts in details all the machines – phonograph, laryngoscope, tiny organ, tuning forks, gramophone disks, wax cylinder box, and a set of lamp chimneys (Chin, 2000: 900) – as a metaphor to the factory machines that change raw materials to fabricating material goods or finished goods which are ready to be sold in the market. It seems that these metaphorical machines play the same role as the machines in the factory in the sense of forming raw materials become valuable-finished materials. However, Eliza is not ‘a material’. She is a human being. She must be treated as a respectable woman regardless to what social class she belongs. Without doing all these processes, Higgins thinks that Eliza cannot be sold to the ‘market’. During the six-month experiment, Eliza is exposed twice in two different ‘markets’. The first ‘market’ is in Mrs. Higgins' at-home day when Eliza makes her fault regarding to her ‘blindness’ of what should be told in high class intercourse. In this upper-class company she behaves like an imperfectly functioning mechanical doll before Mrs. Higgins' friends. The second market is the ambassador's garden party when she appears in triumph at the ball. However, what happens after the ball is not expected by both Higgins and Pickering? Eliza's feelings are wounded because, after the reception, Higgins does not treat her kindly but talks of her as a guinea pig.

All those bad treatments are the evidences of cruel practice of human exploitation in capitalist society in England portrayed by *Pygmalion* where the surplus-value – and all processes for creating it – is considered more important and higher than humanity value of

the workers. The workers in the capitalists' eyes are not more than one of the factors of production. They are objects and commodities that work together with other factors of production to accumulate money in form of bank interest and surplus-value. It is Higgins who represents the nature of the capitalist – the target of Shaw's critique – who allows every effort on behalf of money. He measures Eliza regarding to her possession of money and laughs at her when she bargains to pay one shilling for the language lesson. Eliza's imagination has been caught by Higgins' boast that he could teach her to speak properly and she has now come to learn and to pay for her instructor. It is, of course absurd that in her ignorance, she imagines that she can pay a shilling for her lessons by saying,

A lady friend of mine gets French lessons for eighteen- pence an hour from a real French gentleman. Well, you wouldn't have the face to ask me the same for teaching me my own language as you would for French; so I won't give more than a shilling. Take it or leave it.

(Chin, 2000: 902-903)

The audience will naturally consider this as a joke. They will be reminded by Higgins that it is not really a joke but regarded as a percentage of Eliza's income, a serious business proposition. Fortunately, Pickering - the gentleman, to whom Eliza gives her respect so much – challenges Higgins to pay all the expenses of the lessons if Higgins can create a new way of speaking for Eliza in six months. As Higgins decides to respond the challenge, Eliza is freed of paying any money and takes the language lessons free of charge. The following dialogue illustrates the challenge and response conversation.

PICKERING. Higgins: I'm interested. What about the ambassador's garden party? I'll say you're the greatest teacher alive if you make that good. I'll bet you all the expenses of the experiment you cant do it. And I'll pay for the lessons.

LIZA. Oh, you are real good. Thank you, Captain.

HIGGINS [*tempted, looking at her*] It's almost irresistible. She's so deliciously low—so horribly dirty—

LIZA [*protesting extremely*] Ah-ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-oo-oo!!! I aint dirty: I washed my face and hands afore I come, I did.

PICKERING. You're certainly not going to turn her head with flattery, Higgins.

(Chin, 2000:903-904)

It is interesting here to pay attention on how the two scholars treat and view Eliza. To Higgins, Eliza is “so deliciously low and so horribly dirty”. By saying so (and so many other sarcastic remarks like, “Take all her clothes off and burn them...”, “Wrap her in brown paper till the new clothes come,” ”Put her in the dustbin”), the audience of *Pygmalion* learns that Higgins is a man who really lacks of any understanding of his own behavior and has no empathy to the lower class people. To Colonel Pickering, on the other hand, Eliza is a young girl, poor young girl and he sponsors her lessons with which he shows to the audience that he is really a generous man who cares for the ‘fate’ of the poor. His concerns are more gentlemanly. He always has positive consideration on Eliza as Eliza herself thinks that she is a virtuous woman by saying repeatedly along the play, “I'm a good girl, I am.” These differing perspectives about the same individual contribute to the complexity of Eliza's characterization.

4.2.2 Dehumanization

Dehumanization is the deliberate removal of sympathetic human traits when referring to members of an opposing ideology, race, political party, or other source of conflict (<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-dehumanization.htm>). It often begins with the removal of personal right and the treatment to other people as of lower dignity level – even in the same

level of animals – as the impact of the class distinction in society. Bad treatments of the capitalist to the workers can be obviously seen in the form of rude remarks, brutal physical punishment, inhumane fine system, etc. In this case, the workers are not considered by the capitalists as their fellowmen or business partners, but as ‘creature’ from lower level who can be exploited for the benefits of the capitalists.

The most obvious phenomenal practices of dehumanization in *Pygmalion* are shown by Shaw in the relationship between Higgins and Eliza which is assumed as the reflection of the relationship between the capitalist and the workers. It is obvious since this play performs, in all acts, Higgins inhumane treatments to Eliza by calling her with so many sarcastic remarks, ignoring her feelings, considering her as foolish girl, and using her as far as she is needed. These are the focus of attention of the following discussion.

Talking about the sarcastic language used in the daily conversation between the capitalist and the laborers, Engels informs that the language used in the factories is characterized by many witnesses as ‘indecent’, ‘bad’, and ‘filthy’ (1979, 176). This happens since the capitalist considers that hard work to gain big profit and surplus value can only be run well if he imposes strict method of control, rude instruction and sarcastic remarks. The capitalist – who knows that the workers rely their lives fully on the wage they receive from the factory – views the unfortunate class as lower and are not able to live without their ‘help’. This perception leads the capitalist to contempt the workers and shows their lack of respect to them in daily interaction.

Pygmalion shows almost in all acts how Higgins dehumanizes Eliza by calling her with some inhumane remarks. This indicates not only his low respect to the cockney flower girl but also his arrogant attitude to other people as if they have nothing to parallelize with his scientific property that is his brilliance as the professor of phonetics. In the preface to the play, Shaw wrote that one of his models for Henry Higgins is Henry Sweet, a distinguished phonetician whom Shaw knew. Sweet’s arrogance and his lack of sweetness of character lead him to regard all scholars who are not rabid phoneticians as fools. Rather than contributing anything to scholarship on phonetics it is a libelous attack on another professor of language and literature whom Sweet considers incompetent to hold his position. All these characteristics are then adopted by Shaw ‘to create’ Higgins, the expert of phonetics in *Pygmalion*.

Higgins calls Eliza as “guttersnipe”, “creature picked from the mud”, or “a thing out the squashed cabbage leaf”. “Guttersnipe” is a special term which is usually used for beggars who live on the curb. This term is opposed to a noble predicate – ‘duchess’ – when Higgins says,

HIGGINS [*becoming excited as the idea grows on him*] What is life but a series of inspired follies? The difficulty is to find them to do. Never lose a chance: it doesn’t (sic) come every day. I shall make a duchess of this draggel-tailed guttersnipe.

(Chin, 2000:903)

According to *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (2003), *guttersnipe* is a child from a poor area of a town who is dirty and dressed badly. Actually it is a proper term for Eliza since she is a poor girl living in slum and now she is wearing – according to Higgins’ perspective – dirty and ugly clothes. The problem is not whether the term is proper or not to the actual situation related to who Eliza is and what she is wearing. “Guttersnipe”, here, is used by Higgins in the conversation with Pickering talking about their betting.

By using this term, Higgins deliberately reminds Eliza of her lowest social status (guttersnipe) and boasting that – if he wishes – he can transform the girl to the stratum she dreams (a duchess). Since this is a difficult project of transforming human’s social status – and simultaneously a very profitable experiment – Higgins shows that it is reasonable for him

to receive from this rare opportunity a big amount of money from Pickering who generously pays for Eliza's language lessons. In addition, beyond this economic issue related to Higgins' greed to take profit from his experiment, another concern is the objectification of Eliza. Eliza becomes the object of the betting between Higgins and Pickering and at the same time the object of a language experiment. This reflects the phenomena that exist in most of the capitalists' perception. First, the capitalist always regards the workers as people from the lowest class in society. They are the have-not. They rely their lives upon the wage they earn from the capitalists. It is the capitalist's wish to determine the amount of their wage and the length of their working time. Second, based on the first perception, the capitalists objectify the workers and exploits them to raise the productivity in order to collect as much money as possible.

Feeling is something inherently exists in human beings and becomes one of the most essential faculties that distinguish human beings from animals and other living creatures. Whenever one's feeling is ignored or considered nothing, consciously or unconsciously, the essence and the dignity of human beings is dehumanized. When the audience of *Pygmalion* watches the play, the impression that Higgins does not care of Eliza's feeling is so strong. Many critics then conclude that there is dehumanization portrayed by the play to criticize the practice of the ignorance of feelings in daily human relation through attitudes, words, and action (Bentley 1988:14). Observe the following conversation.

HIGGINS [*storming on*] Take all her clothes off and burn them. Ring up Whiteley or somebody for new ones. Wrap her up in brown paper till they come.

LIZA. You're no gentleman, you're not, to talk of such things. I'm a good girl, I am; and I know what the like of you are, I do.

HIGGINS. We want none of your Lisson Grove prudery here, young woman. You've got to learn to behave like a duchess. Take her away, Mrs. Pearce. If she gives you any trouble wallop her.

LIZA No! I'll call the police, I will.

MRS. PEARCE. But I've no place to put her.

HIGGINS. Put her in the dustbin.

LIZA. Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-oo!

PICKERING. Oh come, Higgins! be reasonable.

MRS. PEARCE [*resolutely*] You must be reasonable, Mr. Higgins: really you must. You can't walk over everybody like this.

(Chin, 2000:904)

To start his project of transforming Eliza from a flower girl to a duchess, Higgins gives orders which are susceptible of more than one interpretation. Eliza hears the phrase, "Take all her clothes off," and, assumes that Higgins considers her as a prostitute. Therefore she protests by saying that she is a good girl and in contrast to Higgins' remarks, she suspects Higgins as not a gentleman. The whole action of the second act depends upon this doubt about whether Higgins' intentions are sexual or intellectual. Eliza assumes that they are sexual, and Pickering advises Higgins to be reasonable. Alfred Doolittle, Eliza's father, also arrives to investigate this dubious situation and extract what economic profit he can get for himself.

Audiences and readers, therefore, are right to wonder about the relationship between Higgins and Eliza. She is right to be alarmed since Higgins does make it appear that he considers her something which he may use for his pleasure. She naturally interprets her role as that of a prostitute. The irony is that nothing could be further from Higgins' intentions. He is interested in her mind as the object of an experiment and does not really regard her as having any feelings that go with her. As a critique to every policy in industry that neglects the

aspect of emotion/feeling and gives more respect to reason as the typical of rationalism, Shaw performs Colonel Pickering who objects what Higgins practices on Eliza.

PICKERING [*in good-humored remonstrance*] Does it occur to you, Higgins, that the girl has some feelings?

HIGGINS [*looking critically at her*] Oh no, I don't think so. Not any feelings that we need bother about. [*Cheerily*] Have you, Eliza?

LIZA. I got my feelings same as anyone else.

(Chin, 2000:905)

Pickering's question whether Higgins is aware or not that Eliza has some feelings is answered smartly by Higgins that his project does not deal with the feelings but with the scientific effort to teach Eliza how to speak properly in. Anyhow, for Eliza, the experiment should not only touch the intellectual aspect but also the emotional one. Therefore, she strictly underlines that she has feelings as other human beings and highlights her will to be treated as other mankind.

Dehumanization also goes with the consideration that other people have no capabilities to understand things and to determine their own future, that other people cannot be involved (or invited to involve) in the decision making process, and that other people must follow whatever ordered by the decision maker whether they agree or not. This consideration degrades the potentialities every human has and denies the equality of dignity among human beings. On the other hand, the perception has led certain person or group of people to treat others as foolish, incapable, unskilled, uneducated, or even savage as reflected in the following dialogue.

HIGGINS. How can she? She's incapable of understanding anything. Besides, do any of us understand what we are doing? If we did, would we ever do it?

PICKERING. Very clever, Higgins; but not sound sense. [*To Eliza*] Miss Doolittle—

LIZA [*overwhelmed*] Ah-ah-ow-oo!

HIGGINS. There! That's all you get out of Eliza. Ah-ah-ow-oo! No use explaining. As a military man you ought to know that. Give her orders: that's what she wants.

(Chin, 2000:906)

To criticize this malpractice of ignoring human potentialities in capitalist society, Shaw presents Higgins as a figure who always views Eliza as an idiot, a poor stupid girl, and a foolish guttersnipe who cannot make any better effort to survive and to live in more reasonable ways. This is a critique that Shaw conveys upon what he witnesses in manufacture sphere where the workers are regarded as stupid laborers who can only work by orders. The quotation reflects the fact how the workers are treated as if they have no creativity, no imagination, and no desires. The capitalists ignore the fact that workers can express who they are through the activities which shows what they produce and how they produce. Through working, the workers actually can express their creativity or desires and at the same time they fulfill their daily needs. However, from the capitalists' view point, the workers must work based on the capitalists' design and desires. The workers are considered as 'idiot' people who must work under the command and instructions from the capitalist. As Eliza's objection to Higgins' less appreciation to every human's feelings arouse a serious conflict between Higgins and her, in fact, the situation where the workers' potentialities are neglected by the factory owners also often arouse conflict between the capitalist and the laborers.

4.2.3 Poverty

As the factories started to be the center of economic activities in England from which the laborers earned their living, there was a vast wave of urbanization that led many people moved to the industrial cities which continued to grow in numbers and extent. Morgan (1988) informs,

The urbanization of the mass of the population and the decline of rural areas not surprisingly had profound social consequences for all classes of the population. The greatest fear of the propertied class in the first decade of the century had been of a revolutionary working classes: that no such class emerged is perhaps the most striking feature of the second decade of the century. P. 481)

The migration of people to the cities in the early twentieth century to work in the central areas of industry is considered as the most striking feature of urbanization compared with the people mobility from the rural areas to the cities in other eras. It means that most of the industrial labourers were from the villages outside the towns who were bound themselves to the manufactures as the waged workers. However, since the wages they earned are so low, their coming to the cities causes new social problems regarded to housing, health and education services, unemployment, crime, and above of those all is the poverty itself. Many children do not go to school because their parents have no money to support their education. Instead of going to school, the children are brought to the factory to work as child-labors or asked to sell things like flowers, cigarettes, candies on the curb as portrayed through the *Pygmalion's* main character, Eliza, the flower girl. Robert Blatchford, a Socialist journalist, who makes so many reports about the revolting life situation of the poor, asks his readers to be aware of the children future and asks them to think about certain concrete effort to help the children. He writes in Ausubel (1955),

... Suppose that a child is born in a poor hovel, in a poor slum. Suppose its home surroundings are such that cleanliness and modesty are well-nigh impossible. Suppose the gutter is its playground; the gin shop its nursery; the factory its college; the drunkard its exemplar; the ruffian and the thief its instructors! Suppose bad nursing, bad air, bad water, bad food, dirt, hunger, ill-usage, foul language, and hard work are its daily portion. Suppose it has inherited poor blood, dull spirits, enfeebled wit, and a stunted stature, from its ill-fed, untaught, overworked, miserable, ignorant, and unhealthy parents, can you expect that child to be clever, and moral, and thrifty, and clean, and sober? (p.33)

For Shaw, the main factor that causes all social problems is poverty. He witnesses how poverty marginalizes so many working class people, including children, and leaving them beyond the support of civilization. In his perception, there are no evil people but evil circumstances which must be identified, attacked and eliminated. In his opinion, the children of poor family become uneducated not because they are foolish but because their circumstance does not give them sufficient support for schooling; prostitution is not seen as a moral sin but as a product of social environment; and crime must be viewed not as the action of criminal people but of the depressed situation of poverty. Showing his concern on the less improvement in political legislation to relieve the social problem that creates extreme contrasts of wealth and poverty, in his letter to H.G. Wells (Wodd, **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**), Shaw writes,

Poverty is the greatest of our evils and the worst of our crimes and humanity cannot realistically advance until poverty is eliminated. We must reform society before we can reform ourselves since personal righteousness is impossible in an unrighteous environment.

Employing Alfred Doolittle as his mouth piece, Shaw attacks the welfare legislation that is rooted in the concept of the deserving and undeserving poor introduced by the 19th

century Poor Laws (Batty, 2003), which provides substantial assistance only for old people and widows. According to this law, the working class people who earn low wages are not deserved to get such assistance. Shaw objects this law since it treats poor widows and poor old people different from poor laborers. In this sense, he does not agree to distinguish poor people as the law instructs. Instead, he suggests an equal treatment and distribution of social donation from the government to all paupers including the poor laborers who are described by Engels as people who “consume today what they earned yesterday” and “the subjects who do not have the slightest guarantee for being able to earn the barest necessities of life” (Engels, 1979:146). In the ‘discussion’ about the depressed situation caused by the poverty he encounters, Alfred Doolittle says to Mrs. Higgins,

DOOLITTLE: [*softening his manner in deference to her sex*] That’s the tragedy of it, maam. It’s easy to say chuck it; but I haven’t the nerve. Which of us has? We’re all intimidated. Intimidated, maam: that’s what we are. What is there for me if I chuck it but the workhouse in my old age? I have to dye my hair already to keep my job as a dustman. If I was one of the deserving poor, and had put by a bit, I could chuck it; but then why should I, cause the deserving poor might as well be millionaires for all the happiness they ever has. They don’t know what happiness is.

(Chin, 2000:942)

Besides describing the unjust treatment that Doolittle experiences as an undeserving poor, this quotation also reflects the intimidation felt by poor laborers who live in workhouse. The intimidation is so strong that Doolittle has no audacity to leave his job as a dustman as he says, “but I haven’t the nerve”, which also means that he is afraid of losing his place for living. Since most laborers do not have any capability to buy private houses, they have to live in the houses provided by their employers. In certain extent, this system keeps the laborers to stay working in the same factory unless they will lose the house. Doolittle wishes to be the deserving poor in order being able to leave the workhouse, many laborers also dream to have their own house to free themselves from the employers’ bound. Instead of the small amount of workhouses, most houses are located in slums. Shaw witnesses many people live in these kinds of houses which do not fit to live. He puts his testimony about the condition of the houses of poor people in his fictional character’s mouth, Eliza, who says that her own dorm in Lisson Grove is “wasn’t fit for a pig to live in” (Chin, 2000: 894). Since the local authorities are trying to clean up the city from many wild settlements of the new comers, these unfortunate people can be removed any time the local officials wish. On the other hand, some of them are luckier that they may live in workhouses built by the local government though they have to work for certain public services with very low wages. These people live in an intimidated situation of slum clearance, lose of jobs, and get epidemic diseases caused by bad sanitation.

Poverty is affected by many factors including income, health, education, access to fulfill daily basic needs, family circumstances and the socio-political system a society has. Actually, it is difficult to measure poverty, but income and expenditure are commonly used to measure poverty. When someone or a family cannot afford the basic needs for daily life, they are categorized as poor. In this sense the fulfillment of the basic needs becomes the measurement to evaluate the minimum standard of living of someone or family or group of people. The satisfaction of basic needs means meeting the minimum requirements of a family for personal consumption: food, shelter, and clothing. In *Pygmalion*, Shaw underlines that the paupers need the same basic necessities as the wealthy people require. Again, through Alfred Doolittle he voices the idea and tells the audience if there is no difference between the poor and the rich in the need of food, clothes, and shelter.

V. Conclusions

Pygmalion portrays the social conditions in England in the end of nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. One of the most obvious topics to reflect from the play is class distinction. Conducting close reading on *Pygmalion* leads the writer to the understanding of how George Bernard Shaw has utilized this play to convey his socialist view points. He symbolizes the power exercise of Higgins to Eliza as the power relation applied by the capitalist on the workers. It also reflects the support of Pickering and Mrs. Higgins to Eliza's struggle as the support of many socialists to the labour movements.

Class distinction has become the central issue since there is a clear-cut boundary between the capital holding class and the working class in industrial society. They are different – or forced to be different – in many aspects of life. The distinction results in some social implications: first, the capitalists as the superior and dominant group of people apply exploitation on the majority inferior and subordinate workers to gain maximum economic profit in the process of production, distribution, and consumption. The share of profit is not fair at all because the workers do not receive enough wage from their masters although they have contributed their labor power in a long working hours. This situation yields in the dehumanization which means the ignorance of human values and dignity of the workers on behalf of the business benefits. Shaw portrays the degradation of human values by presenting the bad treatments of Professor Higgins toward Eliza through rude remarks and other inhumane actions.

Human exploitation and dehumanization put most people of working class into severe poverty. It is said, for example, that poverty becomes the greatest evil and the worst crimes. Shaw and his Fabian Society has struggled so hard to reform the society toward a better situation with sufficient income to fulfill people's basic needs.

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